TED ROACH

From Pig Iron Hero to Long Bay Gaol

Denis Kevans

Edited by Sophia Kevans (with Bob Fagan and Bill Egan)

“This is a very important book. It is a significant piece of political history and every Australian should read it.”

—Jack Mundey

“Ted Roach was the type of individual who had a fighting spirit; somehow a flame that never died. A flame that never burnt out. His one aim was to see the waterfront a much better place to work and he achieved just that.”

—Walter Bailey (Port Kembla wharfie)* Quoted in Gary Griffith, ‘Obituary: Ted Roach (1909–1997)’, Illawarra Unity - Journal of the Illawarra Branch of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History, 1 (1997), pp. 30-34.

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A Wharfie's Life

Denis Kevans

Edited by Sophia Kevans (with Bob Fagan and Bill Egan)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS…… vi
ABOUT THE AUTHOR …… vii
ABOUT THE EDITORS and ACKNOWLEDGMENTS…… ix
EDITORS' INTRODUCTION…… x
ABBREVIATIONS…… xxi
DRAMATIS PERSONAE…… xxiv
IMPORTANT DATES…… xxvii

INTRODUCTION…… 1

PART 1: EARLY LIFE AND DEPRESSION YEARS

Chapter 1 TED READS "BOSTON" BY UPTON SINCLAIR 5
Chapter 2 FROM COLEDALE TO MACKAY: WWI AND THE DEPRESSION 7
Chapter 3 BACK TO NEWCASTLE, 1931-1937 21

PART 2: PORT KEMBLA, 1937-1942

Chapter 4 PORT KEMBLA: TED ROACH AS BRANCH SECRETARY WWF 27
Chapter 5 THE *DALFRAM* PIG IRON DISPUTE 35
Chapter 6 KEMBLA DAYS: LIFE AFTER *DALFRAM,* 1939-1942 47
Chapter 7 RED DUST AND ROTARIES, 1940 51
Chapter 8 SMEARS, SUCCESSES AND SOUTH COAST FAREWELL, 1941-1942 56

PART 3: TED ROACH AS ASSISTANT-GENERAL SECRETARY, 1942-1951

Chapter 9 FEDERAL OFFICE: TED ROACH - ORGANISER 66
Chapter 10 THE DUTCH SHIPS DISPUTE: BACKGROUND 73
Chapter 11 THE DUTCH SHIPS DISPUTE: *GARLANDS OF FLOWERS* …… 84
Chapter 12 TED ROACH'S LEADERSHIP AT THE NATIONAL OFFICE, 1946-1947 98
Chapter 13 ROACH DOES "MOST OF THE CORRESPONDENCE": LEADERSHIP IN 1948 107
Chapter 14 IT'S ON!: TED ROACH CHASES MELBOURNE GROUPERS 111
Chapter 15 THE NSW COAL STRIKE, 1949 120
Chapter 16 THE BRISBANE ROTARY HATCH DISPUTE, 1950 127
Chapter 17 THE BASIC WAGE DECISION 1951: FOSTER GAOLS TED ROACH 143
Chapter 18 LONG BAY GAOL, 1951: "KEEP STEP, 103" 159

PART 4: AFTER LONG BAY

Chapter 19 BLAND'S SECRET LETTER TO HAROLD HOLT, 22 May 1951 173
Chapter 20 *UNITY … THE WINNING WEAPON*, 1953: KWINANA AND "OPERATION CAIN" 185
Chapter 21 TED ROACH IN THE 1950s: SHAKING THE SHIP OWNERS 198
Chapter 22 DEATH OF JIM HEALY, 1961: TED AND THE CPA 212
Chapter 23 "COMRADE, FAREWELL!" 218
BIBLIOGRAPHY 220

ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig 1 ASIO surveillance photo, May Day March Sydney, 1964 …… vii
Fig 2 Denis Kevans at Sydney Domain ……. viii
Fig 3 S.E.A.L's Campaign Poster, Sydney 1969 ……. xxxiv
Fig 4 'Fill 'em Up Again' (1915) ……. 8
Fig 5 Nobby's Camp, Newcastle (1938) …… 12
Fig 6 'Spider' Roach …….. 15
Fig 7 'Look at the Sacrifice He Makes' (1939) …….. 35
Fig 8 Menzies and Pig Iron, 1942 …… 36
Fig 9 Pig Iron Loaded Into a Ship's Hold, Port Kembla ……. 37
Fig 10 Meeting with Attorney-General Menzies, 6 December 1938 …… 40
Fig 11 'War on the Waterfront' (1987) ……. 41
Fig 12 'Ted Roach Honoured At Social Gathering' (1942) …….. 45
Fig 13 Memorial to 50th Anniversary of *Dalfram* Dispute (1988) …… 46
Fig 14 Candidates for WWF Assistant Secretary and Organiser, 1942 …… 61
Fig 15 The Unknown Warrior' 1939-1947 ……... 70
Fig 16 Letter to WWF National Office From A.I.F. Soldiers, 1945 ……. 75
Fig 17 Ted Roach and 'Sourabaya Sue', Public Lecture …….. 89
Fig 18 'Go to Arbitration – Or': NSW Coal Strike 1949 ……. 121
Fig 19 'The Spanish Mackerel' (1950) …… 127
Fig 20 'Nearer the Edge' – Rolling Strikes in Brisbane 1950 ……. 128
Fig 21 'Dislocation Plans for Industry' (1950) …… 132
Fig 22 'How Long Must We Take It?' (1950) ……. 133
Fig 23 'Egg Strike' – Roach in Charge? (1950) …….. 136
Fig 24 'Sleight of Hand and the £1 Basic Wage Rise' (1951) ……. 148
Fig 25 Ted Roach Taken to Long Bay Gaol, March 1951 …… 152
Fig 26 'Roach Gets 12 Months for Contempt', March 1951 …… 153
Fig 27 'Cargo Working Halted' (1951) …… 154
Fig 28 'Carrying the Struggle Into Long Bay Gaol' (1979) ……. 160
Fig 29 Ted Roach Outside Sydney Town Hall, 17 December 1951 ……. 162
Fig 30 Ted Roach Banner, Park St Sydney, May Day 1951 ……. 163
Fig 31 'ACTU Condemns Savage Sentence of Ted Roach' (1951) ……. 164
Fig 32 'Release Roach' (1951) ……. 165
Fig 33 'Release Roach" (p. 2) (1951) …… 166
Fig 34 High Court Appeal Quashed (1951) ……. 168
Fig 35 United Federation Candidates for the WWF 1949 Elections …… 177
Fig 36 United Federation Candidates for the WWF 1949 Elections …… 178
Fig 37 Ted Roach with 'Dutchy' Young in China, May 1953 ……. 187
Fig 38 A Cargo of Steel Rails ……... 194
Fig 39 Ted Roach's Visit to Queensland Branches, November 1959 …….. 207
Fig 40 Ted Roach's Itinerary of Branch Meetings, November 1959 ……... 208
Fig 41 Ted Roach in Retirement …….. 219

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Denis Kevans (1939-2005) had a prolific literary output, mostly of poetry and song, for over 50 years. Born in Westlake, Canberra, to a Catholic working-class family, he won a scholarship to Sydney's St Joseph's College where he excelled academically and in sport. A star performer on the cricket field, he was selected in 1958 by Robert Menzies to play in the traditional Prime Minister's XI cricket match against the visiting English team. There is wonderful irony in the contrast between the loyalty of the anti-Communist Menzies to Australia's British heritage, and his young cricketer's developing loyalty to Australia's Irish heritage, republicanism and socialist politics. Denis initially studied medicine at the University of Sydney but was encouraged by his father Mick to abandon what Denis by now saw as a bourgeois establishment degree to concentrate on writing about the truth and social justice. Soon after, he joined the Communist Party.

> "I was a member of the CPA from 1960-1970 and worked on the Communist paper the 'Tribune' from 1964-1965."[1]

Fig 1 ASIO surveillance photo, May Day March, Sydney, 1964

Source: Courtesy, National Archives of Australia
*Denis Kevans, far right

[1] Kevans, D. 2005.

At a time when many young people lived under the spell of an impending revolution, Denis became an activist participating in May Day (Fig 1) and anti-war marches. He recited to crowds at rallies and in Sydney's Domain (Fig 2). In the early 1960s, the young Denis Kevans was secretary of the left-wing Sydney Realist Writers' Group and his poems frequently appeared in their journal, *Realist Writer*. Strongly anti-war, he was the first poet to openly oppose the sending of Australian troops to Vietnam with his 1961 poem "The Slouch of Vietnam". Denis began writing poetry when he was 12. His poetry won many awards during his lifetime. In 1956, aged 17, he won his first prize for poetry in a Junior Poetry Competition with the poem "The Man on the Wharf", judged by R. F. Brissenden. In 1962 he won the Dame Mary Gilmore Award with "For Rebecca". In addition to his writing, Denis played an active part in the Australian folk music 'revival', including as the youngest member of the well-known singing group "The Rambleers". Many of his poems were set to music by himself and others.

Fig 2 Denis Kevans at Sydney Domain

Source: from Denis Kevans photograph album (photographer unknown)

Denis became disenchanted with the narrow outlook of some fellow Communists in the CPA. He returned to university to complete a Bachelor of Arts and Diploma of Education while working part-time in a string of jobs, including in factories and on building sites. At this time he became a member of the NSW Builders Labourers Federation. Denis was involved in the famous Green Bans disputes of the early 1970s and was one of their unofficial 'poets-in-residence'. During the 1970s he completed a Master of Arts in Literature at The University of Sydney while he taught English and History in high schools. He retired from teaching in 1982 and moved to the Blue Mountains to concentrate on writing.

Through his poetry, Denis intended to capture with immediacy the left-wing struggle of the day: to unite, uplift, entertain and open hearts and minds through humour. As "the people's poet", his verse and songs encompass workers' and anti-war movements, history, politics, the Australian vernacular, Aboriginal and Irish justice, immigration, nature, beauty, education, republicanism and international solidarity. He

performed tirelessly at political events such as industrial actions by unions like the BLF, the Waterside Workers' Federation ("the Wharfies") and the NSW Teachers' Federation; solidarity benefits for East Timor, Chile, Cuba among others; anti-war rallies and environmental campaigns. On his raison d'être for writing, he once wrote:

> "Being able to be a voice for those denied a voice" and, "I am bound together with all fighters, to end injustice, and to liberate humanity from bigotry, blind prejudice, oppression and exploitation."

His pen and "fighting tongue"[2] were his weapons.

ABOUT THE EDITORS

Sophia Kevans is Denis's daughter. She studied Journalism at RMIT University with majors in History and Sociology. She inherited the Sisyphean task of editing and publishing Denis's unfinished and unpublished literary work.

Bob Fagan, emeritus professor of Human Geography at Macquarie University, taught and wrote for 38 years about Australia's labour geography and history. He remains active in the Australian folk music scene, through which he first met Denis. He performs and arranges songs written by, and about, working-class people from both cities and the bush.

Bill Egan is an Irish-born long-term Canberra resident. An independent researcher and author, he has written several books in his specialist areas of chess and jazz. Denis was a valued friend for nearly forty years and Bill helped Denis with his archive research in Canberra. Bill also appreciated having met Ted Roach.

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Sophia Kevans

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[2] Kevans, D. Song "City of Green" 1972-74. Set to music by Kate Fagan.

EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

And I've heard the roar at the Town Hall
When the delegate rose to speak.
A roar to shake the merciless,
A roar to raise the weak,
To raise the weak and wandering,
To give eyes to the blind,
That was the roar of a tidal wave
That was making up its mind.
(from Denis Kevans, "The Roar of the Crowd", 1962)

Denis Kevans spent his adult life writing poetry, singing, teaching and campaigning about peace and social justice. That work was anchored strongly by his knowledge of Australian history especially of working-class people in the cities and the bush. It also reflected his grasp of stories from Australian literature about individual and collective struggles by people trying to earn a living, entertain themselves, survive in wars they were periodically sent to fight, and cope with the behaviors of their bosses and politicians.

Through this book Denis intended to inspire workers by fully revealing the ground-breaking strategies and tactics of union leader Ted Roach, which led to outstanding and successful union campaigns on the Australian waterfront. Denis hoped that this knowledge would bolster the fight of the left against the ideology of the far-right, which he saw gaining greater influence during the Howard era. Before he passed away unexpectedly in August 2005, Denis felt a keen sense of urgency for this book to be published in order that this critical information be known and understood for the benefit of political and social justice.

Denis's interest in waterfront politics was inspired by his father, Mick, who having left Canberra, began working on the Sydney waterfront in the 1950s during the Cold War. Here, Mick was exposed to the struggles of the wharfies and their commitment in solidarity to the fight of workers worldwide. At home, Mick regaled a young, impressionable Denis, with clever and witty stories about the wharfies, told in the Australian vernacular and rhyming slang. Denis was struck not only by stories of stirring industrial campaigns, which often took on Australia's political and business heavy-weights (even some from Britain) but also by the roles of individual leaders of the Waterside Workers' Federation (WWF). Denis was raised a Catholic and educated at an elite Catholic high school in Sydney where he was a scholarship boy. Denis's Catholicism and conservative education gradually came into conflict with the influence of his father, who presented a world of striving for social justice guided by the ideologies of the left. This is what Denis (modestly) said about himself in a draft introduction to his book about Ted Roach, Assistant-General Secretary and national organiser of the wharfies:

> "My father, Clyde Kendall ('Mick') Kevans, worked on the Sydney waterfront, as a tally clerk, from the early 1950s until he retired in 1976. Dad had many friends among Wharfies and tallies, who came to our home, and whom I met, and listened to, including Communist Jack Hartley."

Later in life, Denis became fascinated by the life and times of Ted Roach who spent twenty-five years as Assistant-General Secretary and National Organiser of the WWF. The more Denis talked to Ted, and read archival material about his involvement in successful industrial campaigns, the more he became concerned that published histories of the Wharfies had often ignored, or seemingly been unaware of, details of Ted's hands-on role over three decades in industrial actions across many Australian ports. This provided a strong motivation for Denis to write this biography of Ted Roach – a book-length study not only for academic labour historians but also for general readers interested in Australia's working-class history.

Denis wanted the book to achieve at least three things. First, a book about Ted's working life would increase our understanding of the complicated mix of ingredients involved in successful industrial campaigns. This was no less the case for industrial action on the waterfront from the mid-1930s to the 1960s than it was for the NSW BLF's famous Green Bans in the 1970s. Yet such a book could also throw light on things which cause campaigns to fall short of their goals – where the bosses, or more commonly politicians, get the upper hand and rank-and-file workers bear the consequences. Second, a detailed focus on Ted Roach's life and work would dig out the real importance of his role from beneath the silences which seemed to have buried a full appreciation of his actual contribution. Was there an orchestrated campaign to thwart and hide the importance of Ted's work in the WWF and, if so, by whom and why?

Finally, Denis wanted to open a space for Ted Roach to tell his own story about events on Australia's waterfronts. He did this by recording 35 cassettes of interviews in which Ted talked freely about his work as Assistant-General Secretary of the WWF. Denis also studied Ted's voluminous written reports, made over two decades and designed to keep both WWF officials and union members informed about industrial conditions, disputes and work stoppages, along with their outcomes and lessons for future struggle. Denis also talked to other people who had worked with or observed Ted and read material about him, including by politicians. This included records made by people such as ASIO agents who kept Ted under surveillance because of his industrial and political activities.

The result was a massive original research project involving not only the hours of interviews but also a painstaking sifting by Denis through documents, most of which were unpublished and sitting in archives. This was accompanied by the equally challenging task of writing a manuscript of 110,000 words, work that came to dominate the last decade of Denis's life while he continued as Australia's 'Poet Lorikeet', committed political activist, poet and singer. At the time of his death (23 August 2005) Denis had an unfinished, but near-final, draft of his biography of Ted Roach.

Several years later, an editorial team (see About the Editors) formed with the conviction that Denis's unfinished work could make too important a contribution to Australia's labour history to leave unpublished. At the same time, they recognised the environment for Australian trade unions is now dramatically different to that which shaped Ted's working life. In common with other Western industrialised countries over the past forty years, Australian society and economy has been in the grip of its own version of *neoliberalism*. This cover-all ideology has swept the world in tandem with so-called 'globalisation' which has affected both capitalist states and those few still ostensibly remaining committed to some form of communism.

Advocates of these intermingled ideas began to preach that Australia's labour markets, highly-regulated by governments from the time of Australian federation in 1901, should be de-regulated and made much less subject to control by governments or unions. This, they argued, would help the economy become more efficient and 'flexible', creating additional wealth and better futures for workers. In practice, however, such deregulation was aimed directly at reducing the bargaining strength of workers' organisations and their abilities to protect workers' rights, helping to engineer a long-term shift in the distribution of national income away from workers' wages towards business profits.

The idea of globalisation, often used to justify these major changes in industrial relations, was unknown in Ted Roach's day. In addition, it would have been difficult for him to anticipate union membership would have fallen to around half of the national labour force by 1976, a decade after he stepped down, let alone that it would have fallen forty years later to its 2016 national level of just 14 per cent. Despite the dramatic changes in context, however, the editors felt strongly that Denis's manuscript provided a treasury of rich and practical stories, from a variety of eye-witness accounts, about the crucial importance of organisation, solidarity, flexibility and realism in successful trade union strategies. These things seem vital in 'holding the line' – maintaining the role of labour unions as essential social organisations in capitalist states to safeguard the hard-won rights of its workers. The author and editors also shared the conviction that Ted Roach's story can point to important directions for unions striving to re-build membership and increase their effectiveness in the albeit very different political and industrial environments.

The editors divided some of the tasks found necessary to bring the manuscript to publishable form. Sophia Kevans inherited the task of completing and editing the unfinished work of her father and has coordinated the project. Bill Egan brought his experience as a researcher and author especially to the task

of checking and finalising the myriad of archival references and those from other sources. Bob Fagan contributed contextual material drawing on his research background in Australian labour history and industrial geography. All the editors worked through the manuscript as a whole, making minimal but necessary alterations and corrections. Finally, they prepared this editorial introduction: first, to explain conventions used in bringing Denis's rich draft to this final form; and second, to discuss briefly the context and background to Australian society, economy and politics during the period covered by the book.

Denis's narrative focuses largely on significant events in the history of the Wharfies' union identified to him by Ted Roach in his interviews and writings. The story runs over 30 years; Ted became branch secretary of the WWF at Port Kembla in 1938, was elected to his national position in 1942 and stepped down in 1967. Many features of Australian society in that period, between fifty and eighty years ago, will be recognised by contemporary readers. Yet society and economy were also profoundly different in Ted's era and his story should be understood in its own times and places.

FROM THE THIRTIES TO THE SIXTIES: BUST AND BOOM?

Ted Roach was born in 1909 in a small coastal coal mining village in the Illawarra Region south of Sydney. Australia was in its ninth year as a nation, a collection of six similar but different British colonies encompassing the Australian continent. The new nation-state can be represented at that time as a prosperous 'settler' capitalist society on the southern fringes of the British Empire. Its social development had been dominated by continuous immigration of white settlers throughout the 19th century, mostly from Great Britain and Ireland, with development spreading *outwards* into each colony's hinterlands from their initial coastal settlements. This implemented a massive colonial dispossession of the lands and livelihood of Indigenous Australians whose at least 65,000 years of society, culture and economy were set aside by the British Government's fiction that the continent was *terra nullius* – unsettled and available for possession.

From its colonial heritage, the new nation inherited high dependence for its prosperity, not only on the richness of its purloined resources, but also on inflows of capital, mostly from Britain, which commonly ran well ahead of the inflows of immigrants. By the time of federation, Australia had become a massive sink for British investment with the finance flowing into colonial infrastructure like ports and railways but also, especially after the mid-century gold rushes, into fledgling private sector manufacturing industries targeted at growing urban markets in each State. By European standards, Australia was highly-urbanised by 1901 with more than two-thirds of its national population living in the main cities and towns. On average, working-class people in Australia's growing cities were most probably better off than those of the 'mother' country, mainly because labour shortages had been a dominant feature of both rural and urban development in Australia's colonies. Following invasion in 1788, Indigenous Australians were plundered mainly for their land not their labour, at least for most of the 19th century.

Exports of agricultural and mineral commodities paid the interest on the growing foreign debt and financed imported capital goods and technology, again mostly from Europe. This two-way trade gave rise to a myriad of ports and wharves servicing both coastal shipping and forging links with the centres of Empire in the northern hemisphere. Waterside workers thus played a key role in Australia's economic development and their combined national union, the Waterside Workers Federation (WWF)[1], was founded in 1902. Yet despite the crucial importance of imports, Australia's growing urban markets encouraged development of local manufacturing early in the life of the new nation.

The First World War, lasting from 1914 to 1918, and in which the Australian Government was a keen participant, caused major dislocations to both trade and capital inflow. In addition, the horrendous casualties, mostly of young men, left a major impact on current and future labour forces both in rural areas and the cities. But the major wars of the twentieth century also gave new impetus to local industries which could replace imports from the Imperial Centre. Mining giant BHP Ltd, for example, blew in its first integrated coastal steelworks at Newcastle Harbour in 1915.

The legacies of colonial and Imperial development underpinned two important features of economic and social life in the Australia Ted grew up in. First, colonial administrations were accustomed to intervening in the day-to-day lives of their citizens, much more so than in the 'old Country' as England was often called. This trend was inherited by the new Federal Government although its powers, mostly over 'national' matters such as defence, foreign affairs, foreign trade and capital inflow, were strictly prescribed by the written Australian Constitution. All other powers remained with the new State Governments and were guarded jealously as a condition of the former colonies agreeing to federate. There was often competition between State Governments to use their powers over infrastructure and resources to attract immigrants and continued capital inflow. The Australian Government provided tariff protection against imports to support local manufacturing, especially after 1920, and in 1911 opened a state-owned Commonwealth Bank to bring some national order into the banking system.

Second, greater proportions of Australian workers were organised into trade unions than they were in most European industrialised countries. This partly reflected the workers' greater bargaining power from long periods of labour shortage in the colonies. Australian workers organised first in the 1850s to control the number of hours in the working week, skilled workers in building and construction industries gaining an eight-hour day (48-hour week) by 1856. In the last part of the 19th century, unions spread throughout the colonies including on the waterfronts. Further, in the new Commonwealth of Australia both Federal and State Governments became involved in setting minimum wages and conditions for workers in particular industries and according to their skills. In addition, these Governments set up Arbitration Courts to adjudicate disputes between bosses and workers, at first in the wake of widespread strikes in the early 1890s by rural workers and miners and, later, workers on coastal ships, in wharf labouring and construction.

Yet despite relatively high standards of living for most workers in Australia's largest cities, class-based inequalities typical of industrialised capitalist countries remained widespread in Australia particularly disparities in wealth derived from ownership of land and capital. By the 1920s, Indigenous Australians had been excluded from the mainstream of Australia's social and economic life, some as fringe-dwellers in the larger cities while many were compelled to cluster on 'reserves' or missions across rural Australia. A dwindling proportion maintained their traditional way of life in areas beyond the reach of capitalist economic activity, mostly on lands in northern and central Australia over which the prior, let alone continuing, ownership by the First Australians remained unrecognised. For the population as a whole, unemployment, and under-employment (especially of women), remained endemic especially in smaller regional towns, many of which depended for their prosperity on surrounding agriculture or industries like mining and metal-processing (including steelmaking). This made them vulnerable to wide fluctuations in European markets. Indeed, the vulnerability caused by Australia's high dependency on foreign trade and high debt to overseas' banks and investors, was demonstrated dramatically in the early 1930s.

The so-called Great Depression swept through capitalist countries in the early 1930s beginning with a dramatic stock market crash in the United States late in 1929. Impacts of the rapid decline in the American economy spread around the world, with a collapse in international trade and business investment falling across North America and Western Europe in the early 1930s. Australia's primary exporting industries, especially wool and wheat, suffered severely from rapid decline in the British market, and Australia soon experienced falling profits across its local business sector and massive downward pressure on wages. This quickly led to a shrinking demand for locally-produced goods and services so unemployment rose even more dramatically than it had during the hard years of the early 1890s.

From 1907, the Federal Court of Conciliation and Arbitration had been used to set 'fair' wages for bread-winners (assumed to be male) at a time of rising demand for labour and shortages of workers. Yet in 1931 the Court was used to slash wages across the economy. Australia's national unemployment rate peaked at an unprecedented 30 per cent in mid-1932. There were crippling strikes in key sectors, beginning in the coal industry in 1929 when coal-owners sought quick reductions in wages. Unionised miners who refused to accept lower pay were locked-out in an attempt by bosses, often encouraged strongly by State Governments, to introduce non-union ('scab') labour into pits, for example in the NSW Hunter Valley.

Poverty and homelessness increased during this turmoil, especially in coastal cities and industrial regions. Many men, still the principal bread-winners in traditional family households, took to the swag – 'the wallaby brigade" – walking from region to region looking for casual work or even a feed. Some walked long distances to north Queensland where relatively new pursuits, like growing and milling sugar cane, had expanded during the 1920s. Denis's story of Ted Roach effectively begins with Ted taking to the road from the family's (then) home in the Hunter Valley and ending up, unemployed, in the Queensland port town of Mackay.

Desperate poverty quickly weakened the bargaining strength of the unions and their membership fell. In 1929 over 60 per cent of Australia's male wage-earners were members of trade unions – a high level among industrialised countries – but this had fallen to 47 per cent by 1933. Many workers had no choice but to return to work on the low wages offered even after the hardships of lengthy industrial action. Despite this, there was an upsurge in local political activity by radical working-class organisations which often provided welfare services the Federal and State Governments refused to provide. Many workers were radicalised not only because the brunt of the Depression's impacts were falling on the poorest families but also by the apparent paralysis of the Australian Labor Party leadership in: first, not standing up to British banks and large Australian companies in their insistence on wage-cuts and reduced public spending; second, failing to introduce job-creation schemes; and third, failure to recommend its Arbitration Court hold the line on wages in support of basic standards of living which, paradoxically, would have helped Australia recover from its deep Depression.

Various socialist parties had gained a foothold in Australia after Federation especially during, and immediately after, the First World War. The anti-War, pro-worker groups included the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW or 'Wobblies') which spread from the United States and, after the 1917 Russian Revolution, the Communist Party of Australia (CPA). Although membership of the CPA dwindled during the relatively buoyant conditions for workers in the 1920s, party membership grew again during the Depression as workers realised capitalism appeared to be collapsing. In 1935 there was an international push by Comintern[2] to support local communist party activity throughout industrialised capitalist countries. In Australia, the CPA supported groups like Friends of the Soviet Union and targeted CPA-members to win leadership positions in key trade unions. This happened in the miners' union (1934), the iron workers (1936) and the Wharfies (1937).

Partly because of the onslaught on wages, industries like steel-making in Newcastle recovered quite quickly after 1935. This produced the irony of a large squatter settlement of unemployed people and the homeless, from the city and surrounding rural areas, growing on Kooragang Island in Newcastle Harbour opposite the expanding steelworks of BHP Ltd. In 1935, BHP was able to take over their struggling competitor, Australian Iron and Steel Pty Ltd, and its newly-developed steelworks at Port Kembla south of Sydney. Now a monopolist in Australian steel production, BHP quickly built up its new Port Kembla works to two-thirds the capacity of its flagship Newcastle plant. The die was cast for the geography of BHP Steel in the late 1930s, not only because coking coal reserves accessible to the company were regarded as superior near Port Kembla, but because it suited BHP to develop a new works with different union coverage beyond the reach of the (then) more militant workers in the Hunter Valley. High tariff barriers imposed on imports of some manufactured goods helped overall economic recovery. But while employment in Australian manufacturing grew by 50 per cent between 1935 and 1939, recovery in the rural sector was very slow as export prices remained depressed, especially for wool and wheat.

The Second World War (1939-1945) had a greater impact on the direction of social and economic development in Australia than had WWI, despite the human costs of the latter in casualties and post-War trauma. Britain declared war on the Fascist Government of Germany on 3 September 1939. Following the declaration of war by the United Australia Party's[3] Prime Minister Robert Menzies, Australia immediately joined New Zealand as the first members of the British Dominions – indeed the first independent nations – to pledge active involvement with Britain in the war against Germany.

During wartime, the Australian Constitution considerably strengthens the powers of the Federal Government to intervene in the governance of Australian society and economy. This included powers to control prices, profits, wages and banking during wartime mobilisation, and increased power to raise

income tax. In June 1940, the Menzies Government used the wartime emergency powers to ban membership of the Communist Party having become alarmed during the late 1930s about the CPA's growing influence through leadership of key unions like the Wharfies. Prime Minister Menzies focused on Australia's historical role as a partner in the British Empire, sending contingents of the Australian army, navy and air force to European and North African theatres of war. In the late 1930s, however, he had remained ambivalent towards the growing belligerence of Japan in the East Asian Region and supported a continuation of economic relations with Imperial Japan during their military expansion. The 1940 federal election produced a minority government for the UAP and in 1941, Menzies was forced to resign as UAP leader. John Curtin formed a (minority) Labor Government just two months before Japan's air attack on the United States' naval base in Pearl Harbour, Hawaii (October 1941) brought the USA into the War. Curtin quickly announced the historic decision that Australia would look to America to support its primary defence rather than to Britain which was now beleaguered, not only in Europe and North Africa but also in Southeast Asian colonies like Malaya and Singapore.

With a national population of just over 7 million, Australians keenly felt their vulnerability during the Second World War as a small Southwest Pacific nation, far from the Northern Hemisphere power centres of its principal allies, especially to attack from Japan. Yet wartime mobilisation, controlled and directed by the Federal Government, once more provided significant stimulus to economic growth. A wartime boom in production effectively ended unemployment in Australia which had remained stuck at 10 per cent of the national labour force by mid-1939. In addition, with increasing numbers of men in uniform both overseas and in Australia, women entered factory work and transport sectors in significant numbers for the first time. By 1942, the manufacturing sector was contributing a record 20 per cent of GDP and providing one-quarter of national employment.

Post-War reconstruction after the end of WWII in 1945 provided huge challenges to governments right across the capitalist West, now dominated economically and politically by the United States. In Australia, returned soldiers joined with workers who had made enormous contributions to mining, manufacturing and transport at home, in expecting, then demanding, rising living standards in spite of price rises across the economy in things like fuels and electricity. After re-election in 1946, Labor Prime Minister Ben Chifley embarked on a wide-ranging reconstruction plan arising from a 1945 White Paper on 'Full Employment' built on continuing growth of manufacturing. At its core, the reconstruction plan advocated proofing Australian society against the devastation of depressions, like those of the 1890s and 1930s, through adopting economic policies advocated by British economist John Maynard Keynes. These included direct government intervention in job creation involving considerable public sector spending in industrial and social infrastructure, and also a commitment to wages-growth across the economy to maintain consumer demand.

The Chifley Government began to introduce welfare state measures missing during the 1930s but which were now popular in post-War reconstruction across governments in Western Europe, including the British (Labour) Government, to rebuild the lives of their war-weary citizenry and economies devastated by the War. While WWII had speeded up Australia's recovery in industrial production, the social inequality that widened dramatically during the 1930s Depression, had not been addressed by government policy, in particular problems arising from low wages and poverty. Hence the provision of public sector housing and accessible medical services, alongside the substantial state investments in job-creation, were seen as a social glue which would provide a bulwark against the spread of domestic Communism. Governments in Western countries hoped this would help counter the growing influence of the Soviet Union in the post-War world with its centrally-planned alternative to the capitalist development which had crashed badly in the Great Depression.

The Chifley Government also focused on restarting Australian population growth, commencing an immigration program with more formalised state support. Not surprisingly, the target source countries for large-scale settler migration began with Britain and Ireland, especially as Britain's returning soldiers in their hundreds of thousands realised the promised "homes for heroes" could be a long time coming. The Australian Government soon encouraged migrants from more diverse sources, however, at first through resettling substantial numbers of Europeans displaced by the War, including those fleeing from absorption

of their countries into the Communist bloc. While multicultural Australia was born, there was no relaxation of the long-standing 'White Australia Policy' about which there was general consensus not only from the conservative Coalition, dominated after 1945 by the newly-formed Liberal Party led by Robert Menzies, but also from the trade union movement which echoed their historic fear of substantial immigration from low-cost labour countries (mostly of non-white people!). Finally, tariff protection of manufacturing industries was reorganised while some large-scale, job-creating infrastructure projects were commenced, such as the Snowy Mountains hydro-electricity scheme which recruited workers from a mix of European countries. The Chifley Government nationalised Australia's sole international airline, Qantas, buying-out controlling British interests, and established a state-owned domestic airline (later TAA) to compete with private air service providers.

Yet Chifley's plans to go further in regulating and socialising the Australian economy hit political walls towards the late 1940s. In 1947, his Government announced it would seek to nationalise[4] Australia's trading banks but a feverish opposition campaign was organised by the Liberal-Country Party Federal Opposition who argued this was an unacceptable expansion of socialism in Australia. The private sector trading banks successfully challenged Chifley's nationalisation plan in the High Court which determined that Australian Governments lacked constitutional power to impose a government takeover of banks in peacetime. While the policy died, the campaigns damaged Chifley's political reputation.

In addition, workers across the economy had "endured the years of want and sacrifice of the Great Depression and WWII"[5] so their rising post-War expectations included pent up demands for peacetime wage-rises. Yet the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration was slow to grant wage increases, and their decisions were supported by Chifley who was sure faster rises in wages would destabilise the economy and threaten economic crisis. By the late 1940s, the pressure for wage-rises was made more urgent by rising inflation which spilled over into disillusionment with the Labor Government and outbreaks of industrial unrest, especially in mining and on the waterside. In 1949, an election year, there was a national strike of coal miners which Chifley saw as a major disruption to post-War reconstruction. Yet the deepening Cold War also played a major part in his Government's response. Chifley led a majority of his federal Labor Caucus in a determination to contain Communist influence over leadership of key unions like the miners and Wharfies. Membership of the CPA had grown rapidly after the Soviet Union joined the Allied side against the Fascist powers in 1941 and the Curtin Government lifted the Menzies' ban on CPA membership. Chifley saw the Coal Strike as a test of strength against Communist influence. In the 1949 federal election, Opposition leader Menzies campaigned hard on an anti-communist platform and foreshadowed reinstating the 1940 bans on CPA membership.

In an attempt to end the coal strike, Chifley intervened directly: first, through pressuring the moderate Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) to encourage striking miners to return to work, second, by passing legislation to prevent unions using members' funds to support striking coal miners and; third, by employing soldiers to work in open-cut mines. This alienated many in the community including ALP members. In any event, Chifley's Labor Government was defeated at the 1949 election and Robert Menzies regained the Prime Ministership he had been forced to relinquish during the War. It is no accident Robert Menzies is a major figure throughout the Ted Roach story from the late 1930s until they both stepped down from their respective roles in 1966-67.

During the December 1949 election campaign Menzies drew on speeches he first made during WWII about the need to form a new Liberal Party to represent so-called 'forgotten people' in the Australian electorate. This idea has been remarkably persistent in Australian conservative politics for the 70 years since the first Menzies Coalition Government despite profound changes in economic, social, cultural and political circumstances, both in Australia and internationally. It resonates with Coalition electoral victories against the ALP by John Howard in 1996 ('Howards' Battlers') and Scott Morrison in 2019 ('the Quiet Australians'!). Yet Menzies was not pitching for the support of Australia's economic and social battlers from either the cities or the bush, championed by left wing writers from the 1890s onward – for example, in the poetry of Henry Lawson and, later, the writing of Mary Gilmour, Judah Waten, Katharine Susannah Pritchard and, in the 1960s, Dorothy Hewett and Denis Kevans. These battlers included working people

struggling hard to make their way in both rural Australia and inner suburbs of the large cities, in low-wage jobs or on the dole. They were people marginalised by the Depressions of the 1890s and 1930s.

Rather, the 'forgotten people' of Menzies, and later the 'silent majority' of Howard, were small business owners and shop-keepers along with hard-working but decidedly non-radical (mostly suburban) working class voters who, Menzies argued, distrusted both socialism and government intervention in their daily lives to bring it about. During the 1950s, Menzies successfully coupled this rhetoric with a fierce anti-Communism, which had been reinforced in the late 1930s by his turbulent relations with unions like the Wharfies. In addition, he disliked rapid social or cultural change (including multiculturalism) which would inevitably take Australia away from its adherence to the British monarchy and Australia's role as an industrialised partner of 'mother England' within the British Commonwealth.

Despite the rhetoric, however, the Menzies Government continued with strong federal government intervention in Australian economic and social life. This stands in sharp contrast to the subsequent era of *neoliberalism* from the mid-1970s to the present with its accompanying political rhetoric of 'market forces know best', urging the need for governments to reduce public expenditure and deregulate the economy by removing red (and later 'green') tape, held to be strangling business enterprise. Instead, the Menzies' years featured a triangle of economic and social interventions which reinforced each other powerfully. In a new social contract, the Menzies Government introduced: first, an expansion of the mass, state-supported immigration program guaranteeing capital both a growing workforce and domestic market for consumer goods; second, systematic across-the-board protection of manufacturing against imports from North America and Western Europe, involving tariffs and, in some key sectors, strict import quotas; and third, reliance on the Conciliation and Arbitration Court to pass on productivity rises in manufacturing through increases in both the basic wage and skill-based awards, to further stimulate growth of Australia's domestic market.

Union membership grew steadily again during the 1950s especially in mining and manufacturing but also in transport sectors such as stevedoring and the railways. Australia's high degree of unionisation provided strong political support for this triangle of economic policies under which by 1960 manufacturing made its peak contribution both to employment, reaching 30 per cent of the Australia's labour force, and the growth of Gross National Product. Domestic manufacturing provided strong multiplier effects to drive job-growth in a wide range of services especially in the cities. There were record inflows of foreign capital into Australia in the 1950s, still underpinned by exports from the recovering rural sector which now benefitted from rising prices and a steady growth in international demand for food and fibres like wool. A majority of finance still came from Britain but capital inflow from the United States and Western Europe began to grow faster. Finally, in common with governments throughout the developed world, the Menzies Government kept tight controls over the value of the currency and monetary policy in general.

Yet the Coalition Government did not follow European models in many of its welfare state policies. Rather than embarking on a widespread program of state-owned housing development, for example, the Menzies Government part encouraged, part compelled banks to provide low-cost finance for home-ownership. This policy had twin goals: first, to give young families a stake in the system quickly by tying them to mortgages; and second, to further underpin a boom in housing construction in the major cities. This stimulated further growth of manufacturing in steel-making, metal fabrication and building materials, and rising production of consumer durables such as electrical appliances, household furnishings and motor vehicles all of which helped facilitate rapid suburbanisation of the largest cities.

This so-called 'long boom' of economic growth in Australia reduced unemployment rates to historically low-levels. National rates hovered around two per cent from the mid-1950s and through the 1960s. While 'full employment' was effectively achieved, the national figures disguised sharp differences between labour market experiences of women and men. Male rates of unemployment had fallen below two per cent in many parts of Australia but rates for women were more than twice national rates and under-employment of women remained relatively high especially in rural and regional areas. Little, if anything, was done to reduce the historically high unemployment rates experienced by Aboriginal Australians and their rates of participation in the labour force remained low especially outside the cities[6].

By the late 1940s and early 1950s, many CPA members and other left-wing writers and political commentators, remember feeling that 'the revolution was just around the corner', and were encouraged in this belief by the widespread industrial unrest and attempts by both the Chifley and Menzies Governments to suppress left-wing political activity. They saw another economic and political crisis across Western capitalist countries as being inevitable and, in Australia, this atmosphere of crisis was fanned by the Cold War rhetoric of Prime Minster Menzies. While Chifley strove to contain Communist influence, Menzies was determined to eliminate it. After its election in December 1949, the Coalition Government made immediate attempts to crack-down on the activities of CPA members and constrain the rights of unions in key sectors to undertake strike action, for example using draconian provisions of the Crimes Act. This led to the gaoling of trade union leaders, especially those who were members of the CPA, usually for contempt of Arbitration Court rulings against industrial action.

The Menzies Government also boosted the activities of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) in domestic surveillance of left-wing trade unionists, activists and writers (see Fig 1 above). In its first year of office, it passed new legislation to ban membership of the CPA once more. This was found by the High Court to be unconstitutional in peacetime but, undeterred, the Coalition Government called an early election in mid-1951 and put a referendum to the Australian electorate seeking to change the Constitution to allow its CPA ban. While the Coalition won the election, the referendum was lost (narrowly) after a divisive campaign which left serious divisions inside the Australian Labor Party. Central electoral strategies of Robert Menzies included painting the Australian Labor Party as being 'soft on Communism and national security' and feeding Cold War, 'reds-under-the-beds' hysteria. Any industrial action by trade unions was liable to be branded as 'Communist conspiracy'. In 1955, a strongly anti-Communist wing of the ALP, led by the Melbourne-based 'Groupers', was finally expelled from, or quit, the party and formed the 'Democratic Labor Party'. This split in the ALP helped entrench the Menzies Government and kept Labor out of federal office until 1972. Yet, somewhat paradoxically, the rising overall levels of employment and national prosperity in the 1950s had a dampening effect on radical (left-wing) political activity. This had surged during the atmosphere of crisis in the immediate post-War reconstruction period but CPA union leaders, along with many others on the Left of Australian politics, misread the industrial turbulence of the late 1940s as foreshadowing economic crisis in Australian capitalism and rising revolutionary potential – "come the revvo"! Despite the High Court's 1950 decision and Menzies's failed referendum, membership of the Communist Party of Australia began a steady decline although CPA activism remained in Australian industrial relations, especially in key sectors such as the Wharfies.

Between 1947 and 1961, 70 per cent of new jobs in Australian manufacturing were filled by (European) migrants seeking better lives than those in their post-war, economically ravaged homelands. Factory work provided opportunities for unskilled workers generally and early school-leavers, while new training opportunities for apprentices provided pathways to better-paid jobs in manufacturing and services like building and construction. Economic growth faltered during the 'credit squeezes' of 1960-61, which again exposed the vulnerability of an economy whose trade still depended on agricultural exports. While the Menzies Government came very close to losing office at the 1963 federal election, a boom of new foreign investment in large-scale mining projects, oriented towards the fast-growing Japanese economy, recharged the long boom, postponing the onset of economic recession until the mid-1970s. This foreshadowed dramatic economic restructuring in the 1980s when unemployment rates soared again into double figures and Australia's economic relationships with the growing 'global' economy were turned upside down.

By 1966-67, however, Bob Menzies and Ted Roach had both departed from their respective roles and, indeed, Denis Kevans's story. 'Pig Iron Bob' Menzies stepped down as Australia's longest-serving Prime Minister in January 1966 and his successor Harold Holt, his all-important Minister of Labour during the 1950s, was soon "all the way with LBJ", the American president poised to massively increase expenditure on the war against Communist takeover of capitalist South Vietnam by Communist-led North Vietnam. America's funding of this military quagmire came close to bankrupting the world's most powerful economy. The globalising financial system became flooded with United States dollars which led LBJ's successor (Richard Nixon) to abandon the Bretton Woods Agreement[7] in 1971, breaking up the tight state

control of the world financial system which operated after 1945. The international financial system has never recovered its composure.

EDITING "TED ROACH: FROM PIG IRON HERO TO LONG BAY GAOL"

From the outset, the editors decided to make minimal changes to the text as it stood in Denis's last manuscript before his death[8] – he was determined this one should go forward to publication. Denis worked for a while in the 1960s as a journalist and wrote articles, often on political and literary subjects, for magazines such as *Realist Writer*. It should be remembered, however, that he was first and foremost a poet. His Ted Roach manuscript initially comprised more than 70 chapters, some of which were substantial narratives about successes and struggles in Ted's life in the Wharfies. Other chapters, however, were short vignettes about incidents in Ted's working life, or passing commentaries enriching the progress of the main story. This mélange of long and short writings resembled, in many ways, an anthology of poetry. The editors have tried to retain as much of this character as possible but the chapter structure of the manuscript was reorganised for publication to facilitate the unfolding for readers of Denis's narrative about Ted Roach.

Denis interviewed Ted at his home over a period of five years, recording 40-45 hours of the interviews on cassettes. The interviews are in the process of being digitised for posterity. Denis posed questions to initiate conversation, or to seek amplification and clarification, and Ted talked – often at great length. Typical of Ted's habit of being tight-lipped about his personal life, he wasn't especially forthcoming about his marriage and family. In addition, Denis consulted a wide range of written sources. It's only by following Denis's trail through collections at the Australian National Archives, the ANU Butlin Archives and the New South Wales State Library for example, that one can get a sense of the vast array of documents he examined in detail – ASIO intelligence reports, trade union and political party records, official government reports, court proceedings, official and private letters. Today one needs to remember that he did this in the era before easy on-line access at home was available through full-text databases like the Australian National Library's *Trove* catalogue. Many of his sources were thick dusty volumes containing detailed minutes of routine meetings, spread over hundreds of pages, with just an occasional nugget to reward the researcher's painstaking efforts.

Denis tells the story in Ted's voice where possible, both coming from the taped interviews and quoted directly from the large volume of Ted's writings. These included reports, letters and a small number of formal articles. The editors have adopted the convention of putting Ted's voice in *italics* whether it comes from direct quotations from interviews or written sources. Denis provided meticulous source-referencing for Ted's writings and this has been cross-checked by the editors when ambiguities were found or clarification was needed. In all other cases, *italics* indicate Ted's voice is quoted from the interviews. Denis's voice in the interviews also appears in the text where the author considered it necessary. The editors' convention is to call him simply 'the author'.

The convention of italicising Ted's voice means two other things. First, quotations of direct speech from other people are placed in double quotation marks with the speaker indicated in the text (sometimes in brackets). This includes questions from the author. Second, italics are not used in source referencing — double quotation marks are used for book or journal titles — while emphasis added by the author uses **boldface**. The sole exception has been to use italics for the names of ships as in *Dalfram*. The use of square brackets indicates where the editors have added an explanatory word or words. Finally, Denis's manuscript contained a large number of endnotes for each chapter including not only the source referencing but also explanatory notes, some providing further information or discussion. The editors have added a strictly minimal number of endnotes where they felt readers may have needed additional information to understand meaning or importance of text. These inserted endnotes are indicated clearly as **Editors' note**.

Sophia Kevans, Bob Fagan, Bill Egan (2020)

[1] Billy Hughes had been an organiser for the shearer's union; was, from 1894, a Labor member of the NSW Colonial Parliament; and also became secretary of the Wharf Labourers' Union. After federation in 1901, Hughes was elected to the first Australian Parliament as a Labor member. In 1902 he helped establish the national Wharfies' Union (WWF), becoming its first president. In 1915 Hughes became Australia's wartime (Labor) Prime Minister but, in 1916, was expelled from the Labor Party for advocating military conscription for overseas service in WWI. He remained as wartime Prime Minister by forming a Nationalist Party with the conservative Opposition.

[2] Comintern — the 'Communist International' — was founded after the Russian Revolution in 1917 by the leader of the new Soviet Union, Vladimir Lenin. Its aim was to help spread Communism to the rest of the world by supporting Socialist and emerging Communist parties overseas.

[3] The United Australia Party (UAP) was formed in 1931 after a group of Labor Government members defected from the Australian Labor Party to join with the Nationalists in Parliament to form the UAP. The UAP won the 1931 federal election and Joseph Lyons, a former Labor Government minister, became Prime Minister. Thus Lyons joined Billy Hughes as a senior Labor politician who changed sides to become conservative PM. On Lyons's death in 1939, he was replaced as PM by UAP Attorney-General Robert Menzies.

[4] Nationalisation is the transforming of privately-owned assets into public assets by compulsory acquisition by the state.

[5] Cottle, D. How Australia failed to destroy Communism, "The Hummer", Vol.10, 2015. Source: https://www.labourhistory.org.au/hummer/the-hummer-vol-10-no-1-2015/australia-failed

[6] It was not until 1967 that a referendum was passed to change the Australian Constitution and allow the Federal Government to make laws specifically for the benefit of Aboriginal people. A successful amendment at the same time allowed Indigenous Australians to be counted in future population censuses – an amazing hangover from Terra Nullius that our First Australians weren't considered part of the 'Australian' population until then.

[7] The Bretton Woods Agreement was signed in 1944 by governments of the principal Allied nations in WWII. Leaders of these countries attended a conference at Bretton Woods in New Hampshire (USA) designed to ensure a stable world trading and financial system after the War. Signatories to the Agreement promised to maintain fixed exchange rates in the post-War world between their currencies and the United States' dollar. This was chosen as the benchmark currency because the American economy was expected (correctly) to be the world's dominant trading economy after the War. Prior to Bretton Woods, most countries underpinned their currencies with gold. After the Agreement, the US dollar became "as good as gold" and the United States Government guaranteed to exchange US dollars for gold at a fixed price. The US dollar thus became the currency of exchange for international trade.

[8] One exception concerned the sometimes colourful language the author quotes directly from his hours of interviews with Ted Roach. It scarcely needs saying that the colloquial language of the workplace is often recalled in recounting events, disputes and people who populate the lengthy discussions about Ted's working life. In some cases, the editors have adopted simple principles used in the print media to indicate words still generally thought of as impolite language in published reporting. The language of Ted's written reports, also presented in the text as Ted's voice, is formal, as per the original setting.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACJ	Acting Chief Judge
ACP or CPA	Australian Communist Party
ACTU	Australian Council of Trade Unions (Melbourne, Head Office)
A/G	Attorney-General
A/GS	Assistant-General Secretary
AH	Anthony "Tony" Hawkins, Wharfie delegate, Sydney
AIF	Australian Imperial Force (First AIF, 1914-1921; Second AIF, 1939-1947)
ALP	Australian Labor Party
ANL	Australian National Line
ANZAM	Australia, New Zealand and Malaya Agreement; organised by Britain in 1949 for Commonwealth Defence Planning, SE Asia
ASIB	Australian Stevedoring Industry Board
ASIC	Australian Stevedoring Industry Commission
ASIO	Australian Security Intelligence Organisation
ASOA	Australian Steamship Owners' Association
AWU	Australian Workers Union
BHP	Broken Hill Proprietary Co. Ltd
BOR	Board of Reference.
BR	Blanche Roach, sister of Ted Roach
CA	Catholic Action
CCCA	Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, commonly simply 'the Arbitration Court'
CC-CPA	Central Committee of the Communist Party of Australia
CENKIM	Brisbane-based Central Committee for Indonesian Independence. Also: Central Komite Indonesia Merdeka
CFMMEU	Construction Forestry Mining Maritime and Energy Union
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency, United States
CIB	Central Investigation Branch, State Police
CIS	Commonwealth Investigation Service (Security Intelligence, 1946-1949)
CJ	Chief Judge
COM	Committee of Management
Comintern	Communist International (based in Moscow)
Conf	Conference

CPA	Communist Party of Australia
CR	"Communist Review" magazine
CSOA	Commonwealth Steamship Owners' Association
CSR	Colonial Sugar Refining Company
CUC	Combined Unions Council
DCS	Detective Chief Superintendent
DLP	Democratic Labor Party, sarcastically known as Disguised Liberal Party or Diseased Labor Party
EP	Eric Parker, Sydney Wharfie, CPA, organiser, writer
FCM	Federal Council Minutes (of the WWF)
FEDFA	Federated Engine Drivers' and Firemen's Association
FEM	Federal Executive Minutes (of the WWF)
FIA	Federated Iron Workers Association of Australia
Frem	Fremantle
Gen-Sec	General Secretary
GS	General Secretary
HA	Hal Alexander, Sydney (CC-CPA)
IGW	International Guerilla Warfare
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ILWU	International Longshore and Warehouse Union (USA)
IWW	Industrial Workers of the World — "The Wobblies"
J	Judge/Justice
JDA	Job Delegates' Association
KC	King's Counsel (Queen's Counsel when monarch is Queen)
Lib	member of the Liberal Party
L&NS	Department of Labor and National Service
MHR	Member of the House of Representatives, Federal Parliament, Canberra
MK	Clyde Kendall 'Mick' Kevans, tally clerk Sydney waterfront
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly, Australian State Parliaments
MMM	Militant Minority Movement
MP	Member of Parliament
MSU (WA)	Maritime Services Union (Western Australia)
MUA	Maritime Union of Australia
MW	"The Maritime Worker"; 'Wharfies' fortnightly Union paper
NEI	Not elsewhere included

Noms	Nominations
NSW	New South Wales
OSOA	Overseas Steamships Owners' Association
PM	Prime Minister
Ps&Cs	Permanents and Casuals
Qld	Queensland
RAN	Royal Australian Navy
RILU	Red International of Labour Unions
SE	South East
SEAC	(British) South East Asian Command (1945)
SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation
Sec	Secretary
SIB	Stevedoring Industry Board
SIC	Stevedoring Industry Commission
SMH	"Sydney Morning Herald"
SOBSI	Central All-Indonesian Workers Organisation
SUA	Seamen's Union of Australia
T&LC	Trades and Labor Council
TR	Ted Roach
TU	Trade Union
TWA	Transport Workers Act or "Dog Collar" Act
UAP	United Australia Party
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
UWM	Unemployed Workers Movement
Vic	Victoria
WA	Western Australia
WEC	Waterfront Employment Committee
WFTU	World Federation of Trade Unions
WWF	Waterside Workers Federation of Australia; now MUA (within CFMMEU)
WWI	World War I (1914-1918)
WWII	World War II (1939-1945)

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Alford, V. G. (‘Gus’)	Leader of Industrial Groupers, Melbourne Wharfies.
Bailey, Sir Ken	Secretary of the Attorney-General’s Department and Commonwealth Solicitor-General, 1946-1964; handled “Roach case”, 1951.
Baker, Bill	Lawyer representing Wharfies, Basic Wage Case, 1950-1951.
Ballard, B. C.	Australian Consul General, Batavia (Java), 1947.
Ball, W. (‘Bill’)	Brisbane Port Inspector, SIB; Chairman, Brisbane Waterside Employment Committee.
Barrett, ‘Ivo’	Wharfies Sydney Branch Executive, expelled from the ALP for standing on a Unity Ticket for a Wharfies’ election with Tom Nelson, a Communist.
Beeby, Sir George Stephenson	NSW Minister for Labour and Industry during WWI (Holman Govt); Chief Judge, Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Court.
Bennett, A. G.	Deputy Commonwealth Solicitor-General, early 1950s; lawyer assisting Sir Ken Bailey, A/G’s Department.
Bland, Henry Armand (‘Harry’)	Secretary, Commonwealth Department of Labor and National Service, 1952-1967.
Chifley, Joseph Benedict (‘Ben’)	Labor Prime Minister of Australia, 1945-1949.
Clarke, Bert	Member of Industrial Groupers, Melbourne.
Curtin, Jack	Secretary, Wharfies’ Townsville (Qld) Branch.
Dixon, Richard (‘Dick’)	National President, CPA 1948-1972.
Docker, Norman	Appointed as Industrial Organiser WWF, 14 July 1951. CPA member. Assisted General Secretary Jim Healy with legal matters. Became Wharfies’ General Secretary (1983-1984) succeeding Charlie Fitzgibbon.
Elliott, Della	CPA activist, editor of SUA “Seamen’s Journal”; delegate to Sydney Labour Council and ACTU; worker in WWF Office. Partner of E. V. Elliott (Secretary, Seaman’s Union of Australia).
Evatt, Clive	Barrister; Minister in NSW State ALP Governments (1941-52); after electoral defeat, returned to legal practice in industrial relations field.
Evatt, Herbert Vere (Dr)	Commonwealth Attorney-General, Curtin and Chifley Labor Governments (1941-1949); leader of the Federal ALP Opposition (1951-1960); Chief Justice of NSW (1960-1962).
Fitzgibbon, C. H. (‘Charlie’)	ALP member; defeated Tom Nelson (CPA) for General Secretary, WWF (1961-1983) to replace deceased Jim Healy; executive member of ACTU (1967-1983).
Foster, A. W. (‘Alf’)	Judge, Commonwealth Arbitration Court (1944-1957); sentenced Ted Roach to Long Bay Gaol for contempt of court, March 1951.
Galleghan, Frank	Head, Commonwealth Investigation Service (1946-1951).

Griffiths, Douglas Pritchard	SIB Port Inspector at Mackay, 1950-1951.
Healy, Jim	Wharfies' General Secretary, 1937-1961; member ACTU Executive; Sydney T&LC; CC-CPA.
Healy, Mick	Secretary, Brisbane Trades Hall; General Secretary, Qld Trades and Labour Council; CPA.
Hewitt, J. M. ('Joe')	Chairman, Australian Stevedoring Industry Board.
Hickey, M. J.	Chairman, Brisbane Waterside Employment Committee.
Hicks, Olive ('Wyck')	Wife of Ted Roach.
Holman, W. A.	Labor Premier of NSW, 1913-1920.
Holt, Harold	Minister for Labor, Menzies UAP Government (1940-1941) and Coalition Government (1949-1958); Prime Minister of Australia (1966-1967).
Isaacs, Sir Isaac	Barrister; Victorian State and Federal politician (1892-1906); High Court Judge (1906-1931); Governor-General, 1931-36.
Isaacs, Sammy KC	Barrister, defended Ted Roach, March 1951.
Kirby, Sir Richard	Judge, Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration (1947-1956); President, Conciliation and Arbitration Commission (1957-1973).
Lyons, Joseph	Prime Minister of Australia (UAP), 1932-1939.
McCready	Wharfie Federal Councillor.
McHenry, Pat	CPA; Secretary of the Federated Ironworkers Association.
McLintock, Herb	Artist, cartoonist, caricaturist, illustrator.
McPhillips, Jack	Industrial Committee, CC-CPA; Federated Ironworkers Association.
Maxwell, Ron ('Ronnie')	Executive Member, WWF Sydney Branch.
Menzies, Sir Robert Gordon	Prime Minister of Australia, 1939-1941 (UAP); 1949-1966 (Liberal-Country Coalition); Attorney-General, Lyons UAP Government, 1934-1939.
Miles, J. B. ('Jack')	Founding member, Communist Party of Australia; General Secretary CPA, 1931-1948.
Morrison, Don	Stevedoring Industry Commission.
Mountbatten, Lord Louis	Commander-in-Chief of British Forces in South-East Asia; former Viceroy of India.
Mulherin, John	Stevedoring Industry Board member, Mackay Qld.
Nelson, Tom	Secretary Wharfies Sydney Branch; CPA member.
Olive, Doug	CC-CPA, cane cutter, boxer, organiser.
Parker, Eric	CPA and WWF member; labour and political historian.
Roach, Edward Charles ('Ted')	Wharfies' Assistant-General Secretary and Organiser.
Santamaria, Bob	Founder of the "Movement" and Catholic Action.

Sharkey, Lancelot ‘Lance’	Gen-Sec Communist Party of Australia, Communist International (Comintern) representative in Australia.
Spicer, John Armstrong	Attorney-General, 1951 Menzies Government.
Spry, Colonel	English Army Colonel. Head of ASIO.
Thornton, Ernie	Secretary FIA, CC-CPA, Executive WFTU. Enemy of Ted Roach.
Troy, Patrick (‘Paddie’)	Founding member, WA Trades and Labour Council.
Webb, S. G. KC	Prosecuting barrister, contempt of court case against Ted Roach, 1951.
Wright, S. KC	Barrister, advocate for employers in Basic Wage Case, 1951.
Young, Jim ‘Dutchy’	Wharfie, member WWF Sydney Branch Executive; alternate member of Stevedoring Industry Commission; ALP.

IMPORTANT DATES

24.9.1909	Ted Roach b. on Coledale Rail Station South Coast, New South Wales (NSW).
27.10.1915 - 9.2.1923	W. M. 'Billy' Hughes Prime Minister of Australia.
1916	Hughes deserts Australian Labor Party (ALP) forms National Party, tries to impose conscription on Australians for World War I.
1917	Judge Ewings tries Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) prisoners, in Sydney.
24.9.1917	Olive Elizabeth Hicks (Ted's wife — 'Wyck' Roach) b. Glebe, NSW.
1917	General Strike in NSW — Ted's father, coal miner, Matt Roach sacked and blacklisted.
Oct 1917	Bolshevik Revolution in Russia led by Vladimir Lenin.
24.12.1919	Sacco and Vanzetti, Italian Trade Union organisers, arrested in Boston, USA.
27.8.1927	Sacco and Vanzetti executed in Boston.
19.6.1928	Beeby Award, plus Transport Workers ("Dog Collar") Act (TWA), shocks Wharfies.
1929	Wall St. Stock Market collapses in New York. World-wide "Depression". Ted reads "Boston" by Upton Sinclair, about Sacco and Vanzetti. Carries swag in Queensland, organises the Unemployed Workers Movement (UWM).
Apri1 1930	Militant Minority Movement (MMM) Sec, Communist Bill Orr, NSW Miners.
1931	Japan invades Manchuria for slave labour and industrial raw materials.
13.3.1931	"Honest Joe" Lyons (ALP) plus four other ALP, MHR's, cross floor in Canberra and vote against Scullin (ALP) Government. Five Labor plus Nationals form United Australia Party.
24.10.1931	"Smith's Weekly", Sydney, exposes the "New Guard", formerly "King and Empire League".
13.5.1932	NSW Imperial Governor, Sir P. Game, sacks NSW Labor Premier, Jack Lang.
26.5.1933	Nazis take charge in Germany, gaol or murder Trade Union leaders, and appoint their own.
Jan 1934	Bill Orr (CPA) elected Secretary Western Miners, NSW.
1934	A/G Menzies bans Gerald Griffin and Egon Erwin Kisch, from Anti-War Congress in Melbourne.
1934	Ted joins Wharfies, in Newcastle, NSW, with help from Tim Foley.
14.3.1934	Ted's brother, Harold 'Spider' Roach, wins Australian featherweight boxing title defeating 'Speedy' Daddo at Leichhardt stadium.
1935	Dimitrov's speech at Seventh World Congress of Communist International, "On the Unity of the Working Class against Fascism".
1935	A/G Menzies, United Australia Party, tries to ban the Communist Party.
26.8.1935	Italian Fascist Army, Navy, Air Force invade Abyssinia.
19.12.1935	Striking seamen respond to A/G Menzies invitation to send delegation. Menzies threatens them with Transport Workers ("Dog Collar") Act. Arthur Turley (Wharfies' Sec) refuses to support Seamen's Union of Australia (SUA) because of "no direction" from ACTU, (Charlie Crofts).
1936	British Investment in Malaya was 106,200,000 pounds.[1]
4.2.1936	Successful Norman Annabel strike, against 12-hour shifts, Broken Hill Pty Ltd Wollongong.
7.3.1936	Hitler tears up "Locarno Treaty", marches into Rhineland.
21.3.1936	Lang's "Labour Daily" demands the expulsion of Communist Trade Union Officials.
26.4.1936	Wyck and Ted Roach marry at the Glebe Registry Office, Sydney.
18.7.1936	Franco's Army attacks democratically elected Government of the Republic of Spain. Australia's International Brigade Volunteers, soldiers, sisters, and nurses, travel to Spain, to support the elected Republican Government.

8.12.1936	A/G Menzies victory over Australian Seamen's Union, Sec, Joe Keenan.
6.7.1937	Japan resumes war on China.
Jan 1938	Ted Roach beats George Sloan for Sec Wharfies' Port Kembla Branch, by one vote. Works part-time, faces pick up other days.
8.3.1938	South Coast Wharfies win right to travel to and from work in Jack Hill's buses.
9.4.1938	Nazis seize Austria, commence universal Terror.
April 1938	Jim Healy General Secretary (Gen-Sec) WWF.
10.4.1938	Wharfies' Union work roster in Kembla.
May 1938	Wharfies' Federal Committee of Management ends Japan embargo policy.
19.5.1938	PM Lyons tells Parliament that BHP signed Japan pig iron contract without consulting his Government.
July 1938	Communist Party of Australia's special Spain and China month.
4.7.1938	Raid on Communist Party headquarters in Melbourne, on the King's birthday.
6.7.1938	Miners force 35-hour week.
July 1938	Captain Patrick entertains Nazi agent, Count Felix Von Luckner, in Sydney.[2]
2.8.1938	Miners win Log of Claims (Bill Orr).
16.10.1938	R. G. Menzies returns from European visit, incl. Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. Says Nazi dictatorship "does not want war".
15.11.1938	*Dalfram* ties up at No.4 Jetty, Port Kembla, to load pig iron for Japan. Led by Secretary, Ted Roach, the Wharfies start work but refuse to load rest of the 300,000 ton BHP contract, and are locked out for ten weeks.
25.11.1938	Yvonne Roach born.
7.12.1938	Urgent telegram from Menzies to Jim Healy.
8.12.1938	Federal Government gazettes Transport Workers ("Dog Collar") Act.
9.12.1938	Menzies "declares" Port Kembla a TWA port, dismissing Kembla Wharfies, asks workers to buy one shilling "Dog Collar" licence and work as Wharfies.
17.12.1938	To beat the Wharfies, BHP dismisses 3500 Wollongong steelworkers, just before Christmas.
11.1.1939	A/G Menzies visits Wollongong. Public holiday declared. Kembla women baptize Robert Menzies "Pig Iron Bob".
17.1.1939	Wharfies end 'strike'; load only the *Dalfram*, BHP contract cancelled. Huge victory to the Wharfies, Trade Unionists and Australian community.
14.3.1939	Nazis launch war of extermination in Czecho-Slovakia.
28.3.1939	Wharfies' South Coast branch makes Ted Roach full-time Branch Secretary.
19.3.1939	Judge Dethridge dies, Beeby new Chief Judge Arbitration Court.
1939	Communist, Fred Patterson, elected to Townsville Council, Queensland (Qld).
7.5.1939	Death of Prime Minister 'Honest Joe' Lyons.
18.5.1940	Jim Healy ill, undergoes an operation.
15.6.1940	PM Menzies bans Communist Party of Australia.
17.3.1941	Attempted frame-up of Ted Englart (Communist Party of Australia), Wharfies' Brisbane Branch Sec, thrown out of court.
April 1941	Stevedoring Industry Commission (SIC).
5.6.1941	ACTU "Work For Victory" pledge.

22.6.1941	As predicted by Red Army Marshall Tukhachevsky, 190 Nazi divisions invade Soviet Union - "Operation Barbarossa" (Redbeard).
Oct 1941	Labor wins Australian Federal election. PM John Curtin replaces Menzies in Canberra.
1941	Ted Roach stands as "Independent Socialist" for Wollongong Council. Announced winner, loses in re-count to Davies.
7.12.1941	Japan attacks Pearl Harbour and Malaya.
15.2.1942	British General, Arthur Ernest Percival, unconditionally surrenders 80,000 Allied troops, incl. 18,000 Aust. troops, to Lt-Gen Yamashita's 30,000 troops in Singapore, Malaya.
March 1942	Indonesia — after fighting for approximately one week, Dutch General, Hein ter Poorten, surrenders the Dutch Army, and Indonesia, to the Japanese Imperial Army. The Dutch Colonial Administration sets up in Australia, bringing 550 Dutch ships, stores and KLM staff. These are the "Dutch Ships".
14.3.1942	Congress of the Australian Council of Trade Unions for "National Unity for an Allied Victory".
22.8.1942	Australian Miners coal hewing records for war effort.
26.8.1942	Ted Roach elected Wharfies' Federal Assistant-General Secretary and Organiser, defeating six others by 2033 votes.
19.9.1942	South Coast farewell dinner for Ted, Wyck and Yvonne Roach.
5.10.1942	Australia USSR official representative.
Dec 1942	John Curtin lifts ban on Communist Party of Australia.
13.1.1943	Mustard gas leak on *Idomeneus* — Ted's brother Bill, and three others affected.
19.6.1943	Ted Roach moves into Wharfies' Federal Office, Sydney, with Secretary Jim Healy. Ted is the Wharfies' second National or Federal Executive Officer. He organises the communication system from the Federal Office. Ted commences his routine of 8-12 week organising tours of Australian ports, establishing fundamental organisation and instructing members on Federation's industrial and social policies, as decided by the Wharfies' Conferences, and confirmed by the Wharfies' Federal Council and the Wharfies' Federal Executive.
19.6.1943	Jim Healy sick for nine days.
June 1943	300 Indonesian political prisoners brought to Australia from "Tanah Merah" concentration camp, Dutch West New Guinea.
7.11.1943	Indonesians out of Compound "D", Cowra, NSW.
15.4.1944	Fred Patterson (CPA) elected Member for Bowen, Qld State Parliament.
6.6.1944	D-Day — "Second Front" opened in North France by Allies. "First Front" was the Eastern Front in USSR.
8.10.1944	Jim Healy operation on leg wound from WWI.
March 1945	Jim Healy in New Zealand.
15.3.1945	Unionists in twenty countries condemn Fascist military dictator Franco.
19.6.1945	Death of staunch Wharfie, Tim Foley, Ted Roach's comrade in Newcastle.
29.6.1945	Ted proposes a Wharfies' National Safety Council.
June 1945	Jim Healy on ACTU Executive; "left-wing" has 180 delegates out of 388.
1945	Ernie Thornton (CPA) elected to the Standing Orders Committee of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU).
17.8.1945	Japan surrenders. Soekarno declares Republic of Indonesia, "Merdeka" (Freedom), but armed Dutch and British return. Republic of Vietnam declared by Ho Chi Minh.
Sept 1945	The Wharfies' Federal Council puts Ted Roach "in charge" of the Wharfies' ban (with the ACTU) on the 550 "Dutch Ships", tied up in Australian ports.
5.10.1945	Combined Union Meeting re. Dutch Ships Ban, Sydney Trades Hall.

10.11.1945	British Air and Naval attack on Surabaya, Indonesia. H. V. Evatt (A/G) returns to Australia after five months with United Nations.
30.1.1946	The ACTU appoints a Sub-Committee of Ted Roach, Barney Smith (Seamen), and Peter McKeon (Ironworkers), to handle the "Dutch Ships" dispute (1945-1949). Ted Roach uses ACTU "Rule 13"[3] to block all ACTU Right-Wing Executive attempts to "sell out" the dispute.
22.2.1946	Royal assent given to Judge Foster's report to Chifley Government on Australian waterfront.
1.5.1946	Nyoongah stockmen and station workers walk-off cattle station at Port Headland, WA. "Clancy and Dooley and Don McLeod."
3.6.1946	Birth of Suzanne Roach.
June 1946	Queensland Meatworkers Strike.
16.7.1946	A/G Evatt sends Judge Kirby to question Ted Roach's contact Sjahrir, in Indonesia, about the "Dutch Ships" hold up.
28.9.1946	Chifley Labor Government re-elected.
26.10.1946	World Federation of Trade Unions' resolution on Fascist Spain.
11.2.1947	Foster J. grants Wharfies' demand for Annual Leave.
Feb 1947	Jim Healy ill.
17-19 May 1947	Ted Roach and Mick Healy (Brisbane) are the two Australian delegates to first-ever All Indonesia Trade Union Conference (SOBSI) in Malang, Java. They are not only to attend, speak and report on the Congress, the Indonesians have also asked them to advise on every aspect of Trade Union Organisation and at every level.
May 1947	Ted interviews Malayan Communist and WWII anti-Japanese Resistance leader, Chin Peng.
24.7.1947	WWF Executive confirms Ted Roach "in charge" of the "Dutch Ships" dispute.
4.8.1947	WWF Malaya Circular No.44 Ted Roach's interview with Chin Peng.
29.8.1947	Judge Richard Kirby appointed Chair of new Stevedoring Industry Board (SIB), replacing Stevedoring Industry Commission (SIC).
10.3.1947	Ted Roach attacked in Sydney Morning Herald by Barney Mullins, President, Wharfies' Sydney Branch over "no overtime" strike.
13.10.1947	Judge A. W. 'Alf' Foster attacks "tyranny" of Arbitration Court.
3.11.1947	Eastern Bureau of World Federation of Trade Unions established. Ernie Thornton (CPA) of the Australian Federated Ironworkers Association (FIA) is Vice-President.
31.1.1948	Hanlon (ALP Premier, Qld) Anti-Union legislation. Queensland Railway Strike.
27.2.1948	Queensland "State of Emergency".
1948	Australia's A/G, Dr H. V. Evatt, President United Nations General Assembly.
10.2.1948	Picketing decision by Queensland Trade Unions.
17.3.1948	Police bash Communist MP and Barrister, Fred Patterson, in Brisbane.
12.6.1948	Imperial Britain's "full might" unleashed on "defenceless, people of Malaya."[4]
23.7.1948	Death of Barney Mullins, MLC, Mayor of Leichhardt, former WWF Sydney Branch President, and boxing trainer.
Aug 1948	Wharfies' Brisbane Sec, Ted Englart refuses to pay fine resulting from his arrest with Max Julius, Mick Healy, Albie Graham and E. Elser, over picketing during Queensland, State Rail Strike.
3.8.1948	The House Un-American Activities Committee commences anti-Communist witch hunt in the USA.
5.8.1948	Mick Healy, Max Julius, Ted Englart, E. Elser gaoled in Brisbane.

14.8.1948	Harold Spider Roach, former Australian featherweight boxing champion, Wharfie job delegate, dies in Brisbane, age 33 years.
8.10.1948	Execution of 38 Greek seamen, incl. Union Gen Sec, A. Ambatielos. Trade Unionists murdered in Japan, Cuba, Malaya.
1948	Ted Roach's declaration on Malaya: *No Ships for Malayan War.*
18.11.1948	Essential Services Act - Victoria (McDonald).
4.12.1948	Cuban dictator Batista, a United States' puppet, murders Cuban Trade Union leaders, Iglesias Dies, J. G. Galloso, A. Seval.
22.12.1948	WWF Federal Executive re-affirms Ted Roach "in charge" of "Dutch Ships".
1949	Justice Reed founds ASIO, Chifley Labor Government.
March 1949	Lance Sharkey (CPA Gen-Sec) gaoled.
5.4.1949	Jack McPhillips (Ironworkers) gaoled for "contempt".
9.4.1949	Over the radio Kirby J. tells Wharfies to ignore WWF Executive directions to members.
21.4.1949	Judge Kirby sends a letter to each Wharfie, attacking Healy and Roach for "counsels of disobedience", while Wharfies have "unprecedented privileges".
May 1949	Kirby J. removes Healy and Roach from the Stevedoring Industry Commission.
27.6.1949 - 15.8 1949	NSW Coal Miners' Strike.
29.6.1949	Labor A/G Evatt's "Fund Freezing Legislation" seizes Union Funds, during Coal Strike. This is applied retrospectively to 16 June.
4.7.1949	Court walkout by Union officials over Coal Strike.
8.7.1949	Coal Strike, NSW Contempt summonses on 13 Union officials Raid on Marx House, Sydney.
16.7.1949	Nine Union officials gaoled, incl. Healy and Roach.
Aug 1949	PM Chifley sends 13,000 troops into NSW coalfields on strike.
1.8.1949	"Concentration camps for Commos" says Arthur Calwell (ALP), Sydney Domain.
29.8.1949	Healy and Roach out of Long Bay Gaol, Sydney.
Sept 1949	USSR 1st atomic weapon test.
19-23 Sept 1949	ACTU Congress (in Sydney) cancels "Rule 13".
1.10.1949	Mao Zedong proclaims the People's Republic of China.
2.12.1949	Jim Healy announces final lifting of the ban on arms cargoes in Dutch Ships, (Sep 1945 to Dec 1949).
4.12.1949	Declaration by Ted Roach on Wharfie Pensions and Guaranteed Shifts — *Give the Government a month*.
10.12.1949	Liberal-Country Party coalition elected to Federal Parliament. R. G. Menzies PM.
16.12.1949	Mao Zedong visits Moscow.
3.3.1950	Ted Roach's "Rolling Strike" speech in Brisbane Stadium.
Feb 1950	"The Fall of Mulherin", Mackay, Qld.
March 1950	"Rotary Hatch" Campaign, Brisbane. Menzies invokes Crimes Act (30J). After a three-week campaign, Wharfies win the roster on hatches in Brisbane. Menzies announces on radio that, if Wharfies front the pickup, they will be reinstated without penalty**.**
27.4.1950	Communist Party Dissolution Bill (the 'Red Bill') passed.
June 1950	Korean War — external war, internal repression.
22.9.1950	Human Rights Assembly, Melbourne. Ted speaks on *Dalfram* and Menzies' Red Bill.
20.10.1950	The Red Bill becomes law.

23.10.1950	ASIO raids on Communist Party offices.
Dec 1950	*Omsk* with badly bagged, Polish cargo, tied up at Mackay, Queensland.
14.12.1950	Judge Kirby: striking Wharfies at Lucinda Point, Queensland had "flouted the law" and "taken the law into their own hands".
14.11.1950	Jim Healy away for three months, delegate to World Peace Congress, returns 17.2.1951.
7.12.1950	Judge Kirby awards one pound (20 shillings) increase in Basic Wage but changes Wharfies' "divisor" (casual wage formula) from 30 hours to 32.3 hours. Wharfies get half a pound or ten shillings. Ted Roach says it is a *wage steal*.
3.1.1951	Acting-General Secretary Ted Roach reports to a Special Wharfie Council meeting on their overtime ban over the "divisor": *We are in a strong position*.
5.1.1951	Ted's WWF Circular No.2/51 ER exposes the "divisor" decision.
13.1.1951	"The Maritime Worker" publishes exposure of "divisor" decision, and prints "thimble and pea" cartoon headed "Sleight of Hand of the £1 Basic Wage Rise".
24.1.1951	Wharfies' angry "divisor" protest meeting at Leichhardt Stadium, Sydney.
25.1.1951	Summons served on Ted Roach, at 4.55 pm for "contempt" charges.
17.2.1951	"Welcome Home" to Jim Healy from World Peace Congress, after three months absence.
1.3.1951	Ted Roach found guilty of two out of three of his second set of charges of contempt of the Arbitration Court. Ted Roach gaoled by Acting Chief Justice Foster and sent to Long Bay prison.
1.3.1951	Menzies Cabinet's "Operation Alien"[5] alert, to use troops on wharves, cancelled.
7.3.1951	Menzies predicts "war in three years".
9.3.1951	Australia's High Court finds the Red Bill "unconstitutional".
28.4.1951	Sir Charles Lowe's 154 sitting days Victorian Royal Commission, into the Communist Party of Australia, (7.7.1949 to 28.4.1951), clears the CPA of the charge of "conspiracy". Lowe releases a benign, humorous report.
7.5.1951	Ted Roach's appeal to Full High Court of five judges is rejected, unanimously.
May 1951	ALP Victorian MLA's "Catholic Action" (CA) cross the floor of the Victorian Parliament and bring down the Cain Labor Government. CA controls the Victorian ALP Branch.
25.5.1951	ASIO raid on Wharfies' Sydney Branch Office, documents stolen.
13.6.1951	Frank Hardy (CPA), beats "criminal libel" charge, in Melbourne, over his novel "Power Without Glory".
16.6.1951	"Release Roach Committee" formed in Sydney. "RR Committee" documents stolen.
June 1951	Thirteen Australian Communists go to China to attend Communist Party Higher Party School, Beijing.
29.6.1951	First set of contempt of court charges against Ted Roach, over *Omsk*, withdrawn.[6]
14.7.1951	Jim Healy gaoled for six weeks.
14.7.1951	Norm Docker appointed Wharfies' industrial officer.
5.8.1951	Further Ted Roach appeal — rejected.
18.8.1951	Miners' Central Council re-affirms support for Ted Roach and Jim Healy in gaol.
Sept 1951	Menzies says: "War in three years."
22.9.1951	Menzies' Referendum to outlaw Communist Party of Australia defeated 2,370,009 to 2,317,927.
18.12.1951	Ted Roach released from solitary in Long Bay Gaol, Sydney, after nine months and 18 days.
22.4.1952	Korean War Truce Talks.

1952	Ted Roach in Australian Trade Union delegation to the Chinese People's Republic. Ted makes the first "Trade with China" speech (Sydney Town Hall).
13.10.1952	Ted organises North Qld Ports Sugar Conference, and sets up "Sugar Bureaux".
31.1.53	"Verbals" and rumours attack WA Dockers' leader, Paddy Troy (see "MW").
2.3.1953	Josef Vissarionovich Djugashvili (Stalin) dies in Moscow.
13.3.1953	Ted sent to solve the Australian Workers Union grab for Wharfies' jobs at Kwinana, WA. Ted undertakes Wharfie organising tour of north-west Australia; highlights the plight of Aborigines; details wages and conditions on pearl luggers.
26.3.1953	"Divisor" equation, (30 hours), restored by Judge Kirby.
29.4.1953	Australian Workers Union withdraws from Kwinana project.
July 1953	Ted Roach convenes Northern NSW Ports Conference.
30.5.1953	Jim Healy, serious operation.
16.6.1953	Jim Healy gravely ill. Away for three months.
1.8.1953	Bowen (Qld) "crisis". Ted Roach takes night plane to Bowen - "Operation Cain"- Menzies/Holt send troops to Bowen, to do Wharfies' work. "Operation Cain" collapses in 48 hours.
14.8.1953	Healy and Roach confer with ACTU.
17.8.1953	Healy and Roach confer with Holt.
7.10.1953	Roach reports to WWF Federal Council on his WA Kwinana victory.
27.1.1954	Wharfies' Federal Executive and Melbourne rank and file dismiss Melbourne Branch Secretary, H. E. 'Bert' Clarke and all-Grouper Wharfies' Melbourne Exec. An election is held to fill their positions.
May 1954	Ted Roach organises North Queensland Sugar Conference for Wharfie/Farmer Unity.
9.8.1954	Ted Roach elected to "Democratic Rights Council".
22.9.1954	Ted Roach's mother in Adelaide in a distressed state. Blanche Roach finds her and brings her to Sydney.
19.10.1954	Women's Committee's Making History — Wharfies' Bienniel Conference, Ted Roach (Sydney).
Nov 1954	Wharfies' "margins" strike — "14 Days that Shook the Shipowners".
6.1.1956	Ted Roach organises Special Congress of Unions to discuss ACTU's "sellout" of Wharfies' "margins" case.
1957	Jim Healy overseas for three months.
Nov 1958	Ted attends All Ceylon Harbour and Dockworkers' Conference.
14.6.1961	Ted and Charlie Fitzgibbons go to Asian-Pacific Dockworkers Conference, Japan.
13.7.1961	Death of WWF General Secretary, Jim Healy. Ted Roach overlooked for WWF Gen Sec by Communist Party leadership. ALP's Charlie Fitzgibbons defeats Communist Tom Nelson for Gen-Sec, WWF. Ted attends Japanese Dockworkers Conference.
13.9.1961	Ted speaks to ACTU delegates, at Wharfie function, on "Unity".
1962	Death of Ted's father, Matt Roach, coal miner, staunch Trade Unionist. Ted Roach initiates Wharfies National "Safety, Health and Hygiene" campaign.
1964	Wharfies' Ballot for A/GS — Ted Roach 13,578, Gus Alford 3,527.
10.3.1965	WWF Mechanisation and Pension Fund.
1967	Ted Roach steps down. Removal of office of Assistant-General Secretary.
1969	Ted Roach returns to work on the Sydney waterfront — organises "SEALS" ticket in Sydney Branch elections. (See Fig 3)

1970s	Ted Roach organises successful workers' strike at Revesby Workers Club, Sydney. Ted wins snooker tournament at Revesby Workers.
17.12.1976	Ted challenges service to members, from the ACTU "Leisure Club".
1980s	Ted promotes Soviet (CTC Black Sea Line) cruise ships, selling enough tickets to get two free cruises for himself and Wyck Roach.
February 1997	Wyck Roach dies in Sydney.
3.3.1997	Ted Roach's funeral service Rookwood, Sydney, attended by MUA leaders. Eulogy by the author, Denis Kevans.

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[1] "MW", 9.10.1948, p.7.

[2] "MW", 13.7.1940 p.12.

[3] **Editors' note**: Rule 13 meant that the Unions running the dispute had complete charge and could not be over-ruled by the ACTU executive.

[4] Lim, Hong. Bee. "Communist Review" ("CR"), September 1949, pp. 267-268.

[5] See Louis, L. J. "Menzies' Cold War: a reinterpretation", Carlton North: Red Rag Publications, 2001, chapter 3.

[6] NAA: SP186/1, 58445, Box 173 29.7.1951.

Fig 3 S.E.A.L's Campaign Poster, Sydney 1969

Source: kindly provided to Author by Ted Roach

WE SUBMIT OURSELVES AS THE EIGHT CANDIDATES FOR THE S.E.A.L. COMPANY COMMITTEE

We are not pledged to any party grouping

EACH CANDIDATE IS A WELL KNOWN MILITANT DELEGATE
WE WILL NOT THEREFORE BE BUTTONHOLED, BROWBEATEN OR OTHERWISE HANDLED

WE PLEDGE TO FIGHT FOR A NEW AND BETTER DEAL FOR S.E.A.L.s

Since Permanency was introduced in November 1967 all members have worked longer hours for less money. The manner in which the scheme has been run has unfortunately favoured permanents to the detriment of Seals and has seriously divided our union.

Seals constitute 40% of our branch labour force and as such are entitled to a strong voice in branch policy making.

In ten months of operation no fundamental alteration has been attempted to right the roster in equalization, only stop gap measures which are continually changing on direction from the executive and not based on rank and file discussions with the Seals. This has not caused any real alteration in the unequal position.

What is required is a policy and action

We have a Seal Committee and a J.D.A. Executive. Neither has been able to achieve any real progress on equalization of Wages and Idle Time.

Nor have they established any real policy for the improvement of the standards of Seals.

Whether they were unable to do this or were prevented by the Branch Executive adds up to the same. No Progress

We pledge ourselves to fight for the requirements of Seals based on job discussions and report back to the rank and file.

DECISION ..... ACTION ..... REPORT ..... at all times

For a clear cut policy for Seals consider these ten points:

1. Eventual return of all labour to the one pool, being under control of S.E.A.L.
2. A weekend roster
3. Weekly points on pay packets
4. An idle time roster
5. Priority to lowest units on all aspects of overtime
6. Phone inconvenience allowance of $40.00
7. Notification on job of next engagement
8. Elimination of the 5.40 a.m. radio pick-up when coming off evening shifts
9. Elimination of the handing system
10. No discrimination between gangs and extras

Members we ask you to give consideration to these aspects and to the eight respected branch members mentioned. We ask for your support and for you to cast your vote accordingly.

Authorised by G. A. Stoddart, 40 Rea Street, Cremorne.
Printed by Southwood Press Pty Limited, 22 Steam Mill Street, Sydney.

INTRODUCTION
FROM PIG-IRON HERO TO LONG BAY GAOL: THE STORY OF TED ROACH

Edward Charles, 'Ted' or 'Teddy' Roach, was the Assistant-General Secretary and Organiser of the Waterside Workers Federation of Australia (WWF) from 1942 to 1967. It is my duty to write Ted Roach's life. Ted thought everyone knew his story. He thought everyone knew the story of 'the Wharfies', the colloquial name for members of the WWF. He knew it. He knew the truth of a lot of it. He made a lot of it happen. Moreover, in books written so far about the history of the Wharfies, the name of Ted Roach is too often missing. Why?

That "why" is the key to this book. Researchers may have absorbed the bias against Ted Roach, which was active in the Sydney Branch of the WWF. It was a bad bias, based on lies and half-truths. Many didn't talk to Ted because they were told "Roach had nothing to do with it", which was a lie. Much of the written record which tells essentials of Ted's story has been damaged, lost, mis-sorted or even destroyed. Further, Ted worked to keep out of sight, and out of notice, of the security police and the authorities. He was a Trade Union organiser par excellence in the period after the Great Depression of the 1930s when Trade Unions and Trade Unionism were badly damaged in Australia.

Ted's father, Matt Roach, was a coal miner, staunch Trade Unionist and member of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) who had been sacked and blacklisted in the NSW General Strike of 1917. Ted grew up listening to his father's strong beliefs. In 1928, in his late teens at the beginning of the Great Depression, Ted carried his swag round Queensland, became an organiser of the Unemployed Workers Movement and joined the CPA *in Mackay, around 1930.* In the early 1930s, Ted returned to Newcastle and, within six months, his organising abilities had made him Secretary of the Unemployed Workers' Movement, the Militant Minority and the Newcastle Branch of the CPA. In Newcastle, Trade Union organisation and Communist Party organisation both improved rapidly under young Ted's leadership. After battling to get his nomination through a net of right-wing officials and their protective *pugs and plug-uglies,* Ted Roach joined the Wharfies in Newcastle in 1934. Ted and Olive Elizabeth Hicks ('Wyck') were married in 1936.

In that year Ted and Wyck moved, with his younger brother Matt, to find work in Port Kembla which was emerging from the social and industrial devastation of the Great Depression as BHP's second steel production port. Ted started to build a rank and file movement to wrest power from the 'Bulls' who ran the port, to rapidly improve working conditions and provide the WWF with social and political leadership for the Wharfies and their Community. His role was part of the general move by the Unions and left-wing Union Officials and Communists to transform working conditions in the 1930s and thrust the workers' agenda onto the industrial bargaining table. Ted was elected Secretary of the Port Kembla Branch of the WWF in January 1938. Putting into practice his own ideas of organisation and Branch discipline, he transformed Kembla Branch into a militant, politically conscious and tightly-disciplined group of workers. Ted also argued Communist Party industrial and international policy to the rank and file. Critical issues of War and Peace, the Movement against War and Fascism and the threat to Australia from Japanese Imperialism and Militarism, were clearly understood by most of the rank and file unionists, who endorsed ACTU and Wharfie policy and carried majority resolutions into action.

By the time the ship *Dalfram* had tied up in Port Kembla in November 1938, the Wharfies were well-educated on the issues involved in BHP's contract to sell 300,000 tons of pig iron to Mitsui and Mitsubishi war furnaces in Japan. It was Roach's leadership, his methods, his ideas, and his tactics, which united the Wharfies against loading the pig iron for Japan, an aggressor nation under the League of Nations covenant. The dispute became a lockout for 11 weeks. Attorney-General Robert Gordon 'Pig Iron Bob' Menzies, gazetted the Transport Workers Act, or 'Dog Collar' Act, to encourage non-union labour to take the Wharfies' jobs. Only one 'Dog Collar' licence was taken out, and Ted Roach burnt it in front of Customs House. Ted did this as a conscious re-enactment of the license burning at Eureka. The *Dalfram* departed with a mere 23,000 tons. No more was loaded, and no more BHP contracts were negotiated. The Pig Iron

Dispute was a magnificent victory for the Wharfies with support from the Wollongong-Port Kembla community and Australia-wide.

In 1942, Ted won an Australia-wide Wharfies' election for the Federal position of Assistant-General Secretary and National Organiser, by a majority of 2,033 votes. Jim Healy was the General Secretary. Ted set about taking militant policy to the Wharfies around Australia and organising the communication system from head office in Sydney.

In 1945, after the Indonesian Republic's declaration of independence [from rule by the Netherlands], the Wharfies' Federal Council directed Ted Roach to handle the 'Dutch Ships Dispute' involving 550 Dutch ships, of all which had fled the Japanese in 1942 and were now moored in Australian ports. To prevent the ships returning to Indonesia with arms cargoes to be used to restore Dutch rule, the Wharfies ceased to supply their labour. This dispute continued for four years. Ted used a clever stratagem to block all attempts by the majority, right-wing ACTU Executive, to lift the ban on loading the Dutch Ships.

The rise of anti-Communism after WWII, spearheaded by the Catholic Action Movement and their Industrial Groups, plus a re-vamped ASIO working with the CIA and MI6, placed trade union leaders like Ted Roach under increasing pressure. In 1949 the NSW Coal Strike led to the gaoling of Union officials, including Jim Healy and Ted Roach. This was a dramatic time and Roach performed with dramatic effect in the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration (CCCA).

In 1950, Ted organised rank and file action up and down the Queensland coast, leading a three-week Rotary Hatch Dispute in Brisbane, which was victorious and led to the first roster of ships hatches being installed in Brisbane. This successful action shocked and alarmed the Menzies Coalition Government. Menzies gazetted the Crimes Act, but it failed to defeat Ted in the Rotary Hatch Dispute. During 1950 the ACTU argued for an increased Basic Wage for all workers. After many months of procrastination, Judge Kirby awarded all workers twenty shillings (one pound), except for the Wharfies who he awarded ten shillings. Ted Roach responded with a strong, accurate analysis of the Arbitration Courts "wage stealing" decision. A judge was caricatured in a "Thimble and Pea" cartoon, in "The Maritime Worker" (the Wharfies' fortnightly paper). Immediate and precipitate court proceedings were organised and Ted was railroaded into solitary in Long Bay Gaol in Sydney for "contempt of court".

The Communist Party did not organise a mass political campaign for Ted's release. The CPA leadership abandoned Ted Roach in gaol and invented stories as alibis for their inaction. One story was that it was "Ted's fault" that he was in gaol; another was that he had gone "boob-happy" and become unbalanced. *They buried me in Long Bay,* Ted said. His time in gaol was dramatic and emotional, and Roach fought for his rights, inside the gaol, all the way. He was released after serving nine months and 18 days. Wharfies organised "coming out" celebrations up and down the country. Ted was very bitter about his treatment. He could not reconcile the CPA's oft-trumpeted beliefs with their indifference to his gaoling. However, he continued to throw himself into the struggle. The story of Ted Roach is the story of the period of a living social conscience in the Australian people. Imagine if there had not been a *Dalfram* Dispute refusing to send pig-iron to Japan? Why wasn't there a similar dispute over the invasion of East Timor by Indonesia in 1975 and the massacre of the East Timorese?

There are five books on this period of Australia's industrial history dealing with the Wharfies. Every book largely ignores Ted Roach and the details of his story. In telling the *Dalfram* story in "War on the Waterfront", for example, Rupert Lockwood failed to tell the story of Roach's leadership of the rank and file in 1937 and 1938 when Ted trained the Port Kembla Wharfies in the struggle. His ideas and methods were radical indeed. They had evolved from his education within his own family, from his years carrying a swag, among the unemployed, and his years in Newcastle. Lockwood did not interview Roach about these years.

According to Ted Roach, the Port Kembla Branch won conditions which were *only a pipe dream* in other places. The tactics of the struggle for these conditions were detailed in the Kembla Branch's Minute Books from March 1939 to September 1942. But these Minute Books have disappeared. This would not be especially remarkable except there is a trail of lost documents which all have one thing in common — they all relate to Ted Roach and his work. The trail proceeds throughout Ted's working life. When I mentioned this to people who were CPA members in those years, they did not seem to find it remarkable. They did not

have a high opinion of the man they called “Roach”, nor were they concerned about the wholesale destruction and loss of Trade Union records. Ted became aware of this loss of records in the 1990s when he was in his early eighties. It not only hurt him but cut him to the quick.

Other books about the wharfies like “Black Armada” by Rupert Lockwood (1975), “The Days of Big Jim” by (Wharfie) Vic Williams (1975), and “A History of Stevedoring in Australia” by Jim Healy, do not mention once that Ted Roach was the National Organiser of the Wharfies from 1942 for 25 years. This act of denial was the culmination of a process of denying that Ted Roach was a major force in the building of the WWF, in its policy-making and in its vast, momentous industrial and political campaigns. Even the best book on the WWF, “Wharfies” by Margo Beasley (1996), does not mention that Ted Roach was the National Organiser. Margo, however, re-establishes Roach’s importance to the WWF and, in her chapter on the 1954-56 period of Wharfie militancy, unconsciously pays him this compliment: “the organisation was magnificent”. The National Organiser was Ted throughout this period.

Previous authors have laboured under the disability that Ted Roach was heavily smeared by his enemies over the years and given a negative connotation. Unconsciously, but blindly, they omitted to dig deeper into Wharfie history. Their difficulties were compounded by the inescapable fact that there was a deliberate attempt to obliterate Ted Roach from History. Ted himself spoke very little to anybody and kept his stories and memories unnecessarily quiet. He was unaware that WWF records detailing his work of organising had been partly destroyed until Mr Ewan Maidment of the Australian Archives sent him cartoons and photocopied articles from “The Maritime Worker” — material for which Ted had gone to gaol. When Ted found out about the destroyed and missing records, he felt compelled to tell his side of the story.

In this book, I attempt to tell, for the first time, the real story of Ted Roach’s work for the WWF, the Trade Union Movement, for International Solidarity and Trade Union struggle, and for the Communist Party of Australia. The narrative is based on Ted Roach’s personal testimony to me in thirty-five cassette recordings made between 1993 and 1997; on [surviving] Union records, including reports written by Ted for WWF National Executive and Council; on other interviews with Wharfies’ Union Officials, Communist leaders and rank and file members; and on material held in the Australian National Archives and the Noel Butlin Archives Centre which contain government, industry and Security records such as those of ASIO. It is the ASIO records, and other departmental and government records, that confirm Ted Roach’s final testimony given to the author was the truth.

This book is the first approaching an accurate view of these historical events. It was a dramatic period in trade union history and Ted Roach was central to it. His successful tactics, his ‘permanent’ militancy, his incorruptibility and his sincere Internationalism awoke jealousy, even treachery, among certain CPA officials. Ted Roach was not on the Party’s Central Committee, and maintained his own independence, inside the CPA’s general policy guidelines.

Denis Kevans 1939-2005

Part 1

Early Life and Depression Years

Chapter 1
TED READS "BOSTON" BY UPTON SINCLAIR

A young Australian is propped on his 'willy-wag'[1] in the cattle sales yards in Mackay in Queensland. It is 1929. He is watching a white bullock chew its cud. In 1942, he would meet wharfie, Albie Graham[2], who said that the white bullocks at Rockhampton meat works, which lead the yarded bullocks up the ramp to slaughter were like 'the Industrial Groupers'[3], in the Australian Trade Union movement. Edward Charles Roach, 'Ted', is twenty years old. He is reading "Boston" by American, Upton Sinclair[4]. It's the story of the judicial execution, two years earlier, of two Italian Trade Union organisers, Niccola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti in Boston, USA. Straining to read by an undercoat of moonlight and a tiny candle, flukes of flame flicker through his blood. When he reaches Judge Web Thayer's exclamation: "I'll fry these wops![5]", his whole being tenses in anger, and he says to the possums in the roof and a snoring, bombo-drenched[6] bagman: *These judges think they can get away with anything. These courts only serve the interests of the rich!* One or two imperfect tears trundled down Ted Roach's sun-blackened cheek. Whether he was crying for Sacco and Vanzetti, or himself, and a million other bagmen and outcasts in Australia, the land of milk and honey, is hard to say. But two words exploded from his tense mouth: *Jeez-sus Christ!* and then again, *Jeez-sus Christ!* From that moment, a fire was lit in Ted Roach's blood to fight injustice and exploitation, which never left him till his soul left this earth, at the age of 87, in February 1997.

Ted had three brothers, Matt ('Young Matt'), Bill, Harold ('Spider'), and three sisters, Blanche, Eva May and Merle. The four boys scrapped and boxed and sparred from infancy. Spider was the Australian featherweight champion, Bill fought 'mains'[7] and Matt fought ten rounders. Ted could 'hold his hands up', but such was his moral strength that he hardly ever threw or blocked a punch in his efforts to lead, unite and inspire workers in struggle. But 'the Roaches' had a reputation, from Ted's father down, and they all looked just that bit alike, which saved one or the other from a belting but resulted in one or the other getting a belting, for example during the Pig Iron Dispute in Port Kembla, NSW in 1938, when police mistook Young Matt for Ted, and attacked him, seriously injuring him.

Their father, 'Old Matt', was a staunch coal-miner who hated Imperialism, hated "the war to end all wars"[8] of 1914-1918, and hated Prime Minister Billy Hughes, *the umbrella mender that the miners had put into Parliament*. When his son, Bill, was asked to discourse about Prime Minister Hughes to his class in Adamstown, Newcastle, Old Matt said: "Billy Hughes? He's got no brains. He's an umbrella mender and a twister. You tell 'em Billy Hughes is a dirty twister!" "William Roach", said the teacher, 'Sting' Johnson, "tell us about Australia's Prime Minister, Mr William Morris Hughes?" "Billy Hughes? Billy Hughes is a dirty twister!". Wham! Sting clipped Bill over the ear. Bill hit Sting as hard as he could, and, for Bill Roach, "readen', riten' 'n 'rithmetic" were over. Bill left school forever and joined 'the University of Adversity' with his brothers and sisters. The four Roach boys went to the Newcastle Stadium school of diplomacy and Maguire's Gym, the Newcastle charm school. Nevertheless, Ted Roach was a thorough gentleman who believed in *talking not fighting*, said what he thought, had a powerful mind, a subtle sense of humour and two dark eyes in which smouldered the lava of molten black glass.

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[1] Australian rhyming slang for "swag". A swag is a bundle of personal belongings carried while travelling.

[2] Graham, A. L. (Albie) (CPA) Ass/Sec Waterside Workers Federation (WWF) Brisbane Branch. *I met Albie Graham at the WWF Biennial Conference, 1942. He came down from Bundaberg*.

[3] "Industrial Groupers" and "The Movement" were started in Australia by B. A. Santamaria in the early 1940s, to oppose Communist influence. The concept was started by the Roman Catholic Hierarchy in Europe to infiltrate Trade Unions etc, and destroy the policies of militants, Socialists, and Communists. They wanted 'tame cat' Trade Unionism, and arch-conservative social policies. They started their own Unions, e.g. in France, and linked up with Oil and CIA money. In Australia, they interfered

in Trade Union elections, and collaborated with the State apparatus. They deceived genuine, honest Trade Unionists, who wanted more accountability from Union leaderships.

See Pringle, J. D. "Industrial Groups set up in Sydney (1945) by NSW Trades and Labour Council", in "The Maritime Worker" (MW) 13.10.1951. Also, the Statutory Declaration by Vic Campbell, before a Justice of the Peace, co-signed by Ron Maxwell in Sydney, 8 April 1958, re: meeting of National Council of Industrial Groups in the Parade Hotel Fitzroy, Melbourne "to work for the defeat of the Federal leadership of the WWF in the forthcoming national elections". "MW" April 1958: "To be known as a 'grouper' was almost akin to being called a 'scab'" — L. E. Speirs, former Union Secretary, quoted in "The Beacon", May 1998, p.9.

Later, anti-Communist sentiment among believers was reinforced when they were revulsed by the sudden destructive atheism of Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin, who dynamited magnificent churches, e.g. the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, in Moscow, which had been spiritual and cultural shrines of the people, and which had been constructed by the collective genius of the people.

Editors' note: The Groupers play an important role in this book. After WWII, the Groupers formed a distinct faction within the ALP, especially in Victoria. At every opportunity, they opposed the activities of elected union officials who, like Ted Roach, were CPA members. By the early 1950s, however, much of the Grouper activity was directed at other ALP members they thought were 'soft' on Communism. In 1955, the Federal ALP leader, H.V. Evatt, expelled the Groupers, precipitating a disastrous split in the ALP. The Grouper members formed the 'Anti-Communist Labor Party', renamed the Democratic Labor Party in 1957 which directed its voting preferences to the Liberal-Country Party Coalition Government.

[4] Sinclair, Upton. "Boston A Novel", London: T. Werner Laurie, 1929.

[5] wops: a derogatory word for Italians.

[6] **Editors' note**: bombo-drenched — drunk on cheap wine.

[7] 'Mains': main boxing events; twelve or fifteen rounds. 'Rounders' used with a sing. verb.

[8] "The war to end all wars" — an ambiguous, deceptive sophism, used to attract recruits for slaughter in the gigantic Death Machine of World War I.

Chapter 2
FROM COLEDALE TO MACKAY: WORLD WAR I AND THE DEPRESSION

Ted Roach (28 September 1909 - March 1997) was born on the South Coast of New South Wales (NSW). *The older brother* (Matt) *and I were both born on Coledale Station.* They lived in Wombarra, the 'Red Capital' of Australia. A northern seaside suburb of Wollongong, Wombarra was the one place in Australia that voted a Communist majority in the poll[1]. *It was 'Red Wombarra', all coal miners. We lived in the cutting, in the middle house, in Company Row, in Scarborough.* Ted's two little brothers, Walter Roach and Thomas Roach, died in infancy of "wasting disease"[2] without the 'formula', Bi-Lactogen, to nourish them. Ted's father Matt (b. 1885 Waterloo, Sydney) was a coal miner.[3] He was locked out and blacklisted in the 1917 NSW General Strike against time cards at Randwick Tram Depot, against jacked-up war prices, against the slaughter in France, against the infant Police State and against the NSW Labor Premier, William Arthur Holman's rapid swing to the right. Matt had strong anti-war and anti-Imperialist views, which he drummed into his kids at meal-time. They were told to "stay and listen to what your father is saying". Matt told them that PM Hughes had *betrayed the workers, 'ratted' from the Labor Party, and formed the National Party.* He said that the Nationals were *loyalists…* (to) *the crown and pro-conscription.* The workers had *put the little bastard Billy Hughes* into power, and he had *betrayed them*. PM Hughes' campaign to conscript Australians for the war in France, at the behest of the British War Cabinet, raged fiercely in 1916 and 1917. The Australian people voted against conscription both times. NSW Labor Premier Holman said he would support PM Hughes "in every way. I shall not hesitate to support conscription for this war".[4] He hounded young men into the army,[5] and gaoled anti-war militants like the 'Wobblies'.[6] He said he would use the English "Treason Felony Act" of 1848[7], which claimed that it was "an act of high treason to encompass or imagine the death of the King".[8] In reply, the Wobblies said that they would make the Capitalists "pay".[9] To counter this threat, a secret police operation commenced in Sydney. On perjured evidence, twelve IWW leaders were given lengthy gaol sentences.

The first Australian Imperial Force (AIF), all volunteers, swore an oath to the English monarch: "I will well and truly serve our Sovereign Lord the King, in the Australian Imperial Force, and I will resist His Majesty's enemies…".[10] This was a complete turnaround from the Eureka oath[11] (see chapter 9 of this book). World War I issues were defined as being 'loyal' or 'disloyal' to the Crown. 'Scabs' who took miners' jobs in the Hunter Valley or wharfies' jobs in Sydney during the 1917 NSW General Strike were 'loyalists'. Matt saw scabs, called 'loyalists' by employers, scrambling to take jobs from him and his mates. Locked out miners were called 'disloyalists'. Matt and his miner mates were scorned and lashed with headlines in the Jingo Press, for being 'disloyal'.[12] Workers' newspapers tried to answer using editorials, cartoons and columns, for example, H. E. Boote's "A Fool's Talk".[13] A War Loan cartoon "Fill 'em Up Again!" by Syd Nicholls in 1915 of an Australian soldier, crucified and bleeding like Julius Caesar from forty founts, while "Fat" war profiteers drank salvers of his blood, earned publisher and editor, Tom Barker, twelve months in gaol for 'sedition'[14] (see Fig 4). Then, Donald Grant received a fifteen-year gaol sentence for these fifteen words: "For every day Barker[15] is in gaol, it will cost the Capitalists £10,000 [ten thousand] pounds".[16] The next cartoon to put anyone in gaol was in January 1951. It was the "thimble and pea" cartoon[17], a classic drawn by Herb McClintock, based on an idea by Ted Roach. The cartoon — for which Ted received prison sentences of two lots of twelve months — showed Judge Richard Kirby doing the thimble-and-pea trick with a one pound (twenty shillings) basic wage rise and giving Wharfies only ten shillings a week or just half the promised increase in the Basic Wage. Ted's caption for the cartoon was "Sleight of Hand of the £1 Basic Wage Rise" (see Chapter 17, Fig 24).

Fig 4 'Fill 'em Up Again'
Source: Syd Nicholls, 'Direct Action', 4.12.15

Judge Alfred Foster[18]

As a young lawyer in 1917, Alfred Foster was put on trial in Melbourne because he had "the temerity to criticise the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon W. M. Hughes".[19] Foster recalled the WWI incident when he was banned from discussing 'Civil Liberties' on Melbourne Radio, 3AR, on Sunday 1 May in 1938. Foster's banned speech became a pamphlet in which, Foster said: "Rarely did any speaker of prominence deliver an address, without the services of police officers, as shorthand writers".[20]

Foster, who, on March 1951, sentenced Ted Roach to two lots of twelve months in goal, had himself been arrested and charged in 1917 for strongly criticising the wartime Government of Billy Hughes over their conscription proposal. Although not ultimately convicted, Foster commented on the "absolute nature" of the Hughes Government's WWI emergency provisions for dealing with strikes, civil unrest and those who opposed WWI and conscription. Ted Roach's defence barrister, Sammy Isaacs KC, said the same about Ted's 'trial' for contempt of the Arbitration Court in 1951 before three Arbitration Court judges. Isaacs KC said: "It may reflect back on the view of the Court, that this type of proceeding is

absolute, and that the less there is of this type of proceeding the better".[21] Pointing up the repressive power of the Crimes Act, which Miller KC was to brandish during the trial of Trade Union leaders in the 1949 NSW Coal Strike, Foster's 1938 pamphlet stated: "The printers of anti-conscriptionist literature were prosecuted many times. I appeared as a barrister for many. After the war, the War Precautions Act, was continued, and was only repealed, to be re-enacted in the Crimes Act".[22] Ted Roach and the Brisbane Wharfies were to tear up Section 30J of the Crimes Act[23] in the spectacular Brisbane Rotary Hatch Dispute of March 1950, a victory which was organised and inspired by Ted Roach.

NSW GENERAL STRIKE, 1917

Premier Holman's Labor Government introduced American Fred Taylor's stopwatch, time-card system at the Randwick Tram Depot. The system, a time and motion study, used cards to record the tasks each worker was assigned and the time it took them to complete those tasks.[24] Workers said it was "a system of speeding up, and is on a sweating basis, instead of a fair day's work".[25] After two weeks of deliberately provocative negotiations, the 'trammies' walked off the job on 2 August 1917. This led to the NSW General Strike of 1917. In August 1917, northern coal mines and the BHP Steel Works also stopped work. Miners "declared all coal black".[26] The strike spread to other States, involving around 100,000 workers. Early in 1918, the NSW Minister for Mines, George Stephenson Beeby, proposed "pit conciliation committees"[27] and J. B. Holme, the NSW Under-Secretary, posted 9000 circulars to individual miners directing them to work the 'black' coal. Militants were being head-picked and shunted so miners stayed out. At Islington, Newcastle, Federal Parliamentarians Frank Brennan and David Watkins, said Premier Holman was "relentlessly hunting men, whose only offence is the assertion of their rights as unionists, by depriving them of their right, to earn a livelihood, for themselves, and families".[28] On 7 May 1918, Minister Beeby called for "non-union" labour in the black pits. The NSW General Strike was defeated, the Unions crushed. The Miners' Federation had paid out forty thousand pounds to sacked miners by 1 November 1918, ten days before the end of the 'War for Freedom' in France. It would not be for another 20 years, until November 1938, when Ted Roach led the Port Kembla Branch of the Wharfies in the Pig Iron Dispute, that workers would hold up their heads with pride once again.

"A ROYAL STAND BACK"

The author: "Did your Mum say prayers to you at bedtime, Ted?"
*Plenty of razor strap round the a***! Straightened us all up. We must've been a bunch of little bastards, always scrapping and fighting, being a heap of us together. Never hurt as much as Dad's hand on the a***. I was a bit religious when I was very young. Bill and the others used to say: He's gunna be a priest!*
"What did you do in the War, Dad?" asked Ted's sister Blanche Roach. "Me?", said Matt, "I was a Royal Stand Back". So when Blanche's school mates boasted about what their Dads did in the War, Blanche said: "So what, my Dad was a Royal Stand Back!" And she sang:

> Who was the man that went to the zoo? Billy Hughes,
> Who was the man the monkeys knew? Billy Hughes,
> The chimps they said "well strike me pink,
> "If this ain't Darwin's missen' link",
> Mr bloomen' Billy Hughes.

Blanche continued: "I asked my father why he hated church. He went to the Wesleyan Chapel in Dapto [NSW]. His mother, Mary Anne, played the church organ. She gave Matt a penny for the plate and a penny for himself. He had a penny in each hand. The Minister held out the collection plate and Matt placed a penny on the plate. The Minister told him to release his second penny and tried to force open his hand. "You palmed that penny," he said loudly. "Put that penny in the plate." "It's mine," said Matt. "That

penny's my penny." The Minister clutched open Matt's hand and took the second penny. The boy rushed out of the chapel in tears, calling out to nobody: "I will never go back into a church again"."[29]

Grandparents, John and Mary, spoke in "thees and thous". Grandson Bill mocked them, out of earshot: "Get thee-self inside, or I'll knock thy down." John Roach came to Australia from Cornwall. His wife died of scurvy on the boat, leaving two children. John loved sailing. He had sailed along the Isle of Wight and taught his sons to sail. They made their own sails and won respected trophies. According to Blanche, her father Matt said: "There's nothing more beautiful than the white sails of your boat opening before you." Her grandfather John was a fisherman on Lake Illawarra in NSW and had oyster leases at Port Hacking. He married Mary Anne Warburton. They had fifteen more children. *Dan, Ned, Charlie, Walter, Joe, Bill, that's some of them. They'd need plenty of fish with 17 kids, wouldn't they? There's Roaches everywhere now. The 17 gave them a good run. The second crowd were eight's and nine's. Probably down to one's and two's by now.* Ted's mother, Blanche Ellen Roach, was the daughter of Patrick (Pat) Kelly from County Cork in Ireland. Pat drove bullocks in the Pilliga Scrub in north-central NSW and had "a big bowl of opals". He carted wood from Wollongong to Sydney and was "the most honest man you'd ever meet", said Blanche. Pat married Bridie Murphy. "He called her 'Biddy'. She was a beautiful lady," said Blanche. *Mum's family were Edie, Blanche, Jim, Blue. 'Bluey' went away to war in 1915. He never came back. They blew him to pieces over there, somewhere.*

The author to Ted: "So your Dad was a militant?"
In his way, he was always a militant. They had to be militants, the poor bastards.
At Scarborough on the South Coast of NSW, coal-miner Matt worked in a drive down in under the cliff. In the pub, Stewart, a miner – *a rotten, old Imperialist* – knocked down Matt's *cross-mate*[30] Jimmy Price. Matt elbowed Stewart off Price, and Stewart said: "My son 'Techi' will straighten you up!" *Fights were held on Sunday mornings, on the commons, across the railway line. I saw them all going over to the contest. Mum wouldn't let us kids go*. Later, Matt's brother-in-law told Ted: "I never saw a bloke in all my life get such a hiding as young Techi did that day. Your father bloody well slaughtered him. He gave him an awful bloody thrashing." *Dad's anti-militarism, his anti-war sentiments got him into this bloody fight*. Soon after, Ted was *wheeling water from the lagoon for Mum* when their house erupted in an orange flame. The Roach clan then moved to Newcastle.

Matt worked at Curlewis Mine in Gunnedah and was Treasurer of the Dudley Lodge, Dudley Pit in Newcastle. Blanche said: "He came home black. Black as coal, with big wide eyes, working in a three-foot seam. He couldn't eat anything, just bread and brown sugar. He'd sit in the bath in front of the fuel stove, long feet sticking out the end, and he'd be reading a book. Come on, kids, will you wash my feet? We'd have to rub and scrub his back, and get all the coal dust off him." "Which book do you want from the library, Dad?" asked eight-year-old Blanche. "Something with blood'n guts in it." [Librarian:] "Tell your father he's already read everything in the library." [Blanche:] "He'd give us Darwin's theory, and Marx's theory, and say: "Read this!"

Ted's father was an early member of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA). Matt Roach, Bill Bird's[31] father and others, wore pink carnations to a Labor Party meeting of 'lily whites'[32] at the School of Arts in Adamstown. "We're changing to red, we're deep pink now, but we're going to be red," said Matt. *Rebels they were, and outspoken rebels, so they were expelled from the Labor Party. I never gave them a chance to expel me because I never joined the bastards.*[33] "The first Communist Party Branch in Newcastle, was in Jefferson St, Adamstown. A Russian lady,[34] the first exchange student, slept in my bedroom. She taught in Adamstown School for three months", said Blanche. "Mum didn't like the Communists coming in all the time: "Grubby lot!". We kids thought it was a bogeyman[35] but it was 'Lofty' who crept in and 'knocked off'[36] the Party Branch money out of the grandfather clock. Mum used to sneak up to St. Mary's to pray and said: "My husband doesn't believe in God, father". The priest ordered Matt off "my church steps". Incensed, Matt knocked the priest down in Adamstown." "Mum taught ballroom dancing," said Blanche. "She could do anything. She'd do the stencilling on the curtains. She would fill in bluebirds in cotton silk, all over the canopies." Blanche played Vigoro[37] with the "Rosebuds" in Adamstown. "Mother hand-worked roses round the flares of our dresses."

Meanwhile, Ted's first job was 'holder-up'[38] for boilermaker Jimmy Punshon at Walsh Island, building the 'red rattler' electric trains — *they were modern then. Jimmy was a bit of a militant later on.* "They had a boxing ring in the backyard. Ted and Spider [were] in the ring," said Blanche. "Of course, Ted started it. Dad's in the ring behind Spider. Mum comes out and faints. The neighbours are yelling: "Go! Go! Go!" Spider chopped Ted to pieces and Ted had to go out with the girls. "What happened, Ted?" *I got drunk and laid out in the paddock and the crows picked me.*

The Depression came early in the Hunter Valley, NSW. Matt was laid off in 1927. Bill and his father had two fruit carts and a shop front on their two-bedroom, Adamstown, house. Ted was 'the melon king', bidding for a load of melons. Bill could *pick the card*[39] at the Newcastle Stadium fights, and he was *goen' the bag*[40] for the betting money. Then, Old Matt's cart came in first and Ted's second, and Ted's horse had a munch of Matt's load of cabbages. Another flare-up. Finally, Matt was arguing about the money in the bag and Ted threw it at him: *Sell the bloody melons yourself!* Young Matt and Bill left to go cane cutting in Queensland and work in sugar mills. Following the brief boom of the 1920s, the Wall Street Stock Exchange, the financial nerve centre of the Capitalist world, collapsed and sent Ted *jumpen' the rattler and travellen' for the dole.*[41]

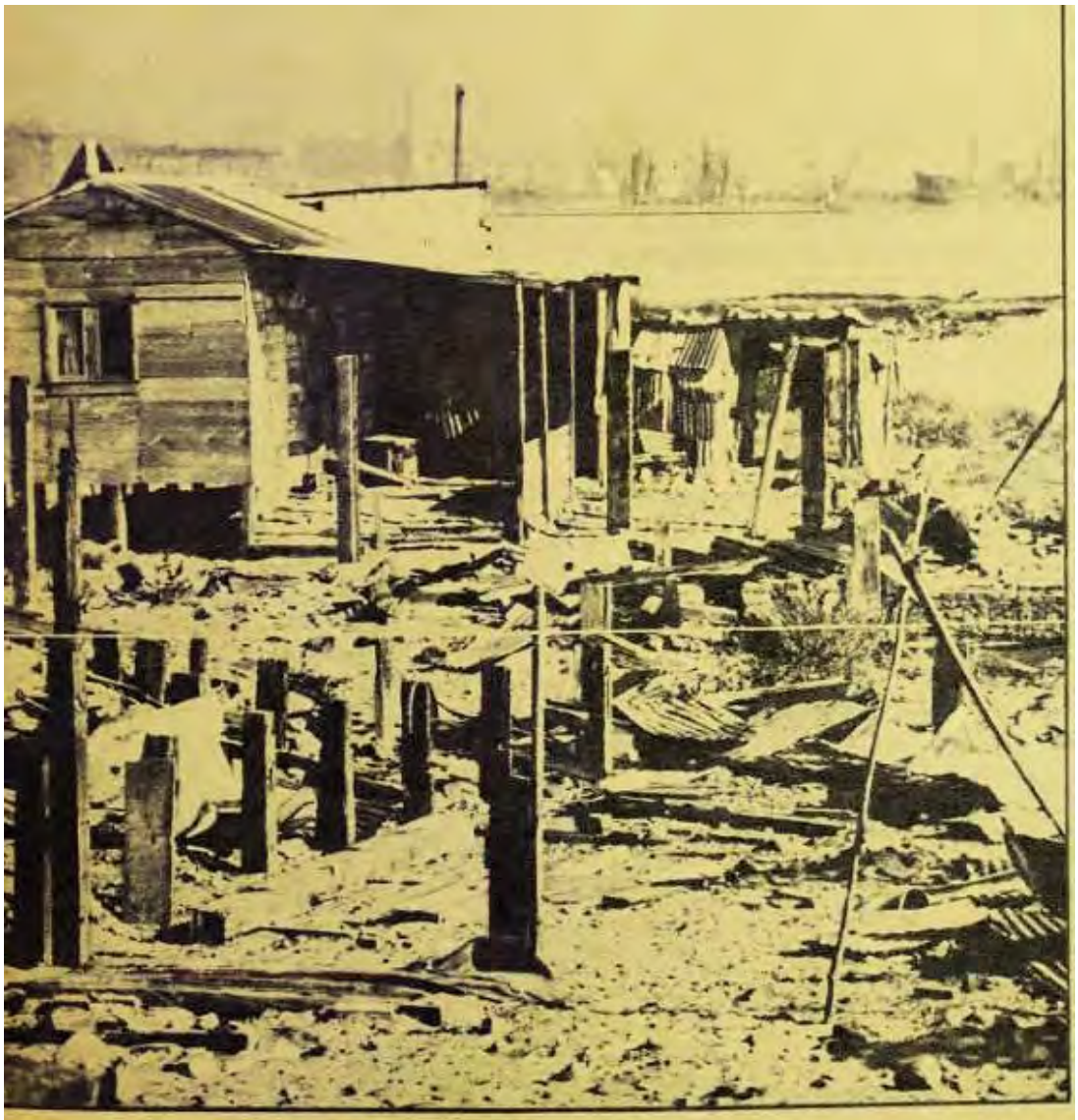
The 1930s Depression took away the Roach's two-bedroom Adamstown home, with the shop front, which they were buying with a no-interest 'Star-Bowkett' loan[42], and put them in a tin and hessian shantytown at Nobby's Head in Newcastle.[43] Ted's father became Secretary of the Camp Committee at Nobby's Head (Fig 5), and he would summon camp meetings by clanging an iron triangle. "Dad was the Mayor," said Blanche. "He used to beat the triangle to summon them from the hundred humpies." Camp Committees put plumbing in for cold water taps.[44] Old Matt put a steam hot water system in their hut and Young Matt 'flummed'[45] the Stockton Bight prawns, which helped to feed the unemployed and their families, along with 'beaker garfish'.

ON THE TRACK: MACKAY AND THE UNEMPLOYED WORKERS' MOVEMENT

The Depression locked workers out into enforced idleness, mercilessly crushed the Unions and raddled the bodies of a million unemployed Australians and their families with the stink of poverty, starvation, and despair. In his late teens, Ted Roach joined the great army of unemployed, carrying his swag, observing at first-hand how Capitalism looked after its devoted population and talking to experience at every campsite. *The bagmen's camps were the Miller's Guides*[46] *to the dole tracks.* Ted walked around Queensland *for three-and-a-half years* in an old pair of cotton swimming tights, a big army hat and a Jackie Howe singlet. Ted's long march through Queensland in his singlet and speedos would build for him a consciousness that could not be dissolved by any form of sophistry, right-wing or left-wing, on earth. *I should have got a lot of melanomas, but I didn't.* Ever conscious of fitness and health, the boy from Maguire's Gym, Newcastle, who as 'Charlie' Roach had four preliminary fights, carried dried vegetables to chew on his Queensland odyssey.

In 1929 at the age of 20, Ted had his first experience *working for a boss and being worked over by a boss.* It was *all over five bob*[47] at the Finchhatter Sugar Mill in Mackay. Ted was in the barracks with brother Matt, who worked there each season, cutting cordwood for the fires. The award stipulated they couldn't be paid less than five shillings. Harold Messer and Ted were bag sewers and bag fillers. In came the manager, Smith, *a big bloke. "Roach?" Yes, Smith. "You've been making a lot of noise." Example? "You're saying you've been underpaid." Five shillings, according to the award. "I've had the impression you were a bit of a Red. This Company is pretty scotch and don't pay any more than the award, and you're under an obligation to me. I'm going to give you 24 hours to get off the premises. You were next on in this mill, but I'll see you don't get a job in any sugar mill in the Mackay district."*

Fig 5 Nobby's Camp, Newcastle
Source: 'Pix', 23.7.38



Portion Of The Remains Of Nobby's (Newcastle) unemployed camp. The inhabitants were evicted by the authorities but many of them moved to other camps in the district.

The author: "So, you made their blacklist, mate?"
Yes, but I wasn't worried about working his bloody sugar anyway. I was building the Unemployed Workers Movement, the UWM[48], at Mackay. We had a good, strong unemployed organisation there. Later, when I went down to Brisbane, I went to the DLI[49] and got my five shillings, a cheque for five shillings. I was twenty years old, I'd already read "Boston" and that was when I became a rebel.

Shelter Shed, Mackay

Ted was Secretary of the UWM and Secretary of the Unemployed Committee in the shelter shed at Mackay. Arthur Wyer, Tim Foley, Alex Borsac and Bill Bird went to the shelter shed to sell "Workers' Weeklies", to talk about the battle for rosters in the workplace, and discuss the International Red Labour

Unions, at the Wharfies' Hall, on Sundays. The shelter shed had a committee of approximately five.[50] *We had magnificent conditions to live in. The shelter shed would be about 60 feet long, beds in the centre, and beds on the side. We had a big barbecue plate, and we organised the timber for it.* Ted and his Committee of five went and 'bit'[51] a local firm for the barbecue plate. Ted worded and moved the resolutions which were endorsed by the shelter shed majority. They had a shower and a toilet on the water's edge.

First Use of Rosters

The Mackay shelter shed was where Ted first learnt about rosters. Everything was rostered, even cleaning the toilet. Once a week the palliasses were moved and everyone had to sweep under their palliases, out to the centre: *three sweepers'd come through. We wouldn't allow dirty, black billycans to be taken in on the floor. The floor was tongue-grooved, so we looked after it very well indeed.*
The author: "Did you have rules in the shelter shed?"
Oh, yes, if they wanted to play up or anything, we'd call a meeting. Righto! What are we gunna do with him? Fetch his swag over the bloody fence! Away you go, mate! No! No! Away you go! If you don't comply with the rules here, go elsewhere. Well, I learnt that that was a very important lesson on discipline to link it with policy.

Ted later linked the Mackay shelter shed experience of 1928-1930 with the decisive use of rosters in the successful, day-to-day campaigns of the Wharfies' Port Kembla Branch[52] from 1937-1942.
See, all through my history in Port Kembla, where the main history was, we built organisation so fast despite some of these professors who wrote papers on the Pig Iron Dispute and couldn't understand, and said this development was only because of the militancy of the Miners' Union and the South Coast people [of NSW]. *They couldn't understand how such an organisation* [the South Coast Branch of the Wharfies] *that lacked everything, became an organisation that had everything, in such a short time. It was because we linked discipline with policy.* In the shelter shed in Mackay Ted saw, in practice, that the use of rosters was a way of equalising responsibility and expectation. It created its own unauthoritarian discipline. It equalized those in the shed and created a form of invisible unity that started to bind them together. 'Warbs'[53], slummocks[54], drunks, spying coppers[55] could be exposed or educated by group pressure, as the common will was turned on them, strengthening the unity of the unemployed and beginning the education of those they evicted about the power of that same unity.

Chasing the AWU off the Job

Ted's only real job in Mackay was *cutting trees down, building a road through virgin forests.* There were three different gangs working, and Ted's was the first gang. The Australian Workers Union (AWU) Organiser, Albert Jupp Gardiner, came up with his membership book under his arm. Ted *accosted* him, and asked him why he was demanding Union tickets. *This was our first real job. Why did he have the audacity to ask for tickets?* The engineer [the boss] complimented Ted for this and said Gardiner had demanded he deduct 25 shillings from every worker's wages for an AWU ticket. *There were three big gangs there but he* [Gardiner] *never sold one ticket. It wasn't anti-union, it was anti-AWU methods. He never came out to see what kind of accommodation we had in the tents, or how the troops were getting on. He just came out to sell us AWU tickets.*

In those days the unemployed had to travel for the dole.[56] It was five bob dole a week, which they could collect in one spot, then they'd have to travel to the next dole station, to collect the dole the next week.
Sometimes we had to go out to North Eaton or to St. Laurence, on a milk train, halfway to Rockhampton, stop at every siding, to collect a rotten five shillings. Mackay was the constituency of one William Forgan Smith, who was the Premier-elect of Queensland. During the State election campaign, Ted asked 'Foghorn' what he would do about travelling for the dole. Forgan replied, in front of the mob, that he would *prevent any further travelling for the dole.* Forgan Smith's Labor team was elected. Ted said to the committee: *Let's go and find old Foghorn. We went round to the pub where he usually stayed. Where's old Foghorn?* "He went thataway!" said his secretary, Tommy Hope. *Finally, we ran him to earth at the police station. Because of our action, Mackay unemployed received stationary rations that week. Everyone else got it the next week. We got it that week. That was an important victory.*

Revolution by Telegram

When 'work for the dole' came in, Ted Roach and the unemployed were paid 14 shillings for the day but the Mackay Police Inspector told them they would get 13 shillings and eight pence. The Queensland Government was taking out four pence, for 'relief tax'. *I addressed the multitude from the police station steps in Mackay. It was my first public meeting, and I said: We've been on the dole for a long time. We've been out of work, and here we get a lousy job of fourteen bob. And the government's starting to take a relief tax of four pence out of it. Out came the Police Inspector and the Crown Sergeant, one on either side of me, and said: "Well, Mr Roach, (first time, any of these bastards, ever called me Mister), I think you ought to accept the thirteen and eight pence and if the government decides to give you the four pence, we'll only be too happy to give it to you." They were giving us bloody nothing! "This is between you and I and the gatepost", says the Inspector. I spun on my heel and I said to the mob: This is what the Inspector just said — I dobbed him in straight away — I think we should refuse to accept the thirteen and eight pence, and take up a tarpaulin muster here and now, and send a reply-paid telegram to Mossie Hines, Minister for Labor, and demand our fourteen shillings! "Aye!" It was carried.*

We waited at the post office and stuck it out, and stuck it out, while the locals were picking up their thirteen and eight pence. No word, no word, and then at quarter to five, we were on our way up to the shelter shed when a copper pulled up behind us and said: "you fellers that haven't collected your 13 and eight pence, your 14 shillings is down there waiting on you". Just like that. We won hands down. So, the next few weeks it infuriated the blokes handing out the dole: "come and get your four pences!" He's got bags of treys [three pence]*, and bags of pennies, making them sign, treys and pennies. We enjoyed it immensely and he was getting upset to buggery. The bastard was getting paid for it though. That was a good fight!*

Here, Ted Roach, in his early twenties, showed his nerves of steel in immediately revealing to the unemployed what the Police Inspector said, and so increased solidarity between himself, the UWM in Mackay, and others present. Ted immediately empowered the meeting of the unemployed by making it crystal clear which side he was on — crystal clear that he was not intimidated by silver crowns and polished caps and that he was keeping his eye 'on the ball', the important four pennies owed to the unemployed. Characteristic of Ted throughout his career, he proposed a plan of action, a plan to involve them all: a reply-paid telegram which the Queensland Minister for Labor and Industry, Mossie Hines, could ignore at his peril. Ted's ability to take the worst that the State could offer, and bounce back with an organised plan and an organised army of workers behind him, proved a real handful for the repressive organs of the State and conservative Australian governments who were increasingly enmeshed in the foreign policy and war economy of the United States of America. When the Harry S. Truman Government decided it would not allow strikes in industries "essential to National Security"[57], the Australian government in the late 1940's — coached by Colonel Charles Spry of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO)[58] and intrepid Communist hunter Henry Bland[59] — followed suit. At this time American 'labour attachés', like Herbert ("Call Me Herb") Weiner, materialized at ACTU Congresses in 1949, observing the line up of forces and taking notes.

Ted's winning ways were based on his positive, creative approach to problems, testing solutions in practice, discussing the results with members and making necessary changes in tactics. This was linked to his clear understanding of basic trade union, human and legal rights, his confidence in the collective strength of the people and their ability to solve every practical problem in the struggle by expressing their innermost thoughts and feelings in daily *programmes of immediate demands*, not 'Logs of Claims' every three years. Resisting Ted, and working in secret, were the Judges in the Arbitration Court, the legal beagles in the Attorney-General's office in Canberra under Sir Ken Bailey, ASIO under Sir Charles Spry, the Commonwealth Investigation Service (CIS) under Frederick (Frank) Galleghan, the Central Intelligence Bureau (CIB) and the Post Master General's Department. They would be engrossed in 'WatFed' telegrams to Wharfie Branches, in their contents, and in whose signature graced the bottom of the counter-foil. They would gradually form an opinion that it was the signature 'ROACH' which counselled disobedience of the Orders of the courts most often.

BOXING IN THE GREAT DEPRESSION

Boxing boomed in the Great Depression — the worst economic downturn in the history of the industrialised world (1929-1936) — when men had a chance to batter each other speechless for one pound[60]. Men would ride their 'gridirons' (pushbikes) fifty miles and further, for a chance to stand up and belt and be belted for a few shillings to buy some sausages and potatoes for their families. In 1934, Spider Roach won the NSW featherweight title at the age of 17 (Fig 6). This was a huge event for the despised and disillusioned 'dole-eeo's' living in Nobby's unemployed camp in Newcastle.

Fig 6 'Spider' Roach
Source: photo kindly provided to Author by Ted Roach

Ted had *a couple of goes* for his two brothers. But he preferred the humour of Depression boxing to any supposed glamour. His brothers were on the track trying to *get a quid.* And they promoted boxing events for *a quid* and a bit of fun. *I had a couple of goes. I had two fights for Spider and two for Bill. I had to fight for them. I fought a bloke, a big stiff bloke, an axe-man, taller than that door. Oh, Jesus Christ, I said. But he never laid a glove on me. He was so frightened of Bill's reputation. And I couldn't fight my way out of a paper bag. I'd run in, and hit him in the guts, and run back. And run in again, and hit him in the guts. And he never hit me once! Oh, Jesus Christ, it must have been worth seeing! (Laughs!)* It was out in the cotton country in Thangool, Dawson Valley *[Qld],* the Campbell brothers', big brother Walter and his brother 'Bantam', came and challenged for one thousand pounds! One thousand pounds with side wagers! Us against the white hope of the Campbell clan. All on the dole, so were they. Promotion was for a two pound guarantee to the loser. I'd fight the prelim, Bill the main. We borrowed the barrels from the pub, timber from the timber mill, rope, and we made a makeshift ring. I'm not sure if the distance from each post was the same. Couldn't cut the timber hanging over the corner, had to leave the planks as they were (laughs). Bill gave him an awful hiding. Bill fought Maxie Richards up at Quilpie. He held the title in

Queensland. Bill's big left hook! Campbell smothered and didn't look, and walked straight through the ropes! I fought the prelim, the axe-man got a quid, Campbell got two pounds. Bill and I (promoted it and all) got 30 shillings between the two of us! (Laughs!)

The author: "Maguire was a good trainer, Ted?"[61]

Yes, a good trainer. He finished up a whiskey drinker, whiskey and rosary beads. Spider never drank before he won the title. He had caulies[62] from the friction of the gloves going past. He'd move just enough. They'd whizz past. He used to say: "Feel the muscles in my ears". He was amongst champions all the time. Just a kid, he set out to learn.

The author: "How did he get the name Spider?"

All the family's got long arms. And Spider was a very skinny kid, and he had these long arms. And he came in wrestling with these fellers in the gym. Next thing they're calling him Spider.

The author: "Spider showed natural talent?"

Oh, did he ever. He hadn't turned 17 when he fought Filipino, Pablo ['Speedy'] *Dado. They bought Dado out to fight four fights. He fought Billy McAlister, and Billy Grimes, a triple champion, and the third bloke. Spider wasn't 17, and he took Dado to a close decision at Rushcutters Bay. He was an old welter, this bloke Pablo, and Spider took him the full distance. Dado's next fight was with 'Newsboy' Brown, for the world championship. So that rated Spider not a bad fighter.*

The author: "And Spider won the featherweight title?"

Spider fought Tenny Moroney from Kurri Kurri for the Australian featherweight title. He stopped Moroney in the third round. Brother Bill was behind him. Bill told me the police wouldn't let them leave the stadium until Moroney came round. Spider hit him that hard in the solar plexus. Spider was a good puncher, a fast mover. He'd go for a clinch, get the head over the shoulder. He had elastic arms, he'd smack them in the mouth like that (reverse behind his own back). He loved to clown around in the ring, get behind his opponent, tap him on the shoulder.

Blanche remembered a handsome Spider Roach[63]: "He could do the satch-a-mo[64], tap dance, ballroom dancing and was the ladies' favourite. He went into a big store, talking to the girl: "What would you like?" "I want to buy a full-length bathtub. Could you model it for me?" He sold metho and whiskey to the Yanks at Cairns for five pounds a bottle (uncorked). He didn't drink when he won the title. Fought for 200 pounds a fight. First he'd 'blue it up' with his mates. His wife was Marjie. When he bounced into the ring, they'd play "Marjie, I'm always dreamen' of you, Marjie". When he won the NSW title at 17, they flashed it on the Cinesound News at the Newcastle flicks," said Blanche. Spider used to park Blanche in the sweat-box, so she wouldn't wander away. "Mum used to knit all his beautiful Fair Isle sweaters, sew his green silk boxing shorts and stitch a big gold spider in the corner."

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[1] **Editors' note**: The final poll declaration of the 1935 NSW election shows the Communist candidate for Bankstown, Patrick McHenry, received by far the highest percentage (19.3%) vote of any Communist candidate in the State. Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Results_of_the_1935_New_South_Wales_state_election_(A-K)#Bulli Examination of incomplete polling stations results for the electorate of Bulli (Illawarra Mercury, Friday 17 May 1935) shows that the Wombarra station gave McHenry by far his highest percentage vote (33%) of any station, next being Fairy Meadow at 25%. "The Mercury" newspaper also commented on the "heavy communist" vote. McHenry is noted in Chapter 6 as a staunch ally of Ted.

[2] **Editors' note**: Wasting disease can be caused by an extremely low energy intake from malnutrition or nutrient losses due to infection, or a combination of low intake and high loss. Infections and conditions associated with wasting disease include tuberculosis.

[3] Edmonds, R. "In Storm and Struggle: A History of the Communist Party in Newcastle, 1920-1940", Newcastle: R. Edmonds, 1991.

[4] Evatt, H. V. "Australian Labour Leader: the Story of W. A. Holman and the Labour Movement", Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1954, p.277, pp.340-341.

[5] Ibid., p.277.

[6] The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) also known as the 'Wobblies'. **Editors' note**: "In Australia, no organisation opposed the outbreak of the Great War as promptly and vociferously as the IWW." "The Industrial Workers of the World was established in Australia first in Sydney in October 1907, two years after the founding of the IWW in the United States in June 1905 in Chicago" … "the IWW was a revolutionary industrial unionist organisation." Burgmann, V. http://links.org.au/node/1104

[7] Originally, the "Treason Act" (1351).

[8] Cain, F. "The Wobblies at War: a History of the IWW and the Great War in Australia", Spectrum Publications, Melbourne, 1993, p.205.

[9] Turner, I. "Sydney's Burning", Sydney: Alpha Books, 1967, p.38.

[10] Oath of the first AIF.

[11] **Editors' note**: The Eureka Oath comes from Irish-Australian leader Peter Fintan Lalor's address to the Eureka miners at the Eureka Rebellion (1854): "We swear by the Southern Cross to stand truly by each other and fight to defend our rights and liberties." Fighting for a foreign king was not 'standing by each other'.

[12] Just as Matt's son, Ted, and his mates would later be lashed, vilified, and smeared in the Tabloid Press in the 1940s and 1950s for carrying out successful industrial action.

[13] Boote, H. E. "A Fool's Talk", Sydney: The Worker Trustees, 1915.

[14] Turner, I. op. cit., p. 38.

[15] Tom Barker, the Editor of "Direct Action" an IWW newspaper — gaoled.

[16] Turner, I. op. cit. p.38.

[17] 'Thimble and pea': a street gambling game. The 'punter' has to guess under which thimble is the hidden pea. It is also a common vernacular phrase for barefaced trickery and robbery.

[18] **Editors' note**: Alfred Foster (1886-1962) plays an important role in Ted Roach's story. As a young lawyer in Melbourne, he was a prominent opponent of Australia's involvement in the First World War and strident anti-conscriptionist, having become a socialist. After the War he worked as a trade union official, later becoming President of the Food Preservers' Union while returning to industrial relations law. In the 1920s, he acted as a union advocate and represented both NSW and Queensland Labor Governments before the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration. In 1927, he was appointed a judge of the Victorian County Court. In 1944, he was appointed as a judge on the CCAC and in 1945 conducted a major inquiry into the stevedoring industry which brought him into direct involvement with the WWF and its leaders. In 1949, and despite his union background, he gaoled 8 union officials who defied the Chifley Government's emergency laws against assisting strikers during a period of industrial turbulence, notably the coal strike. He played a prominent role from the Arbitration Court bench in the 1950 Basic Wage case.

[19] "Barrister Foster's Banned Speech" **Editors' note**: "BARRISTER CHARGED – SOCIALIST HALL SPEECH": "In the District Court yesterday, before Mr. S. J. Goldsmith, P.M., the hearing was commenced of the cases against Alfred W. Foster. barrister, who is charged under the Unlawful Associations Act 1916 with having, at Melbourne, on July 29, encouraged the taking of human life, and, also with having encouraged the destruction of property; and under the War Precautions Act 1915 of having attempted to cause disaffection amongst the civilian population … Mr. H. W. Bryant said that the three charges arose out of the same speech delivered by defendant in the Socialists' Hall, Exhibition Street, on Sunday night, July 29. Defendant was an educated man, but he had apparently associated himself with the Socialist Party, and on the date in question had delivered a lecture on "The Unlawful Associations Act" — the very act under which he was now charged… During his speech Foster had said that he was a revolutionary and a rebel and although he preferred peaceful means he would not stop at taking human life or destroying property if it became necessary. Defendant had also said that if the Socialists' revolution would be furthered by boiling Billy Hughes in oil he would face the doing of it; but he did not think anything would be achieved by doing that as they would have other and blacker "Billys" in the shape of "Billy" Watt and "Billy" Irvine." "The Argus", Melbourne, 12.9.1917, p.9.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Isaacs, S. Australian National Archives: SP186/1, SL58445 Part 1: Waterside Workers Federation and Edward Charles Roach, Contempt proceedings (2 envelopes) Box 172.

[22] "Barrister Foster's Banned Speech", pp.7-8.

[23] "The Government could also act without Parliament in proclaiming the Crimes Act. This was proclaimed in March 1950, against rolling strikes on the Brisbane waterfront. Section 30J of the Act provides that the Governor-General may make a proclamation to the effect that he is of opinion that serious industrial disturbance exists, prejudicing, or threatening, trade or commerce with other countries, or among the States. Until the proclamation is revoked it is an offence to incite, aid, urge, or encourage the taking part in, or continuance of, a strike in relation to interstate or overseas transport of goods or passengers." "SMH", 10.11.1954, p.1.

[24] Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1917_Australian_general_strike

[25] Hearn, M. "Working Lives: A History of the Australian Railways Union (NSW Branch)", Hale & Iremonger, 1990, p.29.

[26] McLagan, A. "Newcastle Herald", N 114/1762. **Editors' note**: in this context, 'black' meant not to be handled by Union members.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid. On 31 August 1917, Merv Flanagan, a picketer, was shot dead on Pyrmont Bridge Rd in Sydney by Reg T. Wearne, the son of a member of the NSW Parliament. Harry Williams was wounded. No evidence was given against Wearne, at Newtown Police Court on 8 September, and he was released.

[29] Blanche Roach to author.

[30] **Editors' note**: in the original text the words are "cross-mate" — meaning unknown.

[31] Bill Bird, Seamen's Union of Australia (SUA).

[32] lilywhites: 1917 strikers who stayed out to the finish. Hearn, Mark. op. cit., p.30. They wore white carnations.

[33] "(a) neither the Communist Party, or a branch thereof, may be or become affiliated with the ALP (b) no member of the CP may be or become a member of the ALP". 1 August 1946, P. J. Kennelly PCMLMSS 5021 5 (76).

[34] Reports from the USSR were about thriving construction, and spectacular industrial growth, e.g. in 1934, Jack Wall, an Australian "best shock worker", in a Moscow factory, penned a letter to Australian comrades and workers. Letters like this confirmed Australian Communists' belief in the USSR, and their idea that the USSR was the first potential Socialist State. Any reports about Stalin's police state and dictatorship were simply dismissed as being "slanders of the Soviet Union".

Jack Wall wrote: "Mere pen and paper are inadequate to produce the intoxication experienced by our senses as the unconquerable forces of the world's first proletarian Republic passed, in review, before their glorious leaders, the Pol Bureau headed by Comrade Stalin. Being elected a best shock worker, from our shop, I had the good fortune to receive, as a premium, a ticket to view the May Day Demonstration from the Red Square, and believe me it was a premium I'd not exchange for the sum total of all that have ever been granted.

"Then commenced the red crested torrent of Moscow's millions of toilers to pour through the Square. Forty, fifty, sixty abreast they march and the eye is dazzled with the scarlet blaze of the tasselled banners. The keynote of this year's demonstration is "Abundance". Moscow's proletariat and collective farmers from surrounding districts seem bent on revealing to the world what 17 years of Soviet power have brought to them. Standing here, and viewing as in a kaleidoscope, the achievements of 17 years of Soviet Power paraded by, and contrasting it with the conditions that the past 17 years have witnessed in Capitalist countries, one wonders how long it will be before we will be witnessing a similar spectacle - say from the GPO steps in Martin Place (Sydney)". Wall, Jack. Moscow, Red Square, 4 May 1934. MLM SS 5021 P/CC ACC 7216 3/76.

[35] **Editors' note**: bogeyman — an imaginary evil spirit or being, used to frighten children.

[36] **Editors' note**: 'knocked-off' — stole.

[37] **Editors' note**: Vigoro — a team sport, played mainly by women in Australia that originally combined elements of cricket and tennis. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vigoro

[38] **Editors' note**: a 'holder up' would hold the rivets in place (with a long handled curved hot anvil/hammer) while they were hammered from the other side by the riveter.

[39] Pick the winner(s).

[40] **Editors' note**: 'goen' the bag': pinching money from the fruit sales bag to gamble on boxing.

[41] *If they stayed at home, they couldn't get the dole, they'd have to be fed from the home purse.*

'Jumpen' the rattler': jumping onto moving freight trains to travel around Australia, from one dole depot to the next.

[42] **Editors' note**: "A Starr-Bowkett Society was a co-operative, non-profit financial institution that provided interest-free loans to its members and operated on the principle of mutual self-help, as espoused in 1843 by Dr T. E. Bowkett … they no longer exist." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Starr-Bowkett_Society

[43] Edmonds, R. op. cit., p.47.

[44] Edmonds, R. op. cit., p.47.

[45] 'flummed': stumbled across, fluked, chanced upon.

[46] Miller's Guide — Australian annual of sports statistics.

[47] bob: shilling, twelve pence

[48] Unemployed Workers Movement. **Editors' note**: the UWM was an initiative of Communist Party members during the 1920s and 1930s across many industrialised countries including Britain and the United States. Movements were organised in different countries by grass-roots Communist activists from 1921 but recruited members rapidly during the Great Depression as unemployment rose dramatically. Branches of the UWM were established by members of the CPA from 1929 in all major Australian cities, industrial and mining regions like the Hunter Valley and the Illawarra, and regional ports like Mackay in Queensland where the young Ted Roach became UWM secretary. By 1935, the UWM claimed over 60,000 members across Australia. Local branches became well-known for organising local resistances against evictions of working-class people from rented housing when they were unable to pay rent because of unemployment. The UWM also pressured local authorities for improvements to emergency food provision schemes and organised 'dole strikes' by unemployed workers refusing to perform obligatory 'work for the dole' on state public works programs until the unemployment benefit was raised.

[49] Department of Labour and Industry.

[50] Williams, V. "The Years of Big Jim", Sydney: Lone Hand Press, 1975, p.9. The author wishes to thank Vic, a Wharfie and poet, for going to a lot of trouble in writing a detailed letter to him about his biography of Jim. Vic Williams' book mentions Ted Roach but in his letter, Vic told the author that he did not know Ted Roach was the Wharfies' Organiser. This would put anyone at a disadvantage in writing a book about the history of the Waterside Workers Federation. The Wharfies' Conference, Council, and Executive Minutes, and the pages of "The Maritime Worker" record Ted Roach's monumental contribution to the building of the Waterside Workers Federation.

[51] **Editors' note**: 'bite' — Australian slang. "To put the bite on someone – (ask for a loan of money, or a favour)". Howard, P. "Oz Slang", Rose Bay: Jim Coroneos, 1997, p.5.

[52] **Editors' note**: throughout this book, the branch of the Waterside Workers Federation (WWF) based at Port Kembla NSW, the major industrial port south of Sydney, is referred to as both 'Port Kembla' Branch and 'South Coast' Branch. From the early 1930s, the official name of the Branch was the WWF South Coast Branch, a name used in most official documents including those of the Waterside Workers Federation itself. This name is used most commonly in the text and referencing, but 'Port Kembla Branch' is sometimes used colloquially in the text, including by Ted Roach, to refer to the same entity.

[53] 'warbs': Australian slang for malodorous, dirty, insignificant persons.

[54] Behaving in a lazy, indolent or clumsy way.

[55] **Editors' note**: 'coppers' — slang for police.

[56] *On the track we had different dole tickets, with different names, at different dole stations. The diploma was a many-sided diploma in the University of Adversity. Only conviction ever was jumping the rattler. I was caught just going out of Rockhampton, threw me back in the giggle-house. I remember one of those little Queensland lock-ups. There were five of us there. The sergeant's wife made a sponge cake. We cut the cards to see who'd go out for the morning tea.*

[57] US Government Document NSC 58.

[58] Sir Charles Spry became Director-General of ASIO in 1950 at the invitation of Prime Minister Robert Menzies. **Editors note**: ASIO was set up in 1949 by the Chifley Labor Government as Australia's national security and intelligence agency. The new Liberal-Country Party Coalition led by Robert Menzies, a fierce anti-communist, upgraded its status and powers of surveillance to collect intelligence domestically. Its first tasks involved raids on Communist Party of Australia offices and, in 1951, conducting the so-called Petrov affair about espionage by the Soviet Union in Australia.

[59] Sir Henry Armand 'Black Harry' Bland was the head of the Department of Labor and National Service, and an architect of the "Most Secret" "Operation Alien" plan to attempt to destroy the Waterside Workers Federation of Australia.

[60] Slang: a 'quid'.

[61] McGuire's Gym, Newcastle, NSW.

[62] 'caulies': cauliflower ears — a hazard of boxing and football.

[63] "Spider Roach was a Newcastle boy, started boxing in 1927. Won a schoolboy tourney, then went on to become State and Australian Feather Champion — a brilliant boxer, fought the best," Bob Power, Newcastle boxing historian, in a letter to the author.

[64] 'satch-a-mo': nickname of Louis 'Satchmo' Armstrong.

Chapter 3
BACK TO NEWCASTLE, 1931-1937

"My memories of Ted were his loyalty to the Party, his boundless energy, and tremendous good humour."
Vic Bird[1]

Ted had joined the CPA *in Mackay, around 1930.* He *arrived in Newcastle* early in 1931. He *pitched his one-man tent* at the back of a shut down, billiard saloon in Adamstown. He asked the owner to rent the saloon for a bob a week, "to provide some entertainment for unemployed youth in the town".[2] Vic Bird recalled that Vic's father and Ted's father started a debating club — "to educate us youngsters in debating and public speaking. Spider Roach and I were regulars". *I set to work in the Communist Party branch, selling the "Workers' Weekly". I joined the UWM and the MM [Militant Minority Movement][3]. Bill Orr, Miners' Federation, was MM General Secretary. I was the local Secretary. Within three or four months, I was on the Section Committee of the Communist Party, the District Secretary of the Militant Minority Movement and District Secretary of the UWM. "District Secretary" meant (from) Newcastle to the (Queensland) border.*

Within six months, Ted was on the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) District Committee with Doug Gillies, and Harry Wells, and made a member of the Newcastle Communist Secretariat. Ted delivered the Newcastle report at the CPA's 11th Congress in 1935.[4] *I had a pretty rich experience as a young fellow: Secretary of the MM, and the Unemployed, and responsible for work in the BHP, and Lysaght's (factory), Secretary of the CPA, and responsible for Trade Union work. All jobs at the same time. I'd earned my spurs everywhere, with the unemployed, I'd earned my spurs as an organiser.* Ted also wrote and printed "Wharfies", on a flatbed he made from an old fruit case. *I got old Merle to help me. I'd be ink from a****le to breakfast time.* Following CPA directives, he painted slogans up on fences: *I painted "Workers Unite" up on this bloody paling fence, in creosote. You can't get it off. And this bloke's crying about some bastard putting the bloody creosote on his fence, and I'm up there commiserating with him and I'm the bastard put it up there in the first place.*

Ted was *charged with the job* of strengthening Communist Trade Union organisation in the BHP and Lysaght's factory, along with *old 'Alf' Buckley* who became General Secretary of the Boilermakers' Union. Lysaght's[5] was being *kick-started by a whole lot of workers brought out from England.* Ted made contacts in Lysaght's: *Charlie Morgan was my first recruit. Frank Campbell, Bill Hopkins, and Charlie Morgan, they finished up the three leaders of the Ironworkers' Union in Newcastle. I got them into an MM Branch. We brought a bloke called Denford in, a left-wing ALP face, but not a Communist.* There was a *strike brewing* at Lysaght's and Ted co-ordinated the organisation from outside with his Lysaght's contacts. Ted was following, precisely, Party policy and instructions: "The Party has industrial work to do and, in the conduct of this work, on the basis of our united front tactic, we attempt to build a broader, non-party organisation, into which we draw workers who can be won for our line, in regard to specific issues, hence the MM."[6] *I was only a kid and I led this struggle at Lysaght's from outside and lead* (the) *May Day* (march) *at the same time with Harry Wells and Doug Gillies.* Bob Cram confirmed Ted's work, when he reported to the Central Committee of the CPA (CC-CPA), in 1936: "We have, (in the steel works), a Party unit of 13 members. To show that our comrades, in the unit, are doing work, it is a fact that, over the past two and a half months, over 200 members have been recruited into the Union. The situation is due, not primarily to the Port Kembla dispute, but due to the improved Party Trade Union work".[7]

The Lysaght's strike was successful and the striking Lysaght's workers and their families turned out for the first Newcastle May Day march. Ted saw the Miners' President, Jimmy Jack, and miners come out in force. *I said: If we hadn't had Lysaght's, it would've been a flop. "No", he said, "there were a thousand people there". See all these people and their families were out there, and they looked good. Edgar Ross[8] gave Lysaght's the best banner and the best turn out. It was at Number Two Sportsground. See I did all these jobs, all in one. I was earning my spurs everywhere. I was earning my spurs as an organiser.[9] A number of Unions had alterations in their award to ensure they took part in May Day but*

after 1932, 1933, and 1934, the pollies got to work and destroyed May Day again, taking it back to Eight Hour Day in October. The pollies didn't want May Day as a real workers' day, as a demonstration. They had always used it to advertise Boss's goods, brewery horses, brewery wagons, and Christ-knows-what.[10]

TED ROACH JOINS THE WHARFIES

I used to go down to the wharf selling "Workers' Weeklies" and I met an old fellow called Tim Foley. Tim used to transfer from north to south, following the seasons, from the sugar to the apples, from the wheat to the meat, but the days of his transferring were nearly over.

The author: "How would you describe yourselves as a group?"

Old Tim and I? Old Tim Foley was a real good old militant. Matt and I were members of the Communist Party. And I [was] *the leader of the Militant Minority as well.*

Ted was *held out* of a new intake of Wharfie members into Newcastle Branch. But Ted had put his name down *between two heavyweight pugilists, 'Starlight' and 'Burglar' Jordan*, who both got in. So why hadn't Ted's nomination been accepted by Branch Secretary, Forbes? *There was such a stinko over my nomination. There were arguments inside, I heard them from outside, about nominations* [that] *had to put me in their order of lodgment. Old Tim said to me: "Are you prepared to front Forbes* [the Secretary]*?" "Yes." We went in and fronted them and, at the next meeting, you should've heard Old Tim Foley. Tim was a good speaker. He sliced lumps off them. He and I used to laugh and get up and sandwich the bastards* (laughs). *I'll never forget one of the old a***-lickers, he got up and said: "Well, I better have my say before I get sandwiched by the opposition!"* (laughs). Alec Forbes asked Arthur Turley (then the Waterside Workers Federation Secretary) and the Wharfies' Federal Committee of Management (COM) for a ruling about Ted becoming a Wharfie. *I had to fight my bloody way into the Federation! Forbes said he didn't know why I was held out, but he'd seen me down there selling workers' papers. But he couldn't hold me out and three or four months later another batch went in and I joined the Newcastle branch of the Wharfies in April 1934. We caught Forbes out, on two occasions, doing things he shouldn't have done. On both occasions, he said: "F**k you all, I'm finished with you"— resigned on the spot, and then the bastard came back and re-contested the ballot.*

"Pugs and Plug-Uglies"

The author: "What was Newcastle like in 1934?"

George Bass was the Secretary of the Newcastle Trades and Labor Council (T&LC). *He was ultra right-wing. He had all his thugs there to keep the T&LC under the control of the Right. They had young 'Bot' Eagles intimidating militants. Bot was an up and coming pug. He followed me out to the toilet, and I thought it was 'on'. He said a few words to me but I squared it up and got away. Then 'Bluey' Jones, a boilermaker from Cardiff Workshop in Newcastle, who was the Australian lightweight champion and left-wing politically, read the riot act to Bot and these plug-uglies*[11]*, that Bass was using them, and pulled them away. Bot got into the ring with Spider. Spider gave him an unmerciful, bloody hiding. Opened up all his mouth on the inside. Spider opened favourite. I had all my money on Spider. I only had a few bob. That'll teach him to go intimidating militants at the Trades Hall.*

"I'll Be In It"

The Newcastle Branch were mainly good blokes with a bad right-wing leadership. It was a good training ground that Newcastle Branch, so the plug-uglies didn't worry us much at all. The brother, Matt, and old Tim Foley were carrying on in their meeting and these thugs'd come plonk in between our legs with arms over our knees like that — a lot of intimidation. They were always going to 'put it on', but the Roaches had a bit of a reputation and the plug-uglies knew they wouldn't have it all their own way. Still, they tried to organise the Great Knock Down of the Reds and they approached one bloke, Roy Burns, who fought for the lightweight title: "Will you be in it, Roy?" "Yes," said Roy, "I'll be in it, but I won't be on your side".

The author: “So Forbes was a one-man band who ran the Newcastle Wharfie branch?”
An ultra right-winger and had a lot of bloody thugs around him. He’d stand up on the platform with the foreman picking up and scrape a stick along the corrugated iron.
The author: “That was the Wharfies’ pick up?”
Yes, and the Wharfies’d rush out this door, gallop along there and run up around the back and he’d shout: “You! You! and You!” You’d see them dragging along like slaves in a bloody slave mart, their eyes pleading for a bloody job. It gave me the shits. I wanted to stretch an invisible rope across, and trip ‘em all up on their bloody faces.
The author: “Did Forbes have a roster in Newcastle?”
*They called it a “roster”. It was a roster’s a*****le. Out they’d all go and drag round, and there might be a dozen left. So, they’d go round again. And there might be ten left, so that ten would go round again and back in. Then they’d go out again. This is how it went on. It wasn’t a bloody roster.*

Ted continued: *There was a Wharfie laughing about seeing a foreman in his pyjamas, when he got home from work. He was a little, dumpy bloke, and Tyson, the foreman’s, a long, skinny bloke, six foot six.*
The author: “That was sex for a job?”
Yes, and he said: “When I got home, there’s Dick in my pyjamas. Jeez, he looked a funny sight” — and the bastard’s laughing about it. And they had coloured wool on mug-handles under the bar. Each foreman had his own coloured wool. Money for the foremen, his own mug, his own pub. Argh, that went on a lot.

Newcastle had two branches of the Permanents and Casuals (Ps&Cs): one on the Hunter River established in 1917 and the other set up at Lee Wharf in 1928. These were the scab Unions formed during the two big strikes. *We proposed their inclusion in the Union, although it was unpopular with a lot of the thugs, and anarchists, even good ALP blokes, they’re screaming — “We won’t work with scabs, scabby bastards”. Every time Tim and I got discussions moving, the Harveys, or some of them, would attack one of the Ps&Cs blokes and throw their bike in the harbour and kill off all the development.*
The author: “Why were the Ps&Cs left outside the Union?”
It was the 1928 strike and the Bruce-Page Government’s Transport Workers Act.[12] *The TWA meant that anyone who bought a licence could be a Wharfie. Those who were on strike didn’t get a licence; those that got in paid a shilling. These were the Permanents and Casuals. You didn’t have to be a member of the Union. Jehovah, Jesus Christ, and all his disciples could come in, pay a shilling and be wharf labourers. And then if you said boo to a goose, a policeman could demand if you had your licence with you.*
The author: “On the wharves?”
Anywhere!

1935 SEAMEN’S STRIKE

During the 1935 Seamen’s Strike, Ted was living in a boarding house in Newcastle with Alf Buckley and Harry Wells. *We bought this great big tin of prunes for five pounds, and ate prunes for breakfast, dinner and tea. We refused to front the pick-up because they would’ve put us on interstate vessels, which were on strike. “Deep Sea” wasn’t involved. Old Tim and I knew they’d pluck us for interstate, which was scabbery. I’ll never forget the President of the Branch at the time, big, loud voice. He took a job on a Patrick’s ship, interstate. One of the ‘volunteers’ on board, a new chum, was fumbling in the gangway with the nets and this big, loud-mouthed President, despite the fact that he was scabbing, said: “You shouldn’t be doing that!” And the ‘volunteer’ turned on him, and said: “Neither should you”.* We wanted to put on a show at Newcastle stadium for the seamen on strike. Bluey Jones said: “Ted, I will provide the boxers and wrestlers for this event.” And we raised money for the seamen. We did it, as little blokes, down below.

Reg Franklin

When (the Seamen's Secretary) *Joe Keenan died, I marched up and down Stockton Beach talking to Reg Franklin and convinced him, finally, to run for the local secretary. He ran and won the position in March 1936. We examined the people in Newcastle, the Party examined the people, and we agreed Franklin was the best candidate.*[13] *When Matt and I left Newcastle to go to Kembla, old Tim Foley set out to do what I was doing and 'Starlight', one of the thugs, knocked him down, an old man and not well. In the war (1939-45), I met Starlight in Melbourne, when he was in the Air Force. He said: "Ted, I knocked the wrong man down. I should've knocked Alec Forbes down".*

Lenin's contention that factories were the 'fortresses' of the Communist Party was a number one priority for the Australian Communist Party. Party cells were formed in the factories. They were in constant touch with the wishes, feelings, and grievances of rank and file workers. Factory bulletins were handed out at the gates, written in a popular, street talk style. Communist journals like the "Communist Review" were written in the boring jargon of boiled down Marxism - Leninism, and Stalinism. Workers always found it hard to identify with this kind of writing. The Communist weekly "Tribune", which replaced "Workers' Weekly", swung between a popular style and the heavy hand of Party sloganising and preaching which Party bureaucrats called "politics". Factory bulletins had popular names like "The Retort", "The Diff", "The Honey Pot", "The Pit Light", "Wharfie", "The Magnet", "In the Running", "Crystal Clear", "Bronze Worker", "Metters News" and many more. Now and then, there would be a change in "Tribune" to a popular style which would be welcomed by readers but, always, a reaction somewhere among the Party leaders brought a retreat to the old, boring, preaching, style of presentation; for example here's a Central Committee-CPA kiss of death for "Tribune" in 1950: "A Communist newspaper must be written for the Party members, and more advanced workers. It must convey the fundamental political concepts of the Party, and apply these on all current questions. It must inculcate hatred of the class enemy, and stir the desire for action against this hated enemy. We need more of the political worker, and less of the journalistic touch with the Tribune."[14]

The factory belts of Sydney and Melbourne, 'the Red Belts'[15], were well organised by the Communist Party. Party members would stand in freezing dawns handing out "The Retort" or "The Diff", selling "Tribunes", fielding abuse, and exchanging good-humoured banter with their numerous supporters. Many of the cream of the working class, and the best and brightest of professional workers, joined the Communist Party in the hope of ending exploitation, racism and injustice. They devoted their energies and their finances to that life-long struggle. Such a one was Ted Roach. Revolutionary rhetoric and Communist Party jargon, however, could be easily learned. A clever police 'plant' could do this, speak when spoken to, always say the right or acceptable thing and be deemed "a good Party member", even "a splendid type". A worker who found the catechism of revolutionary jargon and its constant repetition to be something of a mysterious rigmarole, might speak forcefully in the vernacular and be accused of being "uncouth and degenerate", even branded as "unsuitable for Party membership". Spot judgments and opinions, even off-the-cuff remarks, by senior Communists about individuals could become the standard and unexamined attitude of the Communist Party leadership towards that person, for example, Ted Roach. Sam Aarons' comments on a member of an Australian delegation to Leningrad are an example: "The only sore spot is the Wonthaggi man, who is certainly very impressed, but he is an uncouth and degenerate type".[16] A severe, damaging, and subjective put down!

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[1] Vic Bird, Communist, SUA (Seamen's Union of Australia) in a letter to the author, 9 December 1995. **Editors' note**: The SUA was founded in the 1890s but absorbed in the 1990s.

[2] Ibid.

[3] The Militant Minority Movement brought together trade unionists whose activities were directed to the development of unions into militant, class-conscious organisations. Jack McPhillips obituary, Champion of workers' rights, "Sydney Morning Herald", 1.9.2004. Source: www.smh.com.au/national/champion-of-workers-rights-20040901-gdjnoq

[4] Edmonds, R. op. cit., p.165.

[5] **Editors' note**: John Lysaght (Australia) Pty Ltd was set up in the 1880s in Australia as a subsidiary of British corrugated iron manufacturer John Lysaght Ltd, later establishing galvanised steelplate and steel rolling works next to steelworks at Lithgow, Newcastle and, in 1936, next to the new steelworks at Port Kembla. Commonly referred to locally as Lysaght's, it was absorbed by Australian steelmaker BHP Ltd in 1979.

[6] DC 3 MLMSS 50211 Add on 1936 5 (76).

[7] Bob Cram CPA-PB April 1936. MLMSS 5021 Add-on 1936 p.26.

[8] **Editors' note**: Edgar Argent Ross was an Australian journalist, trade unionist and communist organiser. Ross published several works of labour history.

[9] May Day: "The CPA did not, however, come to play a dominant part in its organisation until 1934, when Ted Roach and other Communists gained a majority on the May Day Committee", Edmonds, R. op. cit, p.116. These Newcastle May Day marches had "dozens of floats, and hundreds of participants", ibid., p.165.

[10] Edmonds, R. op. cit. In 1934 Ted was the CPA candidate for Hamilton Council, Newcastle, and received 203 votes.

[11] **Editors' note**: plug-ugly — an extremely tough and ferocious fighter who could give a sound beating to an opponent. Also, the Plug Uglies were an American Nativist criminal street gang, sometimes referred to loosely as a politicial club, in Baltimore from 1854-1865.

[12] Led by arch conservatives in the Bruce-Page Government, the 1928 Australian Federal Parliament, after an all night sitting, voted 30 to 12 to pass the Transport Workers Act (TWA) in anticipation of a worker upsurge against extreme austerity measures. The Act gave the Government the power to declare specific ports as requiring waterside workers to have a licence to do any work. The Government could then revoke a worker's licence if they refused to follow "lawful orders". A TWA licence cost one shilling per annum, the same as a dog licence! So workers called it the "Dog Licence Act" or "Dog Collar Act".

[13] Reg Franklin: "He never joined the CPA, but was a militant who was close to the Party. In March 1936, he was elected Newcastle Branch Secretary of the Union (Seamen). This was, after Sydney, the largest branch in Australia, and its support for the militant faction in the Australian Seamen's Union was crucial in the eventual victory of E. V. Elliott and other Communists," Edmonds, R. op. cit, p.135.

Author's note: Ted met Jewish author Walter Kauffman. *Walter Kauffman and I were good mates. I've got his autographed book "Voices in the Storm"* — "To E. Roach, a true friend of Walter Kauffman".

[14] "Tribune", 1509/1 No.36, 30.8.1950 p.21.

[15] Hal Alexander, one of the few living CC-CPA members with detailed knowledge of CPA history. **Editors' note**: Since the original writing of this book, Hal has sadly passed away.

Working class housing surrounded the main factory belts until the suburbanisation of housing during the 1950-70 economic boom.

[16] CPA records XII Plenum, 1934, MLMSS 5021 4. Leningrad 26.5.1934.

Part 2

Port Kembla 1937-1942

Chapter 4
PORT KEMBLA: TED ROACH AS BRANCH SECRETARY WWF

"The question of leadership is a very difficult one for us to solve."
R. 'Dick' Dixon, President, Communist Party of Australia, 10 April 1936[1]

"We all feel somewhat disturbed with the position that has developed over recent months. The decline in press sales, the chronic financial position, and also the poor recruiting to the Party. We can, of course, record an increase in the influence of the Party, as far as the Trade Unions are concerned, but hardly any growth of the Party."
R. Dixon, 6 August 1938[2]

"Victory has many fathers."
Fidel Castro

Olive Elizabeth 'Wyck' and Ted Roach met *about 1935* in Newcastle and were married in the Glebe Registry Office on 28 April in 1936. Yvonne, their first baby, was born during the *Dalfram* Pig Iron dispute. Wyck worked hard on Party work and solidarity with the Spanish people during the Spanish civil war. Ted's sister Blanche said: "She was behind him all the way. Without her, he couldn't have done it. I remember the first time I saw her, with her red hair cut short, wearing men's shirt and pants, on Ted's sidecar[3]. Didn't worry her. You'd never see him cry, he was so strong, but at her funeral he broke down and burst into tears."

About the end of 1936 with Port Kembla developing new industry[4], and a new branch building there, I decided to transfer to Port Kembla. In November I arrived in Port Kembla with my brother Matt. Matt had fought ten rounders, but he wasn't in Bill's class, a big left-hook man, and Bill wasn't anywhere near Spider's class. They then had the cargo hook in single gear, whizzing in and out of the hatch. Matt and I were both victimised and couldn't get a job from the 'Bulls'[5]. They used untested gear and overweight slings. The Bull system was a corrupt, inequitable system where the biggest and strongest worker got the most and easiest shifts, and the rest had to take what was left over, or bribe as best they could, for a job. Union activists, militants, and known Communists got what was left, if anything; for example, Townsville was a Bull's paradise — "Is there a port in Australia, where bulls and bosses are better catered for? Where else can the bull, with a 'tenner' in, brazenly top-up the work, by snatching a job, from a mate, who hasn't earned a shilling? Now I await the bellows of the bulls, and the snarls of the heelers".[6]

In the 1930s, the Bosses used a split Wharfies' Union, a smashed Trade Union movement, the threat of the Dog Collar (Transport Workers) Act and the twin whips of hunger and humiliation to increase the size of slings, to speed up, to force all night (24-hour) shifts, called 'dark uns', to ignore safety, and have desperate and hungry men, backing up for a second, and even third, 24-hour shift. When Ted arrived in Port Kembla there were four stevedores (cargo handling companies) in the port: Sloan, Wingate, Dodd and Lowe. George Sloan, brother of the largest stevedore, was the Wharfies' Union Secretary; his brother 'Weary' Sloan, and the sons of Wingate and Harold Dodd, were on the Wharfies' Union Executive. Robert Dodd and Perc Sloan had audited the Union books from 3 February 1931 to 14 February 1939 (when it was resolved that chartered auditors would be appointed).[7] *They had a nice little tie-up*. The Bulls' sons owned table-top lorries and charged Wharfies two bob a trip to take them from Wollongong, out to the job, and back. *They'd leave jobs short-handed, when they were shortenen' down, to bring them home. It was all a big racket. The Bulls were earning four pound a week. I had nothing. We were living in a room, 16 bob a week, with one gas stove. As soon as you put a penny in, every bastard would rush up with their pots*. *They'd sit on these lorries with chains and shovels, and gear in the middle, legs hanging all round these open tabletop lorries. Rain! They'd be like drowned rats! No cover from the bloody rain. On the job, they'd work with bags round their shoulders, slippery underfoot, and twenty-four hour shifts. Well, we set out to alter all that.* As Ted Roach told of these shocking conditions, his old, half-darkened eyes, would see the picture of these degraded workers again, and his indignation would flow out with his narrative, his voice hushed, his mobile hands and arms, moving and dancing, like a boxer shadow sparring.

THAT WAS BRUTAL WORK

Just imagine what it was like shoveling lead antimony; a small piece was all you could lift on the end of the shovel, up to the various ores, cokes, coal, and then handling lead or spelter or pig iron. The lead was 110-pound bars, and they demanded 10 in each sling. The slings were coming in and out fast. There were only six men down below, three men to each sling. That was brutal work. And workers had to supply their own shovel and footplate. A normal pig would weigh 40 or 50 pounds, but they had double pigs. Conditions were most brutal. It wasn't long before we were able to force some alteration in the size of the bars of lead, and we cut the pigs in half. In 1937, Ted and Matt would get a job when all Union labour was picked up: *We were picked up before outsiders. We were No.1 Casuals. There were a trickle of transfers coming through, and gradually we built up a little bit of strength, with these transferees.*

The Minute Books of the Port Kembla [South Coast] Branch of the Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia tell Ted's story, meeting by meeting, first in the writing of the 'Preso'[8] 'Big Bill' Brodie and after November 1937, in Ted's own handwriting. The books up until January 1939 are available, but books for 1939, 1940, 1941 and 1942 cannot be found. Len Richardson writes in "The Bitter Years: Wollongong During the Great Depression"[9] that he read the WWF South Coast Branch Minutes Books (1939-1942), which detailed the exceptional achievements of Roach, and South Coast Branch members, in the WWF office of the Trade Union Centre in Wollongong. But where are these Minute Books now? In "War on the Waterfront: Menzies, Japan and the pig iron dispute", Rupert Lockwood says he is aware of the "destruction of so many records".[10] But he does not notice that the trail of destruction is a trail of destruction of documents related to Ted Roach. *The Minute Books were in such detail. They showed how we won all these conditions and won them on the job. How we set up programs of immediate demands and waged campaigns every day. No sooner we'd roll up one campaign than we'd start another. It was continuous, it never stopped, how we won conditions in Kembla that were only a pipe-dream in other ports.* Ted shook with the helpless fury of an 85-year-old-man who has just learnt that the Wharfies' South Coast Branch Minute Books (1939-1942) had been stolen or destroyed. They were the record of his work.

Another theft of files was the theft of the South Coast Trades and Labour Council's own set of *Dalfram* files.[11] Later, all the *Dalfram* records, and all the telegrams and letters from all over Australia, and from 118 Chinese Trade Unions and Cultural bodies were stolen and destroyed. The Communist Party didn't seem to value them, but the Ruling Class did, and had them, and other minutes and files, stolen and destroyed. The surviving Minute Books (1936 - January 1939) show Ted Roach the tactician at work, taking control from the Bulls: probing, challenging, confronting, pushing up progressive policies, uniting the rank and file, raising consciousness and selecting "good solid militants" for the Committee of Management. Every event, every Union event, was an organic part of this whole process, including the *Dalfram* Pig Iron Dispute, and the rank and file members played a major role. Ted had to renew democracy in the Branch by taking the time, place and frequency of Wharfie meetings out of the hands of the Bulls. The rank and file needed the confidence to go to a meeting and to be confident that when they were there, they could second, or vote, or in rare cases, speak out, without fear of victimisation. For Ted, a Union was *a united, fighting organisation of the workers*; his members practised *many and varied forms of direct action*; he believed that the workers' army marches on *the stomachs of its wives and kids,* so conditions should be won *on the job, on the payroll, and that's the essence of job control.* A full twenty months before the famous *Dalfram* Pig Iron Dispute, Ted and his men started the long fight to oust the Bulls and their corrupt policies and to elect a democratic leadership, with equalisation of work opportunities, based on Kembla Branch Wharfies' own labour roster. Ted built a powerful organisation of Wharfies in Port Kembla and they built inter-Union solidarity and community support. The Communist Party bloomed under Ted's energy, initiative and leadership. One of Ted's ideas was to link Union policy with Union-controlled discipline.

ROACH'S SYSTEM OF WHARFIE DISCIPLINE

In the battles in Port Kembla we insisted that every member carry out policy as determined by the members. We had such a militant, close-knit situation that we finished up with automatic penalties for non-compliance with policy decisions that we made. We linked our discipline with policy. Let's say walk up gangways — because blokes were climbing over the side of the ship. "It's safe!" they said. It's not bloody safe! If somebody gets their knees crushed there, it's contributory negligence. So we want a gangway. So they'd discuss it. And we'd decide "gangway". And it's got to be or we'd fine them. Then there's got to be a safety net under the gangway, before any man walks up that gangway. No gangway? Automatic fine. Then, there's got to be rails, before we go up. This is the policy of the Union, and we want everybody to carry it out.

So this is discipline. It's discipline around policy, not just to fine them, to take money off them. This policy is improving their lot and very quickly they learn that that is the reason why it's all done. Then, they used to go up the road at lunchtime and get half full of grog. We said: "No. It's too permanent when you get hit with steel". So we decided that, in view of the fact that we were running the job with our job delegates, not Job Delegates' Associations, but job delegates as part of the Union policy [as a way] of ensuring the carrying out of proper policy, we decided on automatic penalties. It was a two quid automatic fine. At this stage [1941-42] *we'd taken over, the foremen couldn't sack anyone, we took it completely out of their hands — the delegate would sack, the delegate would 'shorten' down', the delegate would do all these things. The Union delegate would say: "You're finished, mate". We had it working like a well-oiled machine. Getting half a dozen schooners aboard and coming back, three parts 'stung'? "Righto! Home you go!" First offence, an automatic week* [off the roster]. *Second offence? A fortnight. Third offence? A month. Only Coogan, a little half-a-wino, reached the four weeks, to double up the third time.*

My brother Spider was featherweight champion, and he came down crying to me. I stood him off for a fortnight on this [drinking] *twice! Second time, off! I said: Spider! I'm sorry. We're not brothers in the Union. After five o'clock we're brothers. But in the Union, I'm the Secretary, and you're a member. No bloody different to any other member. You committed offences against the Union policy, and that's it, that's it. You can go and get drunk and lie down in the gutter if you like, but don't take a job first.*

My other brother, Bill, came out of the pub, walked up to Perc Sloan and put himself on the roster. We [had] *cut out all this pandering to foremen. I said: Bill, where are you going? He said: "I'm going to work". I said: No, you're not. He said: "Why?" I said: Because you violated the rules. You were in the pub and then walked up and said to Perc Sloan: "Do I get a job?" and Perc Sloan put you on. You are not going to work. Bill said: "A man ought to hit you on the chin". Bill, maybe you could do that, but you won't get away with it. If you do, you rest assured I will make a classic example of you. And he didn't do it. See, that's the way I approached it. One thing the Wharfies used to say, although they were going up before 'The Redbeards', every second week, before the Committee, on Sunday morning 10am, they said: "One thing about it. Roach doesn't make fish of one and fowl of the other. It's all straight going".*

See, blokes would be fishing between shunts. "Righto, Nob! If you want to write a letter to the shipping company, and say we don't need six men below, why don't you bloody well write them a letter, and say: "We can go fishing, we don't need six men below". The Union says six men below. Any man that's caught fishing when there should be six men below? It's an automatic two pounds fine." So that's how it went on, and you know I had the rules printed[12]. They were never submitted to the Federal Committee of Management because they'd have never let us do it. We made our own laws, our own rules. They couldn't see what we saw, couldn't see how we saw it. "You can't do this! And you can't do that!" The Law wouldn't allow this! The Law wouldn't allow that! It's a lot of bull's crap, you know. We made our own bloody laws.

'Fronten' the Redbeards'

The author: "What would be a typical lecture you would give someone at a Wharfies' Sunday morning disciplinary hearing in Port Kembla?"

All sorts of things, linking discipline with Union policy, not discipline as an abstract thing, not discipline just to fine someone, to take money off them. Our delegates were all members of the Committee. It wasn't

a big port. We'd meet regularly to discuss our campaigns as well, and members not on the job, we'd bring them along. I used to spend my time, every second Sunday of the month. They called it 'fronten' The Redbeards'. We didn't want their money, we'd point this out to them. So, we have a policy! So, what's the good of us determining policy, if every Tom, Dick and Harry can then decide: "Well, that's no good to me. I'm not going to cop it. I'm going to do this, and I'm going to do that". What have you got? Anarchy. When you have a policy, this policy has got to be carried out by every man. And your discipline is linked to that policy to ensure that every single man carries it out. Some people might say it's a bit rough to say: You've got to do it! It's a democratic decision, a democratic vote, this is what it's got to be! And it would be undemocratic if we allowed you, or you, or you, to decide who am I to be governed by you? It's a Union, if you don't like it, get out of it. And Harry 'Tiny' Morey said: "I didn't mind being indicted. But what I hated most was the lecture Roach used to give us". Ted's thesis of "many and varied forms of direct action" was not a recipe for a free-for-all. All the Branch actions were planned, linked closely with policy and were reviewed and reassessed, after the event, by Kembla Branch members. This process was evolving from 1937 and developed rapidly after Ted's election to Branch Secretary on 17 January 1938.

A Single Whip Gear

Ted explained some of his "many and varied" tactics in taking control of jobs, enforcing Union policies and safety standards. Ted and Wharfie Federal Councillors discussed and modified 'direct action' tactics like these at Wharfies' Federal Biennial Conferences, and at Wharfie Branch meetings, after Ted was elected to the Wharfies' Federal office in October 1942. *They had a single whip gear, all round the country, with enormous loads. You slowed down your big slings and the rip, tear and bust. They used to bring heaps of steel in on chains. Unhook the chain, hook it on. Whoosh! Rip it out! This was all right with rails and girders but with merchant steel, the sharp edge would wound the chains. Blokes down below, bullocking, filling the baskets. Blokes out on the truck, pull the tail rope, and then back again. Not very heavy for the two blokes on the tail rope. But it's the two blokes below who are bullocking. And the job is speeded up all the while. We'd demand softwood for the sharp edges of steel. It might be line-ball, but they knew we had it. They'd call a Board of Reference* [meeting][13]. *Old Bob Shipp, he was the chairman, he'd say: "There it is in black and white. It's in the Regulations – "sharp edges of steel". And they'd have to agree. And so we kept on exasperating them.*

Port Kembla handled very heavy and dangerous sling-loads of BHP steel, for example "a steel chain, in which about 26 bars of lead were held, broke as the sling was passing over the hatch coaming[14]. The sling divided, 15 bars going into the hold, and the others dropping on the deck".[15] The dangers facing Wharfies in all ports, though magnified in the steel port of Kembla, are manifest in this incident — lead bombs flying through the air into the deep, half-dark hatch, with Wharfies leaping like rhesus monkeys, up flake-rusty, stirrup-runged, iron ladders scabbing away from the sheer sides of the cavernous hold. Wharfie Rae Elliott recalls: "As the long steel slings came flyen' in, we'd scramble halfway up the ladders for safety".[16] They handled dusty ores and hazardous chemicals. It was heavy, arduous and dangerous work. The better organised the Wharfies were, and the better organised the job was, then the better the outcome for the industrial giant, BHP.[17] Ted continued to exasperate the foremen and 'heelers-up' in his campaigns on the job, to slow down the single whip gear, and enforce a safe pace when working.

SLOWED IT DOWN TO BUGGERY

With chains I would insist, instead of heaving it out I'd say: "No! Wire on, lower down, take your chains out, hook on". Slowed it down to buggery! Always we'd bring back the guerrilla warfare when it was necessary. It's all fought on the job, no coming off the job. So the troops, the fellers, became very adept at fighting the boss but they were still on the pay roll, and that's what job control really means. We took the authority off them. They had the authority only to say: "We want the cargo here, and we want the cargo there". That's all the authority they had, only to say where the cargo was going. The foremen would pick them off the roster, thirty men, and a couple of winchmen and hatchmen. The labour would be automatically placed, and delegates 'shortened down'. There was no way in the world a foreman could

come along and get square on someone, and give him a shitty job and so on. Then we got to the stage where the first ship that came into the port … had to be picked up first. The ship ties up. It's the first ship. No way in the world could the BHP or the shipping companies jockey in any way. We had it completely under control. We used to work hard on PR, and I'd have a beer with old Bob Shipp. The Minute Books show Ted's campaigning, from the time he arrived in Kembla, selling "Workers' Weeklies" on the wharves and trying to get a day's work. The Minute Books record a clear narrative of struggle by Ted, and his COM, inspiring the rank and file to transform working conditions long before the Dalfram berthed at No.4 jetty Port Kembla on 15 November 1938. In so doing they transformed themselves into *a united, fighting organisation of the working-class*.

The Wollongong Trades and Labour Council (T&LC) played a vital part in the regrowth of Trade Unionism in the Illawarra and in the victorious *Dalfram* Pig Iron Dispute. *'Big Bill' Brodie was a strong Branch Preso. The Bulls had a big knockdown man, 'Weary' Sloan, they called him. Big moustache up here. Someone called him 'Kaiser Bill'. He was the knockdown man. But he couldn't knock Brodie down. Brodie boxed with Dave Smith and Dave Smith fought Les Darcy four times, remember? Brodie wasn't a champion but neither were any of the Sloans. Bill tamed them, he tamed them pretty bloody quick. Once I won by one vote, that was the end of them. Whoosh! You've got no idea, how many blokes come up, and said to me: "It was my vote, Ted, that put you in, that was my vote". Oh, I said, thank you very much.* Brodie kept precise, brief notes of the meetings, still preserved in the P. K. Branch (1937) Minute Books that have survived.[18] "On Monday 15 March 1937, in the Alliance Hall, Arthur Turley, (General Secretary of the WWF) said he was "concerned" about the rank and file of the South Coast Branch, as a result of "information received from a representative of the employers".[19] *We were making such a noise about rosters in Kembla that they sent Arthur Turley to quieten us down.*

Brodie's Minutes continue: "There were several interjections, when Mr Turley said we had never received preference (for Unionists) from any court".[20] He said the employers had "intimated they were going to get outside labour if the Branch could not supply the class of men required". At this juncture, there was "a deal of disorder" and Brodie was asked "to use his powers to maintain order".[21] Wasn't this what the militants wanted? Arthur Turley exposing his policies in front of the South Coast Branch rank and file, now alive with the yeast of change?[22]

Ted and the rank and file intended to end the Bull system and to have all Wharfies, including casuals, in one Union, and on a Union work roster, to "equalise" earnings. The meeting resumed after tea and Ted moved against the Bulls, with an early form of work roster:

> *No.1 proposal. Any member having worked the previous day on* [the] *job will not be eligible to accept work ahead of members not having worked.*
> *No.2 proposal. If any member refuses work when offered, that* [will] *be constituted his turn, and he will not be eligible for a pickup until every man has been picked up.*
> *No.3 proposal. In the event of a transfer of labour being required, the Secretary, or COM member, in conjunction with the employer,* [will] *transfer such labour from* [the] *ship, or hatch, finishing first.*
> *Carried. 43 to 19.*[23]

Arthur Turley replied that the employers "would not accept a rotary system", and "there were only two of the 44 WWF Branches where the equalisation system worked".[24] The meeting resolved "to keep a record of hours worked each day, with a view of gaining evidence, for compiling claims, and assist in the making of awards". Ted gave the delegates hatch cards, and (later) watches, to keep a record of in and out cargoes, times and tonnages. For the same reasons, Ted issued hatch cards and watches to delegates in Wharfie Branches after he was elected to the Wharfies' Federal Office.

Though this outcome on 15 March 1937 was an early form of the Kembla roster, and was worked on, and changed by the Branch members, it is a long while before the *Dalfram* Dispute. According to Rupert Lockwood in his book "War on the Waterfront", the Kembla Branch still had a Bull pick-up. On 17 October 1938, one month before the *Dalfram* Dispute, B. Turner and Bill Howie moved that all work be put on the

Rotary.[25] Also in the lead up, Arthur Finlay, NSW State Representative of the WWF, was invited to a "Special Meeting"[26] on Wednesday 28 April 1937 to discuss the Branch roster.[27] Moreover, on 9 October 1937, [these Minutes are in Ted Roach's hand writing] Ted reported that he was successful in claims for wages due on *Kowarra*: *No.4 gang were paid one and a half hours short, and No.3, one hour short. These amounts are to be collected by* [the] *men concerned*.[28] Ted was careful about preserving anonymity for members. It was a life-long habit. It was difficult to get Ted to name anybody. I (the author) said to Ted: "If you don't tell me, no-one will ever know". He thought that was somewhat quizzical but with evidence of lost records he spoke up more. Ted, like a lot of working-class militants and activists, believed that somewhere, someone was writing their story in a golden book — that their story was so essential, that it would not be omitted from History. How wrong they were! How cruel it is to know how little of their story was ever recorded! Stalinism, Reformism, and the Ruling Class did not want the voices, arguments, and opinions of the rank and file militants recorded. They would be spiced with many truthful reflections, and observations of ineffective, and, sometimes, hypocritical leaders. Also, some of these silent militants feel that their opinions are a forbidden, underground, narrative of events — not vital, essential, and truthful additions to the fuller picture. In fact, there was a man writing in a book, a SECRET book, but his writings were always stamped, at the bottom, with the insignia of the Secret Police.

The surviving Minute Books of the Wharfies' Port Kembla Branch show that in 1937 and 1938 Ted and the militants were moving their organisation forward: to establish a Union roster and rotary — a roster of a ship's four to six cargo hatches — to force changes in the appalling working conditions and to expose and destroy the corrupt Bull system of favouritism.[29] In addition, they started a system of Union controlled discipline which treated each Federation member without fear or favour. Thus, they created morale and united the membership firmly behind policies that they were deciding themselves and towards which they, and their leaders, were campaigning. This process sped up after Ted's election as Secretary, South Coast Branch of the WWF, "by one vote" on 17 January 1938 at a Stop Work Meeting at Alliance Hall. Seconded by Bill Hill and Harry 'Dealer' Wells, Ted beat George Washington Sloan by 62 votes to 61, with one informal.

For President, Bill Brodie beat 'Tiny' Morey, 78 votes to 44. For Treasurer, Fred Price beat J. Moon, 80 to 47. The highest votes for Committee of Management (COM) were: Jack Kelly (85), 'Charlie' Kent (82), 'Reg' Francis (76), and 'Alf' Baldry (67). Ted and the COM were in business and moved: "that this stop work meeting calls for a stop work meeting, of a half-day each month, on the first Monday of each month" (Carried). The Unions were back in earnest after many years in the wilderness. Ted Roach raised "the restoration of wages to pre-cut standard" ("Depression" cut) and moved that Wharfies and Seamen, all maritime workers, unite and campaign together. This was "industrial Trade Unionism", which was Communist Party policy, but what the CC-CPA, or the WWF COM, thought about Ted's decisive move, has not been discovered.

At a branch meeting on 7 March 1938[30] "it was pointed out that the Rotary had been won after a long struggle, and had to be protected whether we had rules covering them or not".[31] George Sloan "walked out, stating that the gag was being applied to him". An early Union roster for the South Coast Branch was drawn up, in Ted's handwriting, in April 1938.[32] Consistent with evidence of interference with Ted Roach's documents, in the last line of this document, the first word, 'Rotary', has been almost erased. "The Secretary then asked permission to bring forward the Rotary (Roster) Rules drawn up by [the] Committee of Management." Permission was given and the Rules were adopted.[33] Also brought forward was the matter of the suggestion of the Union taking over the selection of labour in this port — a box of handkerchiefs was procured, and presented to Miss Lanahan, for the production of Rotary Lists.

On 11 May 1938, W. Hill and W. Howie moved: "That this meeting decide to work in co-operation with casuals in any move they should wish to make to have the pick-up of casual workers in hands of the Union…". Branch Secretary Ted Roach asked permission to get quotes for a filing index card system for Branch records. (Carried.) The meeting also moved that "we call on all members to declare those two papers (The Daily Telegraph and The Illawarra Star) black, and members refrain from buying same."

It was one month before the *Dalfram* Dispute, on 17 October 1938, that B. Turner and Bill Howie moved that all work be put on the Rotary. The *Dalfram* tied up at No.4 jetty, Port Kembla on 15 November

1938 but there are few records of the *Dalfram* Dispute in the Minutes: for example, Committee Propaganda, Committee Pickets, Welfare and Relief Committee "moved and seconded" that this Branch protest against the bashing and bullying tactics employed by the police against our members, and call on the Gov. to hold an enquiry. In the event of such enquiry being held, the witnesses' exes [expenses] to be borne by the branch. Carried."

The last entries in the extant, South Coast Minute Books, read: "Friendly Societies Hall, 14 February 1939: "taps, wharves be kept clean, lavatories be kept clean, a shelter shed with hot water". Ted said that failing satisfaction, particularly in regard to the shelter shed: "we then decide to walk up to the greens, rear stevedores' office, for meals" (Carried). Here is where the Minute Books stop. Other chapters have been added about the "Kembla Days" from "The Maritime Worker", Wharfie records, and the final testimony of Ted Roach. By 27 March 1939, Ted is now Secretary full-time. Moved by R. Watson and seconded by G. ('Gerry') Leonard, the Secretary's salary was to be fixed at seven pounds ten shillings — a levy of one shilling a week per member. After Ted's election to the Federal Office in August 1942 as Federal Assistant-General Secretary and Organiser of the Wharfies, Joe Brunette said to Ted: *"We'll double your wages if you'll stay here, as Secretary, South Coast Branch".*

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[1] Dixon, R. Minutes CC-CPA, 10.4.1936, p.4. ML MSS 5021 Add-on 1936 IV.

[2] Minutes CC-CPA, 6.8.1938, MLM SS 5021 P/C ACC 72/6.

[3] This was Ted's *Harley 'pea-shooter'* which he worked on with his mate, 'Ginger' Reynolds, of Belmont, Newcastle.

[4] **Editors'note**: In 1935, BHP Ltd, Australia's largest steelmaker at Newcastle, bought out Australian Iron and Steel Ltd (AIS) at Port Kembla. The new AIS steelworks was becoming profitable but was starved of capital for expansion during the Depression and agreed to merge with its larger competitor. Thus BHP became Australia's monopoly steelmaker. Blessed with high quality, relatively low-cost coal nearby, BHP quickly expanded its Port Kembla works to two-thirds the capacity of its Newcastle flagship by 1939. The steelworks encouraged growth of additional industries around Port Kembla. See Richardson, L. "The Bitter Years: Wollongong During the Great Depression", Sydney: Hale and Ironmonger, 1984, pp. 129-32.

[5] 'Bulls': foremen controlling jobs on the wharf; taking bribes from workers to get jobs. Sometimes the fastest or strongest workers.

[6] McCarthy, D. Townsville, "MW", 25.7.1940. See Griffith, G. "The Growing Militancy of the South Coast Branch of the Waterside Workers' Federation 1930-1939", BA (Hons.) thesis, University of Wollongong, 1980.

[7] South Coast Branch Minutes, 1931-1939, Z429, Box 53.

[8] 'Preso': president.

[9] Richardson, L. "The Bitter Years: Wollongong During the Great Depression", op.cit., p.240.

[10] Lockwood, R. "War on the Waterfront: Menzies, Japan and the pig iron dispute", Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1987, pp.185, 249.

[11] Ibid. There are a few mementoes of the Pig Iron Dispute in a Beijing Museum.

[12] Port Kembla Branch Rules. There is a wall poster of these rules in the Noel Butlin Archives Centre in Canberra.

[13] A Board of Reference was a meeting between shipowners' representatives and the Federation (the Wharfies) with an independent Chairman.

"Steel or rail, with sharp edges, going in or out, in chains, must never be reaved. Gluts must be used at all times", Loading and Unloading Regulations.

[14] **Editors' note**: A raised frame around a hatch; it forms a support for the hatch cover and strengthens the edges of the opening.

[15] "MW", 10.2.1940, p.7.

[16] Author interview with the late Rae Elliott, a Dalfram Wharfie.

[17] "Respond more to Com. ldrshp" [respond more to Communist leadership]. AA ST443/1/0 Box 11, notes of a Commonwealth Ship Owners' Association meeting, Messrs Spurrett, Foster, Cotton, Burt, Craig, Reed.

[18] South Coast Branch Minutes, 1931-1939, Z429, 53, p.121.

[19] Ibid., p.124.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid., p.125.

[22] Bill Brodie chaired this "Special Meeting" from 3.10pm to 9.33pm on 15 March 1937.

[23] South Coast Branch Minutes, 1931-1939, Z429, 53, pp.156-157. On 15.3.1937, the South Coast branch met WWF Fed. Vic. President Turley. Ted Roach proposed: *"a roster system of equalization".* Carried 43 to 19. Kembla had a form of a roster by July 1937. *"*[The] *first employers to capitulate to the Union's demand for rosters".* In November 1938, Port Kembla Steel (PKS) agreed to a roster "covering the whole of this port, with absolute Union control".

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid., pp.173-174.

[26] Ibid., pp.126-127.

[27] The meeting also discussed a letter from Port Kembla Communist Party Branch regarding the 1933 imprisonment and ongoing solitary confinement of the General Secretary of the German Communist Party, Ernst Thalmann. It was "resolved that we demand E. Thalmann be released and Von Luckner, a Nazi urger, not be allowed to land in any Australian port". (Carried). This decision was to be conveyed to the German Consul, and the Prime Minister, Joe Lyons.

Ernst Thalmann, "transport arbeiter (worker)" was the General Secretary of the German Communist Party (KPD), which in 1931 had 89 elected representatives in the German Reichstag. He was arrested by the Gestapo in 1933 and held in solitary confinement for 11 years. Rosa Thalmann said she last saw her husband in Gestapo hands in the Beuthen Prison, on 27.2.1944. Volkogonov, Dmitri. "Stalin - Triumph and Tragedy", Phoenix Press, pp.499-500. Von Luckner, visitor to Australia from Nazi Germany, in his boat, *Seeteufel*.

[28] South Coast Branch Minutes, 1931-1939, Z429, 53, op cit., p.128.

[29] Wyck was active with Spanish Relief Committee work. On 27 September 1937, Wharfie W. Hill spoke in support of money for Spanish children and offered to give 15/- per month to the fund if the Branch would undertake to be responsible for 15/- per month. There is a letter from the Spanish Relief Committee by Wyck, with a report of a meeting in the Town Hall Annexe, and with a copy of the resolution attached. Bill Howie appealed to members, to hear Sister Lawson on the Spanish question, when she returned from Spain. Ibid., p.176.

[30] Ibid., p.136.

[31] Ibid., p.193.

[32] Ibid., pp.208-210. (26b)-(199). In Ted's own handwriting, this is an early form of the Rotary, or Work Roster, of Port Kembla Branch of the Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia.

[33] All remaining information about South Coast Branch meetings in 1938 and 1939 comes from the South Coast Branch Minutes, 1931-1939, Z429, 53, op cit., pp.202-253.

Chapter 5
THE *DALFRAM* PIG IRON DISPUTE

"The Port Kembla Wharfies are doomed to failure."
Ned Holloway (ALP) MHR, Canberra, Opposition Shipping spokesperson, 1938

We are fighting the fight of Australia.
Ted Roach, November 1938

"A million Chinese lips will bless,
The Kembla Wharfies' stubbornness."
Julian Smith, "MW", 14 January 1939

The new year of 1938 would be a momentous one in Port Kembla. The Union movement, led by the Wharfies and the nine-member T&LC, would take on the Lyons-Menzies Conservative Government, and the Transport Workers Act, over BHP's 300,000 ton pig iron contract with Japan, and *do them like a dinner*. Ted Roach and the Wharfies of Port Kembla were well aware of Militarist Japan's plans for conquest. They had read the "Tanaka Memorandum" of 1929[1] which outlined the expansionist aims and Imperialist attitudes of Japan's Militarist Faction co-striding with the industrial conglomerates, the Zaibatsu[2]. Port Kembla branch didn't just burst into militancy, like a tuppenny bunger, on the day the *Dalfram* berthed at Port Kembla[3] Their consciousness had been rising ever since Ted arrived (See Fig 7) and on Armistice Day

Fig 7 'Look at the Sacrifice He Makes'
Source: "Maritime Worker", 1939

(11 November 1937), a full year before the *Dalfram* Dispute, the Kembla Branch of the Waterside Workers Federation passed two prophetic resolutions. Ted Roach and Bill Howie moved **"that we view with horror the unprovoked and murderous attack of the Japanese militarists against the peace-loving, Chinese people, and lodge an emphatic protest, and demand the application of the League Covenant, be put into operation, against Japan. Furthermore, we, as members of the Australian working class, are prepared to assist the Chinese workers in their fight against Fascist Japan".** The motion was carried.[4] This unequivocal motion, written by Ted Roach, shows clearly that there was nothing "spontaneous" in the

Dalfram pig iron walk-off which was to become a lockout a year later in November 1938. The hidden element as always with 'Roachy' was the organisation and education of the Wharfies in Federation and ACTU policies, done consistently and without fanfare. *I was the only bastard carrying out* [Communist] *Party industrial policy.* Branch minutes and these resolutions show that the Branch was organised and led by Ted and his Committee of Management and the members were "educated", well before the *Dalfram* tied up at No.4 Jetty, Port Kembla, Inner Harbour, NSW on Tuesday 15 November 1938. Bill Howie and Matt Roach moved: **"that we, of the South Coast Branch of the Waterside Workers' Federation, view, with disgust, the attitude of the Federal Government, in allowing Japan to draw supplies of iron ore from Yampi Sound, or other Australian sources".** (Carried.) On 17 January 1938, letters to and from the Chinese Consul, and Japanese Consul and Prime Minister were received and read[5] (Fig 8).

Fig 8 Menzies and Pig Iron, 1942
Source: 'Maritime Worker', 18.4.42

Menzies And Pig-Iron

Speaking over the radio recently Mr. Menzies was at great pains to explain that his administration had not been responsible for the sending of pig iron to Japan and, that in any case, the amount of scrap iron sent from Australia to Japan during the period of his administration was small compared to the exports of wool and wheat, which could be equally classed as munitions of war.

In making his explanation, Mr. Menzies only told half the truth.

The strike over the loading of the "Dalfram" occurred during the Lyons' administration, in which Mr. Menzies was the Attorney-General, and it was he who handled the whole of the negotiations for the Government which brought about the termination of the dispute.

The "Dalfram's" cargo was part of of a contract of approximately 27,000 tons of pig iron sold to Japan, and in the settlement the members of the Waterside Workers' Federation agreed to load the full amount of pig iron covered by that contract, on the understanding from Mr. Menzies, as the representative of the Government, that there would be no further export of pig iron when that contract was completed.

During the course of the discussions that took place after the dispute had been in progress for some considerable time, Mr. Menzies said, inter alia, to a conference held at Canberra on the 6th December, 1938, that "Australia was a member of the League of Nations, the League of Nations had not imposed sanctions on Japan in relation to China, had not even made a protest, and the Australian Government, therefore, did not propose to do so. Our country was most closely associated with Japan in a geographical sense, yet it was suggested that we alone among all the countries on the League of Nations, should impose sanctions on Japan. He did not believe that any body in Australia would seriously suggest such a course."

Mr. Menzies also said "that it might be suggested that the refusal to load pig iron which could be made into munitions was not sanctions. That was a very limited point of view, the Japanese armies in China required clothing, required food as well as arms, and suggested that if we were going to prevent Japan from carrying on a war against China, we would have to prevent wool and wheat, as well as pig iron going to Japan; that would have meant cutting off our exports to Japan altogether, and he doubted whether that would prevent Japan carrying on the war against China; but he believed that if we did do it, it would start a trade war against Japan, the end of which nobody present at the conference could see."

Mr. Menzies further said: "It was an entirely good thing to be in favor of peace, but it was not very sensible to say we are in favor of peace and then follow up a line of policy that must do more to provoke war than any other policy he could imagine."

"The Government did not propose to allow a small section of the community to dictate its foreign policy, and he, "Mr. Menzies," could not belong to a Government that would sit back and let foreign policy be taken out of its hands, and consequently, he had to say to the Waterside Workers at Port Kembla if they did not load pig iron for Japan the Government would have to take steps to compel them, and to do this would have recourse to the Transport Workers' Act.

The Transport Workers' Act was subsequently introduced to Port Kembla, but it did not succeed in forcing the Waterside Workers to load the pig iron; it was only when the Gov- be no further shipments of pig iron be no further shipments of uig iron from Port Kembla that the Waterside Workers agreed to load the amount covered by the contract entered into between the B.H.P. and the Japanese.

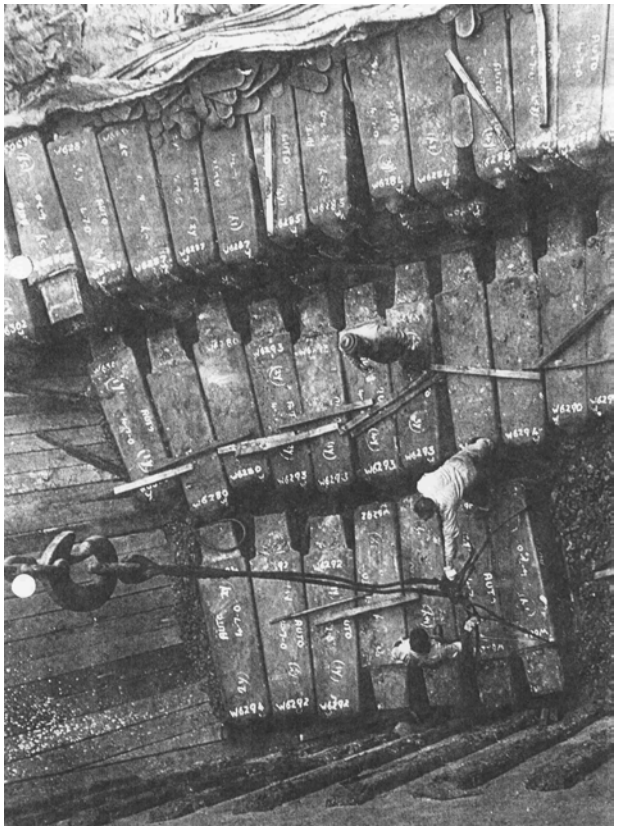
It is also as well to note in this matter that Mr. Menzies was a leading member of the Government which was party to the lease of Yampi Sound to interests representative of Japan. The waterside workers say that it was not from choice on the part of Mr. Menzies that his administration did not send pig iron to Japan, from choice they sent wool and wheat.

Ted Roach spoke at the Labour History Conference in Newcastle on 26 June 1993. Before he died, he asked that this be printed.[6]

"MENZIES AND PIG IRON FOR JAPAN" BY E. C. ROACH

I remember the Pig Iron dispute (See Fig 9). *Old Charley Young in Melbourne, he sent word up to the Federal Office that the ship called the Dalfram was coming to Port Kembla for pig iron. Members were incensed at the Japanese rape of China. We had seen a document, (purported to be a copy of the infamous "Tanaka Memorandum"), which contained maps, showing projected Japanese expansion in the Pacific, which included Australia, New Guinea, and Indonesia. When the ACTU called for a ban on Japanese goods in 1937, Kembla Branch endorsed it. Groups of rank and file members would take to the streets, handing out leaflets, calling for bans on Japanese goods. Our policy was clear. Professor Blainey, in his book, "The Steel Master", said: "The three Chiefs of Staff of the Armed Forces expected war in the Far East, probably in 1939" — as we know, it happened earlier. Up till then the policy of the ACTU as the ACTU was, "No pig iron for Japan!" But no-one did anything about it. A number of branches moved a bit, and bang! They were quickly hunted back to work. They'd talk about "Dog Collar Acts", and away they'd go back to work, one after the other, Adelaide, Sydney, Townsville and others. But when it came to Kembla, it was a different story.*

Fig 9 Pig Iron Loaded Into a Ship's Hold, Port Kembla
Source: Illawarra Trades and Labour Council (photographer unknown); kindly provided to Author by Ted Roach



Pre Pick-Up Meeting

In the nine months from the date of my election as Branch Secretary on 1st March 1938 we:
- waged consistent campaigns with something happening every day;
- destroyed the vicious Bull System of job selection;
- kept setting short programmes of immediate demands;
- established rosters for both union and casual workers;
- established bus transport from Wollongong/Kembla, no work in rain;
- [had successes on]*safety, job delegates, and conditions too numerable to mention here.*

We were not satisfied in winning a new condition, for the sake of it, but ensured that collective discussion to draw the necessary conclusions took place, thus preparing for the next steps. We linked strict discipline with policy to ensure that policy, after being determined, was carried out by every member. In this way we were able to develop a high level of politico-militant industrial understanding.

We were developing the policy of "No Trade With Japan". We'd go into Woolworths on Friday night, late shopping night, and we used to put leaflets out, and then we heard the Dalfram was coming. No instructions were issued by Jim Healy or the [Communist] *Party. I used to call pre-pick up meetings, and I laid out what our policy was: that the Dalfram was going to Japan, and what we ought to do about it. I proposed that we refuse to load it. It was carried. So I said: "First of all, we must make sure that it is going to Japan. So you better all go to work and leave it with me to verify". It took me till about 11 am to be absolutely sure. So I came up and said: "OK boys, she's goen' to Kobe". Everything stopped. The whole bloody shift went straight off. All four gangs, bang! Like that! Not a murmur! Not a murmur! And then some of the blokes who used to rule the roost, before the militancy took over, ran out with their clip-boards saying: "Do you personally refuse to handle this? Do you personally refuse to handle this?". Obviously well-drilled. "Oh, go away!" They pissed them off! The minions of the shipping companies and the BHP were contemptuously brushed aside. Intimidation was no longer any good. Rosters and job delegates had breathed new life into the Union, and fear of victimisation no longer existed.*

And it was quite a show with the Dalfram. They'd pull her off to the breakwater then they'd bring her in again. Then, a launch went to the back, and down came four Pommie seamen, and three Indian lascars, and they were 'put into snooker'[7]. Each morning, as other jobs in the port finished, men attended the pick-up. The Dalfram was put on the top of the list. Every man refused the Dalfram, until the available labour list was exhausted. The employers refused to isolate the Dalfram. Within a few days the rest of the labour coming from finished jobs were called, and they also refused. This was how the port was stopped. ***It wasn't a strike, it was a 'lock out'.*** *We quickly set out to activate our whole membership. We set up committees to cover every phase of activity. We had our own "Drama Group" portraying the struggle in a very fine theatrical form. It lampooned the BHP, the Government, and the War Profiteers. The cast were members of our Union, and acted the parts with great gusto. The group would pull up, and put the show on, in busy areas, and in country towns[8].*

We departmentalised into a variety of activities, e.g. Pickets Committee, Food Committee[9] etc. We worked very closely with the Trades and Labour Council, and the Combined Unions' Committee. Day to day organisation of the dispute was placed in the hands of the Labour Council's Combined Disputes Committee.[10] Our action was not endorsed by the Wharfies; Federal COM Len Richardson, in his paper, "Dole Queue Patriots", said: "Throughout 1938, Healy had grave doubts about crossing swords with BHP, as he feared this would give Lyons and the Company an opportunity to rush in, with some kind of intimidating action."[11] Richardson said that Jim Healy told him in December 1938 that he could not see eye-to-eye with the branch decision to strike[12]. So we did not have the full support of the Federal COM, nor the official support from the leader of the Labor Party. When we visited Canberra, we had a meeting with Labor leader John Curtin. He lay back on his green divan, with his hands behind his neck, and remonstrated with us, like we were a lot of naughty little boys, and said: "if we, (the ALP) were the Government, you would have to load the Dalfram". Our Branch membership, at the time, was 180, and we had a big job to do. Menzies told the Federal COM, that if the boycott was not lifted, it would serve to bring about talk of the Transport Workers' Act. He publicly stated this threat on 21st November, 1938.

Visit of Wharfies' Federal Committee Of Management

Jim Healy told me the Federal COM (Finlay, Mullins, Lonergan, Braund, Ogden) were coming down to order us back to work. I knew they were there to order us back. I suggested that we accept from the COM some guarantees towards (food) relief payments for the Branch members. So I then jumped the stump and I demanded a one thousand pound grocery relief order from the COM. They couldn't say "No!", then, could they? They were "in" then!! They couldn't pull out, in front of the troops, could they? You should've seen the grins on all the blokes around the room".

The author: "By COM you mean the members of the Wharfies' Federal Committee of Management who were present at this meeting?"

Oh, yes! (Laughs!) The Bastards!

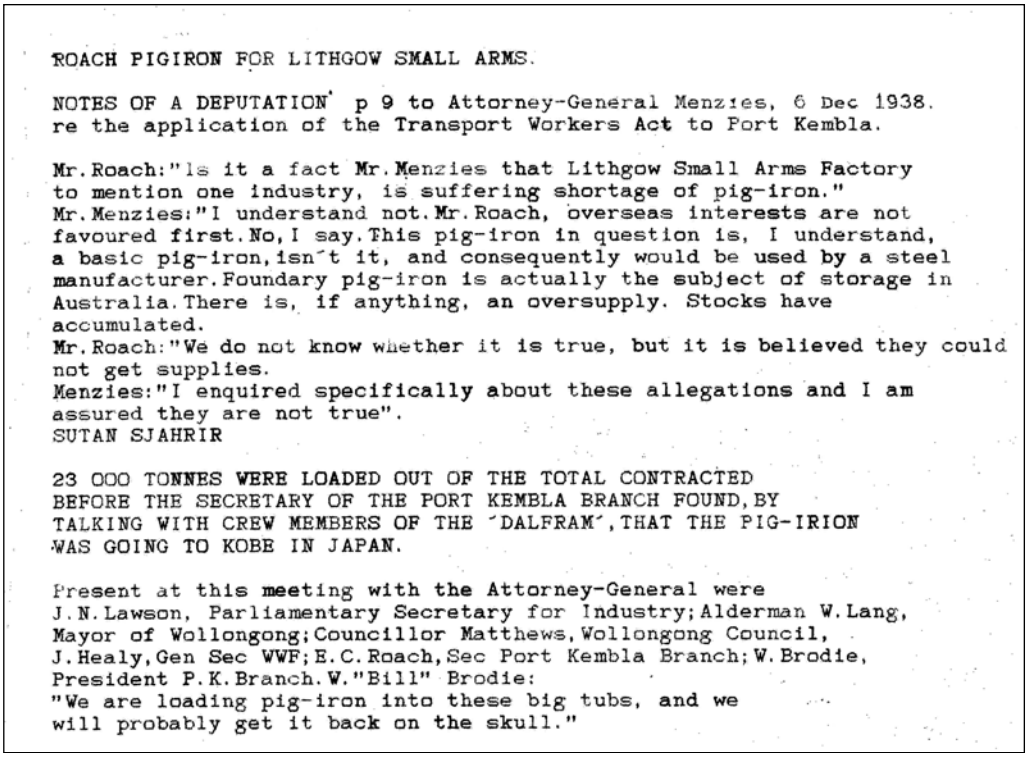
The Fall of Lawson

Menzies then sent his Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Lawson, to Wollongong. We were not notified. He arrived in Port Kembla, not Wollongong, where headquarters was situated. The first I knew of it was when a member of our Branch COM rang me in the afternoon and said that there was a bloke here, who said he represented Menzies, and wanted to meet the Committee right away, and he had to catch a plane to Melbourne that night. Lawson got on the phone and said he wanted to meet our COM forthwith. I commented on the lack of courtesy, and told him he could meet the COM next day. He was upset about his plane booking and I told him that he could either wait until tomorrow, or catch his plane. We met Lawson at the Wollongong Hotel the next day. I introduced the President, and others, by position, not by name. This allowed me to sneak Bob Allen, the "Daily News" reporter, into the meeting. Lawson said that "whilst the world stands aghast, at the atrocities committed by Japan in China, and while he sympathised with our stand, he must nevertheless insist on Government policy being carried out". After the meeting, he asked if he and I would make a joint statement. I told him no — each make their own statement. The "Daily News" came out, next day, with banner headlines — "Lawson "Woos" the Wharfies". He lost his job as Parliamentary Under-Secretary shortly after.

On 28th November, Menzies issued his ultimatum that, unless work was resumed by 6th December, he would "declare" Kembla a "Transport Workers' Act" port. At a full meeting the next day (which included casuals, and waterfront workers), Menzies' ultimatum was rejected out of hand. Menzies then postponed the operation of the Act, until he met a delegation in Canberra (see Fig 10)*. At the Canberra meeting Menzies said Japan was "a friendly power". He said the League of Nations had not applied sanctions against Japan, and so his government could not allow any group to apply sanctions. The pig iron would have to be loaded. I then stated our unequivocal attitude to the 'Dog Collar Act' and I said: "This pig iron will be used to slaughter our own women and children, and raze our own cities to the ground, in Australia — the same as in China today. So on these grounds, we have made our decision not to load the Dalfram. We recognise the consequences. The Branch members have decided that they are definitely not going to accept licences.*

The port was declared on 9th December, 1938. Menzies met representatives of the ACTU and Federal COM (Wharfies) on 12th December in Melbourne. He intimated that if the Branch would load the Dalfram he would lift the declaration. The (Kembla) Branch Committee of Management met on 16th December and rejected Menzies', the ACTU's, and the Wharfies' Federal COM's proposal, stating that they regarded the Act only as supplementary to the main issue — (which was) our refusal to send war materials to an aggressor nation.[13] Our work through and with the Combined Unions Council, and PR with the public (embracing the unemployed) ensured as a final result that, apart from managerial staff, only one licence was taken out. This was by a member of our union. I quickly made contact with him, and obtained the licence. I organised a public bonfire in front of the Port Kembla Customs House and burnt the only licence taken out.[14]

Fig 10 Meeting with Attorney-General Menzies, 6 December 1938
Source: kindly provided to Author by Ted Roach



ROACH PIGIRON FOR LITHGOW SMALL ARMS.

NOTES OF A DEPUTATION p 9 to Attorney-General Menzies, 6 Dec 1938.
re the application of the Transport Workers Act to Port Kembla.

Mr.Roach:"Is it a fact Mr.Menzies that Lithgow Small Arms Factory to mention one industry, is suffering shortage of pig-iron."
Mr.Menzies:"I understand not.Mr.Roach, overseas interests are not favoured first.No,I say.This pig-iron in question is, I understand, a basic pig-iron,isn't it, and consequently would be used by a steel manufacturer.Foundary pig-iron is actually the subject of storage in Australia.There is, if anything, an oversupply. Stocks have accumulated.
Mr.Roach:"We do not know whether it is true, but it is believed they could not get supplies.
Menzies:"I enquired specifically about these allegations and I am assured they are not true".
SUTAN SJAHRIR

23 000 TONNES WERE LOADED OUT OF THE TOTAL CONTRACTED BEFORE THE SECRETARY OF THE PORT KEMBLA BRANCH FOUND,BY TALKING WITH CREW MEMBERS OF THE 'DALFRAM',THAT THE PIG-IRION WAS GOING TO KOBE IN JAPAN.

Present at this meeting with the Attorney-General were J.N.Lawson, Parliamentary Secretary for Industry;Alderman W.Lang, Mayor of Wollongong;Councillor Matthews,Wollongong Council, J.Healy,Gen Sec WWF;E.C.Roach,Sec Port Kembla Branch;W.Brodie, President P.K.Branch.W."Bill" Brodie:
"We are loading pig-iron into these big tubs, and we will probably get it back on the skull."

The following day, 17th December, the BHP announced that they were retrenching 3,500 steel workers forthwith, and another 500 immediately after Christmas.[15] This obviously affected coal production, as well as the business people of the area. The Government was becoming desperate. They closed Radio 2KY, because of comments, by commentator J. K. Morley. The TWA was used to break the waterside strike in 1928 — leaving nine branches of a volunteer union on the waterfront — and the 1935 seamen's strike, filling half the ships on the coast with volunteer labour and on innumerable occasions it was used as a threat to coerce, as in the case of Melbourne, Adelaide and Sydney. We had enormous public support with this, and we were confident of defeating our formidable opposition. We were able to create such unity against the Act, as to make its application ineffective. We were aware that we had forced the Government into a corner.

Menzies came to Wollongong to promise the Combined Unions that he would lift the Act if we loaded the Dalfram. He faced a huge hostile demonstration assembled at the Town Hall, to meet him. Police Inspector Roser sent out a call for me on the loudspeaker, and I went over, and he said: "Will there be any trouble?" I said: "No, we're only here to welcome Menzies". And the women 've got all these little bannerettes, and they're poken' at Menzies, and poken' at him — "Pig Iron!" "No Dog Collars for Wharfies!" and "No Pig Iron for Japan!" "Pig Iron Bob!" And, here again, others[16] want to claim that they coined the phrase, 'Pig Iron Bob', not that it's important, but it was Gwendoline Crofts[17] and the women who were calling out "Pig Iron Bob", "Pig Iron Bob".[18]

And Menzies entered the Wollongong Hotel, opposite the Town Hall, by stealth, through the rear entrance. He was to meet the Unions at the Town Hall after lunch. I was called by loud hailer to the hotel entrance by Police Inspector Roser, who expressed concern about the safety of Menzies and requested that I break a way through the crowd, ahead of Menzies, to ensure his safe passage across the road. The irony of this! Menzies, Australia's Number 1, red-baiter, had to be protected by Communists! Neither White,

Ward, Richardson nor Lockwood (Fig 11) *in their writings, showed the pig iron dispute as a purely political struggle, and were, in my view, quite simplistic in their analysis of its finish. They used terms like "partial success", "partial victory", "compromise", "promptly disciplined by Menzies", and "moral victory only".*

Fig 11 'War on the Waterfront'
Source: 'Maritime Worker', Sept 1987, p. 13.

BOOK REVIEW

War on the waterfront:

Menzies, Japan and the Pig-Iron Affair by Rupert Lockwood

Original No 1 belt jetty, Port Kembla (insert) Ted Roach, Port Kembla Secretary who called watersiders off the Dalfram pig-iron job in November 1938.

RUPERT Lockwood's book on the waterside workers' historic resistance to supply of war materials to Japan, should be on sale later this month.

Publication was delayed by a fire which destroyed Hale & Iremonger's printery, where the book has now been set up, proof-read, illustrated and made ready for the presses.

Lockwood's book exposes sinister plottings of the Japanese in Australia and their occupation plans, the suspicious assistance they were given by numbers of politicians, press proprietors, export and import interests and local fascist groups.

Watersiders in that era not only faced the BHP and the scrap-iron exporters, but a formidable pro-Japanese lobby, organised and sometimes subsidised from Tokyo.

The Port Kembla watersiders bestowed on the chief appeaser, Bob Menzies, the enduring title of "Pig-Iron Bob". They boycotted the *Dalfram's* pig-iron cargo for Mitsui's war furnaces. Fremantle, Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane watersiders also imposed scrap-iron bans.

Watersiders' boycotts of war materials for Japan inspired, as the book stresses, a national front, ranging from church leaders to professors, RSL bodies to unionists, of resistance to Axis aggression.

Messages of gratitude from many ports of China to Port Kembla and Melbourne watersiders for their humanitarian aid to victims of Japanese invasion are published for the first time. Guerilla presses in China's north-west printed news of Australian actions — some of it now in museums.

Surviving veterans of the *Dalfram* pig-iron were interviewed and gave colourful accounts.

Lockwood's book will not be popular reading in BHP board-rooms, in Tokyo or among those Australian politicians and historians who persist in portraying Menzies as "a great statesman".

One academic historian reading the manuscript rated the Lockwood book as "an alternate history of Australian policies and attitudes of the 1930s." ABC Radio Sydney plans a session on the book.

This book has given Lockwood the opportunity to chronicle waterfront political strikes in national an internationalist interest and for humanitarian causes. The author says he hopes this will underscore the truth that the Waterside Workers' Federation has never confined its struggles to material benefits to members — though successes in this area have been spectacular. There are few unions in the world able to match Australian watersiders' record in strikes for peace and freedom, against war, colonalism, tyranny and racism.

Black Armada

MELBOURNE Branch watersiders have co-operated in filming on the waterfront for background to an ABC film on Australian-Indonesian relations, based on Rupert Lockwood's Black Armada.

And ABC interview with the author on episodes in Black Armada was filmed in Melbourne Branch Office.

The 1945-49 waterfront boycotts of Dutch warships and vessels carrying war supplies for suppression of the new-born Indonesian Republic was depicted in Black Armada as of significant aid in the defeat of Dutch colonialism.

The ABC film on Australian-Indonesian relations will not be ready for TV presentation till early in the New Year.

MARITIME WORKER, September 1987 — 13

The essence of the struggle was not so much as whether we loaded the Dalfram or not — intrinsically the cargo itself made little difference to the war in China. The real issue was that the Dalfram was the vehicle to focus national and international attention on the reactionary policy of the Lyons/Menzies Government, to alert the Australian people to dangers inherent in Japanese war policy, and to force alteration in our Government's foreign policy. In this we were extremely successful. We forced a ban on the shipment of the remaining 277,000 tons of pig iron to Japan and, in the process, destroyed the vicious, Transport Workers' Act. Sir Isaac Isaacs, Australia's respected retired Governor-General and former High Court Judge, wrote

at the time in his booklet "Australian Democracy and Our Constitutional System": "It is wholly contrary to British Democracy to coerce a private citizen to do something not required of him by law, simply because it is the policy of the Government, however unconscientious that may be." ... "That is a dictator's rule." ... "The Government had used the economic pressure of possible starvation, to force the men, to act against their conscience." ... "I believe that Port Kembla with the sturdy but peaceful and altogether disinterested attitude of the men concerned, will find a place in our history beside the Eureka Stockade" ... "as a noble stand against Executive dictatorship…".[19]

We caused a ban on pig iron for Japan, we destroyed a strike-breaking, union destroying system of licencing, and we never lost a member. We went back to work stronger, organisationally, than before, not like the poor bastards, at Sovereign Hill (Eureka) who got slaughtered by the soldiers, well, they slaughtered them and the stars finished up in the Southern Cross. It's even a part of our flag. We weren't decimated, we went back stronger than ever. We concluded the battle, with no physical casualties, and emerged as a much stronger organisation. We won a political victory, of enormous, national and international importance. And yet they write us up saying it was a "partial victory", because we loaded the current shipment. It was a magnificent victory, never been another victory like it in History. Here, we took a reactionary government on, 180 of us, that's all, and destroyed their foreign policy. And anybody who wishes to lay claim to inventing the sobriquet, 'Pig Iron Bob', we'll let them do so, as they wish, and to bask in the reflected glory. But it was us 180 Wharfies who contemptuously brushed the minions of the BHP aside, cast the die, and marched up the wharf into History. The Transport Workers' Act was never used again, and it was subsequently erased from the Statute Books.[20]

The author: "Was the Communist Party of Australia's role decisive in the Pig Iron Dispute?"

It was led by me, as a Communist, while a member of the Central Committee was against our taking direct action[21]*. If it hadn't been for me, there would not have been a 'Dalfram'! They say "the Party" did a good job. Which "Party" are we talking about? It was because of the Party's experience that we were able to handle it that way. Yes! But the District Committee didn't believe in it, and Jim Healy said we couldn't beat the BHP!*[22] *I'm taking them on, on a daily basis, in Kembla, and doing them like a dinner! The blokes in charge of the Party down there*[23]*, you wouldn't give two bob for them. If it went well, they did it, but, if it went wrong, they'd very quickly get out from underneath and say: "Comrade Roach was responsible". Fellers battling in the Unions, getting nowhere. Along we came. Well, "the Party did it". The Party couldn't do it, with all these other blokes. The individual never comes into it. "The Party did it"? "The Party taught a lot of lessons". In my case, I taught the Party a lot of lessons they took no notice of. We've got an industrial record, second to none in this country, from my unemployed days right through. We took all the biggest obstacles in our stride. I didn't have to run and say: "Please should I do it this way?" I went along and did it. Dixon said: "You make decisions too quick". I said: "Thank Christ someone makes a bloody decision!" Then they said, "Not enough consultation". "If you wait too long for consultation, the opportunity is gone." I remembered the old blacksmith: "Strike while the iron is hot!"*

The author: "Dixon? Sharkey? What experience did they have of leading the masses in struggle?"

I sometimes wonder. Dixon was a clerk on the railways. Sharkey was a labourer on the Shire Council. And Jack Miles was a stone mason. They led us into many a cul de sac, I can tell you that. Half the time they lacked all realism!

JIM HEALY ON *DALFRAM*

"The Maritime Worker" of Saturday 14 January 1939 reported Jim Healy's comments on *Dalfram* at the Wharfies' Triennial: "No question has occurred in the last three years where there was a danger of the Federation being drawn into a whirlpool, except in the case of the Port Kembla, pig iron dispute. Although the Federation did not win through, it had to be noted that, since the contract of 20,000 tons had gone from Port Kembla, no more had been sent away, which indicated that their industrial strength could be used, but it must be understood, that it could not be left to individual effort, but to collaboration, and that was the policy, of the Federal Committee of Management (COM)".[24]

DALFRAM SPECIAL "RETURN TO WORK" MEETING (16-17 January, 1939)

Sydney Labor Council representatives, Cranwell and McAlpine, and Comrade Healy reported on negotiations with Menzies and the subsequent formula. The Branch Secretary moved that the formula be accepted. McAlpine and Cranwell addressed the meeting. Adjournment. Meeting resumed. January 17, 1939 – "moved and seconded" that we go through the whole business again. Comrade Healy again reported. "Moved and seconded" that visiting delegates be heard first. (Carried.) Moved E. Roach and W. Midgely that we recommend the acceptance of the proposals, and furthermore that in the event of a future attempt being made to ship any further contracts, that we emphatically refuse to handle it.[25] Despite two meetings, and double addresses, by Jim Healy and Ted Roach, **Kembla Branch rejected the return to work, 100 against, 34 for.** Soon after, on 22 January 1939, they voted to return to work. It meant that only 23,000 tons of the 300,000 ton BHP contract were loaded and sent to Japan. The rest stayed in Australia, and no more BHP-Japan contracts were then written – a resounding victory. (See also Fig 12 and Fig 13)[26].

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[1] Japanese Prime Minister, General Tanaka's secret memorandum to the Emperor of Japan regarding Japanese Imperial Economic Expansion, 1927. See Yefimov, Dmitri. "Our Common Victory", Moscow: Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, 1988, p.17.

[2] **Editors' note**: 'Zaibatsu' is a Japanese term referring to industrial and financial business conglomerates in the Empire of Japan, whose influence and size allowed control over significant parts of the Japanese economy from the Meiji period until the end of World War II.

[3] Rupert Lockwood implies that the Dalfram Dispute in November 1938, one of the climaxes of Roach's leadership, was more or less a spontaneous walk off. This is the opposite of the truth. A Melbourne University thesis by Patrick Meehan says the same thing: "Just as the bans had been spontaneous in Sydney, so also were the bans in Port Kembla. The action was taken by 62 members on Tuesday afternoon, Nov. 15, 1938". See Meehan, Patrick. "Government Policy versus Individual Conscience: The Australian Waterside Workers' Embargoes on War Material for Japan, 1938", BA (Hons.) thesis, University of Melbourne, 1979.

[4] Z 248 53 NB. Op.cit., p.177.

[5] Ibid., p.179.

[6] **Author's note**: it has been cut for space. **Editors' note**: This includes excerpts from Ted Roach's 26 June presentation to the 1993 Labour History Conference, later published in "Hummer", Vol.2(2), 1994.

[7] 'put into snooker': hidden away.

[8] Roland, Betty. "War on the Waterfront". **Editors' note**: now available in "Illawarra Unity", Vol.7(1), 2007 Online at: http://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1089&context=unity

[9] Food Committees — Rae Elliott said: "I took the ferrets to Robertson for the bunnies. The boys ate well". *Others went fishing. A worker drowned on a fishing trip.*

[10] Richardson, Len. "The Bitter Years: Wollongong During the Great Depression", op. cit., p.210.

Ted Roach also said: *The Chinese sent us truck loads of vegetables from the city markets — see how important it was, nationally. We had no starvation there. There were eight of us living in these flats, eight Wharfies, and we finished up we were all evicted, well, obviously, no rent, ten weeks. Mrs Duffy came down and she sat on my lounge, swinging her leg, and she wanted to know why we can't pay our rent. And I said we'd like to pay our rent to her, but could she ask Mr Menzies to give us our jobs back. I knew that if we went out with a Press photographer, we would have made the headlines. Let the bastards carry the four of us out that door, then we'll carry them back in through this door. We are going to have a bit of fun".* At another time, in Wollongong, Ted pawned his furniture to bail out a Wharfie.

[11] Richardson, L. Dole Queue Patriots, "Labour History", 24, 1973, pp.143-158.

[12] Richardson, L. "The Bitter Years: Wollongong During the Great Depression", op. cit., p.206.

[13] At this time a "Mr Smith" asked British seaman, Albert Murphy, "If anything happened to Roach, would you be prepared to be Secretary of Kembla Branch?" *I got a stat dec* [statutory declaration] *very quickly about it all. I hit Canberra with it. Billy Hughes*

said: "We didn't send anyone down at all". Who was Albert Murphy? "He was in the Socialist Party of Great Britain, one of those do or die outfits". The Wharfies' South Coast Branch address, at that time, was "Southcoast Branch, E. Roach, 1 Belmore St., Wollongong".

[14] Ted asked 'Bunny' Griffiths to take out a licence. Ted burnt the licence in front of Customs House as a conscious re-enactment of the licence-burning at Eureka.

[15] Christmas 1938: Ted looked out the door and there was a big Christmas hamper from W&D Chambers & Co, for "The Secretary". *Jesus Christ, where did that come from? George Sloan had been getting these Christmas hampers from Chambers & Co, for years.* Wyck had just given birth to Yvonne, a difficult first birth, (she had come home with an undetected needle in her upper leg) and she asked Ted to, "at least, keep the ham". *"No", he said, "we'll drink the bottle of wine, and we'll raffle the rest for the strike fund".* "I could've killed him," said Wyck.

[16] Stan Moran, Treasurer, Wharfies' Sydney Branch, was incorrectly credited with inventing the phrase "Pig Iron Bob".

[17] Gwendoline Crofts, former suffragette, who had close liaison with Kembla Branch COM and Ted Roach, organised the women for the anti-Menzies demonstration and it was they who proclaimed the name "Pig Iron Bob".

[18] "Illawarra Star" journalist, Reg Mahoney, who said he knew "the red-ragger Ted Roach", confirmed this, when he reported Menzies' visit to Wollongong, and said: "the cry 'Pig Iron Bob!' went up at the public meeting, in front of the Council Chambers, on the corner of Crown St". See Gammage, W. & Spearritt, P. "Australians 1938", Sydney: Fairfax, Syme & Weldon Associates, 1987, p.303.

[19] Isaacs, Sir Isaac. "Australian Democracy and Our Constitutional System", Melbourne: I. Isaacs, 1939, pp.15-16, 25.

[20] Ted Roach, Newcastle, NSW, 26 June, 1993. Some of these men were Charlie Kent, Alf Baldry, Joe Carter, Alan McRae, Bill Howie, Ken McDonald, Walter Bailey, Fred Perry, Jim Brownlee, Fred Watson, Bill Bates, Bill Nedon, Charlie McCann, Jack Tattersall, Rae Elliott, Wallie Ratcliffe, Stan Speechley, Jock McLeod, Hector Rene, Harry 'Dealer' Wells, Victor Nicholson, Albert Smith, George Smith, Reg Churchin, Sol Gould, Fred Price, Jack 'Bomber' Williams, Jim Jackson, Matt Munro, George Murray, Bill Hill, Smokey Wade, etc.

[21] Ted means that he had already trained the Wharfies in self-disciplined, effective, industrial activity, that the Branch had endorsed, by resolution, ACTU, and Communist Party policy, in relation to "No Trade with Japan" and that he, Ted Roach, made the correct, calculated, and decisive move, to refuse to load pig iron for Japan, to walk off the Dalfram, and take on the BHP, and the Lyons/Menzies Government in Canberra.

[22] Len Richardson says that Jim Healy "in December, 1938, by his own admission ... could not see eye to eye with the branch decision to strike", "The Bitter Years: Wollongong During the Great Depression", op. cit., p.206. "Throughout 1938 Healy, however, had grave doubts about crossing swords with BHP, as he feared this would give Lyons and company, an opportunity to rush in with some kind of intimidating action.", op. cit. Jack Lonergan, WWF Federal Vice-Present said "Jim Healy did not agree with the Branch going on strike", see Gen-Sec's Report to the 4th Biennial Conference of the WWF, 15.9.1952, p.40. However, at Jim Healy's funeral, in 1961, Lance Sharkey, revised these facts in this way: "Jim Healy proved his patriotism when he led the pre-war struggle of waterfront workers against the export of pig-iron to Japan, which he foresaw would be used against our country" (speech given at the funeral of Jim Healy, by Lance Sharkey). After the speech, Ted Roach said to Lance: *"Lance, you know that Jim Healy did not lead the Pig Iron dispute". And Sharkey replied: "I know, Ted, but I was emotional, and I got a bit carried away".*

[23] *At the time of the Dalfram, the Party leader down there was Gordon King. Finished up he "touched" the Party, and went back into the racing in Victoria.*

[24] Healy, Jim. (J. H.) "MW", 14.1.1939, p.7. Rae Elliott recalled that during the Pig Iron dispute, Chambers & Co invited Ted and the Wharfies, to a 'beano' (a party) in the Agricultural Hall. "There was food laid on, white table cloths and bottles of whiskey, open, on the tables," recalled Rae. "But Ted said: "Drink 'Pilato', only drink Pilato. So we only drank Pilato. Very astute, Roach. At least I thought so." Rae Elliott ran (Bill) Brogan, (Bill) Brodie and Ted, in his car up to Sydney, to confer with Jim Healy in January 1939 during the *Dalfram* Dispute. 'Pilato' were small bottles of orange or lemon juice.

[25] **Editors' note**: this paragraph appears to be a direct quote but was not in quotation marks in the original manuscript.

[26] **Editors' note**: Fig 13 is a clipping from "MW", December 1988, reporting on the 50th anniversary commemoration of the *Dalfram* dispute in 1988. Ted Roach gave a speech and a memorial was unveiled by then Federal (ALP) Minister Stewart West, formerly president of South Coast WWF branch. One of the article's authors, Rupert Lockwood, describes this as "…possibly the only memorial of its kind in the world which commemorates workers' action against a national government".

Fig 12 'Ted Roach Honoured At Social Gathering'

Source: 'Illawarra Mercury", 11.9.42

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1942.

TED ROACH HONOURED

At Social Gathering

"This is the supreme moment of my life," said Mr. E. Roach, the late secretary of the Port Kembla Branch of the Waterside Workers' Union, and now assistant secretary of the Waterside Workers' Federation, when responding to the toast of "Mr. and Mrs. Roach," at a social gathering at which he was entertained at the Soldiers' Memorial Hall at Wollongong, on Monday.

Mr. Roach had every reason to be proud for the gathering was not only representative of the industrial life of the community, but of citizens as well.

The Mayor of Wollongong (Ald. P. C. Pryor) presided, and he had Mr. and Mrs. Roach on his left, and Messrs. W. Davies and Howard Fowles, Ms.L.A., on his right. Apologies were received from Hon. H. P. Lazzarini, M.H.R. and Mr. M. J. Smith.

The Mayor thanked the organisers of the function for giving him the privilege of being present. He was very pleased to be present out of respect for their guest, Ted Roach, who he respected very much. They had not always worked on the same side of the fence, but that made no difference to their friendship. "I respect and esteem our good friend, Ted Roach," continued the Mayor, "and I wish to show my respect for him and for the manner in which he administered his position whilst secretary of the Port Kembla Branch of the Waterside Workers' Federation."

Mr. Eric Burgess, president of the Illawarra Trades & Labour Council, proposed the toast, "Our Guests, Mr. and Mrs. Ted Roach." He reviewed his association with Mr. Roach over many years, particularly on the Trades & Labour Council, and said that even before he became secretary of the local branch of the Waterside Workers, Ted had ideas about improving conditions for workers on the Coast, and when he became secretary he put those ideas into effect, with the result that to-day the condition of the Waterside Workers is superior to any other branch in the Commonwealth. (Applause). The early position of the branch was difficult, but Ted Roach made a success of his job. He had youth, enthusiasm, energy and understanding and was also game to express his convictions. He had been successful in many campaigns, but his greatest success was in connection with the Dalfram dispute. When the history of Australia was being written, the incidents of Lawlor and the Eureka Stockade and Roach and the Dalfram dispute would be outstanding incidents. Their elation at his success in the ballot for the assistant secretaryship of the Federation was tinged with regret at losing him. Their loss, however, would be somebody else's gain. He believed that the whole working class organisations throughout Australia would benefit by Ted's elevation to his new position, and there would come a time when Ted would move on to higher things. They would hear of him again. Ted was a model husband, and would admit that a great deal of his success was achieved through the assistance of his good wife. (Applause). "May she go on helping him from success to success," concluded the speaker, who then proposed the toast of "Our Guests, Mr. and Mrs. Roach."

The toast was received with prolonged applause and was drunk with musical honours.

Mr. W. Davies, M.L.A., in supporting the toast, referred to what Ted had done for the district, and for the branch of the Waterside Workers, which he had organised to the highest plane. The large vote Ted had received in the ballot reflected the esteem in which he is held in the Union. Respect and a good name in a community is better than all wealth. Ted Roach has got that respect in the community. He had achieved much in the district for he had made the Port Kembla Branch of the Waterside Workers one of the best in the Commonwealth. The conditions of the workers on the water front at Port Kembla are as good as those at any port in the Commonwealth, due to Teddy Roach's work. The conditions for the settlement of disputes there are such that they might well be copied by other industries. In older industries a long time elapses before any attempt is made towards the settlement of a dispute. If a dispute occurs on the waterfront at Port Kembla, it is not allowed to drag for a long time, the machinery is there to settle it at once—this procedure might well be followed by other industries. Mr. Davies went on to point out that Ted Roach was now in a position where there would be greater scope for his ability, and was bound to go on to greater success.

Mr. Howard Fowles said he deemed it an honour to be associated with the farewell to Mr. Roach, and his good wife. They had heard that night the good work that had been accomplished by Ted in the industrial and political field. It was inevitable that a man with such ability would progress in the working class movement. Men of the class of Ted are wanted in the movement. Ted has the ability to go further, and he is bound to do so, and may reach the highest pedestal in the working class movement. The speaker went on to refer to the Dalfram incident, and the distinction Ted had achieved when he brought it to a successful conclusion.

Mr. Bill Brodie, president of the Port Kembla Branch of the Waterside Workers, said he felt it an honour to be selected to make a presentation to Mr. and Mrs. Roach, on behalf of the citizens of Wollongong, on the eve of their departure from the town, when Ted would take up his new duties as assistant secretary of the Waterside Workers' Federation. "I can't make up my mind," said the speaker, "as to whether I am pleased or not at his going." Continuing, he said when Ted first came to the district a great friendship sprang up between them, which became stronger when Ted was made secretary of the Port Kembla Branch. He proved a sincere and straightforward friend. He was fearless in his outlook and always stood up for what he thought was right. Ted and Mrs. Roach can be classed as being as good as the best citizens we have got. "I know," said the speaker, "that Mrs. Roach is a good worker, not only for charity, but for our great ally, Russia. Ted will prove a great success in his new position under the guidance of Jim Healey. I have much pleasure in presenting Ted and his good wife with a canteen of cutlery in appreciation of their good services and kind actions whilst residents of the town. (Prolonged applause as Mr. Brodie presented the canteen of cutlery).

When rising to respond, Mr. Roach received an ovation. "I feel this is the supreme moment of my life," he said. "Although my name has been associated with events on the Coast as an individual, I have always been a believer in collectivity and any success that has been achieved has been brought about on the basis of collective action, in which all sections of the people have taken part, for without public support individual action cannot achieve much. The Dalfram has been mentioned. When the Waterside Workers decided not to load any more pig iron for Japan, because we feared it would come back later as bombs, we had the support of the public throughout Australia. Our policy at that time has been vindicated."

The speaker went on to stress the need for unity amongst all sections of the community in order to defeat the Fascists. He pointed out that unity was exemplified in the social tendered to his wife and himself that night, when all sections of the community were united to do them honour, and he hoped it would be the starting point for unity on the South Coast, which would extend to the Commonwealth. If there was a National Unity to defeat Fascism they would not only win the war, but they would win the peace to follow the war.

Mr. L. Mullin proposed "The United Nations," to which Mr. R. Waller (sec., Wollongong Branch R.S.S.I.L.A.) responded. Whilst the toast was being honoured, the Internationale was sung.

Mr. Fred Lowden paid a tribute of praise to Ted Roach and to the part he had played in the Dalfram incident. He said that the action of Ted was the chief cause of the defeat of Pig Iron Bob, who would never live it down. Mr. Lowden went on to refer to the great struggle of the Russian people and remarked that the actions of some people who applauded the Russians made him think that they did so with their tongues in their cheeks, because when asked to speed up production in order to help our Russian Allies, they would rather have a day off. "The Russians are fighting like hell," said the speaker, "to save their own people from slavery, but they are also fighting to save you from such a fate also."

After this, dancing was resumed, with Mr. A. Cowan as M.C. and music provided by Jock Kidd's Orchestra. A most enjoyable night was spent, and the promoters were congratulated upon the success which had attended their efforts. Mr. L. George was president, and J. Lyons secretary of the committee, and they are deserving of credit for the manner in which their duties were carried out.

Fig 13 Memorial to 50th Anniversary of *Dalfram* Dispute

Source: 'Maritime Worker', Dec 1988

Historian and writer, Rupert Lockwood and Branch Secretary Bob Lawrie report on what is perhaps the first memorial to industrial action against a national government.

THE Federal Minister for Administrative Services, Mr Stewart West, former Port Kembla WWF Branch President, unveiled the memorial and plaque honoring the 180 watersiders who sacrificed 10 weeks' wages to boycott the BHP pig-iron shipment to Japan in the Dalfram, on the 50th anniversary of the November 1938 walk-off.

The memorial is in Peace Park, near the scene of the historic stand against war materials for the Japanese invaders of China.

The People's Republic of China was represented by the Counsellor and the Cultural Attache, Ms Tsai Lien, from the Embassy in Canberra.

South Coast trade unionists attended in force. Mr Colin Hollis, Labor MHR for the area, was among the prominent labor movement personalities in the ceremony.

Ted Roach, Secretary of Port Kembla Branch at the time of the Dalfram boycott, described how the boycott was applied and maintained. Other speakers were the Chinese Embassy Counsellor Zhang Minghua, South Coast Trades and Labor Council President Stan Woodbury, Port Kembla WWF Branch Secretary Bob Lawrie and Rupert Lockwood, who suggested erection of the memorial in his book, *War on the Waterfront,* the only history in book form of the famous dispute that earned R. G. Menzies the nick-name of "Pig Iron Bob".

Most of the proceedings were held in an adjacent hall but the majority of those who attended braved the inclement weather conditions to witness the actual unveiling. This monument is the result of an application for a Bicentennial Grant made on behalf of the Branch and organisation between the Port Kembla Ports Committee.

It is possibly the only memorial of its kind in the world which commemorates workers actions against a national government.

1938 branch secretary and black ban leader, Ted Roach.

Thanks must go to federal office for their kind donation to assist with the catering expenses and all those people who gave assistance to make the ceremony successful.

In 1938 the Port Kembla wharfies declared that Australians would get our own metal back in the shape of bullets and bombs. History proved them be correct and it is significant to recall that 22 waterside workers were killed during the first Japanese air raid on Darwin.

As Bob Lawrie mentioned to the gathering, the inscription on the memorial was compiled by Rupert Lockwood.

Minister Stewart West and branch secretary Bob Lawrie, brave the weather to unveil the memorial.

"The Dalfram dispute," said Stewart West at the Port Kembla ceremony, "is regarded in labor history as one of Australia's most famous strikes.

"In a sense it was more than a moral defeat for BHP and the conservative Federal Government. Firstly, it illustrated on the eve of World War II that in a national situation of real crisis. Australian conservative governments could not be trusted to action in the national interest.

"It also assisted to create an Australian working class ethic to use industrial strength to combat bad legislation. That is, freedom of conscience of the individual to resist bad law.

Zhang Minghua, Chinese Embassy counsellor.

"Further, it assisted in creating the capacity and mode for unions to struggle industrially on political and international issues."

Stewart West stressed that the dispute showed that even back in 1938-39 there was a glimmer of light in the racist sentiment that pervaded middle and working class Australia. The Minister concluded by quoting from Rupert Lockwood's *War on the Waterfront:*

"The resolve of Port Kembla watersiders, gathered for the Dalfram labor pick-up among the beer-barrels behind the old Wollongong Hotel, to sacrifice their wages to help the Chinese people toward peace, freedom, equality and national dignity, could not have come upon them as a Pauline-style blinding light conversion. Their action and the wide and spontaneous support accorded the Port Kembla unionists from academic, commercial and trade union and political sectors, showed that alternate forces, less articulate in the past than the traditional anti-Asian racists, were ready to emerge in armor.

"While the post-World War II hold-up in Australian ports of Dutch ships, munitions, soldiers, colonial official's documents, re-occupation currency and other vital supplies had more significant impact on the outcome of a war, the Port Kembla refusal to heave pig-iron into the Dalfram's holds for Mitsui left more readable markings on the chronicle of resistance to policies that affronted conscience and principle."

22 — MARITIME WORKER, December 1988

Chapter 6
KEMBLA DAYS: LIFE AFTER *DALFRAM*, 1939 to 1942

The theft and destruction of the all-important Minute Books for 1940, 1941 and 1942 of the Wharfies' South Coast Branch, NSW means we must quote from the "The Maritime Worker" (MW) to show the work done by Ted Roach and his COM during 1940-1942. People who had not worked in the special, industrial conditions of Port Kembla Steel Works and wharves might say Ted is "laying it on" with phrases like "*intolerable and inhuman conditions*" (see below). But that is exactly what they were.

SPUN PIPES WERE SNEAKED DOWN: DRIVING A WEDGE

On Monday 19 February 1940, the workers in the spun pipe department of the local BHP steel works took action against their intolerable and inhuman conditions and, as a result, they were locked out. On the Wednesday 1 am shift, two wagons of spun pipes were sneaked down to the jetties but the am shift was cancelled because of rain. When we were informed of the move, I immediately contacted the Secretary of the Ironworkers' Union (Pat McHenry)[1] *and proceeded with him to the No.4 jetty*. [I] *explained the position to our members concerned, then told the manager of the PKS that these pipes were loaded by non-union labor, that we did not want any trouble, but the cargo was black, and the next move was up to him. Very shortly after, we were informed that the powerful BHP feared an extension of the dispute which would seriously impair the promptitude of fulfilling its overseas orders. The spun pipes were bought out of the works, loaded by staff labour, in order to weaken the morale of the workers on strike and drive a wedge between the Trade Unions on the coast. We were able to turn the tables and further strengthen Trade Union unity on the South Coast … enormously raise the morale of the workers on strike, and bring victory for them much closer. More important still, this has shown the possibilities that exist for united struggles, in defence of our better wages and living conditions.*[2]

'Morale', so important in any group struggle, is a word often used by Ted Roach and understood by him. Hadn't he mixed with, boxed with, and organised sporting leaders, and champions? He worked on "morale" through common discipline and by setting small, achievable goals and winning them all while, at the same time, discussing and preparing for the bigger questions like "No Trade With Aggressor Nations", meaning "No Trade With Japan". Cleanliness, toilets, a billy of cold water, lowered down into a deep, hot hold and small acts of self-sacrifice were all part of 'morale building'.

SUPREME COURT WRITS FOR COMPENSATION

"You can never trust an honest man."
Al Capone

Ted's stand against compensation bribes would have been a key factor in his loss of popularity at the top. The compensation industry handled fabulous amounts of money and compensation lawyers had the dye from freshly minted notes, fast in either hand[3]. Not only did Ted refuse a compensation bribe, sack the lawyer [involved][4], and expose the move to his Kembla Wharfie Executive, but he conducted his own compensation cases, sometimes with more success than top silks.

The author: "What gave you the idea to sue for negligence in compensation cases?"

With compo, you'd have to wait some time so we didn't bother about compo. I would sue for negligence in the Supreme Court. We'd loan them a couple of quid (pounds) a week till the case came up. Invariably, we'd have to battle to get that back off them, after they got their money. Every bloody time we had a fight to get it back. I remember Harry Montgomery, we got him £1200. In those days, it was a lot of money. He must have buried the money. Hell's own job, to get our loan back.

It didn't matter if an accident happened at three o'clock in the morning, I'd grab a cab, and away I'd go, I'd be out on the job right then, and I'd say: "Righto, Toby, you gave the wrong signal, and he came back on you". And I'd get it all down, and sign it. I had to find out who was the strongest character in it. Righto, this is the plan: "You misunderstood the order of the hatchman? Is that right?" "Yes, yes." "And you gave the order to come back, and your winch stuck, or something like that." "Yes, that's right", all down, and signed like that, ready to make the case. I picked the strong bloke. They were all silenced and would not talk to Insurance, except through me. They couldn't get statements from anyone else. The cases were all lay down misères[5] from the bloody start. It'd go to the Supreme Court. The solicitor would do all the preparation. Be a couple of barristers, [Clive] *Evatt[6], mouth piece, and Dick Kirby[7], junior.*
The author: "This was an initiative of your own?"
Of course, of course. There's a lot of difference between compo and a civil action, civil action for negligence. It's negligence on the part of the employer, for this fellow who's employed by him in that position, to do the wrong thing and injure this fellow. I found out how easy it was very early in the piece.

Ted sued in the Supreme Court on behalf of Montgomery, a greyhound trainer, and got Harry about 1200 pounds. This case became a "cause célèbre" for Arthur Finlay, ALP President of Wharfies' Sydney Branch, who spent an hour questioning Ted about the Montgomery case, implying impropriety.[8] As always with 'honest' Ted Roach there was no impropriety, just a brilliant, successful prosecution of a Supreme Court writ on behalf of a Wharfie. But the smear implied in Finlay's questions, joined other smears of Ted from Chief Judge Beeby … Ernie Thornton, 'Loshi' Baroni, Robert Gordon Menzies, Arthur Turley among others.

Workers Seeking Advice

We used to have workers coming from all industries to seek compo advice. Then there was the case of Kerr, who fell down a hatch. Clive Evatt was advising Kerr, and they're up at the Court in Taylor Square. He's advising Kerr to settle for one thousand pounds. I said: "Tell them no more discussions till I get up there. No settlement until I am there." Ted grabbed a cab in Kembla and went straight up to Sydney. *We got Kerr two thousand pounds. Clive Evatt said: "Why don't you have a victory celebration? Dick Devereaux[9] and I'll come down to it". And they wanted to settle for one thousand pounds!*

'Sonny' Glynn

The author: "All those posters and banners that you carried, who did them?"
In Kembla, 'Sonny' Glynn[10] did the posters and banners. We'd lock Sonny up in the room opposite our office, until he finished his work. We used to pay him for it. I think I recruited Sonny to the Party. The one with the Eureka Oath on it, Sonny did that. A lovely feller. Asked about Roach, Sonny Glynn said: "Ted? Ted Roach? Ted used to flatten 'em and then flatten 'em again." Sonny meant Ted's winning tactics, in the Wollongong-Kembla industrial campaigns, 1939-1942.

LORD AND LADY WAKEHURST

When Cecil and Cyril Hoskins, of Hoskins Bros. Steel, invited Lord and Lady Wakehurst, the Governor of NSW and his wife to the BHP's businessmen's club in Wollongong, the Lord and Lady didn't expect to be given a bolts and nails lecture from Ted Roach about exporting pig iron to aggressor nations, as well as a trenchant treatise, on the rights of workers. *They brought Lord and Lady Wakehurst, Workhouse, Workhaste, Workhorse, and they had a function up in the BHP's big business club. Cecil and Cyril Hoskins were there. And they had all the Trade Unions there. Steve Best, he was the Secretary of the South Coast Labour Council — a good bloke, a good Party bloke. We're up there, and Cecil and Cyril Hoskins were running round with sandwiches, and we stood in line, and Wharfhurst and his 'waif' came down to say a few words, and move onto the next one, and said a few more words, and so on. Then, all of a sudden, one of the Hoskinses says to Steve Best: Wait'll the boys know about you drinking up here with the Big Bad Wolf". Oh! This is like a red rag to a bull to me, and I'm* half full of Scotch (laughs!). *Never mind Wharfhoist or Wifehurst, I took the floor and I got into them about pig iron for Japan. Hoskins brothers*

*are running round with sandwiches, all embarrassed, handing them to everybody, and they don't what to do because I'm half-full and I'm getting right up them! And hitting them about pig iron to Japan and workers' rights, you see? (Laughs!) I'll never forget that. I didn't wait to be introduced. I'm getting into them! Pat McHenry, he was the Secretary of the Ironworkers down there. He's saying: "Shsh! Shsh! You might upset the BHP!" "Upset the BHP? Pig's f*****g arse!" He and I grabbed a handful of cigars and a bottle of whiskey each and walked out.*

NELSON SENT DOWN: PORT KEMBLA, 1939

We transformed the whole branch and laid the basis for transforming the Federation, down there at Port Kembla. Then, when our [Communist] *Party Conference was on, who do you think they sent down, as the main speaker, from the Party? Nelson! Nelson! The Pig Iron Dispute was finished.*
The author: "And Tommy Nelson[11] came to speak!"
Sent him down as the big man from the top to lecture us on how to build Party organisation. Sent him to our Party Conference. I thought it was hilarious. Yes, I did! Fair dinkum! (Laughs!) Tell us how to build organisation? We built a magnificent organisation there. It was me, I had built the Party Organisation there. We had so many recruits we had to form a second branch. We had to sub-divide the Party Branches into street areas — that's how our influence was! They had next to nothing up here!
The author: "They had a lot of confidence in you, then, Ted?"
I had a lot of confidence in my own ability to organise them around me. We built the Party, down there. We had so many we had to form two branches. Had the hat out for the Party, might have someone on it, might not. They threw into the hat, on the pay line, 3d in the pound for the Party. And all through 'illegality' [1941-42] *I used to collect money, three pence in the pound per Union contribution for the Party. Ten to 12 pounds a week we averaged for the Party. The workers didn't see us as little blokes with beards, throwing Molotov cocktails, but as people doing a job. They didn't see Communists as blokes with horns and bombs and knives and Christ-knows-what. They saw Communists, through me, and my activity, as people who were looking after the interests of the bloody workers. Simple as that.*

DICK DODD NEAR MISS

Ted Roach was experienced in all phases of the loading and unloading of ships' cargoes and other Wharfie work. Here he recalls a humorous incident with Dick Dodd, a member of one of Kembla's four 'Bull' families, when Ted was driving the 'yard-arm winch'. Dick Dodd thought Ted intentionally speared a hatch-board at him. *I missed Dick Dodd with a hatch-board: "Mind you, bastard!", he said. They're a hundred weight each, ten-feet by two-inch, a ten-foot carry, all hard wood. Just imagine how hard and heavy they were. Didn't know Dodd was there. Worst thing was the President, Bill Brodie, was driving the mid-ship winch, and I'm driving the yard-arm winch that hangs over the wharf. Midships winch, straight out on deck. Yard over side, both hooked together. Yard pulls it up on the jetty. As he lifts it up, midships takes it, yard slackens off. Hatchman giving signals. Above the coamings the yard takes over, out it goes. Midships slackens off, holds it so there's tension. Midships slackens off, yard loads it onto the truck. He's slacking off faster than me, so I had to give it an extra boost. Just missed the coaming! Whoof! Onto the gunwhales of the ship!*
The author: "You would've been in trouble?"
Would we ever have been! We'd 've been up for bloody murder. Specially after the dispute, and the Wharfies had put a big sign up – "Dodd Scab" – on the breakwater. I was only thinking of the blokes down below. One single bight[12] inside of a round turn, through the eye, put the extra turn on, pulls it tight. Bill Brodie let all the midship go slackwire. If the tail end of his sling hits the coaming – I was only thinking of the fellows below – with all the slack, it went whoof! – off the gunwales – whoof! There's old Dick Dodd – "Mind you bastard!" Oh, Christ! That was humorous! He thought it was fair dinkum! (Laughs!)

[1] Pat McHenry, FIA, known as 'the Grey Ghost'. Pat was a great ally for Ted in building Communist Party organisation on the South Coast of NSW.

[2] "MW", 10.3.1940.

[3] McClelland, J. "Stirring the Possum: A Political Autobiography", Melbourne: Viking Penguin Books Australia Ltd, 1989, p.80-83. *To get on the Labour Council's panel of solicitors, was almost a licence to print money. One day I opened the door of Maurice Simon's office without knocking, to the great embarrassment of Maurice, and his visitor, Wallace Ritchie, then compensation officer for the Trades and Labour Council. I was hastily shoved out of the room, but not before I had observed a thick wad of notes being handed over to Ritchie, who had called for his periodic commission, on the cases which had been directed to the firm. My boss later cautioned me that I had not seen what I had just seen.* Ted Roach was challenging the legal fraternity's prerogative in the trough of compensation money. He was 'interfering" in the great game of Unions, compensation lawyers and injured workers, known as 'the walking wounded'.

[4] Aidan M. Devereaux. *He gave me the settlement, and then, handed me ten pounds, and said: "This is yours, Ted". I took the bribe to my Executive, and said I recommend we donate the money to our Peace Committee, and sack this legal firm.* See P. K. Minutes, 11.7.1938, p.217. Ted described compensation bribes as *the glitter of a dollar for the destruction of a principle*.

[5] lay down misère — a card game bid where the player is so sure of losing every trick that they undertake to do so with their cards placed face-up on the table. **Editors' note**: 'Lay down misère' is Australian gambling slang for a predicted easy victory.

[6] Clive Evatt of the Evatt family, Australian dynasty of progressive barristers and lawyers.

[7] Richard Kirby.

[8] Biennial Conference Minutes, 1940-1941. Finlay questions Roach about Montgomery.

[9] Dick Devereaux — legal firm.

[10] Alexander 'Sonny' Glynn. Wharfie artist who worked on the famous Wharfies' mural in Sussex St., Sydney, with Clem Millward, Harry Reade, etc. Ted Roach is in outline, a good likeness, on the edge of this mural. Billy Hughes has been painted into the mural, "for History's sake", even though The Wharf Labourers Union expelled Billy Hughes from the Union in 1917, and took his Wharfies' No.1 Life Membership Badge back from the Prime Minister, for betraying the Labor Party and the working class. Sonny, who was in Kembla with Ted, is the one artist in the book about the Wharfies' Mural, "Tapestry of Australia", who mentions that the famous "Pig Iron Dispute" on the *Dalfram* is not in the mural. Many have asked why the victorious 'No Pig Iron for Japan!' Struggle, of November-January 1938-39, led 'from go to whoa', by Ted Roach, does not appear in the famous Wharfies' mural, now at 61-63 Sussex St., Sydney.

[11] Tom Nelson, Secretary Sydney Branch, WWF, one of the five to seven member Wharfies' National Executive. Tom was a member of the National Bureau, of Jim Healy, Ted Roach, Tom Nelson, Rupert Lockwood, and one other, e.g. Dick Dixon.

[12] **Editors' note**: a single loop of a rope or cable. The middle or slack part of an extended rope.

Chapter 7
RED DUST AND ROTARIES, 1940

Success has been achieved on the matter of cleaning up the residue of iron ore dust after discharging, before loading general cargo. For some time the condition of these ships has caused great concern, not only in this port, but throughout our Federation. We raised the question with the people concerned, but to no avail. The "Murada" came in, for general cargo, in a filthy state. We immediately discussed the position, and the five gangs of men concerned refused to go below, until the ship was reasonably cleaned up. Threats of various descriptions were used by the Company but it did not take long for them to get the crew on the job, shoveling and sweeping up the mess that had been left, and it proved a costly policy. The hustle and bustle for profits was more important to the ship owners than the lesson they had been taught. The "Iron King" was brought in without being properly cleaned up and a board [Board of Reference] *was immediately called, 3d per hour was awarded, and a recommendation that, in future, these ships were to be reasonably cleaned, before our men were asked to work them. Our position, as it exists now, is that no work will be done in the future, unless some consideration is given to the working conditions of our members, by making reasonable attempts to get rid of the dust and filth.*[1]

This is a typical Ted Roach report from Port Kembla. This report is unsigned in the *Maritime Worker*. This short, powerful evocation of the Wharfies' campaigns in Kembla is as effective now as it was then. It is the particular detail which makes it an historic document. Communist Party leaders spoke and wrote in their Party treatises and articles, in generalisations. And if, as a Communist leader like Roach, you wanted to impress the Party leadership, you ought to rote-quote the much masticated generalisations of Stalinised Marxism, with few specifics, few actual observations of your own, none of your own perceptions if possible and the occasional ritual salaam in the right direction. Concentrating on detail, on the local struggle, on workers' attitudes, could find you taped with one of the Party's tear off the roll 'criticisms' — you were too 'spontaneous', a tendency to 'anarchism', you were ignoring the centre, you were 'a backward comrade', you hadn't been to enough 'Party schools'.

LIKE RED INDIANS

When the ships used to unload the iron ore at Hoskin's Jetty (they call it Hoskin's Jetty, the BHP steelworks jetty out in the Harbour) the workers'd be like Red Indians. The ships'd come over, and all the hatch-boards and BHP tarpaulins'd be covered in bloody red dust, and our blokes'd finish up like Red Indians. I said: "No, no, no! This won't happen! We're not going to let this happen anymore". So before it moved from its berth, we insisted on hoses being put on the ship, and hosed down before all the dust was bought over for Wharfies to be called on to load the ship. They're all working inside the inner harbour now, before it was outer harbour, and Hoskins'd bring it across to No.4 Jetty right alongside the iron ore berth. We used to make them hose it all down, till the ship was clean.

DUSTS, DUSTS, DUSTS AND DUSTS

Ted Roach, the son of a miner who lived and organised among miners in Newcastle and the South Coast of NSW, was acutely aware of dusts. On Sunday mornings he went with his father, Matt Roach, visiting miners who were 'dusted'. He heard the sharp explosions of their coughs, he saw the ox eyes bloom in their tortured frames and he watched the hurried hankies whisking coal-seeded, dark blood, from their bed coverlets, already clouded with the tide-lines of erupting lungs, the wiping rag then quickly hidden. *What's wrong with that bloke, Dad? "Dusted mate, dusted* (Matt)*."* Ted Roach wouldn't forget what he had seen and heard, nor would he stop describing what he had seen. Others might forget, or disremember, but not Ted Roach, not 'Roachy'. *Miners? Dust? It wasn't even compensatable at one time — their lungs'd be like a lump of hard rock.* Ted was mistaken for a miner. He had the blue blaze of the coal on his right cheek and

eyebrow. *When I first went to Kembla, I was down below, I remember. I had a crib in the warmer and rushed to get it. Bang! Hit my cheek on a steel stanchion.*

In Kembla, Ted 'bunkered' coal. The Wharfies climbed down into the deep hatch with a shovel, a metal plate (to give the shovel purchase) and a candle. *They'd bring the big wagon over, ten tons of coal, bring over the big pin that holds the pin on the door on the bottom, and the pin boss is there to knock that pin out and release the coal below. There were 4000 tons in the chute trimmed down into the hatches. Put your plates in, pick it up. Throw it round, and spread it back. Each man has a plate making a floor for your shovel — pick it up and throw it back, but keep on doing it. Build walls and throw it behind. Big boats with big bunkers and no escape hatch. Wet? Wet only with sweat. There were coal Bulls, some who liked coal. The trimmers would bunker coal, coal bunkers for the ships' engines. Coaltrimmers were always in the WWF but in a separate branch, the Newcastle Coaltrimmers' Branch. South Coast was the best steaming coal, not shiny Newcastle coal but a very dusty one; bad coal for lungs, miners' lungs. Silicosis was very prevalent down the Coast with that coal.*

Having known for years that authorities and bureaucrats do not move without *pressure, organised pressure*, Ted developed his own initiatives about dusts in Port Kembla. In the week of 30 September 1940 he arranged for Dr Barham, a dust expert, to visit Kembla and inspect the many types of dusts, which threatened the health, livelihood, and future, of workers in the port. "The Maritime Worker" reported: In connection with dust/silicosis cargoes, Mr Roach, Secretary, South Coast Branch, mentioned that, during the week, Dr Barham would be visiting Port Kembla, to take samples of air and dust in a ship where concentrates were being worked. The WWF NSW State Executive would, for example, "press for the following cargoes to be included in any Silicosis Act: Wheat, manganese ore, zinc concentrates, phosphates, matte ores, lead antimony, lead concentrates, mor. gas, E.Z. ore , cement, flour and iron ore dust."[2] Other dangerous dusts were later added to this list.[3] Note that it is Ted Roach who takes the initiative. Ted is determined that irrefutable, scientific evidence will be detailed in his Branch of the Federation, to support the Unions' demand for a Silicosis Act. In the 1960s Ted took on the work of "Safety, Health and Hygiene" for the Wharfies, which meant co-operating with employers and medical officers in researching risks, and promoting the benefits of adequate protection.[4]

EUREKA FLAG - EUREKA OATH, 1940

"Moreover, a Marxist can never be a narrow national chauvinist.
A Marxist can be a patriot, which is different, and love his or her homeland, which is different, too."
Fidel Castro[5]

After the speech at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern in 1935 by the Secretary General of the Communist International (Comintern), Georgi Dimitrov, the CPA leaders in Australia became conscious of the need for historical symbols of the struggle of the Australian people and working-class. Dimitrov watched Fascism engulfing Europe and watched how the Fascists stole National symbols, symbols of the people's struggle and resistance, and used them for the Fascist cause. The Nazi Party, for example, called itself the National Socialist German Workers' Party. They stole the Communist red, as a background, for their swastika, the swastika itself stolen from ancient symbols.

Ted Roach, who said he was *the only bastard carrying out* (Communist) *Party industrial policy*, took up the question of the Eureka Flag. He learnt the Eureka Oath, and he used to recite the Oath at meetings of Port Kembla citizens and united workers' meetings. *I got hold of the Eureka Oath from a Lloyd Ross* [Union official] *pamphlet. The Wharfies, en masse, took the oath and through the TLC, and at as many mass meetings as possible, we had the oath recited and sworn. I started it off first in the National Register campaign on the Wollongong esplanade, a big march down there against Menzies' National Register, 1940. I'd say: "So we'll administer the oath — 'We swear, by the Southern Cross, to stand truly by each other, and fight to defend our rights and liberties'". They'd all join in. I even did it in the Branch on issue. This went over big, a big lift, it was very lifting.*

Ted was the only Communist[6] in Australia who actively and consciously put the Eureka flag, and oath, into positive action among workers and the community. For Ted Roach, championing the Oath of Eureka, as proposed by Miles and Dixon of the CC-CPA, would bring him into direct conflict with the loyalties of British Imperial shipping representatives. 'Loyalism', stretching back to the World War I slaughter of the finest of Australian youth, still predominated in official Australia. Ted's simple gesture of highlighting Eureka, and Peter Lalor's oath, would be noted by Imperial observers and 'Security' and a mark put against Ted's name. His declaration of support for Chinese Malayan resistance to British re-invasion in 1948 was described, by ASIO, as "an anti-British trend"[7]. In the context of British Imperial History, Peter Lalor of Eureka was the brother of James Fintan Lalor, who was an 'Irish revolutionary', someone who fought for Irish Survival, Independence and Social Justice[8]. Eureka and its flag, its ideals, its struggle, were adopted by the Australian Communist Party after Georgi Dimitrov proclaimed 'the people's front against Fascism' at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern. Dimitrov said: "Communists who do nothing, to encourage the masses, on the part of the people, in a genuinely Marxist spirit, who do nothing to link up the present struggle, with the people's revolutionary traditions and past — voluntarily hand over to the fascist falsifiers, all that is valuable in the historical past of the nation"[9]. He said that any symbols of struggle from the people's past, such as Eureka, should be dug up, re-consecrated, and held on high.

The idea did not come from Miles and Dixon, themselves. It came from reading Dimitrov's moving speech overseas, regurgitated in Australia in Party journals. With few exceptions, the Australian Communist leaders, like most people, were derivative thinkers, not originators of thought. Sir Thomas Gordon[10], a Vice-President of the Wharfies' Football Club, in receiving a club blazer one evening said he was "in favour of a library and social club, where cultural facilities could be provided for Sydney members, and he could be relied on for support"[11]. Sir Thomas Gordon would not be seen dead taking the Eureka Oath.

In later times in the 1980s, the Communist Party of Australia, as it was then, abandoned the Eureka Flag and all National symbols and references, and left them for the Right, the Fascists, and White Racists to use. Georgi Dimitrov was no longer a genius. His ideas were now "chauvinist" and "unreconstructed". In 1935 a Genius, in 1981 a Dunce, Georgi Dimitrov, who bearded the Nazi judges in their own court[12], a symbol that lived in Ted Roach's sub-conscious, was no longer a genius, but, because of the intellectual elasticity of Australian Communist leaders, had been changed miraculously by 1981, from a Genius to a Dunce. Here was another sudden, sharp turn in Communist thinking in Australia.

KENI – THE HATCH ROTARY: IMPOSING A UNION ROSTER ON A SHIP'S HATCHES

History is written by people who think that it was that way.
Ted Roach

In Port Kembla, Ted chose the ship *Keni* for a creative and innovative Wharfie campaign to impose the Union's roster on the cargo hatches of the ship. The hatch contains the cargo and the *Keni* had four hatches. The Union imposes its roster so that foremen ('pannos')[13] can't pick long or short jobs, clean or dirty jobs, to discriminate against certain workers and victimise militants. This was another Roach initiative and in March 1950 the tactic climaxed with the brilliant, three week struggle of the Wharfies' Brisbane Branch, to impose a hatch roster, called "the rotary", on ships in the port of Brisbane. (See chapter 16.) *We took this struggle on and as a matter of fact the members thought it was a lot of fun. I said: "This is how we do it." That's the important thing — how you do it.*[14] *I told them all at the pre-pick up meeting: "Now we want you to do exactly as the Union roster says. Let the employer, let the panno enjoy himself, and place you, and give you jobs, which hatch, and which not to do. When the panno directs you to a hatch, you agree with him, and say: "Righto, mate!", but when you go to work, you go to your hatch off the Union's roster, and you start work. Then, they'd start work. Then the screams'd start from fore to aft.*

The author: "Who'd be screaming?"

The pannos. The pannos'd be screaming: "Hey! I bloody told you not to go there! Hey! I told you to go to No.1 hatch!" "Hey, you! What are you doing there? Get back to No.2 hatch", and so on. So when they

started screaming, I told the boys, "just say: "OK! Bill! OK, mate!" agree with the pannos all the time, but keep on working. Every time they scream: "Hey, you shouldn't be there! You should be over at No.1!" Just say "OK, Bill, OK, mate", and stay where you are, on our Union roster, and keep working'". This was a bit frustrating to the pannos I know, and they'd tear their hair out, because they couldn't do anything about it. And do you know what happened? They'd race down below and cut the steam off so we couldn't do our work.[15]

I would immediately send a cablegram or wire to Canberra, and accuse the employers of holding up the war effort, stopping the ships from working, stopping us from getting the extra "bottoms" [ships] *that Curtin*[16] *wanted. So, it'd end up in court: "Mr Roach, did you stop the job?" "No, your Honour, the BHP turned the steam off". So, back in the court again, and they agreed that the rotation of hatches was a good thing to have, a very good thing. Only went on for one week, with a ship called the "Keni", a little Union Company, Australia-New Zealand ship. It went on for one week, and the employers caved in on rotation of hatches. See, we took this struggle on, and by using these tactics we forced the employer into all kinds of mistakes. All the time, ease him over, ease him over, ease him over, into his own shit, all the way. And he's in more strife than 'Speed Gordon'. And so we've got to get what we're looking for, and that's how we used to wage our campaigns. That's how we won so many conditions. We never had to come off the job once. We were locked out in the Dalfram Dispute. In the whole five years I was Secretary down there* [in Port Kembla]*, we withdrew our labour on one occasion only*[17].

The author: "What were the extra 'bottoms'?"

Curtin asked for "more bottoms" [ships]. *So I proposed that we take the normal cargo handling, various types of cargo, over the last period of three years and we set that as the norm. Then we set out to create extra effort, and extra cargo, over and above that norm, and a pro rata payment be paid to wharf labourers.*

The author: "Who came up with the idea?"

I did. Curtin asked for "more bottoms". And I thought well here's a chance for the Wharfies to get a little extra money. So I took it to the employers, and I said this is how we'll do it. Let us unite in the war effort. "No," they said, "no, we're not going to!"

The author: "What about the war effort?"

The war effort was not their concern. They were only in the game for profit. They didn't give a stuff if there was one war on or two wars on. Maximum profit was, and is, the motive of the Interstate and Overseas Shipping Companies. And maximum profit is the motor of modern Monopoly Capitalism.

THE *"RAVINE" GANG*, PORT KEMBLA

It happened when the employers decided to challenge our right to preference. Their chosen ship was the "Ravine" and they made up a gang called the 'Ravine gang'. They had some of the people from their office in this gang. They started to work. Well, as soon as they started to work, they couldn't work all the ships in the port with this one gang. And so we promptly withdrew our labour from the other ships. Couple of days later, the Stevedoring Industry Commission met and said that all the preference had to be given to the Wharfies. The employers didn't tell them they couldn't employ the Ravine gang. But the employers knew, and the Commission knew, that we had it won, and they knew that if they put the Ravine gang back on the wharf they'd be back in the same position tomorrow as they were yesterday. We were conscious of that. The employers didn't say we won't employ them again but inferentially we knew the Ravine gang would never be used again. And if you go along the Port Kembla breakwater today, you'll see slogans ten foot high on the rocks all along the breakwater - "Sloan Scab", "Dodd Scab" - these are some of the foremen who were making up this Ravine gang. Incidentally, Lockwood's book[18] *said these signs were part of the Pig Iron dispute. They had nothing to do with the Pig Iron dispute. That is how History gets out of plumb.*

[1] "MW", 10.3.1940, p.7.

[2] "MW", 12.10.1940, p.12.

[3] *Soda ash, yellow ochre, red ochre, red oxide, red lead, dye powders, ink powders, whting plumbago, graphite, potash, fuller's earth, nitrate of soda, carbon black, cement, alkali, plasters, dry colours, Tasmanian bark*. "FCM", 20.1.1947, p.23.

[4] The short-lived 1940 Wharfies' NSW State Executive comprised of: Arthur Finlay (Sydney) State Rep, E. B. Thompson (Sydney), J. Effie (Newcastle), 'Loshi' Baroni (Sydney), J. D. Hough (Port Stephens), Fred Malcom (Sydney), Jim Healy (Gen-Sec), H. Weaver (Newcastle Wharf), Matt Bull (Grafton), J. Woods (Sydney), Barney Mullins (Sydney), F. Swadling (Coffs Harbour) and Ted Roach (Secretary, South Coast). Ted Roach was Secretary of the NSW State Executive.

[5] First International Congress on Culture and Development, International Convention Centre, Havana, Cuba, 11 June, 1999.

[6] Outside of the Eureka Youth organisation.

[7] ASIO, 4.8.1947, R/1/48 Vol 1/29 Malaya. The general level of consciousness of the 400 Wharfies, and supporters, at the footie night, might not, on the eve of war, encompass Eureka Republicanism. Who knows? They might have felt Ted Roach was entirely wrong.

[8] One of eighteen children, see Cayley, Frank. "Flag of Stars", Adelaide: Rigby Ltd, 1966.

[9] Dimitrov, Georgi. "Selected Articles and Speeches", London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1951.

[10] Gordon, Sir Thomas. "Apart from heading the subsidiary Birt and Co. agency and other vast P&O Company interests here, he was to be wartime representative in Australia for the United Kingdom Ministry of Transport and Allied Consultative Shipping Council, Director of Shipping for the Australian Government and member of the Shipping Control Board." See Lockwood, R. "War on the Waterfront", op. cit., p.81.

[11] "MW", 16.11.1940. Tom Nelson, Ted Roach and Vic Gore set out to make Wharfies sport, Union business, organised and held successful Wharfies sporting carnivals in the early 1950s, with tours of New Zealand. The Wharfies, with a big 'W' on their jerseys, played in Sydney's Sunday afternoon Rugby League competition. Ted, himself from a family of boxers, was a good snooker and billiards player.

[12] **Editors' note**: "In 1932, Dimitrov was appointed Secretary General of the World Committee Against War and Fascism" ... "In 1933, he was arrested in Berlin for alleged complicity in setting the Reichstag on fire. Dimitrov famously decided to refuse counsel and defended himself against his Nazi accusers, primarily Hermann Göring, using the trial as an opportunity to defend the ideology of communism." … "The Leipzig Trial was widely publicized and was broadcast on the radio. It was expected that the court would find the Communists guilty on all counts and approve the repression and terror exercised by the Nazis against all opposition forces in the country." … "During the Leipzig Trial, Dimitrov's calm conduct of his defence and the accusations he directed at his prosecutors won him world renown. On August 24, 1942, for instance, the American newspaper "The Milwaukee Journal" declared that in the Leipzig Trial, Dimitrov displayed "the most magnificent exhibition of moral courage even shown anywhere." In Europe, a popular saying spread across the Continent: "There is only one brave man in Germany, and he is a Bulgarian." Dimitrov was acquitted." Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgi_Dimitrov and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reichstag_fire_-_Reichstag_fire_trial

[13] Panicking bosses or pannos. Ted said he got an idea for certain tactics when, *at the tea table, little Yvonne on her high chair was stretching and withdrawing her little hand, closer and closer to his, saying "I love you, Daddy. I love you, Daddy". I thought you don't have to get everything, at once, you can try a bit at a time, like little Yvonne did.*

[14] *When you go to work make sure you go to work on the basis of the Federation roster. If he's No.1 in a 12 man gang, all right, one to 12, go to No.1 hatch, 13 to 24 go to No.2 hatch. Already there's hatchmen and winchmen nominated in these groups, and whoever takes No.1 winch, and whoever takes No.2 winch comes off the roster too. Whoever's first goes to the first job, and we had them all itemised. The first job could be hatchmen, the second be winchmen, next time they'd be men below, next time they'd be on the wharf. And that's how the rotation of hatches operated.*

[15] *We took the fight to the employers, and "Hello! He's cut the steam off". "All right, everybody sit down". "But we won't get paid for this." It doesn't matter whether you get paid for it or not. That's not important now. What's important now is to carry out the Union policy. We'll talk about getting paid subsequently. What we want now is rotation of hatches."*

[16] John Curtin, Australian Labor Party Prime Minister during World War II (1941-1945).

[17] In the "Ravine" dispute.

[18] Lockwood, "War on the Waterfront", op. cit., p.184.

Chapter 8
SMEARS, SUCCESSES AND SOUTH COAST FAREWELL, 1941-1942

I cut my teeth on the class struggle.
Ted Roach

On 11 March 1941, Sir George Beeby[1], Chief Judge of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, accused the WWF, including Ted Roach, of "treason" for striving for better conditions for Wharfies in Kembla. "The Maritime Worker" replied: "It is NOT subversive to demand that conditions be improved, it is NOT treason to demand, by industrial action, that bad conditions be immediately righted". It's a pretty big stick, isn't it? "Treason"! Sounds bad. Say the Wharfies said BHP was 'treasonous' for exporting iron ore and pig iron to the roaring furnaces of Mitsui and Mitsubishi-steel? Hush, hush! Tut, tut! Non e permesso! Not bloody well permitted, mate. Capital is patriotic when it is fighting for survival. At other times, it bowsers into the blood pumping from any unfortunate, victimised people on the Earth. But, here you go, the Chief Judge is pulling out a real Big Stick for Ted Roach. But Ted liked to see the Big Stick, because he knew it was a sign of weakness; and as soon as it came out, Ted would 'up the ante', like when he burnt the 'Dog Collar' licence outside the Customs House — an act of defiance.

'PRETTY BOY' ROACH

'Loshi' Baroni, a Pyrmont (Sydney) right-wing 'militant', launched an attack in the Groupers' paper "The Voice" on South Coast Branch over *Dalfram* strike monies trying to smear Ted Roach. Ted answered as follows: *We wish to bring under the notice of the Sydney Branch, the seriousness of the allegations made in the last issue of The Voice against the South Coast Branch, and our Federal Committee of Management, in relation to the Dalfram Dispute and strike funds. The allegations are such that these nameless scribes of this filthy press should be prepared to make definite charges. To use their own terminology, we suggest they have not got the guts to make definite charges which could then be dealt with in the proper quarter*.[2] Ted asked Loshi why he called him 'Pretty Boy' Roach. Loshi said it was because of Ted's "criminal connections"[3]. If there were any working 'under the lap'[4] in Sydney, they did not want 'honest' Ted upsetting their apple carts, nor did they want his system of complete, Union-controlled discipline. Anyway, anyone who handed back a compensation bribe must be a "complete idiot". Roach had banned the Groupers' "Voice" in the Illawarra, as well as W. C. Wentworth's "Illawarra Star" and "The Daily Telegraph". Loshi, with 2667 votes, was seven votes short of election to the WWF Federal Council on 18 August 1951.[5] So Ted was being smeared by lowly Wharfies and elevated judges as early as 1941. When Loshi Baroni died, S. 'Ivo' Barrett spoke at his funeral. Ivo followed a militant line, with an original turn of phrase, on the Wharfies' Federal Council, and was expelled from the ALP for standing on a Unity Ticket with Tom Nelson, a Communist. Ivo Barrett was allowed into Wharfies' Communist Party Fraction[6] meetings in Sydney.[7]

FOUR-HOUR MINIMUM - *AN ENORMOUS HOOK*: JUNE 1941

It used to be a two-hour minimum, so they could sack you after two hours. We forced Beeby to make a decision for a four-hour minimum. Strangely, he only gave it to four ports — Port Kembla, Hobart, Sydney and Adelaide — because of our campaign in Kembla for the four-hour minimum. We had started out on a campaign for an eight-hour minimum. Our campaign went on. [There was] *no campaign elsewhere. There'd be a short job coming up where we could demand the eight-hour minimum. We'd pick a job here and there, some were finishing off jobs. Our Industrial Guerrilla Warfare forced it into the court, in front of Chief Judge Beeby. Beeby awarded the four-hour minimum to Port Kembla, Hobart, Melbourne and Sydney. I wrote this up in "The Maritime Worker", and it was edited to say that "good advocacy in court" got it. Why didn't "good advocacy" win it for the other ports as well? You don't get any concessions by being bloody nice.*

In the Magnet Dispute in Kembla, Jim Healy's ringing me and saying: "Holt wants to know what is the minimum you'll accept?" There is no minimum! It's the number we are requiring! It's two men below! Any concessions that come are based on the struggle of the members, not by wooing judges and going to dinner with them; that doesn't achieve anything. They're representatives of a class organisation. They're not going to make a decision that puts themselves out of a job, are they? I remember an epic one, with men below and the BHP. I knew the day before what was going to happen. We put it on, time and time again. Next thing we'd get an entourage down to a Board of Reference to make justice appear to be done. They had this new hook, an enormous hook, and they said one man can handle this hook. They just whacked it on, and said this is how it's going to be. And we said this is how it's not going to be. Down they came, the whole entourage! Healy, Holt, Captain Crompton, Nicholson, Speedy (General Manager, PKS), Don Morrison (NSW Deputy Registrar) and Rolands (South Australian Deputy Registrar)! The whole entourage! The bloke on the crane was on side. He wrapped this enormous hook, an enormous hook, he wrapped it right round Rolands' skull, when he went down below. Rolands climbs up, sweating profusely: "In my opinion", he says, "that hook is far too big for one man, it needs at least two men below, two men at least. That's my decision, that's it!"

They all had dinner at the Oxford Hotel, after the Board of Reference. I don't know who paid for who. They were careful not to invite me. Then up on the jetty, about 4.30 pm, Rolands is there and the whole Board of Reference and Nicholson — Captain Nicholson — he was the boss down there, always a sniveling, nasty bastard. He says: "Mr Roach do you think you can get some labour for the ship?" "No pick-up Saturday, difficult to get labour, I'll do my best". I was trying to put the family into a picture show. Nicholson comes in nasty: "I'll send a man with you." "Better send a bloody taxi with him, then!" I said.

This was how I learnt so much about Industrial Guerrilla Tactics. Nowhere else in Australia was this work done. As soon as we rolled up one campaign, another would come into place. Continuous campaigns, all the while, and the campaigns would go on as one man, a well-oiled machine, drawing lessons, bringing about that unity of purpose, that showed itself in the Pig Iron Dispute. This Industrial Guerrilla Warfare — we developed a fairly high degree of skill about it all. They were our rules, our policies, our decisions. There was no way the employer could divide and conquer. We developed the discipline to ensure every man carried out the Union policy in any given situation. We built a big wall round us in any given situation. No-one could breach it. Every day we built and strengthened. In Kembla, when we had our job committee for sulphur we got double rates just for the discomfort. We got 6d an hour on most cargoes, dust and so on. Didn't get it because of good advocacy. We got it because of action taken on the job.

SPOT CAFÉ AND OTHER DISPUTES

It was in the Spot Cafe [in Wollongong] *over the girls. We put the tar brush*[8] *on it, and picketed the place.*

The author: "That was about Union membership?"

No, over wages. Spot Cafe, it is Friday night. We're picketing the place. Late shopping and so on. Coppers coming down. Sergeant said: "Mr Roach these girls are entitled to the award wage". They knocked off Gordon King, the Party Organiser, and Vic Workman, from the Hotel Restaurants, they knocked him off, and the Crown Sergeant said to me: "Roach!" I said: "You do your job, sarge, and I'm doing mine". Didn't 'pinch' me, they knew there might be a ship stoppage if they did. I knew that and they knew it too. They knocked the other blokes off. They wouldn't knock me off. Finished up, got quite a bit of back money, for these girls. Thirty or forty quid.

The author: "Quid?"

Yes, bit of money in those days. This is the way it went on down there. They would like to have knocked me off, but, you see, we had the wood on them.

Beer Strike
Held it over Christmas, just before New Year. It was over reducing schooners by an ounce. Mrs Ryan's pub broke first. See the buses ferryen' them to Mrs Ryan's. You could only get six schooners. Hug them and carry them out. You couldn't get back in. First successful beer strike, over reducing schooners by an ounce.

Sudden Price Increases
During the war [1939-1942]*, blokes'd say: "They've increased the price of a box of matches". We'd threaten' the tar brush and they'd take it off. We'd go up, and say: "Right!" — there was a law in, at the time — "take it off, or we'll put you in". It wasn't a black ban. It was making them carry out the bloody law."*

Kembla Wharfies Digging Trenches

On 18 April 1942, "The Maritime Worker" reported that at a "Congress of National Unity for an Allied Victory" it was noted that "members of the South Coast branch (of the Wharfies) are here digging slit trenches for the safety of school children. Plans are being prepared to have everything in readiness to evacuate women and children to a safer place should the need arise", for example to Orange.[9]

Wharfies wanted basic conditions like meal facilities, wash rooms, sanitary arrangements, wharf shelters. Conditions, on 13 June 1942 are not bonzer, e.g. night gangs' showers: Men - Port Kembla 1 to 12, Melbourne 1 to 1000, Sydney 1 to 250, Brisbane 1 to 100, Adelaide nil. Washbasins: Men - Port Kembla 1 to 12, Melbourne nil, Sydney 1 to 100, Brisbane 1 to 100, Adelaide nil. "The NSW Shops and Factories Act prescribes one wash-basin to 25 men, where total employees exceeded 100. Qualitative comparisons are difficult. The Port Kembla installation provides hot water for basins and showers. Shower recesses are tiled, and with the rest of the equipment are kept spotlessly clean".[10]

EVO OWEN'S RABBIT GUN

Ted was a delegate to the South Coast Labour Council. The Council and the Wharfies helped bring the Owen gun to the attention of the Australian Government in Canberra. Evelyn, or 'Evo' Owen invented the gun to shoot rabbits to eat. Wharfie Stanley Ashton knew Evo and told Ted about the gun. *He had this gun. You could drop it in the mud and it would still fire so many rounds. It played such a magnificent role in the Owen Stanleys, in our blokes beating the Japanese Army. We discussed it at the Trade Union Council. I think it was Owen and Jack Ranston, the Secretary of the Sydney Labor Council, we sent on a motorbike to bloody Canberra. We were demanding that the Government manufacture the Owen gun for the Australian Army in Niu Guini. The combined Trade Union pressure successfully convinced the Australian Government to manufacture the Owen Gun for the Australian Army.*

Communist, Sally Bowen[11], was a leader of the Lysaght's Factory team in Wollongong that manufactured the Owen gun for the Australian Army. She wrote this poem for Evo Owen:

Farewell to 'Evo' Owen
From the shores of Salamoua
To the banks of Nassou Bay,
There the Owen guns are firing
Every night and every day.
They're the best of sub-machine guns,
And we're proud to think that we
Have the owner and inventor
In this joyous company.
From the workshop down at Lysaghts,
From the annexe let us say,
"Cheerio" to Evo Owen
And we'd like him back some day.

And wherever he may wander,
Over land or over sea,
He has friends who will remember
That he helped to keep us free.
1944

SHEEP SKINS FOR RUSSIA - 1942

Ted involved his Branch members in the 'Sheep Skins for Russia'[12] campaign, which was a practical gesture of solidarity with Australia's then ally, the late Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, in the fight to crush Nazism and Imperial Japan. As a visible local gesture Ted and Bill Howie ran up the USSR's Red Flag on Wollongong Town Hall. *See, I had the Russian flag flying, the red flag flying, from the mast of the Wollongong Town Hall. Old Bill Howie, an old British soldier, clicked his heels, saluted, and handed the red flag over to the conservative mayor, Lee, of Wollongong. It flew for seven weeks. Old Bill did it in the best, Imperial fashion. I had the first Russian ship that came into Port Kembla. I took the local Member out* [to the ship]*, I took the Mayor out, I took every bastard out. I go out, and there's a big, fat bloke, he's looking at the lines on the back of the ship. "Where's Captain Perez?" "Captain? Oh," he says, "Sparks! Sparks!!" See 'Sparks' is the interpreter, he's the radio operator. "Sparks! Sparks!!" he says. Well, the blokes are coming to coal the ship, so I said: "What do you call in Russia, men who coal ship?" "Workmen". "Well", I said, "Workmen coming here, shovel coal, all money, all wages, sheepskins for Russia". I never saw a bloke's mask bounce off the deck like his did. He gesticulated, and next thing we're up talking to the Captain, in the Captain's cabin. I said: "Captain Perez, do you think some of your people could come ashore, if I arrange something?" My politics taught me this. You see, I jumped the stump before the pick-up. I said: "Boys, sheepskins for Russia is so important, in this struggle, in this war. Now the equivalent of the wages earnt by all of the workers on this ship will be donated to "Sheepskins for Russia". But we will ensure the workers will get their money, because the Union will pay for it." That's it, bang! And so we finished up at the Illawarra Hotel. I had everyone there but the Minister Fraternal and the BHP. We had Lees, the Liberal Mayor, Billy Leyden, and so on. They were all there. I made an impassioned "Open the Second Front" speech that night, a very effective one. And the Russians bought their own vodka there. See, that was good.*

"OH, GOD, NO!"

On Saturday mornings we'd take over half the street at one end. We used to raise over a hundred pounds every Saturday morning for 'Sheep Skins for Russia'. We'd have the hat out for the party. We had games, numbers games, we got up to all the capers. And we'd say to the sergeant, old Davey Frazer: "Can we have half the street that end, to set up and raise money?". And he'd say: "Oh, no! Oh, no! Oh God, no! – but none of my officers will be down that end of the street, before 12 noon." Davey Frazer! (Laughs!)

"INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST": TED RUNS FOR COUNCIL,1942

"Ted ran for Council, down there, and he got beaten by one vote, wasn't it?" (Wyck).[13] *Yes. "Independent Socialist"!* Menzies had banned the Communist Party in 1940[14] so Ted Roach stood as an "Independent Socialist". *By Christ! I nearly got in. I frightened Christ out of them.* "He had to get out and canvas and put his tickets out." (Wyck) *All down Wollongong down along the beach ... down to Port Kembla, one big golf course separated the houses and the road from the surf. I had it all worked out by the local government regulations, golf was a silvertail job then. It wasn't just a workers' game it was a silvertail job. And I was going to run the bloody roads down through the golf course to the beach and have workers' homes there. We were going to have Municipal Timber Mills, and we were going to have Municipal Brick Works, and Municipal Everything. We were going to turn the place, right on its bloody ear.* "Ted already had a price for the land - six thousand pounds." (Wyck) *Yes, I had a Socialist Programme and all fixed up.*

And I only got tossed by one vote, [by] *the local politician's son* [Mr Davies]. *They had me in at first.* "Yes, it came over the air that you had won." (Wyck) *I was in, and then a re-count, and I just got tossed.* Wyck had a real sparkle in her eyes, thinking of how they had "a ton of fun at Kembla". "We had some fun. We'd be handing out leaflets on the Town Hall steps and they'd say: 'You're not supposed to give tickets out on the steps'. And Ted pinned 'How To Vote Ted Roach' on the back of his coat, and he was walking round all night with it. We had some fun in Wollongong, in four years. We had a ton of fun."

Then, as sometimes happened, in the flow of our never-to-be-forgotten conversations, Wyck recalled a more serious story. It was another attempt by 'the authorities' to 'fit'[15] or frame Ted. This time for bashing a 'scab'. "Our eldest daughter had baby eczema. We had to tie her hands down. The only place we could go would be the pictures so that, sometimes, she would sleep through it. And this night she was very restless, so Ted said: "Well, I'll take her out"… He sat, in the foyer, with the baby, and the theatre manager said: "Come in the office, here, and sit with me". Well, it so happened that a scab had been bashed that night and they tried to 'fit' Ted with it. They had all the witnesses arranged and everything. And the theatre manager said: "That night he was here." Ted didn't know he was the theatre manager. The scab got bashed up in Wollongong. Matt did it, didn't he?" (Wyck) *No, no. 'Broken Hill'* [a worker's nickname]*, I think. Anyway they couldn't fit me with it.*

ELECTION FOR THE POSITION OF ASSISTANT-GENERAL SECRETARY AND NATIONAL ORGANISER OF THE AUSTRALIAN WHARFIES, AUGUST 1942

There were two Executive Officers in the Wharfies' Federal (National) Office, Wembley Chambers in Sydney. One was Jim Healy, General Secretary/Treasurer, who was elected in 1937, and the other was Ted Roach, Assistant-General Secretary and Organiser, elected in August 1942. The original proposal for a second Federal Executive Officer in June 1938, was for a 'Provisional Assistant Secretary/Treasurer' for "an immediate drive for increased membership of the Society".[16] Jack Lonergan (Tasmania) and 'Orm' Cook (Fremantle) then moved "that Arthur Finlay act as provisional Assistant Secretary, until a permanent appointment is made by the COM, salary 7 pounds per week".[17]

Union "Agents", they argued, should get 'thrippence' for every new Union member. The 'trey' or 'thrippence' was defeated, and 'fourpence' got up as the Union Agent's Commission! But the move for a 'full time functionary' did not come till the Wharfies' Triennial was held in Phillip St, Sydney, on 28 October 1940. The heavy load on Jim Healy demanded that a "Federal full-time functionary be elected".[18] Sydney Branch President, Arthur Finlay, said it must be for "a Federal Organising Official".[19] The conference settled for an "Assistant Secretary and Organiser". Jim Healy said: "Consideration will have to be given by conference, to the appointing of an additional Federal official. I have in mind, the appointment of some official, who would be used for organising purposes, among the branches. If the Federation is to be organised, and improved industrially, an official such as I suggest is definitely necessary. It is not possible for me, as General Secretary, to combine the two duties of Secretary, and Organising official, and do justice to both jobs".[20] Jim explained the pressure on the Federation's Executive Officers, even at this early stage of its development. Jim had just been absent from the Federal Office for fourteen days and "at a number of branches, the members expressed very definitely their annoyance at the hurried manner of my visit" ... "I would have only been too pleased to spend time with the branches as desired" ... but ... "other appointments forced an immediate return to Sydney ... where ... the fortnight's work ... had to be tackled" which meant … "working back at the office each night to make up the leeway".[21] A Federation-wide ballot of Wharfies in 1942 approved the new position. Newcastle 'Coal' voted 138 to 109 against, and Newcastle 'Wharf' voted 143 to 122 against the "appointment of an additional Federal official".[22] The conditions of the job were set out in "The Maritime Worker" on 13 June 1942; for example, "The Assistant-General Secretary and Organiser shall carry out the instructions of the General Secretary. He shall do all in his power to assist the Gen-Sec, in the execution of his duties. He shall receive for his services, the sum of 9 pounds per week...".[23]

There were seven nominations including three strong Labor Party candidates (Arthur Finlay, Barney Mullins and Alex McLagan), besides the hero of Port Kembla, Ted Roach (Fig 14). "Noms" closed at 12

Fig 14 Candidates for WWF Assistant Secretary and Organiser, 1942
Source: 'Maritime Worker', 18.7.42

Candidates For The Position Of Assistant Secretary And Organiser

The Spirit Of Victory!

Reports the Glasgow "Sunday Post":—

"Clyde dockers are responding gamely to the appeal for a speedier turn round of ships.

"Production Committees are to be formed at each dock to deal with inefficiency by men or employers, and to recommend reforms for the quicker loading and unloading of cargoes.

"An official of the Dockers' Union said the men realised the seriousness of the situation, and were prepared to do all in their power to help their brothers in the Forces.

"A conference, representative of the port local authority, the Clyde Trust, and the dockers is to be held in a few days to set up the new organisation."

A Deliciously Flavoured
ENERGY FOOD
For DAILY LUNCHES

"ETA" Peanut Butter Sandwiches, Peanut Butter rolls or savoury cracker biscuits are quickly made with a light spread of this golden-brown, nutty flavoured appetiser.

ETA

PEANUT BUTTER

Rich in Vitamin B1 — that's why it's so good for kiddies' lunches, too!

M. BULL

Old member of the Federation, rejoined when the Grafton Branch was re-opened. Elected Secretary, which position he now holds. Was delegate at last triennial conference.

IT OCCURS TO ME

Political Corr.: The election of three Independent candidates to Parliament, within a few weeks, in face of the political truce and the close collaboration of the main party machines, is extremely important. Each candidate was wholly for victory, but stood on a "ginger" platform. Similarly significant are the final figures just issued to the Press by the Communist Party, of their big drive for 15,000 new members, and a fund of £40,000. Although they support the Government, they are a "ginger" group. They raised their membership between January and April from 22,738 to 47,932, and raised £47,821 for their funds. There are headaches right now at the Tory Central Office and Transport House.—General News Service.

G. B. MULLINS

Mr. Mullins was elected an official of Sydney Branch in 1917. On the death of W. Seale he became Secretary, a position he now holds. Has been a member of C.O.M. One time Mayor of Balmain. Member of Legislative Council.

A. McLAGAN

Mr. McLagan is Secretary of Newcastle Coal-Trimmers' Branch, a position which he has held for 15½ years. Has been Mayor of Carrington four times, and until recently an alderman on the Greater Newcastle Council.

A. FINLAY

Mr. A. Finlay became a member of the Federation in 1926. Represented N.S.W. on the C.O.M., and was General President for two terms. President of the Sydney Branch for a number of years.

E. ROACH

Originally a member of Newcastle Branch. Mr. Roach transferred to the South Coast Branch. In 1938 he was elected Secretary, and still holds the position. Is the present Secretary of the New South Wales Executive.

Dig For Victory

The New South Wale Legal Rights Committee, of Daking House, Sydney, ha issued a pamphlet entitled, "Dig for Victory." Its plan is to overcome the shortage of vegetables in Australia.

Central control by the Food Council, development of water supplies, municipal production, domestic production—these are the main heads under which the suggestions are grouped. The Committee offers its co-operation in implementing the schemes put forward.

C. E. REILLY

Sydney Branch. Has contested official positions at Branch elections. Transferred from Burnie to Sydney in 1925.

HEAR MAX WERNER:

The author of "The Military Strength of the Powers," Max Werner, writes:—

Japan can be beaten in the Pacific and on the Asiatic mainland, but the job might take years. Japan, however, can be beaten in Eastern Europe.

It must never be forgotten that the fate of the second world war will be decided in the coming super-battle on the Russian front between July and September—and that the fate of Japan will be decided there, too.

Every thousand planes and tanks which the Red Army receives now are in effect thrown in against Japan as effectively as against Germany.

Selfish Spending a Menace!

THE PERSON who spends money foolishly in a time like this is acting anti-socially and is a menace to the safety of his own hearth.

AT PRESENT the nation is committed to abnormal expenditure upon all the accoutrements of war. The sanest way to meet this is to pay for as much of it as possible out of earnings. We must spend less upon ourselves, and save, thus making it easier for the Government to finance its stupendous undertakings.

SAVINGS, therefore, are a vital means of defence against the common foe.

The nation's great need is a trumpet call to every citizen—SAVE!!

Save for Yourself AND THE NATION!

SANDBAGS ARE GOOD SHELTER

—AND SO ARE SAVINGS!

Build slit trenches and air raid shelters by all means—but build your SAVINGS, too! The important thing to do is keep the enemy well away from our doors. The more money you save the greater protection you are building around your home . . . For the money you save helps to provide bombers, guns, essential equipment.

Don't spend foolishly—don't buy anything you don't really need—look after the pence, and watch the shillings and pounds as well. Before you know it, you will have saved a substantial

noon, on 4 July 1942. Each Wharfie branch held the ballot from 27 July to 1 August 1942. The ballot for Assistant-General Secretary and National Organiser of the Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia was declared on 26 August 1942:[24]

Election Voting Figures	
Matt Butt (Grafton)	199
F. Ellis (Sydney)	277
Arthur Finlay (Sydney)	2,700
Alex McLagan (Newcastle Coal)	711
Barney Mullins (Sydney)	2,216
Clarry Reilly (Sydney)	140
Ted Roach (South Coast)	**4,733**
Effective Total	10,976

(Majority for Ted Roach over next highest candidate, Arthur Finlay: 2033)

There were seven runners and I got a majority. The President [Arthur Finlay] *and the Secretary* [Barney Mullins] *of Sydney Branch all had their nominations in. I came from Kembla and I had a majority over the bloody lot of them. I never campaigned from Kembla. I never wrote letters. My reputation was carried by transferees and seamen to do the job. That was good enough. After the ballot, in August 1942, I started to move the Kembla experience into the Federation. The blueprint was Kembla. Up till then there was nothing in the Federation: no organisation, no rosters, no canteens and ten branches of the bloody Ps and Cs.*[25] Ted's job as Organiser of the Waterside Workers' Federation was so well masked, that a member of the Industrial Committee of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Australia, told me he did not know that Ted Roach was the Organiser of the Wharfies and added, without any sense of irony: "And I had special responsibility for the waterfront"[26]. This important election, in August 1942, for Assistant-General Secretary and Organiser, and the fact that Ted Roach was the Assistant-General Secretary and Organiser of the Wharfies, has not been mentioned in any book so far written or published about the history of the Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia[27].

SOUTH COAST FAREWELLS ROACH: AN ENTHUSIASTIC GATHERING

Written in a style of outmoded journalism, this edited account of Ted Roach's farewell from Port Kembla on 14 September 1942, after he won the Waterside Workers' Federation Election for Assistant-General Secretary/Organiser by a majority of 2033, shows the esteem in which Ted and Wyck Roach were held by the South Coast NSW community.

> "A massive case of cutlery, bearing an engraved plate, was presented to Mr and Mrs E. Roach, by Mr Bill Brodie, (President, Wharfies', Port Kembla, Branch), on Monday night last, at the Soldiers' Memorial Hall, Wollongong. A very large gathering, of residents of the South Coast, representative of all sections of the community, assembled to bid them farewell, and to give tangible expressions of thanks, for their earnest work, in the cause of Unity. The aims of the [Wharfies'] Federation, the claims of its members, and the rules were pressed, and adhered to [by Ted Roach] with ruthless vigor, characteristic of a man who has courageous convictions, and the young outlook. His tastes were humble, and his friends legion, and friends, far and wide, will watch, with no small interest, the progress made by this young man, with "collectivity" as his guiding principle. The Mayor of Wollongong took the chair, at the festal board, at the farewell gathering, and was accompanied, at the main table, by Mr and Mrs Roach, Messrs. W. Davies and H. Fowles, MLA's; Mr W. Brodie, Mr E. Burgess, Mr Fred Lowden, Mr S. R. Musgrave, Mr M. J. Smith, Messrs George and Lyons (Organisers) Mr L. Mullin, Mr and Mrs R. Waller, and others. Mr E. Burgess who spoke for the Trades and Labour

Council, congratulated Mr Roach on his elevation to so honoured a position in his Union, and paid glowing tribute to his work, in the interests of Trade Unionism generally".

"Differ In Opinion"

Mr W. Davies, MLA, bought his vocal ability into action, and told of the fine tribute that had been paid Mr Roach, by electing him to the honored position. "Ted Roach has earned this by his generalship and tolerance. I have always found that Ted can differ in opinion, and yet be your best friend. It can truly be said, that he has made this Branch, the best in the Commonwealth, and, without doubt, the conditions here are better than in any other port around our coast. I have often thought it would be a good idea, if other industries adopted the same principles, as the Waterside Workers, particularly at the present time, when every possible effort is needed to assist in the winning of this war."

Aid For Russia

Mr W. 'Big Bill' Brodie (Kembla Branch, President) appreciated the honor conferred on him to make the presentation — "I cannot yet convince myself if I am happy or sorry they are going". Ted had been a good companion. I have found him a friend, willing to stand fearlessly for all that he considers right. Mrs Roach has been a good citizen. We know her work for our greatest ally, Russia. If I had a pound for every time she has said: 'Aid for Russia', I would have a good wad to help John Curtin in his Austerity Loan."

Replying to the congratulatory speeches, Mr E. Roach said he felt this was the supreme moment of his life. *One of the highlights of our work was the Dalfram Dispute. It was not a question of wanting to keep pig iron in Australia, just for the sake of having it for ourselves. We had visions of that pig iron being returned to Australia, in the shape of bombs on Australian women and* children. *Our policy has been vindicated — its correctness has been recognised. We have waged all campaigns collectively and have been able to bring more Unity to the South Coast than is evident in any other part of Australia. We need a greater Unity of all people, not just on the South Coast, but of Australia, 'National Unity' must be the slogan. We are not only going to win the war, but the peace which follows.*

Auld Lang Syne

Mr Fred Lowden (Miners' Federation) spoke of Mr Roach as the chief cause of the decline in favour of Pig Iron Bob Menzies. "I don't think Bob Menzies will ever live that down. The final rally and Auld Lang Syne will remain in memory a very long time. Mr and Mrs E. Roach are fortified in their new surroundings, by the remembrance of a grand night, when friends more numerous than they ever dreamed, rallied to wish them well — health above all, and success, with continued enthusiasm for the duty in hand, and an undying love for the little things of life — the necessary ingredient if we aim to help our fellows who are engaged in the menial round."[28]

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[1] **Editors' note**: Sir George Stephenson Beeby KC (1869-1942) was Chief Justice of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration 1939-1941, having been appointed to the Court in 1928. Associated in the 1890s with the foundation of the Labor Party, he served as a Minister in the NSW State Labor Government (1910-12) but resigned from the Party to become an Independent, subsequently losing his seat and returning to legal practice. From 1918 he served as Minister for Labour in the NSW State Nationalist Government until his appointment in 1920 as a judge of the NSW Arbitration Court where he remained until appointment to the Commonwealth Court. One of his first judgements in 1928 brought him into conflict with the WWF.

[2] "MW", 10.3.1940 (2a), p.7.

[3] Ted had two strong back-ups, Branche and Duval, looking after the Party's collection hat, in Kembla. *They were 'on the lam'' down there.*

[4] **Editors' note**: 'under the lap' — slang for engaging in bribery.

[5] "MW", 18.8.1951. According to "The Maritime Worker", Loshi Baroni, Finlay, Crowe, Coghlan and Walsh "fought to retain the Bull System in Sydney". "MW", 23.3.1946, p.4.

[6] **Editors' note**: fraction — a group of Communist Party members organising to implement a particular policy within a Union.

[7] L. J. 'Jack' McPhillips to the author.

[8] Put the tar brush on it: declared it 'black'.

[9] "MW", 18.5.1942.

[10] "MW", 13.6.1942.

[11] Bowen, Sally. (b. Gunnedah, 1918) "A Garland of Poetry", Wollongong: Sally Bowen, 1994.

[12] **Editors' note**: The Russian Medical Aid and Comforts Committee, formed in Sydney in July 1941 was chaired by Mrs Jessie Street. Source: National Archives of Australia http://www.naa.gov.au/collection/snapshots/uncommon-lives/jessie-street/timeline.aspx "The Committee originally intended to ship medical equipment to Russia, but because of difficulties the plan was abandoned." A direct request from Moscow led to a plan to send "large quantities of fleece-lined sheep-skin coats". "The Horsham Times", Victoria, 7.7.1942, p.2.

[13] Wyck Roach was interviewed with Ted Roach by the author.

[14] **Editors' note**: In June 1940 the Menzies Government banned the Communist Party under wartime national security powers provided in the Australian Constitution. But from 1941 when the Soviet Union joined the Allied cause against Nazi Germany, membership of the CPA began to rise especially after Labor Prime Minister John Curtin lifted the ban on the CPA in December 1942.

[15] 'fit': to bring a person before the law on a trivial or trumped up charge to victimise them.

[16] Minute Books No.122, 5.6.1938, p.14.

[17] Ibid., p.11.

[18] "FCM," 1940, pp.13-14.

[19] Ibid., p.15.

[20] J. H. Report, Triennial Conf., 16.11.40, p.8.

[21] J. H. "MW", 16.11.1940, p.8.

[22] "MW", 22.5.1940.

[23] "MW", 13.6.1942, p.3.

[24] "MW", 19.9.1942.

[25] Early forms of roster occurred at Innisfail, Port Douglas, Bowen, Lucinda Pt. See "MW", "Equalisation", 17.10.1942, p.3.

[26] Interview with CC-CPA member Mr L. J. McPhillips 1999.

[27] In his book "War on the Waterfront", Rupert Lockwood says "when Roach (sic!) ***became*** WWF Assistant-General Secretary in 1942". Lockwood does not say there was a very important Wharfie rank and file election, nor the number of candidates, nor Ted's impressive winning majority, nor mention the full title of Ted Roach's job, "Assistant-General Secretary and Organiser".

[28] "MW", 14.9.42

Part 3

Ted Roach as Assistant-General Secretary 1942-1951

Chapter 9
FEDERAL OFFICE: TED ROACH - ORGANISER

"The first job the Stevedoring Industry Commission did was to organise the labour in the various ports. That was accomplished."
Jim Healy[1]

"I liked Roach. He did his work."
Ron Maxwell, Vigilance Officer and Executive Member, Wharfies' Sydney Branch and City Councillor, City of Sydney

One of the first things I did when I came up to Federal Office was to make a card system of three thousand or so addresses, Women's Committees, and all sorts of committees, right throughout Australia. The Conference Line[2] decided they were going to increase freight rates two-and-a-half per cent from Australia. I set to work. I circularised Women's Committees and Unions all over this country. I sent ***a circular*** *out to them all, demanding protests. No political distinction, no, no, the lot, and I set out how it would affect everybody so they should all protest against the increase of freight rates by two-and-a-half per cent. And you know, no-one said we won, but there was a statement that the Conference Lines were not going ahead with their two-and-a-half per cent freight rates increase. I had three thousand addresses, you wouldn't believe this. I did it. See, I'm the organiser. I did the organising. I did all this. Untold millions it saved Australia, that two-and-a-half per cent freight. Yes! Women's Committees all over Australia, we had them protesting from bloody Darwin down to Tasmania, and up to Thursday Island. We had enough of them protesting to cause the Conference Line to decide they weren't going to increase the freight rates from Australia by two-and- a-half per cent. That was a very big victory but I don't know if that shows in the bloody minutes now.*

Ted set out to organise communications from the Federal Office. His time-honoured wire, or telegram, became the immediate, swift word out to the Branches. "*The Executive directs....".* "*The Federal Council directs...".* No shilly-shallying, no wishy-washy may be, might be, with Ted Roach, it was action stations all the way. With the telegram, there was the annual series of circulars, numbered like the Judge's Orders from the Arbitration Court: short telegrams, long telegrams, two-page telegrams, urgent telegrams, letters, Special Supplements in "The Maritime Worker". This system of communication was perfected by Ted. The word could travel quickly to Branch Secretaries and Executives, meetings could be called that morning, a decision wired back. The names HEALY or ROACH on the urgent telegram were the Wharfies' imprimatur of veracity. "Ted Roach? Yes, Ted was right up there with Jim. If either of 'em had told us to take action, we would've done it", said waterside worker Gordon Campbell.[3]

As the Wharfies' National Organiser, Ted Roach moved immediately on the Permanents and Casuals Branches of the Federation. *In 1943, my first move up north, I observed the situation, and made arrangements for all Ps&Cs Branches in Queensland to come into the Federation. Before the year was out I was able to bring Lucinda Point, Bowen, Innisfail, Bundaberg and Brisbane, all Ps&Cs Branches, into the Federation. I was handling the whole bloody thing. I not only made the proposal, I carried it through. Then I made the Ps&Cs Branches in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, and Newcastle into No.2 Branches of the Federation, and we absorbed the whole lot of them.*

The author: "What were the Ps&Cs?"

The Ps&Cs were the scabs who were given jobs by shipping companies when seamen and wharfies were on strike in 1928 and 1935. The right-wing and the Super Militants would not face up to this problem of the Ps&Cs and said: "Oh, Jesus, the scabs, aw, turn it up!" They'd look over their shoulder in case someone said: "You're a scab-herder!" They'd drop their tails and run. Reformist it is, reformists do that. No practical move had been made on the Ps&Cs till I took it up. In Newcastle 'the 1917-ers' worked at the Hunter River and 'the 1928-ers' didn't work at the Steel Works. They worked at Lee Wharf opposite the Union Rooms. The only trouble was there was a division on the waterfront. There was no trouble with the Ps&Cs. Most of these ideas came from me. This was my work. I was the National Organiser of the Federation.[4]

"The Maritime Worker" tells the story of Ted Roach's organising in reports with clear headlines. Sometimes, though, Ted's name may be absent or there is no byline. Researchers need to be aware that the Organiser was Ted Roach, and most organising stories are about his work. Ted and the Branch taking action would demand a certain condition and conduct of a campaign. If agreed to at a local Board of Reference, the application to the Stevedoring Industry Commission (SIC), where Jim Healy sat, or the Court, would go forward in a standard, pro forma legal document, something like the work of an articled clerk (in other words, filling in a standard application form and having your signature witnessed). The applications most likely to be agreed to were those where the Branches had conducted industrial campaigns, for example, the four-hour minimum. It was not adversarial on the SIC. The Commissioners used first names and built up an amicable rapport. This contrasted with the daily battle of the Organiser, doing the difficult sets of hard yards. Ted's organising tours might take several weeks and he'd be away from home, in all weather, starting when the wharfies started and doing Communist Party organising work as well.
I would do the work in the branches to get the rosters up, and Jim would take it up to the Commission. These struggles for job control built the strength of the Union until the Wharfies became the foremost fighting organisation of the workers.

Ted did his best, and he was good at it, to elude the spies of the wartime Australian Security Service and police as they tracked him and others, relentlessly up and down the East Coast of Australia, across to Adelaide, up to the north-west to Geraldton, to Tasmania, to Melbourne; and wherever else Roach and others went, on delegations to Canberra, Indonesia, Ceylon, India, China and (the late) Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Every move is recorded in the travel reports of ASIO records — time of departure, time of arrival, plane service, who met him, and where they might have gone. In fact, the Security Service started opening Ted's letters in 1943.

SECRET ORDER ON TED ROACH'S MAIL, 1943

Under a SECRET order in 1943, permission was given [to the Security Service] to open the incoming "Letters and Packets" of E. Roach, 5th Floor, 104 Hunter St, Sydney, because "Communists have been directed to forward their local Branch problems, to the above address, for a ruling".[5] "Roach is a well-known Communist in this State to whom all branches have been instructed to submit local industrial troubles".[6] Ted, himself, did not speak of this extra but vital and essential Communist Party responsibility. Why did the Communist Party choose Ted? Obviously because of his proven track record as an organiser. Wharfies wrote to Ted and told him about the level of Communist organisation in their Branch and port. Ted told them how to improve their organisation. This was Communist Party work, as well as Union and Wharfie work. The two jobs could hardly be distinguished, in the brutal, day-by-day struggle, for survival and advancement[7]. Ted had so much responsibility, as this record shows, that he was amazed when people started to question what he had done, and whether he had done it. Remember he's a Communist Trade Union organiser, working in a brutal industry, fighting to wrench a few dollars from the piratical shipping companies.

TRANSHIPPED CARGO, 1943

A letter from the Secretary of Cairns' Wharfie Branch to Ted Roach (30 September 1943) was intercepted by the Security Police. In the letter, the Cairns Secretary says: "P.S. regarding "stevedoring efficiency". The Colonial Sugar[8] boat *Tambug* arrived here, with a full cargo for a forward (military) area. It was transshipped into an allied vessel of same size. It took a fortnight. The cargo went into the allied vessel as it came out of the CSR boat. The result was nothing short of tragic, as light rations were loaded in first, heavy cases on top, and vehicles on top again. The rations would be useless by the time they were unloaded at their destination... Wharfies were angry. They could see the stupidity of the re-load, forced by CSR, to protect their own boats, but knew that they, the Wharfies, would be blamed by the media for the state of "the light rations" when they reached the Australian Army, the AIF."[9]

Point No.2 in the SECRET letter shows that Ted Roach was doing Communist Party work all the time, and that he was getting to know networks of reliable Communists and militants, and good Union members, on whom he could rely to build organisation and discipline and make contacts with the general community. For example, forming wharfie-farmer alliances, against the sugar monopoly CSR, and organising networks of activists in the district. Naturally, Ted didn't keep a diary or detailed notes of these networks. When Ted visited Wharfies in these ports he could move directly to reliable people. Ted spread this organisation, link-by-link, and port-to-port, all round Australia. The well-organised Wharfies were a nucleus for organising all workers in the port or township and for galvanizing Trade Union activities. Queensland erupted in flames of Trade Union militancy from 1946 and Wharfies' organisation played no small part in its success. If senior Communists did not know Ted was the Wharfies' "National Organiser", then how could they know what type of organisation he built in Wharfie Branches around Australia?

CAMERON SAYS WWF GIVES BETTER COVERAGE

Ted reported on defeating the BHP at Whyalla and enrolling Tow Motor members. *The Federation decided that we would have to force the Whyalla question into focus.* ***I discussed our problems, and suggested policy, in this respect, to the Combined Unions Council at Whyalla who were unanimous in support of our proposals.*** He *pointed out* to the Commonwealth Government that *if BHP took any action then all Gulf ports might be affected. This had immediate results, the powers that be commenced moving but when the threat to the peace of industry abated, the Court and the Stevedoring Industry Commission lost interest.* To *create interest*, again, Ted spoke to the Whyalla Combined Unions Council (Joe Brasil, Sec) and every gulf port sent *fairly strong wires* to the Ministers, followed by wires from *our Whyalla Branch and CUC warning Evatt* (Attorney-General) *and Holloway* (Minister for Shipping, Canberra) *that all the Gulf ports might be affected*[10]. 'The Gulf' is Spencer Gulf in South Australia. *Clyde Cameron* [AWU] *said to me "you should take over these fellers. The WWF can give them better coverage than us."*
In the case of Sydney 'Tow Motors', the employers followed the policy of *procrastination*. Ted addressed the members at a stop work meeting and they decided *to put in a roster system and issued an ultimatum to that effect.* This resulted in a *central pick-up and roster endorsed by the Sydney Port Committee within four days*[11].

Thus, he'd organised three new Branches — Whyalla, Sydney Tow Motors and Lucinda Point — and was working on Tow Motor Branches at Brisbane and Melbourne, and Branches at Kempsey, Lismore and Byron Bay. Ted spoke next of the difficulties with Newcastle Branch where *the policy of the Branch can be altered by a few individuals. In fact, stop work meeting decisions are altered this way*. He had spent *fifty-four days off and on at Newcastle in two years*. Early in 1942 he spent *a couple of weeks* planning with the Branch, campaigns to get *canteen, four-hour minimum, meal provisions* which resulted in *enormously improved conditions*. Characteristic of the Branch, was that Weaver, Newcastle Branch Secretary, received three telegrams from the Branch at the WWF Triennial Conference. The first telegram rejected the roster, the next one accepted it, and the third rejected the roster again.[12] It is clear from the record that the elected Assistant-General Secretary and Organiser Ted Roach was carrying out his responsibilities and implementing WWF Industrial policy. It is clear from the record that he was given special responsibility by the Communist Party to handle problems of Communist organisation in Wharfie branches. The year was 1943.

TED ROACH'S SECOND YEAR AS WHARFIES' NATIONAL ORGANISER

On 7 September 1944[13], Ted reported on his organising work to the Wharfies' Federal Council. Jim Healy's report and Ted's report were then the basis of a week or more's discussion by the approximately 21 Wharfie Federal Councillors. In these Minutes, Ted reports on his own ideas about organisation. *Our every move should not be regarded as an end in itself, but as a means towards the greater objective — the control of the waterfront. It is impossible to overstress the need for linking up rules, codes of discipline,*

and other organisational matters. The Brisbane Branch had withdrawn their delegate from the Brisbane Port Committee after its chairman had penalised a Wharfie without consultation. I immediately went to Brisbane. At a meeting, the Branch endorsed proposals to go back on the Committee and elect a Rules Committee of five [who were] *to meet forthwith and draw up a disciplinary code to enable the Branch to take charge of the discipline in the port itself.* (Two words here, "immediately" and "forthwith" are characteristic of Ted Roach. Ted's report is re-printed here, with punctuation added).

Discipline should not be visualised as something that enabled a token penalty to be inflicted as an end in itself, but rather as a deterrent to the breaking or violating of Union rules and conditions. If we couple up the policy of the Federation with the rules, with campaigns, job conditions and organisation, then breaches of rules are breaches of policy in all its forms and can be better dealt with. In Cairns there were no ventilators in the sheds. It was no use individual members refusing to work. It became the duty of the Branch to see the matter through. It resulted in ventilators being put in. This was the result of Branch action based on consultation with us. Canteens in Brisbane were established because the Branch took organised action, after much unsuccessful negotiation, and ***promises made, and not fulfilled, for over a year****.*[14] Speaking about the uneven development of the Branches: *A classic example was the granting of the four-hour minimum. The Court had appeased the stronger Branches and selected eight Branches which had taken strong industrial action for the four-hour minimum.*[15]

THIRD YEAR AS WHARFIES' NATIONAL ORGANISER

The Wharfies' Federal Conference met every two or three years. There was a lot of preparation for the delegates, presentation of main reports by Gen-Sec Jim Healy and AGS/NO Ted Roach, and then up to two weeks' of discussion, working out tactics for the Branches. Ted Roach organised these conferences, with the secretarial staff. In his 1945 report, Ted, with his usual magnanimity, praised the Gen-Sec and then dealt with these matters: Federation and Branch organisation, the Arbitration Court, the Stevedoring Industry Commission and *our relation thereto, and the importance of Union discipline*. In these reports, Ted wrote about "we" or "our Federation". He rarely used "I" and hence there can be confusion about demarcation of the work of the two Federation Executive Officers.

Ted was the National Organiser and made a hard job look easy: *we have made much progress within the Federation, in regard to improving the working conditions, to penetrating new fields of organisation, by building new Branches, and by developing the organisation in the existing Branches to a much higher level. Thus increasing the authority, and the stature, of our National Office during the past three years.*[16] In the reports, Ted's speech is not all verbatim but is edited, sometimes, into a stilted, third person, with a mis-sequencing of pronouns - "he said" ... and "our members". [He said] *that the best measuring rod of conscious, Federation organisation was the splendid War effort of our members* (see Fig 15), *and instanced the statements by the Prime Minister, and Allied Military and Naval Officials, praising the fine work, done by our members*[17]

We have absorbed the already formed Lucinda Point, Brisbane Coal, and Lismore Branches, and have organised new branches at Kempsey, Whyalla, and the mechanical sections of the Ports of Sydney, Brisbane, and Melbourne, making a total of eight Branches, in addition to Fremantle that came in, and, again, withdrew[18]*. Approaches would be made to Sydney Coal and Darwin Waterside Workers' Union for their affiliation... If this were achieved, we would be in a position to implement Federation policy in every port in Australia where the loading, or discharge, of shipping takes place.*

The transcript states that Ted *dealt extensively* with Union-controlled discipline. Discipline of the kind Ted built in Kembla would not be welcomed by those working *'under the lap'*[19]. Their activities would be threatened by a discipline system, policed and controlled, by the Union members[20]. *We must see discipline as a part of Branch policy, evenly developed, alongside, and as a component part of the campaign against the employer for better conditions. In this way, discipline is then inseparably linked with Union policy. ...We are approaching the time when every movement will be led by the local Executive with the members solidly behind it.*[21]

Fig 15 'The Unknown Warrior' 1939-1945
Source: 'Sydney Morning Herald', 27.3.47

After three years organising, Ted Roach stated a new objective. Branches, in consultation with the Federal Office, would be encouraged to respond quickly to employers' *little tricks* with their own local decisions, exploiting any local, tactical advantages. Ted said that he was *concerned* about the workings of the SIC because *as the war receded, a tendency has developed that enabled many important decisions to be made by the Chairman (Judge Piper) and Executive Officer, with Sir Thomas Gordon playing a not unimportant role. The Arbitration Court was brought into being by 'the State' as a means of curbing the activities of the labour movement. Its function has always been that of a 'strike breaker'. It has acted as a buffer in the class struggle, to protect the employer from the employee.* If the Arbitration Court's role was to maintain peace in industry, Ted's tactic was *to give the impression that a challenge to the peace in industry is likely to develop, unless something is done.* Ted warned of the danger of *Reformism,* ***whereby the Federation would lose its independence***, and become *a mere appendage* of the SIC and the Courts, relying on *long drawn out arguments* to try and win reforms, *beheading* the movements within the Branches and *sapping the vitality of vigorous Trade Unionism.*

Awards of the court and Orders of the SIC are of value, because they can be used as 'jumping off grounds' for us. This does not mean that we violate the terms of Awards and Orders indiscriminately but use them as a basis for further campaigns. Because ... advantages have not accrued, from the goodness of

heart of the employers, but from a particular display of strength, round a given question. We have a great task facing us in the post-war years and we must endeavour to strengthen our organisation, as an important link, in the Trade Union movement. If we can apply vital lessons we have learnt from our experience then we shall be able to make greater inroads towards some further share in the control of the industry... Nothing but promises have been received from the Government. We have interviewed the Prime Minister [Ben Chifley] *and nearly all the Cabinet and the net result is more and more promises. We may get holidays this year but simply because the government is going to legislate in this direction for the Commonwealth. We should indicate to the Government that if we don't get some consideration in regard to these points of policy we must get tough.*

Ted's words are deceptively simple. Ted's own form of formal English — *I learnt to read and write on the track* — requires a lot of concentration by the reader. But the ideas in his writing and speaking in relation to Trade Union organisation, action, and independence are radical indeed. Roach believed that his ideas and actions were a true reflection of Communist Party industrial policy and said: *The fight for job control built the militancy of the Union* and that *a Trade Union is a united, fighting organisation of the working-class.*

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[1] Jim Healy in "Brief History of the Australian Waterfront and the Waterside Workers' Union", MSS N 114/760, p. 67. At the WWF Triennial Conference in 1940, Ted foreshadowed this when he said": *The Federation was approaching difficult times, and they wished to see how they could strengthen the organization. At present there were 5000 unorganised workers on the waterfront, as well as 2000 P&C men, or a total of 7000 men outside the Federation. If they were not prepared to overlook hatred for the scab in the interests of organisation they would not go very far. If they left out 7000 men, they left out a very powerful nucleus to be used against them by the employers."* Roach T., Triennial Conference Report, pp. 31-32. Jim Healy said: "He favored the absorption of the men", ibid., p. 29.

[2] **Editors' note:** Conference Line operators agree to maintain a similar rate structure in all advertised ports. This means that the lines operating within that Conference maintain a full monopoly on that trade route. Source: www.shippingandfreightresource.com

[3] Gordon Campbell, WWF, as told to the author at Dapto Leagues Club, NSW.

[4] Scrutiny Order No.2897, 3.8.1943-3.10.1943 R/1/48 Vol 1 A 6119/1 1212 No.3.

[5] No.5072 26.8.1943.

[6] In a letter from Secretary, Wharf Branch, Cairns, Qld to Ted Roach which finishes, "Wharf Branch (typed) Secretary and (stamped) seen by Army." *The Wharfies' 'National Bureau' were the leading WWF Communists, (then) "usually Healy, Roach, Nelson, Lockwood and a CC-CPA rep", e.g Dick Dixon:* "Dear Comrade, Yours to hand of the 2.8.43. Re the reporting to the National Bureau: We will do our bit at this port. This is the first I've heard of such a body existing and I think it's a really splendid idea, and should give all branches a better basis of organisation."

"We have 22 members, and have a good fraction set up, which meets weekly. I can give you a contact in Innisfail, but do not know of any in Port Douglas, but I will make further enquiries.

"We print a fortnightly "Wharfie", copies of which I will forward under separate cover. We also get sale for 8 doz Guardians, and about the same of the different pamphlets, that come to us from time to time. At present we only have one Party member, on the Branch Committee, but there are three vacancies now on it, and it looks as if we can get two, if not three, of the vacancies. We also have two Party members representing us on the Port Committee, one of them being only a deputy, and two Party member delegates, on the Trades and Labour Council.

"We were granted a General meeting for three consecutive Fridays from 8.30 a.m. to 9.30 a.m. Previous to this, we had only three General meetings, in twelve months, we could not get a stop work meeting granted, so the hour every week is a big improvement..."

[7] "Guardian", State CPA newspaper in Queensland and Victoria; "Tribune", CPA National paper.

[8] Colonial Sugar Refining Co.

[9] CIB 632 to Ted Roach from K. Bucklyn, per G. Edwards, Sec, Cairns, 280 Draper St., Cairns Queensland, R/1/48 Vol. A 6119/1 1212 No.3, 30.9.1943.

[10] "Biennial Conference Report 1946" E 81/6/1, p.22.

[11] *I organised the Sydney Tow Motors with Bill Marshall.*

[12] "Biennial Conference Report 1946" E 81/6/1. 'SOLDIERS ON COAL' letter from W. G. Munro, WWF, Townsville, to Ted Roach, opened by secret police: "Recently soldiers were engaged to bunker and trim one of Howard Smith's vessels. On complaining they were being used as cheap labour, to do dirty work, (a justified complaint), they were told by the Boss that they had to do it as the Wharfies had refused. The facts are, the Wharfies were never asked to do the job, but the Boss knew that, had they been asked, they would have demanded that the coal be watered, or damped, to mitigate the dust menace. We can assure the soldiers of our sincere sympathy in their predicament, but would point out that when they hear the Boss's tale, to ascertain our angle on the matter. Being a strong believer in the tactic of divide and conquer the Boss carries on an unceasing campaign, day in and day out, endeavouring to bring about open hostility between Soldiers and Civilian workers. A sly suggestion here, and outright lie there, is all part and parcel of the scheme. The Soldiers and Wharfies are all part of the working class, and we Wharfies must see to it, that mates in uniform are not misled into believing there is any difference. There certainly is a difference in the rates of pay. As Unionists, we should exert all our efforts towards securing equal pay for equal work. Our mates in the Army are looking to us to preserve the hard won conditions on the job, for them to enjoy when once they again return to civil life". Report No.5399, No.14, A 6119/1,1212, No.14. Wharfies' job sheet "Unity Portlight", Townsville, 19.10.1943.

[13] "FCM", 7.9.1944.

[14] "Biennial Conference Report, 1946" E 81/6/1 p.21: "The SIC allocated 125,000 pounds for waterfront canteens"…"after which twelve months elapsed" and still no canteens." Ted said: *I visited Brisbane and after some discussions with the Executive, carefully drafted an ultimatum, giving the Commission a month to commence canteens, or "members working in this area would travel to their homes, to enable them to partake of a hot meal". The result was that the Commission provided mobile Army canteens to give a hot meal, but still did not build canteens.* The second ultimatum discussed by the Branch, at another meeting (Ted does not say so, but he was at this meeting), changed the angle of attack to a protest about "the unhygienic character" of these Brisbane meals. Construction commenced within a fortnight. Arising from further discussion with Ted, the Brisbane Branch then pushed for satellite canteens for other wharves in the area. The ultimatum was that, if the satellite canteens weren't built by a certain date, Wharfies would converge on the first canteen, the Hamilton canteen, for their hot meals (p.7.). Brisbane now had *five very fine canteens, and seven smoke rooms,* close enough to ships' berths. The tactics were used in Townsville and Newcastle with rapid success, but where canteens were "promised" and no pressure ensued, they were not erected up to 18 months later.

[15] Paid for four hours.

[16] "FCM", E 81/6/2, p.37.

[17] Ibid., pp.37-38. **Editors' note:** although not mentioned by Ted Roach, Fig 15 shows a cartoon in "SMH", 27.3.47 which also acknowledges the War effort of members of the WWF by depicting a memorial to an 'unknown warrior' who is clearly a wharfie with his distinctive hook used on the wharves.

[18] Ibid.

[19] 'under the lap': not honest/ trying to deceive.

[20] "FCM", E 81/6/2, op cit., pp. 37-38. Ted Roach said that in building their organisation, they should apply the axiom: *He who doesn't make a mistake makes nothing*. And: *It is therefore much better to make a mistake, endeavouring to do things in the correct way, than to not make mistakes by following the line of least resistance which actually in this is the biggest mistake of all. Therefore mistakes do not matter as long as we learn our lessons from them. It has been said by a great statesman: "We have made many mistakes in the past, and will make many mistakes in the future, but we will not repeat the same mistakes in the future, as in the past".* Ibid., pp.2-3.

[21] Roach, T. AGS/NO Report, 19-22 June 1945.

Chapter 10
THE DUTCH SHIPS DISPUTE: BACKGROUND

"Merdeka (Freedom)," we called. "Tetap (Forever)," came the reply.
"The Voice of Free Indonesia"[1]

In Indonesia on 8 March 1942 after fighting for about a week, General Heini Van der Porten surrendered his Dutch army, unconditionally, to the Japanese Imperial Army (JIA). This opened a straight way for a Japanese drive on Australia and left millions of Queen Wilhelmina's 'beloved children', the Indonesians, to the mercies of the Japanese Imperial Army. The Dutch colonial administration fled to Australia, with shipping and air force staff, Dutch and Indonesian refugees, and a fleet of about 559 ships – 'the Dutch ships'. Two thousand Indonesian seamen demanded the same wages and conditions as Australian seamen. They were ignored and went on strike, assisted by Australian Unions. They were arrested and sent to Long Bay Gaol, Sydney, and from there to Love Day, Adelaide, and interned at Liverpool and Cowra camps, NSW. Union protests released them and they worked in munitions depots at Wallangarra, Blackbutt, Toowoomba, and Helidon (Qld) in the Australian Army Labour Corps.

In June 1943 the Dutch brought to Australia 295 high profile Indonesian political prisoners, 'tapols'[2], from the 'Tanah Merah' concentration camp on the Digul River, Niu Guini. A Liverpool Station (NSW) railway guard picked up a handwritten note by one of the prisoners. This led to their release by PM Ben Chifley from Cowra Compound D. They then worked under armed Dutch control. In March 1945 Indonesians were sent to Camp Columbia in Brisbane. In November 1945 Indonesian militiamen at Casino struck in sympathy with the new Indonesian Republic. Indonesian seamen on ships in Sydney, Brisbane, and Melbourne joined in. Wharfies, ordered to work these ships, jacked up, and the Qld T&LC swung into action[3]. The Indonesian community in Australia formed Committees for Indonesian Independence, eager with hope and anticipation, and assisted by the Australian Unions and community.

In August 1945, however, the Colonial Dutch reappeared in Indonesia, armed to the teeth. Liaising with them was the British South East Asian Command, under Lord Louis Mountbatten, claiming a "policing role" only, by Jove! Prior to the JLA's invasion, British Naval Intelligence compiled a complete topographic, geographic, and economic survey of the main centres of Indonesia. They photographed and described oil refineries at Palembang, coaling wharves, aerial views of towns and suburbs, oil-storage depots, at Balikpapan, 'Rotterdam' and 'Amsterdam' quays, Soerabaya Floating Dock, railway workshops, electrified lines, canals and so on[4]. The Atlantic Charter, signed by the big powers at the end of WWII, promised independence to colonial countries. Vietnam and Indonesia ran up Republican flags on 17 August and 25 August 1945. But Dutch and International Imperialism wanted to keep the super-lucrative profits from the soil, flesh, oil, and talent of the Indonesians.

INDONESIAN SEAMEN'S UNION

On 23 September 1945, Indonesian seamen from three ships in the Port of Brisbane met at Brisbane Trades Hall saying they wanted: "To prevent the Dutch Government exiled here, in Australia, to go back to Indonesia and interfere with the Independent Indonesia, that is the Government of Republic Indonesia" (sic). They resolved that "we will not go to sea unless the following demands are furnished":

1. The (war) bonus amounting to approximately 110 pounds (Australian) for each person, being savings money amounting to 25 guilders per month from 1st June 1943, till August 1945, is paid here in Australia.
2. The monthly allowance for their respective family, which is deducted from their wages every month while not being paid during the occupation, to be refunded here in Australia.
3. The minimum wage per month is fixed.
4. The maximum working hour per week is fixed."[5]

At 8 am on 24 September 1945 the Indonesian seamen commenced their strike. They put their gear on the wharf, and it was carried to their home on the top floor of the Brisbane Trades Hall. At 10.30 am that day, Mick Healy, Secretary (Sec) Brisbane Trades Hall, read these demands to the Disputes Committee of the T&LC of Queensland. Present were Hanson, McDonald, Greer, Milton (Disputes Committee); O'Brien and Mick Healy (Executive); Englart and Doolan (WWF); Linsey, McCaig and Dorricott (Fed. Storeman and Packers) and Laurie (Research Officer). Jim Healy's (Gen-Sec WWF) press statement was read. 'Black' ships in Brisbane, were *Minyak-Tanah, Janssens, Cawra* (Nixon Smith), *Van-Outhorn* (AUSN), *Van-Heutz* (Dalgetys), *Khoen-Hoea* (Howard Smith)[6]. This wasn't about a pedestal toilet at No.2 wharf at Kembla. This was about kicking out the Dutch Colonial administration – Army, Navy, Air Force, police, secret police, the lot! 'Come the Revvo!' Well, 'the Revvo' was on, a few hundred kilometres north of Darwin.

BRISBANE WHARFIES REFUSE TO LOAD DUTCH SHIP

On 24 September 1945 the secretary of the Brisbane Wharfies' Branch, Ted Englart wrote to Jim Healy: "Watersiders Brisbane have refused to load Dutch ships; Melbourne Indonesian seamen have refused to sail Dutch ships; Indonesiaa (sic) Political Exiles Association in Australia appeal to you to support us in our struggle for independent Indonesia, says Achmad Soemadi, Mackay (Queensland)".[7] Wharfies warned that if "Dutch personnel" worked a ship at Dalgety's wharf in Brisbane, the wharf would be declared black. On 24 September 1945 Ted Englart wrote to the WWF in Sydney: "(Brisbane) Executive unanimously decided not to supply labour to work Dutch vessels in port in support Indonesian people. One thousand members this morning at pick up endorsed this decision". From 9 pm that night Brisbane Wharfies, finishing jobs, refused transfers to work the Dutch vessels. On 25 September Wharfies were prepared "for the discharging of all vessels and loading of all except Dutch vessels arriving in port, and for hospital and mercy ships". They were locked out by the Brisbane Waterside Employment Committee (WEC). At a meeting in Macrossan Street pick-up shed on the morning of 25 September, 1400 Wharfies re-affirmed the Monday decision not to work Dutch ships.

Three days later, Mr M. J. Hickey, Chairman of the Brisbane Waterside Employment Committee, wrote: "I visited Dalgety's Wharf today (28 September 1945) at 9 am. I there saw Dutch and Javanese troops working side-by-side engaged in loading operations on the '*Van Heutz'*. Work was proceeding smoothly. I spoke to Mr Beardmore (Dalgety and Co.) who asked me to feature, in my report, that the ship was being loaded at Dalgety's Wharf, under Commonwealth Government instructions, and that Dalgety and Co. were powerless in the matter. None of the gear being used was owned by Dalgety's. He also said that the quantity of ammunition being loaded could be obtained from Mr Sullivan (Inspector of Dangerous Cargoes)".[8] On the same day Mr Darbon, SIC Chief Administrative Officer, announced that an agreement had been reached on Dutch Ships[9]. But it would take another long four-and-a-half years before the Dutch Ships dispute was finally settled.

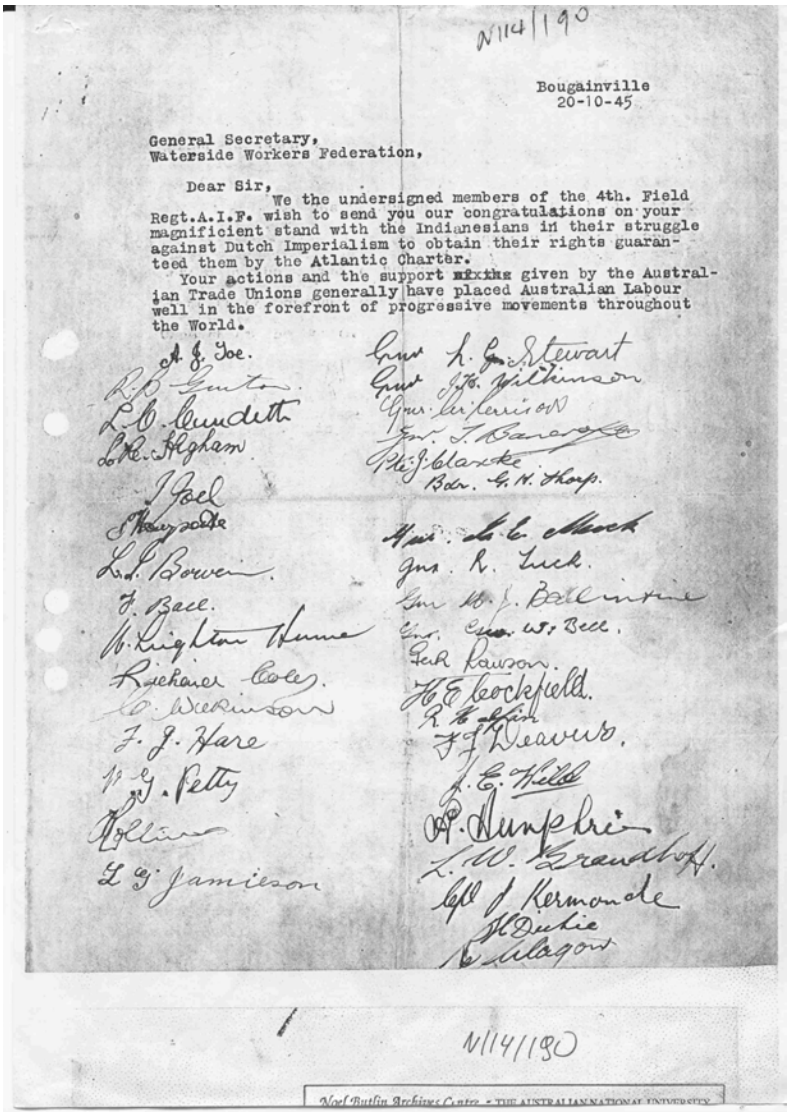
A Brisbane Wharfies' leaflet by Ted Englart reads: "...the Ship owners, in an attempt to win public opinion to the side of the Dutch Government, are using the plea that thousands of P.O.W.'s, European evacuees and Javanese people are suffering as a result of the shipping hold-up. But boxes labelled "Comforts" for Dutch evacuees, were found to be phosphorus bombs and tommy guns".[10] Englart continued: "as Australians we have kept the supplies moving for six years to the boys in the front lines, many of whom are now in our union, we are concerned that all ships with the exception of Dutch vessels, now in Brisbane are worked, so that the Australian people, the soldiers still in the north, and our returning P.O.W.'s will not suffer hardship".[11] Brisbane's "The Courier-Mail"[12] denied the report: "The commandant of the Dutch camp in Brisbane, Camp Columbia, (Lieut. Col. G. A. de Stoppelaar) said there was no truth in the statements, that boxes labelled 'comforts', for Dutch evacuees, contained bombs and tommy guns."[13]

The Wharfies' Federal Council met on 26 September 1945 in Sydney. They decided to support the ban: "in view of the representations made to us by the Seamen's Union of Indonesia, that our members should be directed not to work any vessels involved in the strike by the Indonesian Seamen's Union, and not to handle any munitions or stores, being loaded for Indonesia ports, which might be used against the new

Indonesian Republic".[14] (See also Fig 16[15].) They directed Ted Roach to take charge of the dispute.[16] Englart wired the Supply and Shipping Minister, Senator William Ashley, urging him "to take immediate action to prevent further unnecessary hold up of shipping", that is by directing Shipping Companies to allow Wharfies to work all vessels, except Dutch vessels. "The "total number of men suspended under Order 44, owing to refusal to work Dutch vessels, is 523", Mr Hickey reported on 10 October 1945. Under Order 44 they'd been stood down for "refusing to accept a transfer from one ship to another."[17]

Fig 16 Letter to WWF National Office From A.I.F. Soldiers, 1945

Source: kindly provided to Author by Ted Roach



N114/190

Bougainville
20-10-45

General Secretary,
Waterside Workers Federation,

Dear Sir,

We the undersigned members of the 4th. Field Regt.A.I.F. wish to send you our congratulations on your magnificient stand with the Indianesians in their struggle against Dutch Imperialism to obtain their rights guaranteed them by the Atlantic Charter.

Your actions and the support ~~of the~~ given by the Australian Trade Unions generally have placed Australian Labour well in the forefront of progressive movements throughout the World.

A. J. Toe.
R. B. Gunton
L. C. Cundeth
L. R. Higham
J. Joel
L. J. Bowen
F. Ball.
W. Leighton Hume
Richard Coles
C. Wilkinson
F. J. Hare
W. G. Petty
L. G. Jamieson

Gnr L. G. Stewart
Gnr J. H. Wilkinson
Gnr. Cr. Harrison
Gnr. T. Banerofe
Pte J. Clarke
Bdr. G. H. Thorp.
Gnr. R. Tuck.
Gnr W. J. Ballantine
Gnr. Cpl. W. Bell.
Geo Rawson.
H. E. Cockfield.
F. J. Deavers.
J. E. Weld
A. Humphries
L. W. Grandhoff.
Cpl J. Kermonde
H. Dickie
R. Mulagon

N114/190

Noel Butlin Archives Centre - THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Ted Roach addressed a Brisbane stop work meeting on 16 October 1945, Mr J. A. Barrie, Sec WEC Brisbane reported to the SIC his Port Committee's decision to allow the meeting.[18] The ship *Esperance Bay* repatriating 1416 Indonesian men, women and children, left Brisbane at 2.30 pm on 16 October 1945. The Wharfies worked the ship. Before the Indonesians left for the uncertainties of the cruel war at home they gave Qld T&LC Secretary, Mick Healy, £40,510 to invest in Australian War Bonds.[19]

TED ROACH PLACED IN CHARGE OF THE DISPUTE

Ted Roach was put in charge of the Dutch Ships dispute three times by the WWF Council: first, on 29 September 1945; second, reaffirmed on 14 August 1947 when a complete ban was imposed on Dutch ships; and third, on 28 January 1949 by the WWF Executive.[20] *I took it to the Federal Council of the WWF, and it wasn't Jim* [Healy] *who made the declaration, the* [Wharfies' Federal] *Council made our declaration*. The resolutions were written and moved by Ted in the Wharfies' Federal Council. The ACTU agreed: "Everything Dutch is black". On 30 January 1946, the ACTU Executive appointed a Sub-Committee to handle the dispute consisting of: Ted Roach (WWF), Barney Smith (SUA) and Peter McKeon (Balmain Ironworkers). ACTU secretary, Albert Monk, did not intend Ted to take charge of the dispute but, as usual, Ted took charge very smartly.

The author: "What was Rule 13, Ted?"

Rule 13 meant that the Unions running the dispute had complete charge. Monk, Clarey, Kelly and King could convene meetings and move resolutions, but they couldn't vote! Monk would say: "I move that the ban on Dutch Ships be lifted", and every time he did, I would move the amendment: "I move that the status quo remains".

We [the Wharfies] *had about five ACTU Congress delegates, and the Left was pretty strong. It was the heyday of the left-wing. Rule 13 applied. The Unions concerned in the dispute, Wharfies, Seamen or Ironworkers were the controllers.*

The author: "So, the right-wing Monk, Clarey, Kelly and King would have to organise a "sell-out", so they could get the ban on Dutch Ships lifted?"

Yes, but we had the strength under Rule 13 and we wouldn't allow it — Barney Smith, myself and the Ironworkers. Monk, Clarey, Kelly and King, they never had a vote. They'd move the resolution, and I would move the amendment, roll 'em each time, because they never had a vote. We had the bloody vote, under Rule 13. I had the veto before Khrushchev had it! (Laughs!)

The ACTU Executive could convene a meeting, and move and second a resolution, but they had no authority to vote. They would move the resolution, so they could write up the Minutes. At three different meetings convened by them — could've been more — each time Barney Smith and myself vetoed whatever they said under Rule 13. Rule 13 grew when the ACTU was trying to build up, to gain some strength and recognition. And they got to the stage where the ACTU Executive wanted to pull back but they couldn't. It had gone too far; Rule 13 had them tied. Barney and I were good mates. We used to have a beer, later, and laugh about it.[21]

The author: "What happened then?"

We said that we'll only let goods go that are Red Cross goods, provided we send an observer with the first shipment to make sure they were distributed without fear or favour. See, we modified the ban, saying we would allow the first shipment to go, with so-called medical supplies if an observer, from the Union, travelled to Indonesia. His report on the distribution of the goods would determine the fate of the final ships. That's where the Mountbatten business came in, you see. The conflict was all about the observer. They'd dodge up one of theirs like J. J. Graves, one of Jack Lang's "inner-group". I'd put my hand up and say: "I can write his report before he leaves Australia". I was 'the pea'.[22] *I was the observer. We didn't want anyone else. I was handling the dispute. See all the politics flowing from this. Our decision on the observer was "I am going after the repatriation of all the Indonesians and so on...". Clarey and Monk called these meetings to discuss the observer, they were powerless. I moved the amendment against them every time. It was the Party blokes got rid of Rule 13*[23] [at the ACTU Congress in 1949]. *We've got so many people now, they said, such strength. There was a large minority of the Left on the ACTU Executive at that time. They agreed to scrapping Rule 13. But the real reason was they didn't want people, down below, putting on acts. They might get out of control.*

Australian security and intelligence were working overtime, watching the Unions and tracking Ted's movements. Ted's main concern was to get the mass support of as many Unions as possible, of District Councils, of Trades and Labour Councils, of Union Executives, and, from there, a heap of telegrams on

Albert Monk's desk. Monk and R. A. King flew to Amsterdam to talk to the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), Vice-President, Mr E. Kuupers.[24] Kuupers said there was "a serious famine, and shortage of medicines" in Indonesia, and appealed to the ACTU "to move workers of Australia to load ships with relief goods for Indonesia"[25]. Kuupers insisted there was "no war material loaded on the ships". Monk and King sent an urgent cable saying 'mercy' supplies were needed in Indonesia and claimed that NZ Wharfies did not support Australia's ban. Ted rang Toby Hill, Gen-Sec NZ Wharfies, who said they wouldn't load Dutch ships with any cargo for Indonesia. It had been their policy, Toby said, since October 1945. On 22 January 1946 Monk called a Conference of all Unions involved in Sydney Trades Hall. The conference voted 132 to 120 to lift the ban. Ted said this was asking Wharfies to scab on the Indonesian seamen, and they would not scab. The next day, Albert Monk sent an URGENT telegram to Jim Healy that Dr Evatt had received "personal assurances" from the Dutch Minister (Aerrsen) that the goods in the ships when landed in Java would be distributed without discrimination and that British General Christison[26] would be in charge. There would be "no molestation of Indonesian crews" (by the Dutch military) and therefore ships should be "bunkered and got away as early as possible".[27] Albert Monk also fired a broadside in "The Sydney Morning Herald". He said there had been a lot of "chicanery" in this dispute, pointing a finger at Ted Roach and Rule 13.[28]

Ted Roach and the Unions were aware of Dutch treachery and of Dutch determination to get war cargoes to Indonesia. A case marked "comforts", dropped on the *Sabinta's* deck, at Pinkenba, Brisbane, contained phosphorus bombs and tommy guns. Many tricks were used to break the ban. Evidence this telegram from C. Kim, Indonesian Independence Committee, Trades Hall, Brisbane (13 January 1946): "Radio Republic Indonesia January 13, Minister Information announce, Australian Waterside Workers Cheated by Dutch, American Ship *Henry Letland* Brought Forty Thousand American Goods, Ship Left Fremantle Under Secret Order In Midsea Ordered Bound for Java, Wharfies Did Not Know Contents Cargo and Destination Ship, Unloaded by Japanese and Dutch, Batavia. Kim, 10 Goldsmith St., Mackay". Indonesian Seamen's Union, Brisbane, S. Pinontoan, Secretary.[29] The Dutch Vessel *Laverious* commenced work at Geelong on 18 September 1947. An SIC report says:

"1. No registered Waterside Workers are employed on this vessel.
2. Work is apparently being performed by Dutch Army personnel and the crew of the vessel.
3. The men are transported to Geelong in buses, and it is understood that they are from a Dutch Camp at Royal Park Melbourne."[30]

Ted Roach was directed by the Wharfies' Council to take charge of the Dutch Ship Dispute because he was the National Organiser of the Wharfies. By cleverly using ACTU Rule 13, Ted took the dispute out of the hands of the sell-out right-wing, ACTU Executive. Ted conducted essential negotiations with Dr Burton, Arthur Calwell and Dr Evatt, and organised a Union Conference in Sydney Trades Hall, which re-confirmed the Australian Unions' black ban. *Indonesian seamen (including Tuk Subianto)[31] were in my office every day on questions of propaganda, money raising, victualling, and housing.* All the main reports and feature articles in "The Maritime Worker" about Dutch Ships and Indonesia, and reports to Wharfies' Council and Executive, are reports by Ted Roach about this work.

On 26 January 1946, Ted conferred with Dr John Burton from the Department of External Affairs in the the Sydney Labour Council Office, before the Federal Unions Conference organised by Ted, and produced agreement on three points:

"1. That the *Van Outhorn* be a 'trial ship' either with original crew, or alternatively another crew provided by the Indian Seamen's Union.
2. That the East Asia Command (under Louis Mountbatten) arrange unrestricted rights for the observer, and all facilities to this end to be made available.
3. That arrangement be made for Indonesian representatives to give the necessary protection to the observer through Indonesian/Dutch lines."

The Federal Unions Conference at Sydney Trades Hall on 30 January 1946 re-asserted the ban, 13 votes to 2, and passed the following resolutions written by Ted relative to loading of Dutch ships with food and medical supplies for Java: *That this Conference is prepared to accept the assurance given with regard to the distribution of goods to be transported to Indonesia, as they affect one ship, to be made as a trial ship,*

provided that a representative of the Trade Union Movement is permitted to proceed to Java to act as an observer. The question of loading any further Dutch ship for transshipment of goods and medical supplies to Java, to remain in abeyance, until the report is received from the Trade Union observer; and: *That a sub-committee be appointed to act with the officers of the ACTU to investigate and deal with the manning of the trial vessel. This consisted of Messrs. (Barney) Smith (Seamen's Union), (Ted) Roach (Waterside Workers), and (Peter) McKeon (Balmain Ironworkers). The Sub-Committee recommended:*
A. That the trial ship be the Van Outhorn, and if possible manned by her original crew, as an alternative the offer of the Indian Seamen's Union to supply an alternative Indian crew.
B. That the observer be given the right of entry to Java, by Louis Mountbatten, and that a representative of the Indonesians be permitted to meet the Australian observer.

The position, as I see it, is this: first of all, as I stated before, we accept statements by the Dutch, with quite a lot of reservations and this document (the cargo manifest), whilst it was given under oath, is just the product of a typewriter, and here we have 1000's and 1000's of tons listed under a particular heading. I think it might be necessary to devise some means whereby some personal check would be made of this cargo in the main centres at Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne. Perhaps, you, yourself, Mr Commissioner, or it may be a representative of both parties, the Dutch, the shipping people, the Government, and someone from the Unions might check and find out if this cargo really should be labelled under these headings (e.g. "miscellaneous"). I have grave doubts about this miscellaneous 40,000 tons of Australian goods into vessels nominated by the Dutch 2/3 Indonesian, 1/3 Dutch.[32]

Thus, the Union conference of 30 January resolved to support a trial (Dutch) ship, with a Union appointed observer, to see what happened to the goods, when the ship got to Djokjakarta, a city on the island of Java (formerly Dutch Batavia) in Indonesia.[33] Ted Roach and Barney Smith then interviewed the Attorney-General, Dr Evatt, who did not want Communist, Ted Roach, to be the observer. Ted increased the pressure again by moving *that the ACTU be requested to call a conference of Unions engaged in repairs to Dutch ships and aeroplane repairs.*[34] Dr Evatt then called for compulsory conferences between the parties. According to Margaret George: "Evatt was alerted to the need to re-assert control of Australian policy towards NEI, which was *slipping into the hands of the militant Trade Unions, and the self-appointed liaison to the Republic,* (i.e. Ted Roach)."[35] Baron van Aerssen, Dutch Minister in Australia, rejected "the idea of a trial ship" and said the Dutch Government would not "accept the sending of an observer".[36] That would mean, he said, "a control on the actions of that Government and South-East Asia Command", and would cast "a doubt on the sincerity of the assurance given by the Minister (van Aerssen), on behalf of the (Dutch) Government".

On 26 February March 1946, Dr Evatt requested compulsory conferences between Unions and Lt. Denboer (Dutch Navy), to discuss what was in the cargoes, how much cargo there was, and when and how it could be released and shipped to Indonesia. These conferences reveal equivocation by Lt. Denboer. Don Morrison, the SIC Chairman, insisted on Lt. Denboer taking the oath for the 1 March session.[37] Ted Roach cross-examined Lt. A.M. Denboer (the Netherlands East Indies, Sea Transport Officer).
Mr Roach: *I asked the question yesterday about tommy guns and tripods in one of the ships which was alleged a mercy ship and you denied that?*
Lt. Denboer: "Yes".
Mr Roach: *Do you deny that again?*
Lt. Denboer: "Yes, and the statement was made that tommy guns were packed in cases marked with Red Crosses, if I remember rightly."
Mr Roach: *Do you deny that tommy guns and tripods were in cases that were to be loaded in Brisbane? Cases with Red Crosses on them?"*
Lt. Denboer: "Yes".
Mr Roach: *Do you deny that cases of tommy guns and tripods were to be loaded in Brisbane to be sent to the Indies?*
Lt. Denboer: "I may have to make enquiries about that. I couldn't say off hand. As a matter of fact, at the time indicated I was in hospital in Brisbane with malaria. But they certainly were not packed in Red Cross cases."

Mr Roach: *Have any ordinance cargoes been loaded on any of the Dutch ships here in Australia, for the Indies, or is it contemplated that ordinance will be loaded?*
Lt. Denboer: "It is not anticipated to ship any Army or Navy cargo on our vessels."
Ted Roach: *I said any ordinance cargo, any ammunition of any description, guns or bullets?*
Lt. Denboer: "Definitely not. This statement does not contain any ordinance articles at all. I guarantee that there are not any ordinance articles amongst the cargoes."[38]
Ted was concerned about 10,972 tons of "miscellaneous" cargo, in Lt. Denboer's manifest, "things for the natives, like fishing lines, fishing hooks, and so on". PM Ben Chifley said in Hansard: "I should think 70,000,000 Indonesians might be very good customers ... after the final wash-up this country would be as likely to get trade from the Indonesians, as from the Dutch...".

Ted quoted from a Sydney Labour Council leaflet (below) written *"before the right-wingers decided to assist the Dutch: Dutch soldiers and officers should not get transport. Repairs on Dutch planes, ships, etc must not be done. Dutch ships must not get coal. Tugs must not be made available to Dutch ships. Food, stores, etc must not be provided to Dutch ships. In fact, everything Dutch is black. These Dutch officials are swaggering around our country, protected by armed tommy gunners, threatening Australian Unionists on the Sydney wharves, using brutal methods against the Indonesians, right here in Sydney. Boycott them."*[39]

TED ROACH RE-CAPS THE DUTCH SHIPS' DISPUTE

Well, Mick Healy, in Brisbane, was handling it all because of what the Dutch were doing to the Tanah Merah[40] *prisoners, and how they were brutalising them, and Christ-knows-what. The centre of activity moved from the Brisbane Labour Council to the Sydney Labour Council and the whole tenor of the struggle had changed. It was no longer just a question of supporting the seamen for wages. It became a question of supporting Indonesia for Independence.*

Dr Evatt sent Judge Kirby to interview Sjahrir[41] to try and discover the arrangement that allowed Ted and the Indonesians to persist with and fight off challenges to the Dutch Ships ban.[42] On 8 February 1946 Ted spoke to Arthur Calwell, Minister for Immigration. Mr Calwell gave assurances that the Australian Government was trying to get discharges from the Dutch Army for the Indonesian Militiamen in Lytton and in Casino Camp. He said he'd sent a strongly worded cable that the 19 Indonesians dropped off the ship *Esperance Bay* at Koepang were not to be handed over to the Dutch and, if necessary, the Australian Government would bring them back to Darwin for repatriation.[43]

On 21 February 1946 there was a threat to use RAN. Ted answered every move by Monk, but his well thought-out press releases did not appear in "The Sydney Morning Herald" or "The Daily Telegraph". On 13 March 1946, Monk in the "Sydney Morning Herald" complained of chicanery[44] in the Dutch Ships ban, and pointed the finger at Ted Roach regarding Rule 13. Six days later, Monk and King flew to Amsterdam to talk to Dutch trade union President Kuupers who wired Australia for 'mercy cargoes' for Indonesia. Mr Kuupers was on WFTU with Ted Roach's enemy, Ernie Thornton.

On 18 May 1946 Bondan (CenKim)[45] had heard that there would be problems for married Indonesians repatriating and wrote to Ted Roach. Ted wired Arthur Calwell's private secretary, Mr Armstrong, in Adelaide, who said he was "in touch with Dutch Minister, endeavouring to arrange repatriation of these men, with other Indonesians, next available ship".[46] On that day Bondan wrote personally to Ted Roach thanking him for his "part in the negotiations".

VISIT OF LORD LOUIS MOUNTBATTEN

On 29 March 1946 Lord Louis Mountbatten (Commander-in-Chief of British Forces in South-East Asia) visited to try and get the Unions to lift the Dutch ship ban. *When Mountbatten came down, in order to help them with this, we were up in the Minister* [Bill Ashley's] *suite, on top of the GPO in Martin Place, Sydney. A rear admiral was there,* [Rear-Admiral Sir Douglas Pennant] *talking with a plum in his mouth, and telling us about Indonesian atrocities, bayoneting babies, reminiscent of the first World War. Sitting in this*

meeting with about five or six chairs separating us were: Monk, Clarey, Kelly and King [ACTU Executive]*, Roach* [WWF]*, Elliott* [SUA] *and Smith* [SUA]. *A rear admiral came in and said: "Lord and Lady Mountbatten of Burma would be late". Lord Louis rolled up with his wife in a car. I had a look outside, flags waving. In breezed Lord Louis himself. He was dressed in mufti*[47]*. His 'rare admiral', Pennant, was done up in all his uniform, medals, and Christ-knows-what.*
The author: "What did he say?"
He said: "I'm Louis Mountbatten". He didn't say: "I'm Lord Louis". I walked over and shook hands. I don't remember whether I said anything. I wasn't pleased to meet the bastard. It wasn't that we salaamed and said: "Sir! Can we sit down?" I grabbed him by the paw, and he said: "I'm Louis Mountbatten". It's significant he went to Canberra the day before [to talk to the Security Police]*, to find out what was the score with this meeting* [that Ted Roach was "the pea"]. *I jumped in straightaway. We said that they wanted these ships released to use against the Indonesians. The right-wing said: "That's not so". We already had an example in Brisbane of a case being dropped on its corner* [which] *revealed the "Red Cross supplies" were tommy guns. That was pretty substantial evidence. We were carrying this campaign right through and the climax was Mountbatten's visit.*

I jumped in first and I said: "Why is it that you don't want an observer on the first ship to go?" He said: "You can send a shipload of observers, if you wish". Just like that! Innocent as a babe in the wood! "Is it a fact that you want these ships released to the Dutch, so that they can run ammunition to Indonesia?" "Yes. That is true, and to release our own ships, to get our own ships out of the pool", said Lord Louis. Monk and Clarey were boiling, jumping up and down in their seats, because I was upsetting their role. Clarey said: "Roach we'll deal with you in another place". I was the bloke who was asking the questions. I was the bloke who was "the pea". Mountbatten said they are ships to ferry ammunition. I had said this vociferously on a number of occasions. The ACTU Executive denied it and denied it. The ships were to go and that was it, to take the "mercy" supplies to Indonesia, which was a lot of crap. Underlying it was they didn't want the Communists in the leadership of the bloody struggle. See, Lord Louis wasn't used to dealing with an organised Trade Union movement. He was used to his minions going over Indians tied hand and foot, while he was up with the Sahibs in the palace.

COLONIALISM DUTCH-STYLE

Most of them were killed, poor bastards, said Ted of the many Indonesian leaders and revolutionaries he met. He meant they were killed in the fight for Independence against Dutch, British, and American domination, or in the CIA-inspired Indonesian Army coup of 1965.[48] Their names and faces pass across these documents — Bondan, Achmad Soemadi, Dick Prusean, C. Kim, S. Pinontoan, in an endless stream, like the heads of those beheaded down the centuries, fighting for Justice and Independence. Dutch colonialism plundered Indonesian wealth for three and more centuries. It prevented Indonesia's development and kept its people poor and illiterate. In 1933, the Heunder Commission, a Dutch Government Commission, found that the average income of an Indonesian was one penny, per head per day. Wages of Indonesians employed by foreign firms ranged from six pence to one shilling per day. Rule was direct from Holland via the Governor-General. Political parties and trade unions were banned. For "being considered by the Government to have roused the cause of a labour strike" meant punishment by five years in prison; a 'sixer' for "insulting the government"; nine months for holding a meeting of "more than three persons" without obtaining government permission, 24-hours beforehand.[49]

Drafts of letters on file, with corrections in ink, are by Ted Roach as well as most of the cables and telegrams. Ted talked to Bill Ashley, Herb Evatt, Ben Chifley, Arthur Calwell, and Trade Union Executives and the rank and file everywhere. *We had them by the 'short and curlies'*[50]*. They were hoist on their own petard* (Rule 13). We see Ted's clumsiness at times with written expression and his railway freight train sentences. But, with that, there is clear meaning and a determination to answer smears, innuendos and distortions by Albert Monk in "The Sydney Morning Herald" and "The Daily Telegraph".

Commenting on the Wharfies' Dutch Ships Dispute and Indonesia Archives, principal Noel Butlin Archivist, Mr Jacques Le Clerc said: "very messy file — many gaps in series. Year 1946 almost entirely lacking[51], main bulk of documents seems coming from Ted Roach's files."[52] This is a significant comment confirming Ted Roach's active role in handling the dispute. It suggests that others have been through the files removing items and disorganising sequences. The author saw evidence of pages being torn, attempts to rub Ted's initials from pages, the guillotining of his name from the bottom of roneos, and retyping the content of his telegrams, onto a clear sheet, without destination, date, or author (Ted Roach) on them. And, therefore, the possible destruction of the original telegram! All this is evidence of the pre-Archives, mistreatment of Ted's records by persons unknown, as part of an attempt to wipe Ted Roach out of History.

A TOP SECRET document from Mountbatten to Senator Ashley, which described the frustration of Mountbatten's South-East Asia Command with the Australian Unions' Dutch Ships ban, is one such missing document. Bill Ashley gave this to Ted to read in 1946. When Ted and the author went to Canberra together to read the Archives, it was not on file. *Mountbatten had put Lt-Col. Christison, his underling, in charge of this area, and Christison set his plenipotentiaries to work. They used to say to Sjahrir* [special adviser to President Soekarno]: *"Will you accept the ships if the Wharfies load them?" "Sure, we'll accept them". "Well, then, will you ask the Wharfies to load them?" "No, no, but we will accept the cargo, if they do load them". And then they'd ask the Wharfies if they would load the cargo, and the Wharfies would say: "Yeah, we're prepared to load the cargo if the Indonesians ask us to". And you could see frustration in the whole document. This TOP SECRET document was all about this. Bill Ashley called me out and said, "Ted, have a look at this". It said that they'd been in touch with Indonesia, and Indonesia suggests that we'll accept the ships, if the Wharfies load them, and the Wharfies say we won't load the ships unless the Indonesians ask us to, but if they ask us to, we will load them. This went back and forward. When I went to Malang* [in May 1947, to the All Indonesian Central Organisation of Trade Unions (SOBSI)], *Sjahrir was laughing about it, and he said:* ***"Comrade Roach, I think I've known you for a bloody long, long time".*** *The whole document expressed exasperation, oh, complete exasperation! Oh, a foolscap and a half it was, a magnificent document. It's missing out of the files. I should have had them copied and put in my own personal files.*

Two days before going to Malang for the SOBSI Conference with Mick Healy, Ted still did not have a visa. *Evatt said in no way is Roach going to Indonesia. I had to go under his neck to Arthur Calwell to get a visa two days before I was due to go. There was no trouble with Mick Healy's visa, but mine, they wouldn't give it to me. Evatt was screaming when Chifley asked me to come to Canberra. He challenged me. I said: "Ah, yes, you weren't going to let me get into Indonesia. So I did go under your neck to Arthur, and I got my visa". Bill Ashley, Barney Smith and I, were in Ashley's office, on top of the Sydney General Post Office* [GPO] *to report on one of the meetings of the ACTU Executive. The phone rang. Ashley answered. "Who was that, Bill?" "That was 'Doc' Evatt". "What did he want?" "He wanted to know who the observer was". "What did you say?" "Ted Roach". "What did he say?" "Jesus Christ!".*

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[1] "The Voice of Free Indonesia", no.34, 9.1946, p.7.

[2] tapol: an abbreviation of the Indonesian words for "political prisoners" (tahanan politik).

[3] Qld. Trades and Labor Council pamphlet, N 14/180 NB, Oct 1945.

[4] See Godfrey, T. H. and Rushbrooke E. G. N. "British Naval Intelligence Report", Vols I and II, 19 M 988 1/127 A1.42. (Godfrey and Rushbrooke were Directors of British Naval Intelligence).

[5] Qld Trades and Labour Council pamphlet, N 114/180 NB, Oct 1945.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Englart, Ted. Secretary, Wharfies' Brisbane Branch,Wharfie leaflet N 114/180 NB EC.

[8] "The Courier-Mail", Brisbane, 27.9.1945.

[9] "FCM", 26.9.1945.

[10] **Editors' note**: 'Tommy gun' — nickname for a Thompson submachine gun.

[11] "FCM", op. cit., 26.9.1945.

[12] Extreme right-wing newspaper.

[13] "FCM", op. cit., 26.9.1945, p.51 (Hickey).

[14] Ibid.

[15] Fig 16 is a copy of an original typed letter kindly provided to the Author by Ted Roach. It was written on 20 November 1945 to the General Secretary (National Office) of the WWF by soldiers from the 4th Field Regiment of the AIF stationed in Bougainville at the end of the Second World War. The letter, signed by 35 soldiers, congratulates the WWF for standing "…with the Indonesians in their struggle against Dutch Imperialism" in their support for these bans on Dutch ships in Australia.

[16] "FCM", op. cit., 26.9.1945, p.51

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid., p.56.

[19] Hickey, AASP 1509/20 W8 Box 21 No.22.

[20] The WWF Federal Council met in Sydney on 29 September 1945, passed resolutions, and gave Ted Roach responsibility for handling the dispute. Federal Council Meeting Sept 1945. Monk, Clarey, Kelly and King – ACTU Executive Committee.

[21] In his book "Black Armada", which is about the Dutch Ships' dispute, Rupert Lockwood says merely, that: "the ACTU had failed to release the Dutch ships", p.198. Lockwood does mention the ACTU Sub-Committee for Dutch Ships (on p.191), but omitted naming Ted Roach as being in charge of the dispute or as being central to the maintaining of the boycott by using old ACTU Rule 13. Lockwood uses these generalisations – "Communist union leaders" (p.193); "the communist representatives of maritime unions" (p.208); "the communist union officials on the sub-committee (p.193); "a full conference of the ACTU Emergency committee and of the principal unions concerned in the boycott" (p.155); "a sub-committee of this ACTU-sponsored conference" (p.155); "Waterside Workers' Federation representations" (p.143) (although names Ted in reference notes); and "the sub-committee from the three unions" (p.194). **Editors' note**: while Rupert Lockwood does name Ted Roach ('Mr Roach') on pages 190-92 as being involved in the Dutch Ships dispute, he says on page 190 that Ted communicated with the ACTU because WWF General Secretary, Jim Healy, "happened to be out of Sydney". This implies Ted was effectively 'standing in' for Jim Healy in his role as Assistant-General Secretary. Yet here the author (Denis Kevans) provides evidence that the WWF put Ted Roach in charge of the Dutch Ships dispute and he thus played the lead role throughout. See also endnote 37 below.

[22] "The pea": the secret elect of a silent collective.

[23] See Tom Wright, ACTU, 1949.

[24] President, Netherlands Federation of Trade Unions, and Vice-President of the World Federation of Trade Unions. Ironworkers' Ernie Thornton, Ted's enemy, would soon be WFTU President.

[25] N 114/90 15.1.1945.

[26] Mountbatten's *underling* (said Ted Roach).

[27] E211/155, 23.1.1946.

[28] "Chicanery" used about Communists in the ALP's "Constitution and Platform". The Moral Re-Armament pamphlet, "Ideology and Co-Existence", p.12. If Winston Churchill does it, it's guile, perspicuity, and perceptiveness; if Ted Roach does it, it's "chicanery".

[29] N 114/190.

[30] AA SP 1509/2/0 W8 Box 21 No.120.

[31] Tuk Subianto was the Secretary of the Indonesian Sea and River Workers' Union, and a close friend of Ted Roach. See Margaret George's book "Australia and the Indonesian Revolution", Australian Institute for International Affairs, 1980, for an untitled photo of Ted and Tuk, which looks as if it were taken, long range, by the Security Police.

[32] SP 1509/2/0 W8 Box 21 No.68. 5.3.1946, 2.45 pm. Roach to Morrison.

[33] Ibid.

[34] E 211/154.

[35] George, Margaret. "Australia and the Indonesian Revolution", op. cit.

[36] SP 1509/2/0 W8 Box 21 No.109.

[37] A conference re the working of Dutch ships 26 February 1946, 11 am Sydney. Attendees: Ted Roach (WWF), E. V. Elliott (SUA), Mr A. Strahan and Mr D. Mackay, representing the Director of Shipping, Mr A. M. Denboer, NEI Gov't., Mr H. Jensen, Electrical Trades Union, R. F. Inman, FEDFA, Terry Gordon, P's and D's, Hughie Grant, Boilermakers, Tom Wright, Sheet Metal Workers, Williamson, Shipwrights, A. S. Searle AEU, C. Anderson, Plumbers, G. Stephens, BWIU, T. Rose, Firemen and Deckhands, A. Moate, Marine Stewards and Pantrymen's Union, Mr C. O'Hare, Merchant Services, Mr E. A. Darbon, SIC (observer), Mr F. Ticehurst, TWU. An impressive list of trade union officials, united behind the black ban on Dutch Ships. These Trade Union committees were running the Dutch Ships dispute, and Ted Roach, WWF, was put in charge of the dispute ***three times***, by the WWF. Rupert Lockwood is consistent in diminishing [the role of] Ted Roach, and does not detail this meeting, or underline its significance, in his book "Black Armada".

[38] SP 1509/2/0 W8 Box 21 No.68, 26.2.1946, p.14 (11 am).

[39] E 211/155, 18.3.1946, pp.1-2.

[40] Dutch concentration camp for Indonesian political prisoners located on the Digul River, in Niu Guini. Communists who were arrested after the 1927 uprising against the Dutch were in Digul in March 1942.

[41] Soetan Sjahrir: special adviser to President Soekarno and Republican envoy to the UN Security Council. Ted Roach's intermediary in maintaining the Australian Unions ban on Dutch Ships.

[42] "The Voice of Free Indonesia", No.27, 27.7.1946, p.2.

[43] E 211/154.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Bondan member of CENKIM: Central Komite Indonesia Merdeka / Central Indonesia Merdeka (Freedom) Committee.

[46] E 211/155.

[47] mufti: civilian clothes when worn by a person in the armed forces.

[48] September 1945: "crisis" — President Soekarno "was threatening to break diplomatic relations with the US and nationalise American Oil assets", "Spectrum", 10.7.1999, p.4.

6 October 1965: The US Embassy had an "Indonesia Working Group", made up of diplomats and CIA officers" e.g. US Defence Attache Colonel Willis Ethel, and US Consul in Sourabaya, Ted Heavner. "Spectrum", 10.7.1999.

6 October 1965: Indonesian Working Group, an optimistic report to Washington: "The army appears now to have determined to move "vigorously" against PKI [the Indonesian Communist Party] - Chief of the Jakarta PKI Committee and former head of SOBSI [PKI-led Labor Federation] was arrested by the army, along with several members of PEMUDA RAKJAT, and Germani [respectively PKI and women's auxiliaries], and an undetermined number of lesser PKI officials". Ibid.

[49] "Why Australia Should Support Indonesian Independence." Sydney leaflet. E 211/154 NB.

[50] 'short and curlies': slang for the hairs on the back of one's neck. It means complete control or dominance over another.

[51] 1947 was the year of the Malang Conference, the FIRST EVER ALL INDONESIAN TRADE UNION CONGRESS. 1947 was also the year when a SECOND CONGRESS was proposed, a CONGRESS to found an "All Pacific Dock, Rivers and Harbour Workers Union". This proposal was mysteriously cancelled. In his book "Black Armada" Rupert Lockwood does not report the 1947 MALANG SOBSI Conference, or its extremely important deliberations. **Editors' note**: Rupert Lockwood does report this first SOBSI conference but incorrectly says it was held in 1946 ("Black Armada", op. cit., p.141). The author (DK) shows it was held in Malang in 1947. While Lockwood reports the SOBSI conference was attended by Mick Healy and Ted Roach (ibid.), Lockwood does not summarise what was discussed or why it was important.

[52] Le Clerc, Jacques. The Noel Butlin Archives Centre, Senior Archivist's note on N114/190 Box Z 55/43, Folder 19, Indonesia file, 2.2.1984.

Chapter 11
THE DUTCH SHIPS DISPUTE: *GARLANDS OF FLOWERS*

Ted Roach, as Assistant-General Secretary, read a cable to a meeting of the Wharfies' Federal Executive on 24 April 1947:

> *Dear Mr Roach, we write to you urgently, plane travel priority, Harjono, Gen-Sec.[1] The SOBSI* [Central All-Indonesian Workers Organisation] *which represents all Trade Unions in the Republic of Indonesia, extends to you its best greetings and best wishes for the common struggle for democratic rights and social security. In particular, we would like to convey to you the gratefulness of our people for the great sympathy and support rendered to us in our fights against Dutch Imperialism, and reaction, for the maintenance of the independence of our Republic. I'd like to use this opportunity to invite your delegation to the National Congress of SOBSI, which will be held in Malang, on May 16, 17 & 18, 1947. We send an invitation to the Trade Union Movement in India, Ceylon, Burma, Malaya, the Republic of Vietnam, the Phillipines, China, as well as to our Comrades in Holland, Britain, Australia, Soviet Russia and the USA.*

On 6 May 1947, the Brisbane-based Central Committee for Indonesian Independence (CENKIM) wrote about "the eagerness of Indonesian Unionists to receive the co-operation and help of their Australian counterparts in the important work that lay ahead of them" and of "how disappointed Indonesian Trade Unionists would be if no delegation appeared" because they realised "how valuable would be the link between the working-class organisations of our two countries". Radio Station Djokjakarta stressed "the way in which Indonesian Trade Unions are relying on their Australian counterparts, for their assistance, and training in organisational detail — Indonesia is well aware of the foremost position held by Australia in Union matters".[2]

RADIO MESSAGE FROM SINGAPORE TO THE LISTENING POST IN BRISBANE

(Note: CENKIM, stationed in Brisbane, received radio messages from Indonesia, via Singapore.[3])

> "I have here with me in the studio the General Secretary of the Central Organisation of the All Indonesian Trade Unions (Harjono) who is wishing to convey to our Australian friends and the listening post in Brisbane, an invitation to the Australian Trade Unions, to make a visit to Indonesia to attend the Trade Unions Conference, to be held, in Malang, on the 16, 17 & 18 May. He would like to say that this conference can't be postponed and the presence of an Australian delegate is desired at this conference to help in the preparation of a further conference to be held later in the year, to which delegates from India, Burma, Siam, Indo-China, Malaya, China, and Australia will be invited. The Indonesian Government will endeavour to subsidise the plane fare of the delegates, and will make arrangements from this end. They will go direct to Singapore, and from there they will be looked after by our friends. A cable will be sent with final details."[4]

At the 24 April Federal Executive Conference, Young/Barrett moved: "That we agree in principle to Ted Roach attending the Indonesian Conference pending receipt of a cable setting out further details", carried by Waugh (Geelong), Thompson, (Rockhampton), A. L. Graham (Brisbane), Gifford (Townsville), O'Dea (Adelaide), McAlees (Wallaroo), Lonergan (Hobart), Webber (Bunbury).[5] On 23 May 1947, a meeting of the WWF Federal Executive was advised: "there will be a Pan Pacific Conference of Maritime Unions not later than August 31st, 1947".[6] Harry Bridges[7] wrote: "We are intensely desirous of a Pan Pacific Conference" … "and the Far Eastern countries bordering the Pacific, including the USSR, should convene a waterside workers conference".[8] This

conference might have fulfilled the dream of Communist veterans, Norman Jeffery, and Jack Ryan, of a Pan Pacific Asian workers' organisation, linked with Australia.[9] Ted saw the vision clearly, *in globo*, as he would say. A form of organisation did come later but the powerful impetus of the Dutch Ships dispute and its flames of solidarity, and world-wide publicity, had evaporated. This second conference, to found a Pan Pacific Maritime Union, projected by the Indonesians for 1947, was vetoed somewhere. Ted had to find his own fares to Malang. At the 1947 WWF Council Meeting, Ted gave a detailed description of getting the 130 'quid' together, but this was not recorded in the Council's minutes.

SOBSI CONFERENCE MALANG, 16-18 MAY 1947[10]: *GARLANDS OF FLOWERS*

The Malang Conference was the first ever All Indonesia Trade Union Congress. That's how important it was! In May 1947 there were 1,237,207 members of SOBSI, in 1102 branches of at least 30 Industrial Unions. Thus, all of the clerks, firemen, conductors, cleaners and engineers employed by the Republican Railways were members of "The Railway Workers' Union" and so on. The potential for Trade Union development in Indonesia, Malaya and Singapore was big. Trade Unions had been banned since 1926-27, the years of "widespread and spontaneous revolt against Dutch rule" when 1400 "offenders" were sent to "the green hell of Tanah Merah", a Dutch concentration camp in 'Central Dutch Niu Guini', about 200 miles from the coast"[11]. They were exiled under Article 37 of the Indische Staatsregeling Act which stated: "Those who can be considered, by the Government, to disturb or to have disturbed, the public peace and order, will be, without any legal proceedings, exiled for an indefinite period to a specifically appointed place". Meanwhile, the Dutch propaganda machine had most of the world convinced of the 'progressiveness' of Dutch colonial policy.[12] When the Dutch Colonial Administration fled from the Japanese Imperial Army and 'set up shop' in Australia, they brought the Tanah Merah prisoners to Australia. When they were released from Cowra (NSW) POW prison, these Tanah Merah Indonesian political prisoners were put to work in Australia under armed Dutch control. They were to become central figures in Indonesian Committees, some of them revolutionary Committees, in organising armed resistance to the Dutch colonialists, running up the flag of the Indonesian Republic and ultimately winning freedom for Indonesia.

Mick Healy and Ted Roach got away to the Malang Conference. Ted had to raise his £130 pounds fare himself. His fare was later paid by the Indonesian Independence Movement and reimbursed by the Wharfies' Executive, as a donation to Medical Aid for Indonesia. *We were in a Qantas flying-boat and stopped at Surabaya overnight to refuel. It was full of Dutch soldiers. We had to be very careful. They wouldn't let us land anywhere else, couldn't land at Djakarta. Up to Singapore and back to Surabaya.*
The author: "Did you know Mick Healy?"
I carried my swag with him and Alex McDonald. There were a whole lot of militant Trade Union leaders, blokes off the track who were job delegates and Union officials. They all went to the University of Adversity.
Setijati Gang Tengah[13] was their guide and interpreter. "I can understand Mr Healy's English," she said, "but I can't understand your Australian English, Mr Roach". This tickled Ted because Mick Healy was from Belfast and spoke with a broad Belfast accent.[14]

Djakarta was an international city at the time. When I was going in, I thought there'd be tommy guns behind every tree but when we got there it was, "Good day, Mick!" "Good day, Ted!" "How are you, son?" There were no tommy guns. I didn't know they were having the International discussions for the Linggadjati Agreement. Bloody Dirty Dick Kirby,[15] Evatt sent him over as an observer. We were in a pub and politicians were there. It was a Dutch military establishment. I said: "What about the Dutch? I see them here." "Oh, we rent the buildings to them." "What about the telephones and railroads?" "Oh, we own all that. We rent it to the Dutch". "Do they pay?" "Oh, yes, they pay, but they pay us in Dutch guilders. We won't accept Dutch guilders. We want them to pay us in Indonesian rupiahs. But they don't recognise Indonesian rupiahs". It's a bloody stalemate! See, they've got a Municipal Council of Djakarta and a Municipal Council of Batavia [Dutch] *all in the same town, with the Dutch and English on one side and*

the Indonesians on the other. And he said they don't pay, and we don't pay. So that's the way it was, like a Gilbert and Sullivan Opera.

Not because of me, but because of the role that I played in the Dutch ship dispute, I had enormous personal prestige in Indonesia, enormous. Lucky to go through that country like I did, you know, and see such terrific support and carry so much prestige, garlands of flowers and Soekarno sent his aide-de-camp from Djakarta — an all night trip, right up to Verlang — to ask Mick Healy and me to accompany him on a three week trip on his special train through Western Java. He specially wanted us to meet him. I said to the Trade Union boys, what are my options? All they said was "Blow Soekarno! Stop here, we want you to help us". What an opportunity I missed. Tell his Excellency I'm sorry, the boys want us to stay with the Trade Unions. Oh, Christ, I was disappointed with that! Anyway, Setijati said: "The Deputy-Prime Minister and Minister for Defence, Mr Sjarifuddin would like the pleasure of you and Comrade Healy on his special train trip through the Dutch lines this evening". Away we go and we get through the Dutch lines. There was a lovely situation then with the Labour Party, the Socialist Party, the Socialist Youth, and the Communist Party all aligned. Ted made an appointment to see Mr Sjarifuddin the next day.[16]

Ted Meets Indonesian Leaders

I'm on my own when a general in a staff car came to pick me up. We went to a place. The war's on and it's a bit of a chart room, and I never saw so much bloody braid in all my life. Sjarifuddin called his High Command to meet me. It was the General Command, the whole box and dice, of the top echelons of the Army Colonels and Lieutenant Colonels and Christ-knows-what! And I'm the guest, and they came there to talk to me. I grew ten foot tall; my head hit the bloody ceiling. I said: "Mr Deputy-Prime Minister, the Dutch are making so many anti-Indonesian statements and I want to be able to re-butt their statements. I don't want to know anything that impinges on security." In front of all these Generals, Sjarifuddin said: "Comrade Roach, whatever you want to know even if it's absolute security it is yours for the asking because we know full well it is in safe hands". So, my head hit the roof, right through the tiles at the top. Fair dinkum! The leader of one hundred million people said this. You could grow tall on that, couldn't you? But I said again: If I were to be in possession of some information, other people shouldn't be entitled to and they got access to it and I had access to it too, I obviously would have to be a suspect. So I stood on my dig for what I asked for — generals and colonels. That's the prestige we had! Yeah! The prestige we Wharfies had!

We had a member of parliament, Setiadjid, Vice-Minister of Communications, looking after us right to the conference [Malang, May 1947] *and he'd hand us back to the little girl to bring us back through the Dutch lines. We'd go to a place and we'd have to have a look around to see if anyone was there, the Dutch, or a volcano, or something. Oh, Christ! You've got no idea what it was like! We had to bounce our way through the Dutch* [Army] *Lines. The war was on. Bounce our way through — didn't know what we were going into. So we got through. It was a good experience and* [we] *finished up, bounced our way back through the Dutch Lines when it was impermissible to come through, because we happened to come through with a Deputy-Prime Minister, Sjarifuddin. Mick and I were staying in the Sultan's palace in the harem room, the girls were all gone. And there was a big bed, a big oval bed, and a little bed over there in the corner. You could flop there afterwards. The Indonesian guerrillas vowed never to cut their hair, till they got rid of the Dutch. And the motley array of weapons they used to have, these guerrilla fighters, see, they were all guerrilla-fighters.*

After attending the SOBSI Congress, while still in Singapore Ted met a Minister from the new Republic of Vietnam, who said: "If the French workers had done one hundredth part for Vietnam, as the Australian workers had done for Indonesia, we would have driven the French imperialists out of Vietnam and had our independence recognised before this". The plight of Vietnam, where 200,000 mechanised French legionnaires had been waging "full scale war for the past 12 months", had "not even been discussed by the Security Council" because not one Labour Movement, in any country, had built "a solid basis for the waging of a political campaign" on behalf of the Vietnamese.[17]

"Ballard Most Immediate"

There were a series of SECRET cablegrams before and during the Malang All Indonesia Trade Union Congress in May 1947. Ted Roach's non-committal phrases such as, *and so on*, and, *you know*, are taken as proof of his simple-mindedness by Australian consular officers who say that it will only be "a matter of time" before the Unions and Roach relent and call off the Dutch ships ban. For example: "IMPORTANT SECRET" — "[Mick] Healy and Roach arrived yesterday, Wednesday, and paid a courtesy call to the consulate. They had already seen Van Hoogstraten[18] and had a general idea of the trend and position of our talks. They gave us to understand that, when an agreement acceptable to the Indonesians is arrived at, there will be no difficulty in lifting the ban"[19]. Ted liked to do an impersonation of Van Hoogstraten as a World War I Prussian General, pronouncing his name *Van Hooogstraaaten!* and would laugh! The next secret cablegram, "BALLARD MOST IMMEDIATE" stated: "You will have seen the reports on Campbell's[20] statements at Malang on Friday that Australian Trade Unions had decided not to lift the ban, but on the contrary, **plans for a world-wide ban on Dutch shipping are being formulated by the Australian unions."**[21] P. J. Clarey (ACTU) said that he did not know of any plan for a world-wide ban on Dutch shipping. Ted had upped the ante again.

On 5 May 1947 a spook in Australia said that he had certain information from "a most reliable source".[22] That's top classification of received information. Jim McClelland said after a meeting in Sydney that "Ernie Thornton was Evatt's mate".[23] Ernie was one of Ted's CC-CPA enemies. Ernie Thornton was in charge of the "Eastern Bureau" of WFTU.[24] Would it be too much to believe that Ernie, who had been found guilty of "lying and slander" against another comrade in a 1930's inner-Party investigation,[25] might pass on any information to A/G Evatt, and, through Evatt to Security?

The author: "What was the attitude of the Dutch Communists?"

Oh, well you see they were Communists but they were relying for their big wages on the exploitation of the Indonesians, like everyone else, that's what they were relying on. They didn't see the importance of our struggle for Indonesian Independence. They looked askance at us. "Who do you think you are? You're taking our livelihood off us." That was their approach. I don't know how good they were. In my estimation they were not really good. And they were there a bit on sufferance; I don't know how they got there. We were the invitees. We were invited.

Ted Reports to WWF Federal Executive, June 1947

On returning to Australia from the SOBSI National Congress, Ted reported to a Special Federal Executive meeting on 2 June 1947 his conversations in Indonesia regarding the Dutch Ship ban. Out of this it was decided to send a delegation to Canberra (Jim Healy, Ted Roach and Ivo Barrett), to discuss the question of the Dutch shipping ban in the new conditions (Dutch attacks).[26] Jim Healy reported on the discussions to date relating to the loading of Dutch held goods in Australia. Ted Roach supplemented the report and indicated that the discussions were working out very well and should render considerable mutual assistance to both Australia and Indonesia. Ted reported further on the conditions of the Malayan Labour Movement (from Ted's interview with Chin Peng in Singapore - see chapter 12), and indicated the matter needed urgent attention from the Australian Trade Union Movement. The meeting carried the following resolutions:

> "That the Federation Executive, after having heard a report from the AGS [i.e. Ted Roach] on the criminal conditions of British oppression against the Malayan Labour Movement consider that such conditions of oppression and terror are foreign to the terms of the Atlantic Charter and equals the fascist policy perpetrated by Hitler on the people of Europe, and is a betrayal of the heroic Malayan guerrillas, and anti-Japanese underground fighters, who so bravely resisted Japanese invasion and occupation. We call upon the ACTU to bring before the WFTU the conditions now operating against the Malayan Labour Movement, and Malayan Trade Union Federation, and call for a declaration by the WFTU, to aid the Malayan People, in general, and their Trade Unions in particular."[27] An alternate resolution by Young and Kilmartin ends with these words: we call on "Ted Roach [to] circularize Federal councillors

for endorsement, and all branches, and the ACTU, with directions as to the necessary action to be taken."[28]

If you needed a glimpse of Ted Roach's work, there it is above. Roach did essential research, participated in the SOBSI conference, interviewed Chin Peng[29] and experienced life on the streets in Singapore and Indonesia. While he brilliantly concealed the interview, he got it to WFTU and the Australian Unions as a feature article; wrote the resolutions above for others to present; and was then instructed by the Executive to do the rest of the work as well, and carry out the necessary practical organising steps. *I did the organising. It was my work. I was the Organiser.* Ted was a 'goer': efficient, determined, hardworking, clever, highly organised, with an excellent memory and mathematical ability, and a good tactician, in ever changing circumstances. The kind of 'goer' that philistines, seat warmers, and unimaginative bureaucrats will drive to exhaustion and exasperation.

At the Special Meeting on 24 July, the Wharfies' Executive discussed the massive, mechanised attacks by the Dutch on the Indonesian people. Ted addressed the Executive and read a resolution (below) from a Brisbane Wharfies' stop work meeting:

> *That this stop work meeting of the Brisbane Branch of the WWF of A endorses the decision of Federal Council, in withdrawing labour from Dutch vessels sailing for Indonesia, now in Australia. We call on the Federal Council to consider declaring* ***a complete ban*** *on the working of Dutch vessels in Australia, and* ***to call on workers throughout the world*** *to withhold any support whatsoever for Dutch Imperialism in their efforts to suppress and defeat the Indonesian peoples and their Republic. We congratulate the Dutch dockworkers and seamen, in their refusal to assist the aims of Dutch Imperialism.*[30]

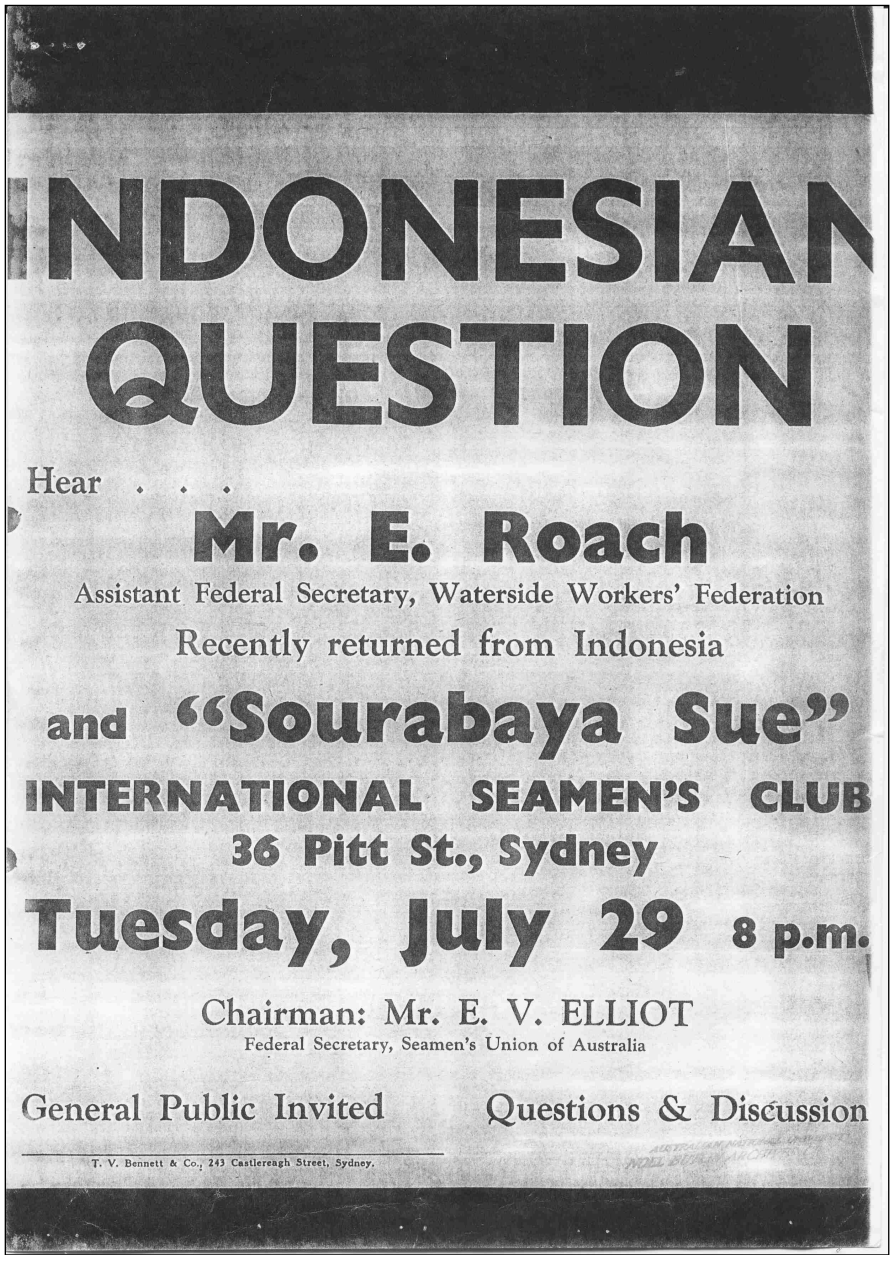
This typically 'Roach' resolution encapsulates a Marxist, and Leninist viewpoint of the Indonesian struggle and Roach's aim of world-wide working-class support. Ted also read "An Appeal from the Indonesian Trade Unions to Australia": *After the signing of the Linggadjati Agreement, the Dutch continued to send troops, planes, and ships to Indonesia. The Indonesian Republic is now threatened as never before with a colonial war in our archipelago. The working class of Indonesia has faith in and is relying on the working-class of the International World.*[31]

At the same meeting, Ted also read an appeal from Indonesia written by 'Sourabaya Sue' whom Ted organised into Australia to address public meetings An indication of Ted's power of secrecy is the telegram[32], with 'Sue's' code name 'Molly'. Broadcasting from Brisbane, Sue made "a special appeal to all Waterside Workers of Australia, not to lift the ban on Dutch ships at any cost". This appeal shows how correct Ted was in seizing hold of the dispute through ACTU Rule 13, to prevent a right-wing sell out of the dispute. Sue's appeal finished with an Indonesian slogan of the day: "It is better to die fighting, than to live a living death!" (see Fig 17). Sourabaya Sue, born Muriel Stuart Walker, was known as 'Miss Daventry' or K'tut Tantri. She was a Scottish-born, American citizen. She played a role in the anti-Japanese resistance in Indonesia as a writer and broadcaster. She was captured by the Japanese Imperial Army and handed to the Kemp Pei Tai[33] for 'special treatment'. She had immense courage and was a close friend of the leaders of the Indonesian, anti-Japanese resistance, and the Committees of Liberation from Dutch Colonialism. Ted organised Miss Daventry to come to Australia and address meetings, in solidarity with Indonesian Independence. Her visit was preceded by her appeals in writing, which reached Australia and went around the world. At the 24 July meeting, the Wharfies' Special Executive passed the following resolutions:

> "The Exec of the WWF directs the cessation of work in loading cargoes on all Dutch vessels in any port in Australia, which decision will only be reconsidered with a cessation of hostilities, and a peaceful settlement of the attack on the Indonesian people."
> "It directs Ted Roach to contact the ACTU and government authorities, acquainting them of our decision and requests the WFTU be requested to call on all affiliated Trade Unions in all

countries of the world to impose a complete ban on Dutch vessels. Hereby isolating the Dutch Imperialists in their endeavour to suppress the progressive peoples of Indonesia".[34]

Fig 17 Ted Roach and 'Sourabaya Sue', Public Lecture
Source: WWF Poster, July 1947; kindly provided to Author by Ted Roach



REPORT ON SOBSI CONFERENCE TO WHARFIES' FEDERAL COUNCIL

At the meeting of the Wharfies' Federal Council in November 1947, Ted Roach told Council delegates that SOBSI's importance could not be overestimated, because Trade Unions might provide unity, and stability, essential for the besieged young Republic of Indonesia. He stressed that the Trade Union Congress

at Malang (which he had attended in May) *was truly a revelation. There were 400 delegates, and up to 20 per cent were women. The reception was held in the Town Hall, attended by the President of the Republic, Dr Soekarno, and the Mayor"*[35]. Ted also told the 23 Council delegates that *the Trade Union Congress was a real tribune of the people rather than a narrow Trade Union organisation and its decisions, social and economic* [had] *become part of the Government program. There were 40 direct Trade Union representatives in parliament*, he said, *with the right of recall, and the General President of the Unions, Setyadjid, was now the Deputy Prime Minister*. SOBSI's 570 members met *annually*, and *all but a working committee of 38, and a Cabinet of 35, return to their normal vocation.* The resolutions and social programs adopted by SOBSI were very progressive, and socially far reaching. They guaranteed the rights of workers, including women workers, the abolition of child labour, working hours (40 hours in 6 days), holiday leave, safety, a minimum wage, where "no difference shall be made in the wages of adult men and women, provided the product of their work is equal", social security for accidents, "sickness of the worker and his family", for permanent injury, and "for old age, widows, and orphans" … job and safety inspections, and, "in every State concern a Workers' Committee, with TU delegates, and the leader of the State Concern, responsible for worker welfare"[36]. Ted said the Republic's Constitution *allows for the social ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange.* Ted felt the Republic of Indonesia must travel *towards socialism* and, *as such, requires ever greater support from the Labour Movement of the world*.[37]

Ted described the Dutch tactics in delaying signing the Linggadjati Agreement (drafted on 14 November 1946, ratified on 25 March 1947), so they could use the truce period to pour mechanised battalions into Indonesia and introduce conscription in Holland for the first time, *all the while blaring out lies and slander, accusing the Indonesians of refusing to co-operate*[38]. The Peace Agreement was finally signed in July 1947, but then the Dutch launched a full-scale attack (21 July 1947) called "a policing action" against the 'peaceful, unarmed population". Ted made these further points in his six-page report to the WWF Council.[39]

> *The ban of our Federation on cargoes on Dutch ships for the NEI assumed such political importance that I believe that it will find its place amongst the most important political struggles in the history of the world labour movement. We entered this struggle to render assistance to the Indonesians because they were fighting against Imperialism, the enemy of progress and democracy ... and as a consequence, by the Labour movement of this country striking blows at Dutch imperialism, we are likewise striking blows at British, American, Belgian and French imperialism ... and we are aiding the fight for independence and freedom for all colonial peoples and national minorities. It is now over two years since our Federation has imposed the ban on Dutch ships ... and we were able to hold up 40,000 tons of Dutch supplies ... and the fact that we joined into this controversial struggle and received world-wide publicity meant that millions who had never heard of Indonesia ... rallied to the support of the Indonesian Republic.*

In 1946 the question went before the United Nations assembly and *for the first time, in the history of the world* an international body was *forced to intervene in a war* — and a colonial war at that — forced by the clamour of humanitarians and democrats, in every country in the world, and the Cease Fire Order was issued. Ted felt that the Wharfies' and Australian Unions' ban had kept *the focus of world attention on Indonesia* and built up the pressure on the UN to take action. *Ted stressed that the ripples of the International Trade Union boycott had built up an international solidarity movement with Indonesia and so when the Dutch attacked in full force, in 1947* we were able to re-inspire a much more mighty international development, and obtain quick response from cables*, for example, to dockworkers' organisations.* In this period, with the imperialists and fascists frantically beating the war drums, in the hope of bringing about a new and more terrible war, we, in this struggle, have provided a classical lesson, as to how world labour can correctly wage an international struggle, against war and war mongers.[40]

Ted's 1947 Indonesian Report to the Wharfies' Federal Council emphasised the enormous value to Australia of trade with the (then) 70 million Indonesians. Australia's re-elected Prime Minister Ben Chifley emphasised mutual trade. As Vice-President of Medical Aid for Indonesia, Ted Roach urged the Wharfie

councillors to raise money for Indonesian Medical Aid, where *operations have been carried out by the hundred without anaesthetics* and *surgical dressings made from bark and banana leaves ... Every bandage, or pair of forceps, or ounce of drugs, will be worth its weight in gold as a morale builder for the Indonesian people, coming from the Australian Labour Movement"*[41].

WARM WELCOME TO 'BAN THE BOMB'

I was on the corresponding Committee of the Asian-Pacific Dockworkers ... headquarters were in Japan. I went to the conference in Japan, and another one in Indonesia, with Ray Hughes.[42] *I met Aidit*[43] *at a glittering reception of the East German Embassy. Oh, what a glittering reception! Do these fellers know how to put it on! They were celebrating something. I don't know what they were celebrating. The Indonesian High Command was on the 'China-line', and the 'China-line' didn't want to ban the Atomic Bomb. They were supporting the French Atomic Tests at the Mururoa Atoll. I remember the debate at the conference itself, there were the Russians, Americans and Australians fighting for the banning of the bomb, and the Indonesians, Chinese, and Koreans were against it. I went to see Tuk Subianto and told him we were against the bomb. And he said: "Oh, Jesus Christ, Ted, why don't you support this?" And I said: "Tuk, the Bombs involve a lot more than you and I. On them depends the future life of a lot of people. Tuk, I couldn't support you." At the reception, I met Aidit and I said: "Aidit! Oh, listen, comrade, I want to have a bit of a yarn with you." And he said: "Right, right, tomorrow night". That's the day I'm leaving, I'm leaving that night on the plane. So we go up to the new Party headquarters they're building. It was one of the biggest buildings in Indonesia. I sat down there with about ten members of the Central Committee of the Party. I'm sitting alongside Aidit, eating little sweet cakes, and drinking a little Indonesian tea. I said I want a joint declaration from the Indonesian Trade Unions and the Australian Wharfies against the French Tests at the Mururoa Atoll. I couldn't speak for the Australian Trade Union Movement. So Aidit said to Soejono*[44]*: "You go out with Comrade Roach and draw this joint declaration up with him against the Atomic Bomb tests". True!*

When I got back, I was talking to Laurie Aarons[45]*, and he said: "Jesus Christ, Ted! That's a diplomatic coup!" — because the Indonesians were following the 'China-line'. Not because of me, but because of what we had done for the Indonesians, I had great personal influence in Indonesia. I got this bloody foolscap and three sheets of carbon. The plane goes in three hours, and I'm writing this bloody thing out. It should be in one of "The Maritime Workers". You know I'm writing in triplicate, so he can have a copy, and I've got a copy and that was so important. Wherever we went, we were treated like bloody kings and princes because Tuk Subianto and the leadership, and Soejono, we looked after them all here. So you see from the government down, Australia was just number one — Wharfies, people, Unions, the whole lot, were number one. Wharfies, Australians, could do nothing wrong with them, the name was good all the way along the line with the Indonesians. Everywhere we went Mick and I were like kings, garlands of flowers, some generals would come and take us to dinner, or the Governor of the Province would take us for a run round. We were really big time.*

When I came back the second time, I said to the Party (CPA) *there's too much "Leftism" in Indonesia. I'm a bit worried about this automatically transplanting Mao Zedong's "power comes out of the barrel of a rifle".* Ted's concern later became the nightmare bloodbath of 1965 in Indonesia. *Years later, we went to a dinner with a Soviet Delegate to the Asian-Pacific Dockworkers' Conference and he said to us: "There won't be any more Asian-Pacific Dockworkers Conferences", and there weren't.*

The author: "Who's "we"?"

Pat Clancy[46] *and me.*

The author: "Who was the delegate?

Kuusinen[47]*, I think.*

"TEN THOUSAND POUNDS FOR YOUR FAVOURITE CHARITY", OCTOBER 1948

Did I tell you how I took ten thousand pounds off an arms dealer and gave it to the Communist Party?
The author: "Will I put that in the book, Ted?"
Yes, put that in, might as well.
The author: "Who was the arms dealer?"
Skolnik was his name, a pillar of the Labour Party. He had bought up a whole lot of this second-hand war equipment. He was concerned about getting the Dutch ships away, because the Dutch ships were going to get the arms to the Dutch in Indonesia. Perc Clarey, ACTU President, took me to dinner with this Skolnik. Clarey said: "Why don't you buy him a drink?" "I don't want to," I said. I didn't want to be there. Then Skolnik said: "Mr Roach, if you lift the ban on Dutch Ships, I'll donate ten thousand pounds to your favourite charity". "I didn't say: "You dirty, rotten, arms-dealen', Labor Party bastard!" No, I said: "My favourite charity is the "Daily Tribune"". This was how I got ten thousand pounds for the Communist Party. I used a three-card trick, on this arms dealer. It wasn't extortion! No bribes involved! Only Dixon and Sharkey knew about it. We had repatriated all the Indonesians. The Party was more or less in control. I said to Jim [Healy]: *"The ban has got to end within a week, and we've got to grab this ten grand[48] off this "thing"" — ten thousand pounds off this Skolnik. It wasn't a bribe. It was a donation. So I said: "Yeah, it's coming off", which it was. I gave the ten thousand pounds straightaway to the Communist Party. Oh, well done, Ted, well done! Well done, Ted, yeah, well bloody done! No acknowledgement! My acknowledgement was they buried me in Long Bay Gaol! Frank Browne[49] speculated on the lifting of the Dutch Ships ban in his news-sheet, which said: "Old Bill Ashley is the bringer of gifts. To call off the ban on Dutch ships, it cost £2000 from the Commonwealth Government."[50] Ted's security was tight.*

ASIO'S VERSION

ASIO had a stab: "....The ban on ships to the NEI[51] will be lifted in about a month's time. A ship - whether Dutch or otherwise is not known - will load goods in Melbourne and then go to Sydney. The goods are destined for Batavia and may be loaded through Singapore. The ban will be lifted because Roach and Healy have made an arrangement with the Dutch Shipping Line, or Consular Authorities, or both, which will provide for payments for them of 2% of the value of the cargo - in this case five thousand pounds to be devided (sic) equally between them. The Dutch are permitting themselves to be a party to the arrangements because they are anxious that such goods as will be shipped will be transported to Batavia at all costs. Roach visited the NEI about twelve (12) months ago, allegedly for the purpose of attending a Trade Union Conference, arranged by the Republican Government. Main intermediary is one, Skolnik, who may be in Melbourne. No further particulars respecting him are at present available."[52] *I didn't give much away. See, sixty per cent of total Dutch investment was in Indonesia. By this ban, the three thousand islands in the archipelago, we took them off the Dutch, and gave them to the Indonesians.* Ted's mouth was as tight as a palaeolithic oyster.
The author: "Ted, did you know Paddy Troy[53] personally?"
I knew him very personally.
End of conversation!

OIL ON THE BOIL – INDONESIA 1945-1949

Collected Despatches of American Correspondents

Indonesia's thousand islands were resource rich and a stream of natural treasures enriched Holland's monarchy and corporations. "In 1940, the Dutch agreed to supply Japan with no less than 1,300,000 tons of Indonesian petroleum a year."[54] In 1948, US journalists came to write features on Indonesia.[55] Nat. A. Burrows (Chicago Daily News Service), James A. 'Jim' Branyan (Houston Post), S. Burton Heath (Newspaper Enterprise Association), Staff Correspondent Bertram D. Hulen (New York Times), William

H. Newton (Scripps-Howard Newspaper Alliance), and H. R. Knickerbocker, reported glowingly on the re-birth of the Oil industry in Indonesia with US personnel and Capital, on the spot, and hard at work. They also categorised and smeared Indonesian leaders as 'Communists', 'Reds', and 'fellow-travellers'.
Burrows wrote that Indonesia had 37 per cent of the world's rubber, 19 per cent of its tea, 20 per cent of its fibres, 90 per cent of its quinine, 15 per cent of its tin and 85 per cent of its pepper. Branyan, from Houston, reported that both of Indonesia's big refineries were in Palembang (Sumatra) and that 90 Americans, mainly from Houston, Texas, worked there. He said they produced 45,000,000 barrels in 1949, a 40 per cent increase on 1948, and anticipated 55,000,000 barrels in 1950, compared to 53,000,000 barrels in 1940. Branyan said: "By and large, the attitude of the oilmen toward the Indonesia political situation is that they are here to stay regardless of what happens. The investments are here and it is growing all the time. Unofficially, the oilmen seem to favor the Dutch — this is not unnatural."

S. Burton Heath, from Batavia (Java), said that the US having 'lost China' would not 'lose' Indonesia, because "the islands are rich in vital oil. There are known reserves of billions of barrels." A. Wright acting general manager for Standard-Vacuum had no doubt that another billion could be discovered when needed (18 July 1949). Burton Heath said: "Sutan Sjahrir appointed 17 Reds and fellow travellers to the Cabinet". Confirming the oil bonanza, Bertram D. Hulen (New York Times) said: "Oil refineries and wells are operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to supply the big tankers lying at the docks along the Musi River". "Here, in South and Central Sumatra, are the principal oilfields of the archipelago. The Royal Dutch Shell Group and the American Standard Vacuum Petroleum company are the principal operators in Sumatra. Shell also has wells in Java and Borneo," said Hulen. He stated that both companies as well as Netherlands Pacific Petroleum Company, Standard Oil of California, and the Texas Company, had begun production in Niu Guini. As to "estimated reserves", that secret ingredient magnetising investment, Hulen quotes 1,000,000,000 barrels, but "undoubtedly there is *much more* here". Hulen then stated a reason why the control of Indonesia, and its oil reserves, was of paramount, strategic importance to the US, Shell and other Oil interests, saying: "the potentialities are such, that in the event the Persian Gulf is shut off, this area could become, strategically, of great importance to the United States".[56] Tragically, all the US oil journalists perished on a Royal Dutch return flight, near Bombay, their despatches already eloquent in their city editions.

Oil Barges Niu Guini

The problem of oil barges for oil wells in Niu Guini at the Wassian and Klamono[57] fields prompted Jim Healy and Ernie Thornton at the ACTU to move towards lifting the ban on general cargoes from Australia to Indonesia. All major exporters, like the Australian Wheat Board, wanted bans lifted as soon as possible.[58] ACTU delegates Healy and Thornton moved (in part): "We now believe that in view of the UNO agreement that the ban can be relaxed, to allow normal trade to be resumed between Australia and Indonesia provided that an embargo will still be continued by the Australian Government on the export of weapons of war".[59] When the Dutch launched another war early in 1949 the bans were re-imposed and the Wharfies' Executive again put Ted Roach in charge. Just before the Dutch ship ban was lifted, Ted and a few inside the Communist Party, such as Jack Blake, wanted to try to stop the brutal, bloody war of British Imperialism against the Malayan people. Late in 1949, the Wharfie Federal Council voted "to lift the ban on Dutch ships. Branches are therefore directed that it is now in order to supply labour for any vessel engaged in the Australia-Indonesia trade".[60]

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[1] Cable from Harjono, E 114/190 863 F.

[2] E 114/190 863 F.

[3] E 211/154 p.1. Central Committee for Indonesian Independence. Information Service. Transmitting from Djokjakarta, Central Java: The Official Communications of the Republican Ministry of Information. Radio transmissions in the Foreign Service, 20.8.1947. English to (Aust. and SE Asia), Dutch to (Indo. Aust. Malaya), Indonesian to (Aust. SE Asia), Chinese to (China, Malaya), French to (Indo.-China, Siam), English, Hindustani, Dutch, Arabic to (India and the Middle East), Dutch to (Holland), Hindustani to (Arab countries), English to (UK, USA, Aust.).

[4] Ibid.

[5] "FEM", 24.4.1947.

[6] Harjono-quoted in "FEM", 23.5.1947.

[7] Bridges, Harry — Australian who led the US West Coast Longshoremen (ILWU). For some reason, Harry Bridges gave Ted a 'bodgies' belt as a present when he was in Australia in the early 1950s. This was about the time when Roumanian cartoonist, Molnar, did a libellous cartoon in the "Sydney Morning Herald" of Ted Roach hitting a woman. Such an act was beyond the character of the chivalrous, magnanimous, comradely Roach. The cartoon attack in the "SMH" showed the desperation of those who hated this courageous man.

[8] "FEM", 10.5.1947.

[9] "In 1922, the CPA became the Australian affiliate of the Communist International, the Comintern…" "…The Comintern and the Red International of Labour Unions (RILU) set up "the Pan Pacific Trade Union Secretariat in 1926, headed up by CPA leaders Jock Garden and Jack Ryan, which required affiliates to pay more attention to the question of imperialism, and the rights of indigenous peoples in the region". Boughton, Bob. "The Communist Party of Australia's Involvement in the Struggle for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Rights in 1920-1970", p.1.

See "The Hummer" Vol.2. No.9. p.36, Jock Garden and Jack Ryan, ibid., Vol.2. No.8. p.11. Barbara Curthoys: "In 1929, Jack Ryan with Jack Kavanagh and Norman Jeffreys were removed from the CC-CPA for opposing Stalin's "Social Fascist" stigmatisation of Social Democratic Parties in Europe and the Labour Party in Australia. Jack Ryan refused to attend the CPA's "Control Commission", for punishment and "self criticism"." Two Comintern-trained visitors Moore (Canada) and Wicks (USA) re-inforced Stalin's line in Australia. Barbara Curthoys felt Moore was "a police provocateur". She wrote: "Moore wanted to destroy Jack Ryan's powerful national and international Trade Union connections, and replace them with connections of his own". Ibid., p.26.

INDONESIA LINKS

Ted Roach the Organiser of the Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia had connections with the Indonesian revolutionaries, Trade Union leaders, and national and cultural leaders. These connections were broken and the potential they represented in on-going Australia-Indonesia development was drastically weakened when Ted was sidelined from the Indonesia job. Ted was smeared in the early 1950s and, like Jack Ryan, would not line up with his 'pants down' (in 1957) to get 'six of the best' from leading Wharfie Communists in the form of 'criticism' and a breast beating session. See SECRET ASIO report No.20839 regarding enlarged CPA city section committee meeting. ASIO stated: "(Tom) Nelson and (Max) Heidke launched a vicious attack on Roach".

COMMUNIST PARTY "CONTROL COMMISSION"

Barbara Curthoys wrote that the CPA Control Commission which moved on Ryan were trained to act in "a dictatorial manner" (p.30). And the "main outcome of the 1929 events was that the CPA was never able to establish an organisation, where it was easy to challenge the prevailing line, where it was as easy to hold a 'mistaken' view, as a 'correct' one, and where it was not a stigma to be 'against the line'. Expulsion was used as a method of ridding the Party of those who strongly opposed sudden changes of line. The practice survived into the early seventies", p.33. Curthoys, Barbara. "The Comintern, the CPA and the Impact of Harry Wicks", "Australian Journal of Politics and History", University of Queensland Press: Vol.39, No.1, 1993. Curthoys also cites Marty, André. "COMINTERN ARCHIVES ECCI General Directives for NZ and Australia". André Marty (1886–1956) was a member of the French Communist Party's Politburo from 1931. Marty represented that Party to the ECCI from 1932; he was commander of the International Brigades in Spain 1936–38, and a member of the ECCI Presidium and Secretariat from 1935-43. He was ousted from the French Party in 1953. Lovell, David W. and Windle, Kevin. (editors), "Our Unswerving Loyalty: A documentary survey of relations between the Communist Party of Australia and Moscow, 1920-1940", The Australian National University Press, ANU E Press: Canberra, 2008, p.xvi.

"BEWILDERED AND DISAPPOINTED"
In October 1939 after the Hitler-Stalin Pact, L. Duncan had warned fellow Central Committee members of the CPA that people were "bewildered and disappointed by the sudden change in Party interpretation of events. I doubt", he wrote, "whether Party leaders realise this. People are afraid to express their doubts, to speak openly, lest they be regarded as being disloyal, disruptors, or so wrong that they are incapable of being trusted. The Party leader seldom hears a free and full discussion in which Party and non-Party people talk freely; against his will - I believe - he has become isolated from many strains of public opinion, Party and otherwise; many members feel that full discussion is becoming difficult, because someone is always sent along, not for the purpose of joining in the discussion, but of putting people right. I believe that this atmosphere is dangerous and disastrous, as far as the future Party development is concerned". Duncan, L. 16 October 1939, CC-CPA, ML MSS 5021 P/C ACC 7216, 193 Hay St. Sydney.

"TWO CAMPS" POLICY:
The new Communist International "line" was announced by Zhdanov in Moscow at the September 1947 "Cominform" meeting and was called "the two camps" policy. The line was relayed to Asia in February 1948 at the Calcutta Conference of the World Federation of Democratic Youth and the International Union of Students, says Jeanne S. Mintz "Mohammed, Marx and Marhaen", pp.92-93.

[10] This section contains material from Ted's June 1947 report on returning from SOBSI, and his Report on Indonesia to WWF Federal Council in November 1947.

[11] The Indonesian Independence Committee, "Dutch Imperialism Exposed, The Green Hell of Tanah Merah", Melbourne: The Melbourne Indonesian Independence Committee, 1946.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Setijati, Teachers' Union, was 29.

[14] CIB file: Mick Healy does not mention Ted Roach in either of his published memoirs.

[15] Judge Kirby,'honoured visitor', arrived in Djakarta on 16.7.1947 to visit the Republican Government and Dr Amir Sjarifuddin, Indonesian Minister for Defence. E 211/154.

[16] Ted Roach later destroyed a unique photo he had with his arms around the Secretary of the Indonesian Socialist Party, and the Secretary of the Indonesian Communist Party.

[17] The Indonesian Independence Committee, 1946, op cit., p.6.

[18] Hoogstraten — Dutch Consular official.

[19] Cablegram 134 "Ballard to External Affairs", 15.5.1947. (AA:A 1838/278, 401/3/10/1 ii).

[20] Mr C. H. Campbell — businessman, importer/exporter.

[21] Ballard to External Affairs, 17.5.1947. (AA:A 1838/278, 401/1/3/2, ii.)

[22] Lloyd to Bailey (Sir Ken) 7.5.1947, with attachment from F. G. Galleghan, CIS, 5.5.1947. (AA:A 1838/278, 401/3/10/4)

[23] McClelland, Jim. MHR, ALP, said "Thornton was Evatt's mate" to Ted Roach, after a public meeting at Mitchell Library, Sydney, in 1994.

[24] 'Eastern Bureau' — "the Asian Bureau of the WFTU which Ernie (Thornton) headed was at least in part intended as an avenue through which the Soviets could keep some check on what the Chinese CP was up to in the region". Aarons, Eric. "What's Left? Memoirs of an Australian Communist", Melbourne: Penguin Books, 1993, p.81.

[25] See Ernie Thornton party trial.

[26] "FEM", 2.6.1947, p.20. **Editors' note**: The Labor Government, and especially Evatt, were appalled at the Dutch attempt to restore their colonial rule over the old Dutch East Indies by 'military onslaught'(see Lockwood, R. "Black Armada", op cit., p.10). Evatt advocated for the new Indonesian Government at the United Nations and criticised the United States Government for providing support to the 'Dutch attacks on the republic' (Ibid.).

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] WWF Special Executive, 24.7.1947.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid.

[32] See Bondan (Brisbane) to Roach (Sydney) — "official word today that Molly accompanies us". Bondan N114/190, p.146, 28.10.1947. See Tantri, K'tut. "Revolt in Paradise", London: William Heinemann, 1960.

[33] JIA: Secret Police.

[34] WWF Special Executive, op. cit., 24.7.1947.

[35] "FCM", November 1947.

[36] E 211/154 NB, p.4.

[37] "FCM", November 1947, op. cit., p.3.

[38] Ibid.

[39] This six-page report of Ted's on Indonesia was found unheaded, undated and unsigned in the Noel Butlin Archives, Canberra, Indonesia File. Archivist M. Purtell inscribed the report, which was confirmed by Ted Roach, on 30.11.1993. A large corner of a page was torn off. Ted stated (p.1): *Two years and four months ago, we received a momentous message through the Indonesian Independence Committee.* That was in September 1945. *In May, 1947, of last year I visited the Indonesian Republic ...* (p.4). Thus he may have given this report early in 1948.

[40] E 211/154, p.2.

[41] "FCM", op. cit., November 1947. Ted Roach's organising abilities, which saw him elected the Australian Wharfies' organiser, were sought by Indonesian Trade Union leaders. Lockwood, and others, do not want Roach's organising ability to be described, or underlined, even going so far, in "Black Armada" as to censor any reports at all from the extremely important, first time ever, Central All-Indonesian Workers Organisation conference, though as shown above Ted Roach brought back compact and moving reports of what he saw, heard, and did at SOBSI in Malang in May 1947.

[42] Hughes, R. WWF Tasmanian Executive.

[43] D. N. Aidit — a senior leader of the Communist Party of Indonesia.

[44] Secretary SOBSI.

[45] Aarons, Laurie. Later Secretary CPA.

[46] Patrick Martin Clancy, Secretary, BWIU.

[47] **Editors' note**: Otto V. Kuusinen was a Finnish and later, Soviet politician, literary historian, and poet who, after the defeat of the Communists in the Finnish Civil War, fled to the Soviet Union. He was a founder of the Finnish Communist Party, secretary of the Communist International (Comintern) and prominent in the Communist Party of the Society Union. Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Otto_Wille_Kuusinen and https://www.britannica.com/biography/Otto-V-Kuusinen

[48] 'grand' — one thousand pounds (or dollars after 1966).

[49] Frank Browne, journalist who published a newsheet commentary.

[50] "FCM", 8.10.1948. p.56.

[51] Netherlands East Indies.

[52] Extracts from N.39083/8Z (16.2.1948), A 6119/79 1212 No.30.

[53] **Editors' note**: Paddy Troy (1908-1978) was gaoled for three months in 1940 for his membership of the CPA when, under wartime emergency powers, the Menzies Government banned CPA membership. (The ban was lifted by the Curtin Labor Government in 1943.) Menzies's attempt to ban the CPA in peacetime was thwarted in 1951 by the defeat of a referendum to give

the Federal Government the necessary constitutional power. Troy became one of Western Australia's best-known communists and was respected widely as a founding member of the WA Trades and Labour Council.

[54] Lockwood, R. "Above the Brisbane Line", [Communist Party of Australia manuscript] p.13, ML SS 502189 (155). Dutch KPM official, J. W. B. Everts amazed Queensland Trade Union leaders when he said that his shipping company had operated under the Japanese and Germans, i.e. during WWII. E 211/154 NB.

[55] See AA SP 1509/2/0 W 8 Box 21 No.135, No.136.

[56] Hulen, Bertram. D. "The New York Times", 1949.

[57] "Netherlands-New Guinea, Notes for Discussion". E 114/190, p.3.

[58] Wheat Board letter, 8.2.1949, addressed to Jim Healy and directed to "Ted Exec" - in Jim Healy's hand-writing.

[59] N 114/190 No 138, ACTU, 26.5.1948, p.3.

[60] Circular 49/56, J. H./D. N. 2.12.1949.

Chapter 12
TED ROACH'S LEADERSHIP AT THE WHARFIES' NATIONAL OFFICE, 1946-1947

"The inspiring leadership of Jim Healy and 'Teddie' Roach has given to the rank and file members new-found strength and confidence, to face future struggles with the ship owners whenever and wherever the situation develops."
H. 'Snipe' Aanensen[1]

'DOUBLE DUMPS': MAY 1946

A 'double dump' was two heavy bales of wool compressed into one, bound with a thin black steel strap and hand-jacked tight. The total weight could be 800 lbs (362.8 kg) or more and there was "a hernia in every one". Wharfies would say "the name's Drysdale, not Clydesdale", and for years wanted to end the torture of bullocking these double dumps of wool. Jim Healy had taken the case to the Industrial Commission and relayed the verdict of Commissioner, Don Morrison, to the Wharfies' Federal Council Meeting (Monday 29 April 1946 - Monday 6 May 1946):[2] "At this stage, the Gen-Sec returned to the meeting and reported the decision of Mr Morrison re the handling of double dumps, the decision being: "Double dumps should be handled but should not be used for topping up, put in a confined space, alleyways, or lockers. Where double dumps have to be rolled over to 10 longers[3], two additional men shall be employed on each side. When doubles are being handled, 12 men to be employed, 6 men to each side. Every attention should be given to reducing the amount of doubles wherever possible, and of a reduction in the weight of a single bale, the ship owners to be asked to give some undertaking in that regard. Two men to be employed trucking the doubles." Morrison's prescription reads like a choreography for a corps de ballet in an experimental, surreal dance theatre. Ted Roach replied: *the position had not been greatly improved.* ***What we really wanted was the elimination of doubles. We want some decision from these bodies, that doubles are not going to be dumped.*** *The decision is in keeping with Morrison's statement that he is loath to interfere with the Employers' business, but, it appears, that he is very anxious to interfere with the Federation's business. The (Chifley) Government is concerned about wool and Morrison is concerned about the Government but the Federation is concerned about its members and nothing else. A conference was called last Friday, there was* ***no decision****, other than to call another conference.*[4]

When Branch Secretaries rang the Federal Office they spoke to Ted Roach. It is clear that Ted was telling them to break the bands on the doubles and to wheel them singly. Ted did not tell Jim Healy what he told Branch Secretaries but it would be clear to Jim Healy that someone was telling them and that that someone was Ted Roach. On the 7 May 1946, Brisbane gangs refused double dumps. On file is Geelong Wharfie, Duggan's telegram, which says it all: "Bands broken, single dumps, men working - Duggan, Geelong".[5] "Men working" is the hallmark of Ted's "many and varied forms of direct action". *The troops are still on the payroll and that's the essence of job control*, said Ted. However, the problem of double dumps continued after 1945.

'ALF' FOSTER ENQUIRY INTO STEVEDORING: 1946

Labor's Cabinet Sub-Committee of E. J. Holloway, Herb Evatt and John Albert Beasley (Acting Attorney-General) met Healy and Roach to discuss the enquiry into stevedoring. Beasley appointed "His Honour Alfred William Foster" to head the special enquiry. Ted felt that the Wharfies and the WWF were not given time to involve the Wharfie rank and file in this enquiry. His words at the WWF Special Council Meeting[6] are reported in the stilted, third person, and the tenses are mis-sequenced: "Mr Roach said he was apprehensive of the result of the enquiry. *We had not carried on a campaign, in the Branches*, over the enquiry. English dockers and American dockers will not win (industry pensions) by magnanimity of the law, but by organisational strength. He felt it was not too late to do something to activate branches in this matter".

Federal Council Meeting: January 1947, Sydney

This Wharfie Federal Council meeting ran from Monday 13 January to Friday 31 January 1947. The eighteen days covered critical issues confronting waterside workers and the Federation. The "scurrilous Melbourne pamphlets" attacking the Federation leadership, from Bills, the Groupers' Melbourne President, were exposed and severely criticised. Ted Roach organised these meetings, and gave his report after Jim Healy's report. The meetings then discussed the issues for up to two weeks. What a pity these discussions were not recorded in any way. It was then Ted was laying out the tactics and strategy for "forcing" the fundamental lists of basic improvements decided by the WWF's Federal Council. This was when the WWF Councillors discussed the 'many and varied forms of direct action' needed to achieve the basic demands of the Union membership. It was the National Organiser, Ted Roach, who led and directed these discussions. *I did the organising. It was my job.*

Judge Foster Attacks Arbitration Court, October 1947

"Is the Arbitration Court a dictatorship?" Judge asks. "To my mind" said Judge Foster, "it is amazing that you fellows should entrust the industrial destinies of the country to three men. It may be that three dictators are expressing the will of the community. But they are not your representatives, they are beyond your control, they are appointed for life". 'Alf' Foster was speaking at a Constitutional Club luncheon on 12 October 1947 in Sydney. "The dictatorship I propose to speak about is me, and it is exercised by the court in which I sit. Have the people, in setting up the Arbitration Court set up a dictatorship which can over-ride State legislature? They could flout your will, and the will of your State Parliament altogether", said Judge Foster.[7]

CHATTING WITH CHIN PENG IN MALAYA,1947

"If we workers take a notion, we can stop the speeding trains,
Every ship upon the ocean, we can tie with mighty chains,
Every wheel in the creation, every mine, and every mill,
Fleets and armies of all nations will, at our command, stand still."
Joe Hill, IWW

When Ted made his declaration that he would stop all ships of war going to Malaya, he curdled the blood of Governments, ship owners, and their administrations. Yet Ted saw this as his sacred Internationalist duty, and thought it was written in gold in the communist classics. J. D. 'Jack' Blake made a moving speech, to the Central Committee, which was ignored. "Not a man, not a gun, must be sent to Malaya" (J. D. Blake)[8]. Ted had seized hold of ACTU 'Rule 13' and taken the Dutch Ships out of the hands of Monk, Clarey, Kelly and King in the vital early stages [of the dispute] as Monk, Clarey, Kelly and King tried one tactic after another to sell out the dispute. Ted, then, broadened the dispute by involving as many Unions as possible. In Malang in 1947, at the huge SOBSI conference, Ted saw the vast potential of millions and millions of workers in Indonesia, Malaya and Singapore who could be organised into Unions. The Malang Conference proposal — to hold a first ever Asian-Pacific Dockworkers' Conference soon after — was torpedoed somewhere.

When Ted took down Chin Peng's[9] words, in a brilliant note-taking exercise describing the brutal, murderous re-occupation of Malaya by Imperial Britain — whose first act was to ban Unions — he was taking down an outline for Union-to-Union co-operation and organisation. Ted was not with Ernie Thornton in Paris, drafting the agenda for the next WFTU conference in San Francisco. Ted was in the heat and stink of Singapore, talking to the leader of the Malayan Resistance and taking down facts as a basis of a plan of co-operative action. Ted discovered early which part of the world was closest to Australia, or History discovered it for him.

Harry Bridges had wanted the Asian-Pacific Dockworkers Conference. Resolutions condemning the Imperial re-occupation of Malaya were dutifully recorded in the ACTU and Wharfies' Conference minutes.

But that's as far as it went — the days of binding, Executive-directed, general bans like 'Dutch Ships' were over. Indeed, at the ACTU National Congress in 1949, the Left, including Communists, cancelled 'Rule 13', stating: "if any interstate strike is not controlled by the ACTU the affiliated Unions have no obligation to give any kind of support, that is to say, are asked to break the strike, and **the man responsible** for the strike, may be dealt with by the (ACTU) Executive".[10] Ted Roach was the one who used Rule 13 in a decisive way in the Dutch Ships Dispute taking on Imperialism and the International shipping companies. The ACTU's 1949 resolution was the promised get square with Roach, from Monk, Clarey, Kelly and King. Didn't they promise "We'll deal with you in another place"?[11]

Ted kept his 1947 interview with Chin Peng a close secret, most of his life. 'Radio Cenkim' had their office in Singapore, with reception in Mackay, Queensland, and Ted was their close friend. They trusted him because they sent him to listen to Chin Peng. Ted could see the potential for Trade Union organisation in Indonesia, Malaya and South-East Asia — a mighty, multi-million member force. He took down Chin Peng's information, and sent it to the WFTU, and from there to the world wide Trade Union movement. Back in Australia, in November 1947 Ted wrote to Huang Li, the Secretary of Singapore's Federation of Trade Unions and said: *we are prepared to render all possible assistance to the peoples of Malaya in their struggle against the rule of intimidation and terror, and aid the Malayan peoples in their struggle for Independence and Freedom.*[12] Before this declaration on Malaya, Ted had always carried out his declarations, just as Ned Kelly did. The statement of intent, a defiance of the Law and authority was one of Ned's, and Ted's, psychological weapons of warfare. But this time, Ted's declaration that *there would be no troops, or ammunition, leave Australia, by ship, for the Capitalists' War in Malaya*, was not made into a general, Executive-directed action, as was the ban on Dutch Ships, and apart from a ship or two it remained a paper resolution only.

But what did Chin Peng tell Ted Roach, on a steamy day in Singapore, when Ted finally took a rickshaw marathon — he refused to ride in them at first — to meet the famous World War II resistance leader? He issued the interview as WWF Circular ER No.44, 3.7.1947. It included a circular letter "to all Branches and all major Unions" to send protests pyramiding up to the ACTU with two aims:

1. *To demand an immediate legality of the Malayan Trade Unions and the Pan Malayan Federation of Trade Unions;*
2. *To make a declaration directed towards assisting the Malayan Labour Movement.*[13]

Here are some points from Ted's Report on the interview with Chin Peng:

The growth of Malayan Trade Union organisations, new and old, has developed to the point where on October 25, 1945, the 'Singapore General Labourers' Union' of various Nationalities and Professions was formed. The name changed from 'Pan Malayan General Labourers' Union' to 'Pan Malayan Federation of Unions'. In the whole of Malaya there were 12 State Federations of Trade Unions, with about 500,000 members, and a further million members possible. Since war's end to December 1946, 627 strikes had occurred, affecting approx. 620,000 workers.[14] *The biggest strike was on 29 January 1946, against the British Military which attacked Trade Unions and 'anti-fascist organisations', raided their homes, and arrested anti-fascists on trumped up charges. In Singapore Harbour, Board Workers were shot and in Palak hunger strikers were also shot.*[15]

Japanese soldiers, prisoners of war, called *surrendered personnel*, were used to break strikes. The Malayan Labour Movement was growing stronger, resisting the British Army. So, Imperial tactics were changed: *The policy now appears to be to develop a series of splits within the Trade Union movement linked with their de-registration, and a policy of* ***procrastination*** *relating to applications for re-registration as a means to hamper, as much as possible, the development of the Trade Unions, on one hand, and enable those other Trade Unions which the Singapore people call 'Yellow Unions' to develop".*[16] (These were Sir [Henry] Harry Bland's[17] tactics in Australia - see chapter 19). *In November 1945 to 1 April 1946, the first phase ran its course during which time, six leaders of the Trade Union movement were banished to Kuo Ming Tang, China, the most prominent of whom was Lee Sing, the General Secretary of the Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions. These, along with four other cultural leaders were banished by the British Military Administration on April 1, 1946.*[18] *There were many Trade Union demonstrations on 15 February 1946 (the date of the Japanese occupation of Malaya was 15 February 1942). Terror tactics were used;*

workers were shot and gaoled by the military in every Malayan state. Ah Liang, the leader of the Communist Party, was gaoled for 18 months. Homes were searched, and material confiscated.[19] *Fong Choon Lay, President Perak of the Federation of Trade Unions, had £15,000 on his head.*

Tactics changed after 1 April 1946, which Chin Peng told Ted was "the end of the first phase". Two Labour advisers, Brazier and Garrett, were then sent from England to promote 'reformist organisation'. Garrett resigned in Singapore. On 24 May 1946, the Government declared the 'Societies' Ordinance', which meant that all existing Unions were illegal. Trade Unions must be "non-political". "There must be no Trade Union demonstrations, nor shall Trade Unions convene, nor its members attend political meetings".[20] The British declared that "Malayan Trade Union leaders did not know enough" about Trade Union organisation. Four students were sent to the London School of Economics to learn "up-to-date methods of Trade Union leadership".[21] A 'Labour Board', weighted against the Unions, was appointed to deal with workers' wages and conditions. Unions must apply to the 'all-powerful registrar' to register their Union, and "out of 75 Unions in Singapore, only 30 have yet obtained registration".[22] Long delays were used as a tactic. "The registrar can de-register any Union for any political activities, and members of Unions are liable to a fine of $100 to $500 (1946) for any considered offence".[23] The final paragraph in Ted's Report was headed "WE MUST ASSIST": *the foregoing is a real indictment of the policy of the British Labour Government* ***who are prepared to sanction the cold-blooded, mass shooting of workers*** *— workers who went underground and into the jungles and fought the Japanese invaders, workers who suffered all the tortures, members of their families being buried alive, because of their activities, whilst the people who are carrying out this reign of terror, and murder, as part of Bevin's Socialism, fled to the security of Australia and elsewhere,* ***and are now resorting to all these frightful and unscrupulous measures to smash that heroic and irresistible fighting spirit*** *that was expressed against the Japanese, in the jungles of Malaya, and in the underground of the cities.*[24]

On 3 July 1950, a SECRET ASIO report noted:

1. "Subject (Ted Roach) arrived in Hobart, on the 23 June at 4.50 p.m., and departed for Sydney on the 26 June, 1950.
2. Apparently by pre-arrangement, he met George Chenery (T.P.F. 195) known Communist, and J. Lonergan (T.P.F. 337) near Gibsons Limited, in Morrison St., at 5.30 pm.
3. During his visit, he is said to have stated, that he was determined that there would be no troops, or ammunition, leave Australia by ship for the Capitalists' War in Malaya".[25]

TED ROACH LEGS UP RICHARD KIRBY,1947

Kirby only became a judge of the Arbitration Court because of me. Kirby was sent by Doctor Evatt to observe the Lingaddjarti discussions in Djokjakarta. He stopped with Sjarifuddin[26]*, the Republican Deputy Prime Minister, and Minister for Defence. Sjarifuddin was telling me about Kirby being over there.* When Ted came back to Sydney, through Singapore, the Government had legislated to create the Stevedoring Industry Board. It could only be launched under the chairmanship of either a Judge or a Commissioner. Jim Healy had already approached Judges Foster, Barry and Taylor. He was on a first name basis with them all but they didn't want the job. The Lush[27] embezzlement case was on in the District Court and Richard Kirby was the Judge. *I'd met Dick in chambers after the Court had finished, and it was "Dick" and "Ted" because I'd known him for a long while.* Ted and Wyck Roach used to meet Mr and Mrs Kirby, and their children, at the Coaltrimmers' Speers Point Annual picnic in Newcastle. *His kids called me Mr Roach.*

The Wharfies' Federal Executive suggested that Ted see Judge Kirby. Ted had a box of cigars from Indonesia and he said: *I'll say Sjarifuddin sent them, and ask Dick if he's interested in becoming a Justice of the Federal Court. I go over and see Dick in chambers … so I said: "What are you getting now, Dick? About two-and-a-half 'grand'?*[28] *This is pounds — that was big money in those days. "Well, this new job is worth four grand, with all the prestige. Are you interested, Dick?""Oh, yes, Ted, I'm very interested. Do you think you can sell it to the employers?" I said: "We can sell it all right." "But, Ted, can you handle your boys?" "Yes, we can handle our boys, no doubt about that." "Come back and see me in chambers,*

any time, Ted." He meant the judges' chambers — that's where they had the whiskey in there. We proceeded from there, and we sold it, and Dick Kirby became a Justice of the Arbitration Court. Within a few years he handed me over to his three 'brothers', Judges Dunphy, Wright, and Foster, on three charges of contempt (of court).

URANGAN – "A BIT OF RAFFERTY"

In her book "Wharfies"[29], Margo Beasley shows the bad conditions for Wharfies at Urangan Port in Queensland, near Fraser Island. But who fixed up these conditions? Up until now, Ted Roach has been 'Comrade X', or the Holy Ghost of Wharfie History. Roach was the Union Organiser, he did the organising, and Ted Roach fixed up Urangan: *Urangan? This is what happened. Sugar on the floor, molasses all over the floor. The place was like a shithouse. Four toilets like this, no covers on them. The Wharfies sit here, with their knees in between the other bloke's knees! A bloke's had his leg off. They've dressed him there, and there's his blood mixed up with the molasses, and spread all over the bloody floor! This was their living quarters! I said: "Have a look at this!" I called a photographer down from Maryborough, and I said, "I want photographs of all of this!"[30] I hit the press with it; I hit the newspaper. I went to Brisbane, and I saw the top blokes and in no time, they built a magnificent amenities building on the end of the wharf. When I first went to Urangan, I couldn't get a meeting. Lang, the Union agent, wouldn't give me a meeting. I said I want a meeting by tonight, and I said bit of 'Rafferty'[31] here, we used a bit of Rafferty, now and then. I said: "By the authority invested in me by the Federal Executive, that is by the authority of Jesus Christ, I hereby transfer the Branch's charter from Maryborough to Urangan". Most of the work was at Urangan. They might do a coke boat, when it came into Maryborough. Urangan, this was the type of thing I had to do, all the time.*

FEET IN THE ROSIN[32], 1947

In 1940, Arthur Finlay accepted 'a promise' from Judge George Stephenson Beeby before he brought down the Wharfies' Interim Award in 1941. But the Chief Judge did not keep his 'undertaking' and Finlay said: "I think we are entitled to expect more honourable treatment from a man holding such an exalted position as the Chief Judge. He definitely **promised** us certain concessions in chambers, if we would give an undertaking to do our utmost to keep ships moving. **After receiving that undertaking, he breaks faith with us** and does not give the things he promised".[33] Judge Beeby had even helped Arthur Finlay write the resolution, which Judge Beeby was, later, to repudiate! Bagmen, soldiers, Wharfies, all knew that 'assurances' and 'promises' were throw away lines from politicians and silk-tongued 'mouth-pieces'. The post World War II period was a time when Wharfies were being given more and more promises and assurances and apart from a few 'cream shifts', still had light pay packets, no security, no pension and casual status. In June 1945, Jim Healy told Council: "The Log of Claims, dealt with partly by the Interim Award of 1941, still remains to be dealt with. The Chief Judge has promised that he will set a date apart this year to deal with it".[34] In May 1946, McAlees (Wallaroo) and Young (Sydney) moved: "that Council declares in favour of Industry Pensions for members over the 60 years, and directs that a further claim be lodged with the SIC".[35]

In January 1947, the General Secretary brought **promises** back from PM Chifley after "a conference with a Sub-Committee of Cabinet".[36] References by Jim Healy to Sub-Committees of the ALP Cabinet, impressed some of the WWF Executive, the ALP members, but they did not impress Ted Roach. Ted was increasingly frustrated with the lack of progress of Wharfie demands, for example industry pensions for Wharfie veterans. At the WWF Federal Council on 14 April 1947, Roach and Waugh (Geelong) moved:

> *Having viewed all the facts covering both matters, this Federal Council of the WWF now says to the Government, and the employer, we have, during the war period, discharged our obligation to the Government, and the industry, and, in return, we expect*

just recognition of our claims, which has so often been agreed to, in principle, and unless some indication is given by Friday (17 January) of this week, that satisfaction will be given to our Federation, on these two vital issues, the Federal Council will immediately proceed to ***fix a date****, on which* ***work shall cease*** *on the Australian waterfront, and fix the date, on which all* ***overtime work shall cease*** *on the Australian waterfront.*[37]

This is Part 1 of a foolscap-sized motion. Note that it is not a decision to stop work, but to "set a date". This was Ted's formula, used time and time again, when battling for workers' rights. It is Roach who is pushing the militant line. The Wharfies' Federal Executive (five to seven members) were not all left-wing militants, let alone Communist militants. Healy and Roach had to fight ingrained conservatism all the way. If the 1938 Committee of Management were basically very conservative fob[38] and waistcoat men, the 1949 Executive were conscious Trade Unionists, who responded to successful, militant leadership. Some members of the Council, like leading Melbourne grouper Bert Clarke, were secretly but constantly organising with Harry Bland, Holt and ASIO to de-stabilise and oust Healy and Roach. Bland's 1952 catchall letter to Harold Holt, at this stage a Member of the House of Representatives, is written proof of this continuing SECRET collaboration (see chapter 19).

The new Stevedoring Industry Board (SIB), replacing the SIC, had got to 'the Bill stage' in Parliament, two for the employees, two for the Federation, and Judge Kirby, Chairman. Jim Healy reported that annual leave would commence from 1 July 1947 and then described[39] how Ben Chifley had 'touched' the Union for 4/- per man, per day, of the 16/- a day attendance money[40] awarded to Wharfies by Commissioner Don Morrison! Healy said: "We convinced Morrison, and I left the meeting with the document, signed and sealed at 16/-. I went down to Melbourne and called in to Canberra on the way down. Ben (Chifley) said: "Is the Government going to have to bear the cost?" To which I replied: "I do not know. I am not worried about who is paying". Ben said: "I do not care; that is my decision, it will be 12/-". "One of the mistakes of my life was (that) I did not want to embarrass the Government, at that time, and I accepted 12/- as not too bad."[41]

Jim had 'Benned' Chif, and Chif had 'Jimmed' 'Big' Jim, and Ben Chifley had 'touched' the Wharfies for 4/- a day, or 25 per cent of the attendance money, agreed to by Commissioner Don Morrison! I don't want to highlight any errors of Jim Healy, but this is an error costing Wharfies many thousands of pounds, 4/- a man a day in attendance money. Ted Roach as National Organiser around the Branches and Organiser of the Executive and Council had generated the attendance money campaign through the Branches — "pressure, organised pressure" — and 16/- was a big win. One of the General Secretary's jobs was to make up the document incorporating the claim, for the Court's assent. This was an ordinary, pro-forma, legal document, signed by a witness, often "K. Nicholas J.P.",[42] which Jim Healy presented to the court to be 'signed and sealed'. Articled clerks did this work in legal firms. The General Secretary's signature is on the documents but a lot of the organising work around the branches to achieve it was done by Ted Roach.

Ted doubted these Government 'assurances'. *The assurances sounded quite good but this is about the twentieth good assurance that delegates have had from PM, Cabinet, Sub-Cabinet and the rest in regard to attendance money and annual leave. Each one of these assurances that were given, gave our Council, and Executive delegations, the feeling that the matters were more or less in the bag, but on each of these occasions the result was the same. For my part, I say that the assurances are not satisfactory,* ***and the tactic of guerrilla warfare, by day stoppages, decided at quick notice each week, or fortnight****, should be carried out,* ***as indicated at Tuesday's discussion****, to ensure a continual focus of Government attention in these matters.*[43] Ted instructed delegates to the Wharfies' Federal Council meeting of January 1947 in *many and varied forms of direct action*. These discussions, almost secret and not transcribed, were the continuing schools of 'direct action' tactics run by Ted. Did the General Secretary support this tactic? Unannounced, unauthorized stoppages were hated by Shipping Companies, the Government and the Courts. Were they agreed to, or even discussed, by the Communist Party? (Ted was not on the 42 person Central Committee). Ted is following his own line of reasoning and tactics. It is a line independent of the General Secretary.

Ted may have discussed these International Guerilla Warfare tactics at the Wharfies' Communist 'National Bureau', made up of Healy, Roach, Lockwood, Nelson and Dixon (or one other).

Jim Healy must have felt uneasy. Jim built friendly relations with Ben Chifley and his Ministers, and got on amicably with Sir Owen Dixon, from the Wool Board, Sir Thomas Gordon, and Judge Piper on the Stevedoring Industry Commission. He had already been "embarrassed" in front of them by Ted's tactics. "The Gen-Sec was very much embarrassed on the SIC when branches had acted on resolution carried, and the Federal Office had not been notified."[44] This was during action for 'uniform sling loads'. Ted had again issued 'hatch cards' to Wharfies, to record cargo tonnages and times. Albie Grahame said, "Our action was endorsed by the Federal Office", in other words, directed and endorsed, by the Assistant-General Secretary /National Organiser, Ted Roach. Roach's description of 'guerrilla tactics', the Industrial Guerilla Warfare of Port Kembla, will embarrass Jim more, for example the double dumps — direct action by branches after they had "rung the Federal Office" and spoken to Ted, the Organiser. He knew the Branches, knew the militant networks and the reliable ones. It was not a growing divergence between the tactics of the two men but a fundamental difference in tactics. Ted Roach's typically long resolution to the Wharfies' Federal Council continued: *Our 20,000 members in 55 branches are waiting for some action being determined by this Council to force the issue with the Government, and I think it is important that the whole of our membership be brought into participation in these stoppages directed against the employer, and by so doing,* ***lift the morale and raise the level of Trade Union consciousness of members and enormously strengthen Federation Organisation.*** *If this were done, it would be a very effective demonstration of our strength, to the employers, and the powers that be, as well as to bring home clearly to our members the value and strength of campaigns of this character.*[45]

Minutes of both the Federation Council and Executive show the clever, controlled militancy and sound political reasoning of Ted Roach. They show his sound grasp of Marxist theory and about the role of organisation, which was Lenin's number one plank — organisation, organisation, organisation. And by achieving discipline and organisation, be able to assist a branch, or branches, "at short notice" to take an effective type of action. Perhaps his sincerity made him seem simplistic; perhaps, the ardour of his feelings against injustice was hard for cynics and philistines; but it is Roach who is mounting the theoretical replies and arguments against the employers' offensive and who, on the election of Menzies, wants an industrial counter attack: *We would make it impossible for Menzies to govern.*

In December 1950, the basic wage decision that changed the Wharfies' 'divisor'[46] came down from Kirby J., the judges making a decision anticipated for years after 142 days of talking. As Acting General Secretary, Ted Roach would be left again to carry the can, do it well, be given a theatrical 'trial' whose details were missed by everyone, and then be driven manacled and at fast speed for a refresher course in "the University of Adversity"[47] in Long Bay Gaol, Malabar, Sydney.

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[1] 'Snipe' Aanensen, Melbourne Wharfie, "MW", 8.3.1947, p.5.

[2] "FCM", 3.5.1946, p.22.

[3] **Editors' note**: "… a longer is the full length of the bale…". "SMH", 14.5.1946, p.1.

[4] "FCM", 3.5.1946, p.23.

[5] "FCM", 25.6.1945.

[6] "FCM", the WWF Special Council Meeting was held on 23 November 1945, p.32.

[7] "SMH", 13.10.1947.

[8] Gibson, Ralph. A 663O178/1/95-54/3O2/134, p.175. (title page torn off). Ted Roach printed his declaration "No Ships for Malaya" in the "MW". ASIO called this "an anti-British trend" ASIO 4.8.1947, R/1/48, Vol/1 29 Malaya.

[9] At least Ted was told he was meeting Chin Peng, the Malayan resistance leader. The quality, detail and political analysis of the interview in Singapore in May 1947 indicates that the person was either Chin Peng, or one of his top Committee members.

[10] "FEM", 10.5.1947.

[11] See chapter 10.

[12] Tom Wright, "CR", November 1949, p.335.

[13] N 114/190, 24.11.1947.

[14] "WWF Circular", ER, No.44, 3.7.1947, (A 6119/79 1212, no.26).

[15] Ibid., no.25, p.3, 9 nos.24 & 25.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Sir Henry 'Harry' Bland, Secretary, Department of Labour.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid., no.24, p.4.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid., pp.4-5.

[23] Ibid., pp.4-5.

[24] "WWF Circular", E.R. No.44, A 6119/79 1212 no.23, p.5; nos 27 & 28.

[25] Ibid., no.26.

[26] "An Honoured Visitor — Judge Kirby will arrive at Djokjakarta on 16.7.1946 to pay a visit to the Republican Minister for Defence, Amir Sharifuddin, who said: "Indonesians owe a debt of honour to the Australian people, who have given them support in Indonesia's struggle for freedom", Radio News from Indonesia, issued by Indonesian Independence Committee Melbourne, July 1946.

[27] In June 1947 Judge Richard Kirby was "appointed a Royal Commissioner to inquire into and report on land sales control administration" including "The transactions specified by Frederick Alan Lush in his letter of May 23 to the Prime- Minister". "Sydney Morning Herald", 14 June 1947 http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article18030436. Lush was eventually found guilty of "misconduct and wrong-doing". "Goulburn Evening Post", 26 September 1947. http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article103326366

[28] "Grand" — one thousand pounds.

[29] Beasley, M. "Wharfies: the history of the Waterside Workers' Federation", Sydney: Halstead Press, 1996, p.126.

[30] These are the Urangan photos in the MUA files.

[31] 'Rafferty's Rules' i.e. no rules at all. One's own rules, not 'by the book' (in boxing) the opposite to "Queensberry Rules" which were the standard rules of boxing.

[32] **Editors' note**: dancers often dipped their shoes in a box of powdered 'rosin' (made from plant resin) to stop their feet slipping on dance floors. Boxers did the same when preparing for a fight.

[33] "MW", 12.7.1941, p.1.

[34] "FCM", 21.6.1945, p.22.

[35] "FCM", 21.5.1946, p.43.

[36] "FCM", 1.7.1947, p.5; "FCM", 13.1.1947, p.11.

[37] "FCM", 14.4.1947, p.4.

[38] fob: a large pocket-watch which goes on a chain in a waist-coat pocket.

[39] "FCM", 16.1.1947, p.14.

[40] **Editors' note**: "Attendance money of 12/- a day is paid to waterside workers who are not picked up, to ensure the attendance of sufficient labor." "The Sun", 24.7.1941, p.1.

[41] "FCM" (retold again by the Gen-Sec) 2.5.1949, p.32.

[42] "K. Nicholas" — It looks like a "K".

[43] "FCM", 16.1.1947, p. 14

[44] Beitz. "Special FCM", 21.11.1945, p.18.

[45] "FCM", 16.1.1947, p.114.

[46] A divisor was used to calculate hourly rates. March 1953: "Divisor altered once again to 30 hours instead of 32 making the hourly rate eight shillings and tenpence." Nelson, Tom. "The Hungry Mile", Waterside Workers Federation of Australia booklet, Forest Lodge: Newsletter Printery, June 1957.

[47] James Larkin, when asked if he was a graduate of Dublin College, replied: "I am a graduate of the school of adversity". See Larkin, Emmet. "James Larkin, Irish Labour Leader 1876-1947", Nel Mentor (ed.), London: Routledge, 1965.

Chapter 13
ROACH DOES "MOST OF THE CORRESPONDENCE": LEADERSHIP IN 1948

By 1948 the Federal Executive of the Wharfies comprised five, six or seven men including Healy, Roach, Nelson, Young (Sydney), Grahame (Brisbane) and Keating (Newcastle). Ted's attendance record at these Wharfie Executive meetings, which he organised, was second to none: for example, 14 out of 16 meetings in 1948; 11 out of 12 meetings in 1949.[1] Ted played a leading role at these Executive Meetings, pushing action policies based on effective ways of waging the class struggle. It is written down, in black and white, in the Wharfies' Executive and Council minutes. The Executive issued directions to the Wharfie Branches including telegrams and urgent telegrams from Ted "directing" the Branch to take certain action. For example, on 9 March 1948, the Executive resolved that "a levy of 5/- on all members be struck, such levy to operate, as from the first pay day, in each pay day, after March 7th" (moved Roach/seconded Mullins).[2] This levy was for Queensland members, striking in solidarity with other Queensland Unions. Present were Barrett (ALP), Young (ALP), Nelson, Mullins (ALP), Healy and Roach. Barney Mullins (ALP) was the President of Sydney Branch. There was no pussy-footing around. It was the Union policy and branches were directed to carry it out. It is instructive to read the signature on the directing telegram of either the General Secretary, Healy, or the Organiser, Roach. Ted's telegrams, which he composed, are succinct and, usually, crystal clear. Healy resolved: "That 50,000 strike levy receipts be printed", (Roach/Young). By 30 March 1948, strike relief to Queensland members was about eighteen thousand 'quid' which is a credit to the Executive, to Jim Healy and the Organiser, Ted Roach.[3]

This WWF Executive was a very powerful grouping. The man who was directed by that Executive to carry out Executive decisions and convey those policy directions to Branches was Ted Roach, the National Organiser and Assistant-General Secretary of the Union. It's down there in black and white. Roach himself could not understand why people doubted his word. Fremantle's Paddy Troy wrote to Ted in 1962, and asked him to outline what he'd done in the Union. Ted didn't know that the whispers were licking round the coast of Australia and he was being slandered. Ted sent an eight-page letter to Paddy in 1962 detailing his achievements.[4] About ten years before this, Wharfie A. McVeigh's letter was published in "The Maritime Worker"[5], exposing the smearing of Paddy Troy, himself, just as the Organiser, Ted Roach, had been smeared.

In 1948, Jim Healy started discussions about the Government's proposed change from the Stevedoring Industry Commission to a new body, the Stevedoring Industry Board. On 26 October 1948, Healy and Roach were elected to the SIB by the Wharfies Federal Council. At the Council meeting, 'Dutchy' Young asked why the AGS/Organiser, Ted Roach, should be spending time at the Commission. The report, in the Minutes, is in this stilted, third person, passive voice. Jim Healy: "Dealt with changed position. Previously the work of the Federation was conducted in the Court and the Commission. Now all business is done in the Commission. Procedure followed was that if both he and the AGS (Ted Roach, also National Organiser) were in town, both attended the Commission. Dealt with need for continuity to be maintained, and officers to be familiar with items dealt with by the Commission, as far as possible." One of the benefits of this was that "as most of the correspondence was dealt with by Mr Roach, he would be familiar with happenings on the SIC, which assisted him, in dealing with the correspondence. The alternative would be for everything to go to him (Healy), as General Secretary." Jim Healy continued and said: "Mr Roach is closer to the men. Dealt with procedure re preparation of cases to be placed before the Commission, which duty devolved on him, (Jim Healy)." The SIC deputy for Jim Healy was Jack Lonergan, and for Ted Roach was Dutchy Young.[6]

AGS-Organiser Ted Roach considered his appointment important because of his knowledge of Branches. When the Commission did meet, his absence from the office was about four hours in a day, and the Commission would meet about a day or a day-and-a-half a week. He said it did not make any difference to him personally if he was on the Commission or not, but thought it would make a difference to the Federation. He handled most of the material from Branches and as a consequence was able to look after the Branches better than somebody who did not know anything about the problems of the Branches from day to day.[7] It was Ted Roach's job to set up the National Organisation of the Wharfies, so naturally he was in

constant contact with the Branches, and handled most of the correspondence. The organisation was not there until Roach was elected in 1942 and set about organising the WWF, link-by-link, around Australia. He is not a correspondence clerk. He is the National Organiser.

Death of Spider Roach

"The Maritime Worker" of 14 August 1948, announced the death of Ted's brother, Harold Spider Roach in Brisbane. Born in 1915, Spider was only 33 when he died. The Wharfies' fortnightly paper said: "It is with regret that we announced the death of Spider Roach. He was well known in sporting circles, having held the title of featherweight champion of Australia. On NSW and QLD waterfronts, he was well known. He was a staunch fighter for unionism and was a lovable character who was well liked and respected wherever he went."[8]

SHIPPING AND FUEL TOP BRASS MEET, 1948

In 1948 Ted declared that he would stop all ships of war going to Malaya. But this could not be 'Dutch Ships' over again. Empire shipping organisations met at the Commonwealth Conference in London (October 1948) and ANZAM[9] was formed at this Conference. Though the Australian Labor Government did not send troops to Malaya, they helped to lay the foundation for their intervention in 1954. In Sydney, Jim Healy went to a top brass shipping and fuel meeting on 18 October 1948. Jim told the Wharfies' Federal Council that "he had attended a Conference presided over by Senator Ashley, at which were represented the SIC (Kirby J.), the Directorate of Shipping, the Secondary Industries Division and the Department of Shipping and Fuel".[10] "There were more ship owners there than I've ever seen", Jim said.[11] The author has not seen the minutes for this meeting, nor any detailed reports. Jim Healy did not make such reports and, as far as the author can see, did not inform the Wharfies' Executive or Council of the details of this important meeting. The SIC Minutes for 1948 were "not published"[12] according to Jim Healy. My guess is that the top brass gave Ted Roach a good 'roasting'. They would not only want an end to the Dutch Ships Dispute, but also a guarantee that Roach would not be allowed to carry out his threat to stop all ships of war going to Malaya. The ban would assist the Malayans and Chinese Malayans in resisting the post World War II re-occupation of their country by the British Empire's tin, rubber, timber, real estate, casino, and political interests.

During 1948-1949, Jim Healy tried to warn Ted Roach about an increasing concentration on Ted's statements by judges and politicians. Jim Healy said: "I used very careful words. You know the way they (the judges) 'goggle' over words".[13] Again, talking to Chifley, Chifley said to Healy that you must "watch your p's and q's when talking to judges".[14] But Chifley also reassured Jim Healy, saying, "you (Healy) know how to take the edge off them".[15] Adding fuel to Ted's frustration were other comments by Jim Healy: "At any time anybody wanted a 'stop work' called off, I have been the first person contacted; quite often I have had to ring Branches up and ask would they do this or that to meet either the wishes of the Commission or the Minister".[16]

Ted referred to times when he had been to a Branch, organised an appropriate action over demands and it was cancelled by Jim Healy, which was Jim Healy's prerogative. Healy's statements are almost mysterious, for example, "as I have discussed with many chairmen off the record",[17] or "I was (Judge) Kirby's protector, to some extent",[18] or "I spoke to certain people, and got certain assurances".[19] The reason for emphasising these vague and unsatisfactory statements, often made by Jim Healy to the Wharfies' Executive or Wharfies' Council, is to underline their effect on Ted Roach who was out on the job, doing the hard yards, organising and facing the flak. One of the effects was to make Ted more determined to carry out his members' wishes and decisions. The other was to increase his resentment against Jim Healy, who was the sole reporter on Wharfie matters to the Central Committee of the Communist Party. This CC-CPA, "the most conscious section of the most politically conscious vanguard of the industrial working class",[20] didn't seem to know much about Ted Roach. For example, in CC-CPA records, rescued from being dumped in a Council tip, four documents are listed from the *Dalfram* Dispute. Two have survived, and neither mentions Ted Roach.[21] Another effect was to make Ted more 'moody'. Jim Healy refers to this, when he

says: “He, the Gen-Sec, was not a moody person and not unapproachable, not given to hostility to people, but generally mixed with all kinds of people; but if he went to a port he did not expect to be required to go looking for officials and did not propose to”.[22] According to Ronnie Maxwell, at one time Ted Roach refused to talk to Jim Healy. Yet despite the General Secretary’s vague warnings, Ted Roach did not tone down his militancy or his determined organisation of Wharfie Councillors and branches to take *many and varied forms of direct action*. In 1950, Ted would ‘up the ante’ once again.

JACK CURTIN’S TOWNSVILLE TELEGRAM ABOUT GAOLINGS, AUGUST 1948

On 5 August 1948, Jack Curtin[23], the Secretary of the Wharfies Townsville Branch, sent this telegram to (Ned) Hanlon (Queensland Premier) and (Bill) Ashley (Minister, Canberra):[24] “URGENT Four hundred and fifty Townsville watersiders this morning unanimously condemned your Government’s action in imprisoning Ted Englart, Albie Graham, Mick Healey, all Brisbane WWF, and E. Elser, and Max Julius (lawyer) for carrying out finest traditions of Trade Unionism, and spontaneously **decided to immediately cease work until such time as all men are released, and all ports, pending action for breaches of anti-picketing laws, are put on the alert while the Federal Executive of the WWF outlines a campaign of action, for the above purpose”.** Jack Curtin’s resolution is a typical ‘Roach’ resolution — key words “unanimously”, “spontaneously”, “immediately” and the phrase “until such time as all men are released”, in other words an indefinite stoppage. From 1942, Ted taught the branches to take basic forms of protest action such as writing telegrams to politicians. *The branches were well trained. Our word was Law, not Law, but taken by them as the Law. Jim Healy did all the work in Sydney, with Nelson. We developed it in other branches. I did it. I was the Organiser.*

This motion for action read out on Thursday 5 August 1948, was a nodal point in the years before Ted’s second gaoling. Wharfies’ consciousness was built up over a long period of time. In 1947-1950, resolutions about the gaoling of Union officials were common because gaolings were common. Jack Curtin’s resolution describing immediate, locally inspired action pointed to the crescendo of protest and action which erupted again when Ted was (illegally) gaoled on Thursday 1 March 1951 (see chapter 17).

“STRENGTHEN THE PARTY”

The National Bureau, or National Wharfie Communist Committee consisted of Healy, Roach, Nelson and one other, Dixon or Lockwood. They discussed the main line of attack or retreat and the tactics to be employed. Even with his “deep grievance” against the CPA, Ted attended these meetings and made his good as gold contribution. *I always spoke after Healy at the National Committee meetings. I didn’t want to place the ball for him. I used to get into Lockwood and Healy at these meetings*.

Published by the Australian Communist Party in August, 1948, the booklet “Strengthen the Party” laid out four main headings: “The Ideological Struggle”, “Training and Promotion of Cadres”, “Factory Organisation” and “Branch Publicity”. The booklet was based on “the conclusions drawn and tasks set by the Communist Party of France” (foreword) because they were held to “apply with particular force” to the problems facing the Australian Communist Party.

Attached is a very exciting reading list:

“On Problems of Organisational Leadership” (Stalin);
“Cadres Decide Everything” (Stalin);
“Selection, Promotion and Allocation of Cadres” (Stalin);
“On Practical Work” (Stalin);
“Party Training and Inner Party Democracy” (Kaganovich);
“On Cadres” (Dimitrov).

Apparently, the immensely experienced and cultured French Communists did not have any theoreticians of their own. It is notable that Georgi Dimitrov, who in 1936 corrected the insane Stalinist line of fighting “Social Fascism” (i.e. fighting the Social Democrats up to 1933 in Germany, which sank the Communist

Party's hope of uniting all German working-class, and anti-Nazi forces, against Hitler and the Nazi Party) is given "little boy" status at the bottom of the list, under the Georgian Genius, Joseph Vissarionovich Djugashvili. It is also notable that Paris, France, was the home of the World Federation of Trade Unions, of which Australia's Iron Workers leader, Ernie Thornton, mortal enemy of 'Roach', was a Vice-President. As far as "problems of organisational leadership" were concerned, Ted Roach had begun solving them on the track, in Newcastle, and in Port Kembla, and had been applying them to extending the membership and united fighting power of the Wharfies since 1942.

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[1] Ted Roach was on leave for the 18 February 1949 meeting and gaoled for six weeks during the 1949 coal strike (see chapter 15).

[2] "FEM", 9.3.1948.

[3] Mr E. (Ted) Englart, Secretary Brisbane Branch, was fined one hundred pounds during the Queensland Railway Strike and refused to pay the fines. On 30 April 1948 it was resolved: "that this Executive note, with concern, the court decision re Mr E. Englart, Brisbane Branch Secretary of the WWF. We record our protest against the vicious action of the Queensland Government in this matter, and request the General Secretary to draw the attention of the Prime Minister to the fact that if any member of the Federation is gaoled arising out of the Queensland dispute, the Federation will not be responsible for the continuation of shipping, to and from, Queensland ports." "FEM", 30.4.1948, p.2.

[4] E.C.R./G.H. 22.8.1963, RA.

[5] McVeigh, A. "MW", 31.1.1953.

[6] 'Dutchy' Young, Sydney Branch; Jack Lonergan, Hobart. Ted told the story that at one *WWF Council meeting, Jack Lonergan said: "I've sat here all day, and I've been castrated and I've been castrated (he meant "castigated"), and now I'm gonna do a bit of castraten' of me own." Albie Graham opened up his pocketknife and passed it up the table. Brought the house down!*

[7] "FCM", 26.10.1948, pp.174-175.

[8] "MW", 14.8.1948.

[9] **Editors' note**: As early as 1949, Australia, Britain and New Zealand had reached an agreement, known as ANZAM — Australia, New Zealand and Malaya — which provided for Commonwealth defence planning in the region. Dr Sally Wood, "60 Years: Australia in Malaysia, 1955-2015", Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Commonwealth of Australia, 2015.

[10] Healy, J. "FCM", 18.10.1948, p.76.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Healy, J. "FEM", 22.4.1949, N 114/146 No.74.

[13] Healy, J. "FCM", 11.5.1949, p.367.

[14] Healy, J. "FCM", 2.5.1949, pp.12, 15, 25, 29.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Healy, J. "FCM", 10.5.1949, p.340.

[20] CPA's theoretical description of CC-CPA leaders.

[21] CC-CPA records.

[22] Healy, J. "FCM", 11.11.1949, p.101.

[23] Jack Curtin, Secretary Wharfies' Townsville Queensland Branch.

[24] "FEM", 5.8.1948, p.2.

Chapter 14
IT'S ON!: TED ROACH CHASES MELBOURNE GROUPERS, 1949

The Federal Council minutes of 11 May 1949 record a concentrated attack on Ted Roach from Melbourne and criticism from Sydney and other branches. Ted attended a Melbourne stop work meeting on 22 June 1948. The stop was from midnight to 1 p.m. Jim Healy, after negotiations with the Melbourne WEC, asked Branches to finish their meetings at 1 p.m. In Melbourne, after one hour, Ted Roach said: *If insufficient time is at your disposal, it is in the hands of members to decide when you are going to complete your business.*[1] In a well-planned provocation, the "Grouper" 'Gus' Alford said to Council: "The actual words you addressed are: you members are the ones to say whether this meeting is going to go for four hours, or whether it is going to go for 24-hours. It is up to you, to make up your minds, and nobody else. You are the ones who are going to say how long the meeting goes".[2] Gus then moved a censure motion against Ted Roach. V. G. Alford was the "verballer" of Ted, for Bland, ASIO, and the Government. Ted replied: *"I say that is a deliberate and premeditated lie; there is Mr Beitz, Mr Clarke, Mr Skinner — before proceeding, I ask the other delegates to substantiate those words or not"*.[3] Gus Alford's attack was supported by Groupers Clarke, Skinner and Jack Beitz. Webber (Newcastle), Clyde Black (Fremantle), and Young, Barrett and Nelson, (Sydney), criticised Ted for what they said was disobeying the General Secretary's agreed time formula. Ford, Graham, and Keating supported Ted. 'Nipper' Ford said: "I think the words used by Mr Roach, or the construction put on his statement, is one of interpretation, and each one who has contributed has a different interpretation. I say Ted Roach is the only person competent to interpret his own remarks".[4] But Bill Keating said: "I will agree he was indiscreet, very indiscreet, in counseling members, if he did, to disregard advice of the General Secretary".[5] Ted had been disobeying the Wharfies' COM since 1937 and remarks of Wharfie Councillors show there was a feeling that Roach should be reined in. Yet in 1950, Ted would give the Council more examples of his tried and tested ability to organise novel industrial action and 'enforce' the will of the Federation on the employers.

SYDNEY DOMAIN MEETING, MAY 1949

Another SECRET report covers a protest meeting by Wharfies' Sydney Branch Executive, in the Sydney Domain, at 2.50 pm, 8 May 1949. Justice Kirby, 'legged up' by Ted Roach, had started to lead the overt legal campaign against the Wharfies. He said Healy and Roach must stop giving "counsels of disobedience" to both Kirby's instructions and orders from the Stevedoring Industry Commission. The two-and-a-half page SECRET report from 'Inquiry Officer' and 'Technical/Assistant, Inquiry Officer' — their names blackened out with a thick, black felt pen — recorded statements by Trade Union leaders at the Domain Rally which 'defy' Kirby and the Commission and which will be used as evidence against them in the future. Climbing onto the 'stump'[6] in the Domain, Ted made his position unequivocally, clear: *"I am prepared to procure stoppages, and I am prepared to go out anywhere, and everywhere to counsel disobedience and bring to bear all the industrial strength that I can marshal in the interests of the lives and conditions of the working class"*.[7]

Any evidence linking speakers like Ted Roach with membership of the CPA was recorded in preparation for Menzies' Red Bill of 1951. This evidence could be used to 'declare' them as Communists and gaol them. Again, confirming Roach's caution about informers and spies, the SECRET ASIO report said: "Healy, whilst in conversation with an informant, stated that the Communist Party had decided to disband its meeting for the day in order that Party members could attend the protest meeting". In other words, Jim Healy was unaware that the person he spoke to was an "informant" of ASIO. Film of this 8 May 1949 meeting at Sydney's Domain, is shown in History documentaries but without accurate narrative. The meeting was provoked by notorious enforcers, the '21 Division'[8] of Sydney Police. The Wharfies, well prepared and anticipating the provocation, successfully defended the speaker's 'stump' from the concentrated violence of the police attack.

1949 – IT'S ON!

"I have heard Mr Healy eulogised here, but I have never heard one man speak of what Mr Roach has done.
In my opinion Mr Roach is equally deserving of praise."
Wharfie Federal Councillor, McCready. (Sydney)[9]

The Wharfies' Federal Council Minutes of 1949 underscore the militant line, the class struggle line, pursued relentlessly by Ted Roach, and his capacity to put this concept into words for Australian workers. Ted's style of speaking was made up of long principal clauses, joined by simple conjunctions. It is a deceptive style and requires concentration. But within the context of his style of expression there is a core of meaning, and at times profound meaning, which has escaped researchers. Delivering the General Secretary's report on 2 May 1949, Jim Healy said that in trying not to embarrass the Chifley Labor Government, he had called off action to enforce WWF employment preference inside the wharf gates. And then he was "subjected to a great deal of criticism in doing it".[10] The Chifley Government "assured" him they were going "to pass an Act" on the recommendation of Judge Foster, providing for "one union in the industry". So Judge Kirby said prepare a case for the Court, and you will probably get what you want. Jim Healy continued: "Well, I fell for that, and became the plaintiff in the case. We were wrongly advised by our legal advisers, who said we had a good case. As we read the Act, there could be only one Union doing stevedoring operations. The result, however, is that the position under the Act is now most uncertain".[11] In other words, the Federation had gone on a wild goose chase after a wig and gown. Such zero results fuelled Ted's intense frustration with the lack of progress of Wharfies' long-incubating claims for permanency and industrial pensions.

The years 1947 to 1951 saw many Union officials gaoled. Ironworkers' leader, Jack McPhillips (CPA), was gaoled for "contempt of court", and the WWF Executive directed Wharfie branches to stop work in protest. This and the stoppage over Lance Sharkey's (CPA) gaoling, one of many, carefully-contrived ASIO provocations, magnetised opposition to Healy and Roach among WWF Branches in Melbourne, Adelaide, Newcastle, and Fremantle. The Groupers came out in full cry attacking Healy, Roach and the Wharfie leadership for 'bringing politics' into the Union. Gus Alford, leader of the Melbourne Groupers, delivered many marathon semi-monologues at WWF Council meetings. Alford stood against Jim Healy in the Federal WWF Elections, and Melbourne Grouper, Tom Healy, stood against Ted Roach. The Industrial Groupers were carrying out the secret policies of ASIO, Harry Bland, and the Menzies Government, expanding the work of Chifley-Evatt.

On Saturday 10 April 1949, Kirby J. sent a letter to each Wharfie telling them to ignore the WWF Executive's direction to stop work for 24-hours over the gaoling of Communists Jack McPhillips (Ironworkers) and Lance Sharkey (Secretary CPA). Kirby signed the letter and it was posted to every Wharfie's address, like Beeby's letter to NSW coal miners in 1918. Kirby and Bland were working with and through the Melbourne Grouper Executive, and Grouper Bert Clarke had told Kirby that Melbourne would not obey the Federal Wharfies' Executive.[12] Ted wanted to ferret out the personal contacts between Judge Richard Kirby and the Melbourne Grouper leaders, and the Judge's ready-made job concessions to them, as part of the Spry-Bland-Menzies SECRET plan to split the Wharfies, behead the Federation and make it a 'tame cat' Union.

Judge Kirby met the Groupers in Chambers and gave them concessions which Healy and Roach could not get from months of discussions on the SIC or SIB. Unlike Judge Beeby's 1940 *promises, in his Chambers*, to Arthur Finlay (ALP), which he did not keep, Judge Kirby kept his promises to Grouper Bert Clarke in 1949, for example, the 'short shifts'.[13] The employers usually followed go-slow tactics when dealing with Wharfie Branch requests but *the employers supported the decision of the Judge* (Kirby J.) *on Melbourne short shifts. What I want to highlight is the collaboration that went on between some members of the Melbourne* (Wharfie Grouper) *Branch and the Judge. While the anti-Federation, anti-working-class campaign was raging in the* (Wharfies') *Federation and the press in each State was running leading articles and scorching headlines against the Federation, the General Secretary* (Jim Healy) *and myself, in the hope of splitting the Federation, the Melbourne Branch Executive lined up with Kirby, the newspapers, the employers and the rest of them against our Union and its members.*[14] Ted then asked how a private

matter mentioned at the Wharfies' Federal Council had got into Santamaria's expensively produced Melbourne paper "News Weekly".[15] Ever conscious of security, and pointing a finger at the Wharfie Councillors who were Groupers from Melbourne, Ted said there had to be a *reporter* on the Wharfies' Council.[16] Ted was penetrating Sir Harry Bland's tactics and strategy point by point, (see Bland's Secret letter, chapter 19). Ted watched their players move into position and had a fair idea which way the play was flowing. Ted appealed to the rank and file of the Melbourne Branch: *These activities are anti working-class; these acts constitute some treachery towards the members of the Melbourne Branch, by members of the Melbourne Executive.*

I WAS DUMBFOUNDED

Ted had conducted a wage claim for Melbourne Mechanical Branch, and Bert Clarke had agreed with Ted on the amount of the claim. *I asked Mr Clarke to open the discussion* (with Judge Foster), said Ted to the Wharfies' Federal Council. Bert had then said to Foster that the amount agreed, an hourly rate, was approximately £9 10s 0p a week. Foster J. then said: "That is not correct Mr Clarke, you agreed on £8 6s 0p. *Is that right?* Ted asked, and Foster J. said that it was. *I was dumbfounded!* Ted told the Wharfie Councillors. *I had no idea such discussions* (Clarke/Foster) *had taken place, and Mr Clarke did not tell me.* Bert's collaboration with Foster J. cost Melbourne Mechanical Branch members more than a pound a week![17] But Clarke told the Melbourne Wharfie Branch members that it was Ted Roach's fault that they only got £8 6s 0p! The smearing of Ted by the Right, and by the Left, continued.[18] Ted, who said he had discussed the issue with Melbourne Dockies' Secretary 'Doc' Doyle[19], then questioned Bert Clarke further: *You do agree, in our discussions, we decided the weekly rate was to be based on the hourly rate?* Mr Clarke: "I agree I opened my mouth too soon at the first discussion before the stoppage. On the question of discussions with shipping reps and incentive payments. It is true I have had off the record discussions." *You have had them with Strahan and Hetherington?*[20] Clarke: "Yes, that is true". *Which ship did you discuss with Kent Hughes?*[21] Clarke: "What I discussed with him - he rang me, actually, the discussions were around the proposition of the WWF Melbourne Branch, doing their own stevedoring of English and Indian coal".[22]

Debating the Melbourne Groupers censure motion, Ted Roach adopted a principled, common sense, Marxist analysis of the issue. Ted was targeting Melbourne's leader Bert Clarke in a fearless manner because there was an incisor-baring, threatening snarl, or sneer, in the Melbourne Wharfie Groupers' statements and unending attacks on Healy, Roach, the militants and the Communist Party. Roach's fearless pursuit of Clarke, fuelled with inside information from Melbourne Wharfies like Charley Young, wound up in 1953 in a full-scale examination of Melbourne Branch's financial records. Clarke, and the entire Grouper leadership, were sacked at a mass meeting by the Federal Executive over *a defalcation of funds*. (Ted Roach wouldn't say Bert Clarke 'stole' anything.) Ted's words at this Wharfies' Federal Council Meeting are recorded in the stilted, third person, and cut and censored. According to the Minutes, Ted said: *We must learn from the experiences of other countries in conducting our strikes.*[23] This important material, on how to wage industrial campaigns, appeared thus: *Dealt with the method of strike (sic) in France, Italy and other European countries, also America".*[24] Who didn't want these details of industrial tactics in the Waterside Workers Federation Council Minutes?

Ted said he was pleased that (Wharfie) *Councillors appeared seized with the necessity and importance of sinking political differences and developing trade union unity around the questions confronting the Federation.*[25] He said there was a crisis in Capitalism. *The Empire Prime Ministers had met in London 18 months ago to work out a plan to combat the crisis by attacking Trade Unions and Trade Unionists in the various Empire countries*. The gaoling of Sharkey (General Secretary CPA) and McPhillips was not 'isolated' but a part of worldwide re-action, attacking workers' conditions and promoting war.[26] Tactics included *gaoling of Unionists, freezing of Unions funds, Government-controlled Union ballots, and enlarging the Crimes Act.* Ted said that the 1949 ACTU Congress decisions were *anti working-class to the extreme.* The *steam roller was used* and *two provincial Labour Council delegates* couldn't get in, while *Weiner, a US Labour attaché* and one of the USA's, pre-CIA, Overseas Strategical Service (OSS) cadres

were *allowed in* to the ACTU Congress. John Foster Dulles, Ford, and Morgan were behind the OSS, Ted Roach said. 'Call Me Herb' Weiner had attended a Conference in Switzerland, with a team of US Labour Attaches. Albert Monk met Weiner in London, at their Unions' Conference, and *took copious notes*. Call Me Herb had attended the NSW Branch of the Railways Union conference. Ted's words were prophetic: *Weiner is a spy of the American Secret Service — we have to take note of this coupled with these developments.*[27]

Next, the Wharfies' Council discussed the ACTU move to withdraw from the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU). Ted exposed a spurious Albert Monk argument that "even the Trade Unions of Iceland, Luxemburg and Norway have withdrawn".[28] Ted said: *there are only a handful of Trade Unionists in all these countries.*[29] Like 'Ivo' Barrett, Ted felt that the 72 million Trade Unionists affiliated to the WFTU could say ***"there is going to be no war, and there will be no war".***[30] Ted wanted to continue to use Union muscle to stop wars and had already declared — *no ships for the war in Malaya*.

Ted also said that the Stevedoring Industry Commission *had outlived its usefulness for the Capitalists.* It had Unionists on it, it had served its purpose during the Second World War and now it had to go. The Government tried to split the Wharfies by saying Communists Healy and Roach did not want the Commission, and Judge Kirby's letter addressed to all Federation members appealed to their Labour Party loyalties. In New Zealand *the procedure was the same*. They tried to split off the members from the leaders by sending a personal appeal to every member of the NZ-Union, attacking leaders Toby Hill and Jock Barnes who were ***not Communists, but militant workers.***

RANK AND FILE PRESSURE

Restating his favourite theme, Ted noted *the vast difference* in wages and conditions between *strong unions and weak unions*. He said that the difference between strong Wharfie Branches and weak Wharfie branches depended on which ones mounted an industrial campaign. *The main thing in determining conditions is not advocacy in the Board, or the Court, which is loaded against us all the time, but the main thing is bringing our industrial strength to bear, laying the basis for a decision, and then using our ability to argue. If we learn to evaluate on a class basis, we will realise the Commission is a class instrument, the Board is a class instrument, and that so also is the Court. If we look to our strength to win conditions, then there can be no confusion. The* (Wharfie) *Branches that have good conditions are those who wage struggles on the job.*[31] Though these are basic, bread and butter Marxist ideas, no-one else on the Wharfies' Executive of six or seven men consistently stated and re-iterated them, as Ted Roach did. Perhaps he bored them to death, I don't know; but he is the one who hammers basic Marxist analysis all the time.

Ted's report in the Federal Council Minutes is weakened by re-editing into the third person. For example, in his trial before the Arbitration Court after the Coal Strike, he had to show cause why he should not be sentenced for contempt. He knew he was getting twelve months being the last sentenced. He had told Judge Foster that if *he allowed the Court or anyone else to interfere, we might as well close up shop because a Trade Union is a fighting and independent organisation of the workers.*[32] This is the stuff of drama and would make dramatic reading, in the first person, even with "we" or "our Federation" which Ted usually used. The sense, and impact, is further confused by the sequence of pronouns "he" and "we". These transcriptive twists, and the absence of punctuation, spoil other reports of Ted Roach preserved in the invaluable Minutes of the Wharfies' Executive, and the Wharfies' Council. Despite the re-edited "we" and "he", which make Ted sound semi-literate, his words are an impassioned plea about "bad laws" for example the Fund Freezing Legislation. *He would not accept a law brought down for the suppression of the workers; if we did this, the few democratic liberties we hold would soon be taken away from us. If the Eureka Miners had been prepared to accept the law, we would not have the democracy, and the Trade Unions we have today. Right through the ages, bad law has been challenged by the workers and always they have been successful in altering it and, often, in completely erasing it from the Statute books.*[33] These are important thoughts from Ted Roach on the eve of the fierce legal campaigns against the Communist Party, the Unions, and Australian Democracy. While Ted was denouncing bad laws, Judge Alf Foster was

also denouncing them, and warning about the tyranny and absolute powers of the Arbitration Court (see chapter 12).

When the two met again in court in March 1951, Alf was boss cocky judge and shuttled Ted off to solitary confinement in Long Bay Gaol, Sydney, in close to an Australian record time. The embarrassing 'trial' was later to be called "illegal", and "ultra vires" of the Court's powers.[34] But five years had passed by then, so Ted could not get any compensation, just as he didn't get any "Moscow gold":[35] *They must have buried the bastard too deep. I couldn't get my bloody hands on it*. Ted didn't quote Alf Foster on bad laws, but quoted Dr Evatt's book "Injustice within the law": *"unless trade unionists throughout the world are always ready to sacrifice their personal interests, their safety, or even their lives for the amelioration of the lot of the poor, their elaborate organisation may perish overnight, either in a holocaust of terror and force, or in the slower process of legal repression".*[36]

Ted appealed to the Wharfies Federal Council: *It is time we pulled up our socks and went out fighting. A lot of energy has been dissipated lately but let us put our energy into uniting and doing a better job for the Waterside Workers".*[37] Argument in court was good, but industrial strength was better: *We should not resort to only sending our complaints onto the Federal Office, and have Jim Healy argue them.* ***He will do a good job arguing about it, but he will do twice as good a job arguing, if you back up your demands with struggle before the case is argued****".*[38] Ted also welcomed Grouper Bert Clarke's desire to fight for better conditions in Melbourne. Ted would *go to Melbourne, spend weeks there if necessary visiting the jobs with the VO's,* bringing his experience to bear, *in waging campaigns to bring Melbourne up to some of the other ports".*[39] This sentence is a description of Ted's activities in ports around Australia since his **election** in August 1942, an event that until this book "Ted Roach, From Pig Iron Hero To Long Bay Gaol", never happened. Jesus Christ was made to appear, Ted Roach was made to disappear. Ted called the Groupers by their first name, fought their policies and disruption unceasingly, and tried to appeal to them as men and workers.

Ted dealt with the US steelworkers' strike at Bethlehem Steel Works, Pennsylvania, where they won a non-contributory pension scheme of eleven pounds a week at the age of 65. If against all odds US steelworkers could win such a pension, Ted argued, then Australian Wharfies could win a pension scheme, the eight-hour shift and so on. *If this Council is prepared to work out the general campaign, leaving details of the campaign to the Federal Office, we can concentrate our attack where it will hit hardest, and we can link up the local demands with the major demands, always having in the forefront, the improvement of the members' conditions.*[40]

At the May 1949 Council meeting, Ted was verbally attacked by WWF General-President Jack Beitz (ALP) of Adelaide. Beitz said Ted Roach's "torrent of abuse" against the Labour Party, in Melbourne, proved that Ted was "unfit" to be a WWF Executive Officer.[41] Ted criticised the right-wing of the ALP at stop work meetings believing he was carrying out the stated policy of the Communist Party. It wasn't popular, but he did it. His manner, too, could be combative, abrupt and uncompromising. Wyck Roach compared this style with "genial, jovial Jim Healy.[42] Healy remembered everyone and was very affable, friendly, sensitive, and courteous. 'How did your daughter get on?' he would say. I never heard anyone say a word against Jim Healy." But, Wyck said, "Ted was gruff, he'd forget their names, and hurt their egos."[43] Wharfie President Beitz's attack on Ted and the serious blunders of the CC-CPA under the stultifying influence of Stalinist dogma did not stop the Wharfies voting for Ted Roach. He was re-elected in 1949, Assistant-General Secretary/Organiser, and expressed "through the Councillors, his appreciation to the members, on his return as a National Officer of the Federation".[44]

POLITICAL GAOLINGS

Melbourne Branch didn't support the Wharfies' Executive's direction to stop work over hostage gaolings. But Sydney Branch, directed by the Executive, stopped 99 per cent over the gaoling of McPhillips, Doyle and Willis.[45] The split grew from the Wharfies' Executive's direction to branches to take action in solidarity with Lance Sharkey and Jack McPhillips, both Communists, who were gaoled.[46] McPhillips was

gaoled for saying: "I do not trust the (Arbitration Court) Judges"[47], and Sharkey for giving a string of principled answers about the Red Army entering Australia "in pursuit of an aggressor". He said Australian workers would support the Red Army in those circumstances. A similar question was asked of Paul Robeson in the USA.[48] Sharkey's words were easily twisted by the Press and Judge Latham, and Sharkey got three years. Wharfies however, were incensed at Sharkey's apparent gullibility and said: "Sharkey is a mug. It was a trick question. He should've told 'em to get stuffed".[49] In the West, novelist Katharine Susannah Prichard handled the provocation in a different way: "She was addressing a public meeting when a piece of paper was passed to the speaker's stand, instructing her that if the question were asked she was to reply that as a Communist she would support an invading Red Army of liberation. Katharine flatly refused. She believed that the question was unreal, deliberately provocative, and divisive".[50] [51]

Ted Roach made invaluable contributions to the Wharfies' Executive about these issues. He spoke persuasively about McPhillips' gaoling. McPhillips did not know perhaps, but he did not repay Ted in kind. Ted said the McPhillips issue was *the vital working-class principle of freedom of speech*, the denial of which was *a development of fascisation*, the development of *a Police State in Australia.*[52] *McPhillips had been on the Basic Wage Committee of the ACTU. He had made himself the most competent man, a specialist on the basic wage. This was why the Government had gaoled McPhillips: I say McPhillips appearing in the Court would have been appearing as an accuser of Capitalism, as a rallying point for the Unions in the struggle for an increase in the Basic Wage.*[53] As a result: *the prestige of the Arbitration Court would be seriously weakened, the mask would be torn considerably from the face of arbitration and the workers would have a better look, as a consequence of this case, at the real Arbitration Court than ever they had had before.*[54] Ted is talking pure Communist Party policy.

I have made similar statements on many occasions in the past and will do so in the future. Speaking this way, Ted is making a deliberate declaration of defiance of the courts, which had warned Healy and Roach against "counsels of disobedience".[55] Ted then described the Arbitration Court which the Communist Party had smothered in angry invective for decades: *The Arbitration Court, as well as any other Court, is loaded against the workers. It is loaded dice. These judges are given £3,500 a year, and £4,500 for the Chief Judge to decide how many ounces of tea you and your family should have per week; how many ounces of sugar; how many ounces of meat per person; how many pairs of shoes per year; or what quality underclothing your wife should wear, and how many pieces of underclothing. They determine the absolute minimum for a man, wife and average family of two children. They are given £3,500 a year. They are there for life. They have the best conditions in the country. From whom? Capitalism! From the ruling class of this country. For what? To protect the interests of the ruling class of this country, and that is the intention of the Arbitration Court — it cushions the class struggle. The Arbitration Court's role, right throughout its history, has been that of a 'Strike Breaker' and it will not give any decisions of any real value to the working-class unless the working-class fights hard and forces these decisions. Thus the removal of McPhillips was part of a hoax, a general plan.*[56] So Ted lifted a corner of the carpet on ASIO's plan, Bland's plan, Sir Ken's men and the secret working of spooks in 'Operation Alien'[57] to 'fit' and gaol militants and Communists, and their families. For all that, Ted's language is Spartan, unleavened, without adjectives, and an occasional flaring phrase, for example in *scorching headlines* (p.112 above).

Ted's blistering attack on the judges was in sharp contradistinction to the General Secretary's friendly relation with the Arbitration Court Judges. Jim Healy was on first name terms with the Judges and the Knights on the SIC. Healy went to private dinners with Judges and drank bottles of whiskey with them. Wharfies said Jim "got the judges pissed to find out their secrets".[58] In 1943 Jim Healy took Ted Roach to dinner in Melbourne with Judge Barry. If Jim had hoped that Ted would learn a bit of class to class sociability with his Honour, he was mistaken. Ted felt the breath of the executioner in a judge's conversation, for some reason. *He took me to dinner at Judge* (John) *Barry's place. Only the three of us. I was so embarrassed. I didn't eat anything. I didn't say anything. I got out of there as quickly as I could. I'd rather spit in their eye.* Ted's "Boston"-fired hatred of Judges may have misinterpreted a friendly chat at a nice dinner. Perhaps Ted failed to see the value of close contacts with 'the enemy' and being, as Jim Healy was, as amicable as possible.

Jim Healy had developed an excellent working relationship with Sir Thomas Playford, Sir Owen Dixon, Piper J., and other chairmen of the SIC from its inception in 1941. "We have got away from the formal attitude and legalisms of the court", Jim said.[59] The complexity of the General Secretary's position, juggling a multiplicity of portfolios, was not clear to Ted. After the end of WWII, Ted only heard more and more reports of 'promises'. He was chafing at the bit to mount campaigns for Wharfies' long-delayed demands. In 1950 he would organise a carnival of rank and file action, mainly in Queensland, and would defeat Robert Gordon Menzies, personally and for the second time, in the remarkable Brisbane Rotary Hatch dispute of March 1950.

Ted's contributions through his Wharfie Council and Executive addresses, valuable and insightful as they were, stayed in the coffin of the Minutes on file. There is no evidence that members of the Central Committee of the Australian Communist Party read or heard what Ted said to the Wharfies' Executive and Council during the tumultuous ten years from 1942, when he was the National Organiser and built the Wharfies' Federation, link by link, around the Australian seaboard. Not on his own, of course. Australian Communist leaders were reading Trade Union pamphlets and dissertations from many countries, but not from 'Roach'. After all, Roach couldn't pronounce certain magic words, like 'naïve' ('na-eff'), and 'nepotism' ('nepopo-tism'), so how could he understand the deep meanings of the great dogmatists who knew how to lecture workers but not how to organise and inspire them? And Australian Communist Party leaders' ideological heroes were not in Australia; their heroes were somewhere else, anywhere but here. 'There' was better. Over 'there' were great men, truly great, who knew everything and were 'real Marxists'. Roach was just a Wharfie, who was a brilliant organiser of workers. They would be embarrassed to have him 'there', because 'there', he would do exactly what he did 'here', organise workers, and tell the truth.

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[1] "FCM", 11.5.1949, p.361. N 114/115.

[2] Ibid., p.360.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid., p.364.

[5] FCM, 11.5.1949, p.366.

[6] Speaker's platform, or trestle. The "stumps" of trees felled in the Sydney Domain, were the original speakers' platforms.

[7] AA 6119/79, 1212, No.40, p.2; for ASIO agents inside the Communist Party — CRSM 15O8/1 NN; ASIO monthly summaries, file No. 743. OO1/3-2353, Aust. Embassy to Dept. of State, Washington, 23 March 1953.

[8] **Editors' note**: "21 Division, which was the training ground for the Criminal Investigations Branch for many years until its disbandment"" http://www.police.nsw.gov.au/about_us/history. "During the early 1970s there were objections to the 21 Division (also known as the 'mobile' or 'riot' squad)". Source: Aboriginal-Police Relations in Redfern, Human Rights Commission.

[9] Wharfie Federal Councillor, McCready. (Sydney)

[10] Ibid, p.27.

[11] Ibid.

[12] "FEM", N114/146, 22.4.1949, Meeting 11, p.2.

[13] ST433 Box 4, 21.4.1949.

[14] N114/115 p.190.

[15] Bob Santamaria was founder of "The Movement" – Catholic Action.

[16] N114/115 p.190.

[17] "FEM", 11.5.1949, pp.387-389.

[18] "FEM", 12.5.1949, p.98.

[19] Ibid., p.387.

[20] Shipping Officials.

[21] Kent Hughes, author, JIA prisoner of war, conservative MP.

[22] "FCM", N 114/N11, 11.4.1949, pp.391-392.

[23] "FCM", N114/116, 10.11.1949, p.70.

[24] Ibid.

[25] "FCM", N114/116, 10.11.1949, p.61-62.

[26] **Editors' note**: The expansion of the military-industrial production complex built around the arms' industry accelerated after 1945 as the Cold War intensified. This pitted the capitalist West, led by USA, against the Communist bloc, led by the Soviet Union. This 'arms race' was an important part of industrial development on both sides of the Cold War. The first direct military conflict across this Cold War line was the Korean War from mid-1950 to mid-1953. In mid-1950, the Soviet-backed North Korean army invaded South Korea causing the United Nations Security Council to defend the South by recruiting a Coalition force which, however, was dominated heavily by the United States Army. Australia committed troops immediately to the UN Coalition along with Britain and France among others. After the arrival of the Coalition forces, the new Communist Government of China committed its army to defending North Korea. In 1953, the Korean War ended in a stalemate and an armistice was signed. Although military conflict ceased, the War between the two Koreas has never officially ended.

[27] "FCM", N114/116, 10.11.1949, p.63.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid, pp.66-67.

[32] Ibid, p.68.

[33] Ibid, pp.67-68.

[34] 1965: see A. E. McIntosh and Henderson — Ted Roach — 4.3.1965, pp.1&5. "Firstly **there can be no doubt** that the action of the Court, as then constituted, in sentencing Mr. Roach to imprisonment was something done **beyond jurisdiction** ... Therefore, at the time at which they were made, the orders should not have been issued being repugnant to the Constitution", p.1. McIntosh and Henderson, 185 Elizabeth St, Sydney, 4.3.1965.

[35] "Moscow Gold" is the mythical bribe money from Moscow paid to Australian Communists.

[36] "FCM", 10.11.1949, p.68. quoting Evatt, Herbert. Vere. in "Injustice within the law: a study of the case of the Dorsetshire labourers", Sydney: Law Book Co. of Australasia, 1937. p.128.

[37] "FCM", 10.11.1949, pp.68-71.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid.

[41] "FCM", 2.5.1949, p.74.

[42] Author's interview with Wyck Roach.

[43] Ibid.

[44] "FCM", Nov 1949, p.71.

[45] "FCM", 10.5.1949, p.334.

[46] The vote of the WWF Council to stop work in protest at the Sharkey & McPhillips gaolings was very close. It was ten votes for, and nine against.

[47] A 6119/79/1212 21449, 35 & 36, p.187.

[48] Robeson was asked would African-Americans fight against an invading Red Army. See SBS documentary "Scandalise My Name: Stories from the Blacklist", 1998.

[49] This quote is attributed to M.K. **Editors' note**: possibly the author's father, 'Mick' Clyde Kendall Kevans.

[50] Throssell, R. "Wild Weeds And Wind Flowers", Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1975, p. 238.

[51] "Life of Shostakovich", SBS film, 29.9.2001 re. Stalin's henchmen giving self-denunciating statements to artists and forcing them to read them aloud, in public.

[52] A 6119/79/1212 21449, 35 & 36, op. cit., p.186.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Ibid., pp.186-187.

[56] Ibid., pp.187-188.

[57] **Editors' note**: "Operation Alien was the name given to a top-secret project created by the Menzies Government in 1950 and operational during the early years of the decade. Directly under the control of Menzies, a special staff of military personnel and the Assistant General Manager of Shell, the plan was for the routine mobilisation and deployment of the armed forces in industrial disputes, especially in areas where essential services were involved, and in the stevedoring and coal industries. Cabinet documents suggest that elements in the government sought to inflame industrial disputes during the period, particularly in the maritime industry, with a view to extending areas of dispute and justifying the implementation of Operation Alien. The first of numerous uses of the armed forces under the plan was in May 1951, in response to Australian solidarity actions during the New Zealand strike by waterside workers. Troops and naval ratings were used to break union bans; trade union offices were raided by State and Commonwealth security agencies; the Crimes Act was used to prosecute prominent unionists." Cahill, R. Menzies: the barbed wire solution "The Guardian" 3.11.1999. Source: http://www.cpa.org.au/z-archive/g1999/978menz.html

[58] This quote is attributed to E. P. **Editors' note**: it is unclear whom E. P. is.

[59] "FCM", 10.5.1949, p.342.

Chapter 15
THE NSW COAL STRIKE, 1949

Chief Judge Foster: "Roach, hand over the money! It is the Law!"
Ted Roach: *Yes, it is the Law to starve the wives and children of the miners who are on strike!*

In May 1949, the voting pattern of the Wharfies' Federal Council was usually 10 for and 9 against. It was touch and go. Bert Clarke, Melbourne President, said: "about twelve months ago we gained a marginal increase and I think about 50% of us (in Melbourne) would have blacked his (Judge Kirby's) boots at the time, it was good".[1] Judge Kirby had written personally to every Wharfie attacking Healy and Roach for giving "counsels of disobedience", while Wharfies had "unprecedented privileges", and saying the beneficial Stevedoring Industry Commission could not remain unless Healy and Roach gave "satisfactory undertakings" to "comply with the Commission's orders".[2] Kirby's letter caused confusion, and well-organised Groupers and the right-wing attacked Healy and Roach at meetings in Melbourne, Newcastle, Adelaide, and Fremantle, flying to ports all expenses paid and addressing Wharfies. *They bobbed up everywhere*, Ted said. *It was the Oil Companies that had ads in Groupers' papers, like "The Watersider", who financed the Groupers.*[3] Bert Clarke suggested that Federal Council draw up a "composite resolution" expressing feelings for and against Judge Kirby's autographed appeal to every Wharfie in Australia. Bert thought Council might "well accept" and endorse, and Judge Kirby might then retain the Stevedoring Industry Commission. It would be "a way out of the impasse".[4] Ted spoke to the next Waterside Workers Federation Council: *Judge Kirby decided to take the fight to the members and give the members the impression we wanted to disband the Commission, because we were not prepared to say to him - "Yes, sir, we are slavishly prepared to accept your dictum, and are prepared to surrender the fundamental rights of members of our organisation".*

Judge Kirby had claimed on radio that 15,000 — or more than half of the Australian Wharfies — did not stop work over the gaoling of Lance Sharkey. Emphasising that Judge Kirby *had his statement going all day on radio*, Ted described the announcements as *deliberate lies put out by Kirby, national statements, through the press, and everywhere else, to confuse waterside workers, in his efforts to split the Federation.*[5] Ted was not afraid to openly attack the Judge. Ted's use of the unadorned surname Kirby, instead of Kirby J., would land him in Long Bay Gaol in March 1951. Someone was worried about leaving off the 'J' for Judge, because the 'J's' are hand-written, after Judges' names, in the Wharfies' Council Minutes. *Kirby was asking Wharfies to surrender the right to strike. Kirby's letter meant that the only stoppage that is not against the Commission's orders is a stop-work meeting granted you by the Judge. It has to come to him, finally, to grant a stop-work meeting. Everything else you do is disobedience to the Commission and its orders.*[6]

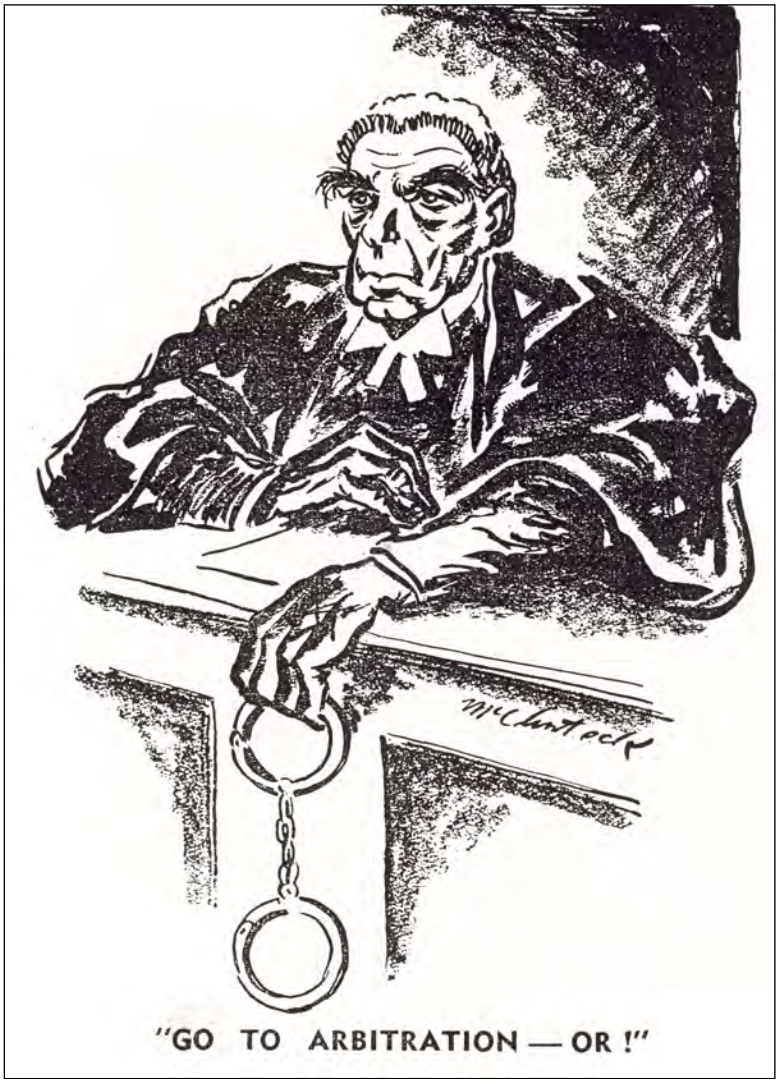
Then Ted made one of his brilliant encapsulations of Communist, and working-class theory, which seasoned his contributions to Wharfies' Executive, Wharfies' Council, and "The Maritime Worker". It illustrates the quality of Ted's mind, working in tandem with Healy, fuelled by a courage as quietly fierce as the dampened fires of the BHP itself. *I say that the right to strike is the dearest possession of the working-class in this country. In order to establish the right our forefathers had to go into battle and struggle. They built their Trade Unions on struggle, in strikes, the same as they built the Labor Party in strikes and struggle, economic, and political. Under no circumstances can we subscribe to a policy, whereby we surrender these important Trade Union rights."*[7]

"COME THE REVVO": THE NSW COAL STRIKE

The NSW Coal Strike lasted from 27 June 1949 to 15 August 1949, a time when 'the Revvo' (Revolution) was in the air. A common saying was "Come the Revvo!"; another was to "Keep Revven' up the Revvo!" On Sydney's electric trains, working class beachgoers sang: "Free beer for all the Wharfies! Free beer for all the Wharfies! Free beer for all the Wharfies when the Red Revolution comes!" Lance

Sharkey predicted ‘Socialism in Three Years’. Other Communist leaders could see a ‘revolutionary situation’ in the Coal Strike. A ‘revolutionary situation’ — an adhesive label from a set of philosophical generalisations, torn off, licked and stuck on a set of actual conditions in the NSW coal fields, which had not been studied in enough detail, as subsequent events were to clearly show, but which were ‘talked up’ at Central Committee meetings by CC members during rhetorical word-baths. Bill Orr, whom the CC-CPA had contemptuously discarded, would have been at his best, an invaluable strategist, assessing the needs and best tactics for struggle among coal miners. On 29 June, two days after the strike began, Labor Attorney-General Dr H. V. Evatt brought down his National Emergency (Coal Strike) Act to strip Unions of back-up assets they might use during the strike and to stop others donating or “promising to donate” to the miners (Fig 18). He also banned traditional miners’ credit dockets with local small businesses, paid up by miners after their return to work.

Fig 18 ‘Go to Arbitration – Or’: NSW Coal Strike 1949
Source: ‘Maritime Worker’, 30.7.49



While Labor caucus members Eddie Ward (East Sydney), and Senators Morrow (TAS), Katz (VIC), and O'Flaherty (SA), opposed Evatt's Bill in the Labor Caucus, it became law. Evatt's Fund Freezing Legislation made unlawful "the contribution, receipt, or use of funds by organisations, for the purpose of assisting, or encouraging the continuance of the [NSW coal miners'] strike."[8] 'The Doc' withdrew £54,215 from Unions' bank accounts. Five miners' leaders were summonsed: George Grant, 'Jock' King, Maurice Fitzgibbon, Idris Williams, Bill Parkinson, then Jack McPhillips (Ironworkers). They refused to answer questions about funds already withdrawn to bypass Evatt's legislation. Jock King, Secretary of the Western District Miners, said to Judge Kelly: "I have the money until such time as the members tell me what to do with it".[9] Chief Judge Kelly gaoled King for one month for contempt of court.

Jim Healy was in Queensland at this time. Ted said: *Whenever Jim was out of the office, I was Acting General Secretary. At the time we had three* (Wharfie) *branches out on strike and six thousand pounds just in. This was our levy of five bob per member. So I took it out and whacked it in three places. The money was in three places, three very safe places, indeed. Only Della Nicholas* (Elliott) *and myself knew where it was.* Della and Ted had "whacked" some of the money inside the rice-filled Chinese jars under the house of shopkeepers, Nick and Agnes Zenodohos, Della's Greek parents.[10] Ted had complete confidence in Della. Ted was in charge of the money and paying the Wharfies on strike £800 a week strike pay. Jim Healy came under severe, sustained attack about the "missing £6000" which wasn't "missing" at all. "The General Secretary should be honest with (the Wharfies') Council, (about the £6000), and give reasons instead of trying to pull the wool over their eyes", said Wharfies' President, Jack Beitz (ALP).[11] Any mention of money sent the Melbourne Groupers into a feeding frenzy and 'Gus' Alford started screaming: "where's our six thousand?"[12] — which was painted in big white letters on a dock wall. It was countered by this huge graffito: "ALFORD WAS BORN IN A POLICE STATION".

Immediately, Herb Evatt made his Fund Freezing Legislation retrospective to 16 June to try and rope in the Wharfies' £6000 Union levy money. According to author Vic Williams, Jim Healy "refused to pay the money into the court", saying: "No, this is workers' money, taken out of their pay packets to help their mates."[13] In the court, Ted Roach launched a full-scale verbal attack on the Fund Freezing law and its effects on the striking miners and their families. It was Ted who drove Judge Dovey to "exasperation" — *ease 'em over, ease 'em over, ease 'em over*. According to Ted Roach, only Ted and Della Elliott knew where the money was, and no-one else. Ted was in charge of it because he was paying the strike pay. Ted was used to handling amounts of money in the fight game, and in the Federation from the Kembla days. Further, it was Ted who made the correct decision to take charge of the money so he could pay the members their strike pay. Yet Williams seems simply unaware of Ted Roach's leading role stating that: "Healy was in Queensland at the time, and Assistant Secretary Roach signed the cheque". You see? That was all Ted did — "signed the cheque". Roach's own testimony in this chapter, and the evidence in the Federation's printed records, provide a different version of events. And Ted Roach was never described as "the Organiser", was he? According to Vic Williams he was Jim Healy's 'Assistant'.

The author: "Was this money to help the coal miners, mate?"

No, no. Port Kembla, Hobart and Launceston, our own members were on strike. Nothing to do with the coal miners. I drew it out as soon as the fund-freezing legislation was coming down. I said "Bang!!" put it in three places, so I could keep paying our blokes, £800 a week strike pay. They hauled me into the court and they wanted me to put the money into the Court. Chief Judge Kelly said: "We will pay your strike pay". I said: "No. That is workers' money, and the court doesn't believe in strikes, your Honour, so I am not putting any money into the court. Ted also told the author that had they put the levy money into the Court, as requested by Judge Kelly, *it would have created a tremendous dent in the morale of the miners.*[14] Ted felt that the miners would have *won their 30/- increase*[15] if they'd stayed out for another week.

In Court, Ted refused *the oath* and *the affirmation*. Justice Kelly said: "You must do one or the other or face the consequences." *My legal adviser told me I don't have to.* Kelly J.: "I am warning you, Roach, I am warning you". *That's what my legal adviser told me.* Kelly J.: "You ought to change your legal adviser".[16] *We were not afraid of the £6000 being stolen, or not handed back to us, by the Government. But I was not prepared to allow the court to interfere in the domestic affairs of the Union and take away the independence of our Trade Union, because independent Trade Unions are fighting organisations of the workers*.[17]

Ordered in and out of the court for three weeks, Ted addressed solidarity meetings; for example, with Jack McPhillips and Edgar Ross, Ted addressed the "Free Jock King" rally in a crowded hall in Lithgow: "Never do I remember a team getting such a good reception" reported "The Lithgow Clarion"[18], and quoted Ted: *So they are going to try and starve the women and children of the miners? The Trade Unions will challenge this authority. The only authority that we understand is the standard of living of the workers. That is the authority we are trying to uphold. I say that while the workers rely on the Law, they rely on a rotten stick. If they rely on the Law, they will deliver themselves into the hands of the philistines.*

Ted said: *Gout from overindulgence was the 'occupational disease' of the judges and the only 'dusting' they got was from cigar dust in their exclusive clubs. Labor politicians should bow their heads in shame that such anti working-class legislation should be placed on the books ... Wharfie branches will adopt a mining lodge, during the strike, and will supply them with funds etc, despite the Strike Emergency Regulations.* This was another Ted Roach idea. *The waterside workers are prepared to give full support to the miners.* Dovey, KC, was the prosecutor for the whole three weeks. *I was taking the Fifth Amendment stand. I said: I refuse to answer that your Honour, as it may incriminate me in another jurisdiction. And Dovey, he always wore a monocle, he flopped on his arse and the monocle bounced off the table, and he said: "I give up, your Honour, I give up!" Judge Dovey!* (Laughs!)

When Jim Healy came back from Queensland, they scooped him up, too, and threw him in the boob[19]. Jeez, he was upset. See, Healy, if he'd wanted to give the money back, he didn't know where it was anyway. The author: "Didn't he ask you where it was?"
No, he wasn't game to do that. Judge Foster[20] was the one who finally sentenced us. I thought: "This bastard's going to hang me". So I said to Sammy Isaacs – "Sammy, I want to 'show cause'". He said: "All right". So I got up, and I got into Foster. And Foster screamed out: "Roach hand over the money! It is the Law!" "Yes", I said, "it is the Law to starve the wives and children of the miners who are on strike!" And Foster screamed out: "Mr Isaacs, I hold you responsible for this unseemingly (sic) outburst in my court!" You see, I was resisting the legality of this law, and ensuring our right to use our money for the purposes we put the levy on for. None of it was for the miners. It was to pay our strike pay.

On 16 July 1949, Jim Healy and Ted Roach were sentenced to twelve months in gaol for contempt of court. They got out in six weeks. Wharfie Branches sent urgent telegrams **demanding action about their gaoling**; for example, in Queensland, Townsville's 506 members demanded (unanimously) **"a nation-wide tie-up of 24 hours on Monday each week".**[21] The Court fined the Miners £2000, the Wharfies £2000, and the Federated Ironworkers Association of Australia £1000. WWF Melbourne Grouper, Gus Alford said: "(Healy and Roach) were jealous of the other people that had been locked up, and they wanted to make martyrs of themselves".[22] The prisoners appealed. Judge Kirby replied: "We find no ground now for discharging, or vacating, the orders imposing the fines. Payment of the fines, in the circumstances of these cases, cannot be regarded as a purging of the contempt found against the organisations. We think these applications should be dismissed."[23]

The seven prisoners were separated from other prisoners in Long Bay Gaol. They had a bath twice a week! Secretary of the Mackay Shelter Shed, Ted Roach was pleased with the very healthy pan system. *We had our shit bucket to bring out of a morning. We slept on a coir mat that you put on the floor for a mattress. That's bloody hard that coir mat.* It was freezing, *the middle of winter*. Ted wore two prison suits and two pair of socks, *the bloody lot*, in bed. He heated a brick on the Queen stove and wrapped it in a towel for a hot water bottle. *Gaol tucker was hominy breakfast and shadow soup. We were in at the worst time. There were no radios, no TV's, no billiard-room, no gymnasium, no freedom, no telephone, no nothing, when we were all in there.* Finally, *enough pressure was brought to bear, by whom I don't know,* that they should all say *sorry to the court. But you see that was in my book anti-Marxism, bowing the nut and saying: "We're sorry, sir". Because what did we do? We said we're not going to let the court handle the workers' money. That was all — where's the contempt in that?*

The Stevedoring Industry Board prepared a detailed "Summary of Results of Stop work Meetings Held, as Protest Against Imprisonment of Messrs Healy and Roach (25 July 1949). The Wharfie response was 50/50. Some Branches wanted the £6000 paid into the court. The Brisbane Branch resolved on action: "This mass meeting of members of the WWF of Australia (Brisbane Branch) protest strongly against the savage

and outrageous sentences of 12 months gaol on our Federal Officers, Messrs. Healy and Roach, respectively and the fine of £2,000 on our Union. We endorse the resolution of condemnation, for such actions carried by our Executive and further declare, that we **will cease work, for 24-hours, each week,** on days to be decided by our Executive until our officers are released" and "it is not the intention of the Branch Executive, to give prior notice of the day, on which it is intended, to stop work".[24] 'Dutchy' Young told the Wharfies' Council: "Forgetting personalities, the fact was that the General Secretary of the Federation was in gaol, and we found the majority were not prepared to stop more than 24-hours to protest".[25]

Judge Kirby announced: "The monies in question have now been paid to the Registrar. Each one has expressed their regret, and apologies, for the contempt of the court, for which they were committed". "Each one," the Judge said "accepts the Law of the country ... as calling for obedience and as superseding the rules of his organisation, and any belief he may hold, as to his obligations under such rules, in loyalty, or supposed loyalty, to his members".[26] Ted did not remember *apologising to any bastard. Follow up, and go down, and grovel on your knees and say: "But, sir, I'm sorry I offended you". And surrender to all the anti-class bloody shit. It's a class question, a class question. I didn't like it in bloody gaol. But I wasn't too wrapped in selling your principle, and doffing your cap. Maybe I was a bit "leftist". I'm built that way. Doffing my cap to authority, when I was in the right. I knew I was in the right."*

On 8 July 1949, 50 police led by Dep.-Insp. Wilkes (Federal Police) and Supt. J. Sweeney (NSW State Police) raided Marx House, Haymarket, Sydney, and took away 32 bundles of records, account books, and documents, on lorries to the Commonwealth Investigation Service, Pitt St, for "examination and report"[27]. All they got of Ted's was a memo, "Ring Maher Wharf". On 9-10 August a Union recommendation to continue the Coal Strike was rejected by a three to one majority, but two-thirds of miners at large pits supported continuation; on 15 August, miners resumed work.[28] On 18 February 1949, previewing the Coal Strike, Lance Sharkey had made this prophecy: "we must show that we have the policy for the masses in the coming period; our aim is to liquidate reformism (that is the ALP) as the decisive party in the working-class movement."[29] This did not happen. In fact, nearly the opposite happened. Another Communist Party Central Committee podium prophecy had failed. But which of the Central Committee, who had endorsed the strike were 'criticised', or lost their Central Committee position? They closed ranks, and looked around for scapegoats. One of the muttered names was the perennial 'naughty boy', Ted Roach who was, in Party parlance, "full of conceit" and too successful for his own good.

The author: "What did you think of the coal strike, mate?"

Another one of these flat-footed stances by McPhillips, and Thornton, and the Central Committee. You know when an irresistible force meets an immoveable object. I had no part in the planning of the Coal Strike and I did not agree with the tactics. I never agreed with flat-footed stances. You are fighting the big fellow, you've got to keep moving all the time, boxing, clinching, on your toes. You've got to have a way out. You cannot beat him head on. The workers' army marches on the stomachs of its wives and kids. The Communist Party was severely damaged by the outcome of the Coal Strike, conservative political forces flogged the ALP, Menzies was elected in December 1949, and Ben Chifley died in 1951. Workers did not flock to the Communist Party. The grand total of "ex-Communists", the biggest Party in Australia, increased, and the big freeze of the Cold War and McCarthyite Fascism (USA)[30] commenced a life and death struggle to annihilate the Communist Party. On 1 August 1949 in Sydney's Domain, Arthur Calwell (Minister for Immigration, ALP) said, waving a search warrant under Section 10 of the Crimes Act: "If it is left to me, in a concentration camp, they [the Communist leaders] will go".[31] 'Operation Alien'[32] planned just such a destination for Communist Trade Union leaders once they had been 'declared' under Menzies' proposed Red Bill, which Ted called the 'Bill for a Police State'.

[1] BC N114/115, p.288.

[2] A 6119/79 1212, No.35.

[3] Groupers' paper "The Voice" was published in Hobart (Dwyer Gray, ed.). Other Grouper papers were "The Vigilante", "The Watersider", and "Watersider Junior".

[4] BC N114/115, p.288.

[5] Roach, Ted. See Harry Bland Letter about "splitting" the Wharfies' Federation in chapter 19.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Transcript, CCAC, 23.9.1949, p.2.

[9] "The Sun", 6 July 1949, p.2.

[10] "The Hummer", No.34, 1 August 1992, p.19.

[11] "FEM", 20.7.1949, p.2.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Williams, V. "The Years of Big Jim", op. cit., p.92.

[14] **Editors' note**: This is a very important revelation. Evatt's emergency 'Freezing Funds' legislation of mid-1949 swept up all union funds into its net. The aim of the legislation was to prevent other union funds being used to help coal miners' strike funds and the 'Freezing Funds' Act made giving any help to the striking coal-miners illegal. Ted Roach and Jim Healy were arrested and found guilty of contempt of court because they'd removed Wharfies' union funds (raised from member levies) to be used for wharfie strike pay in industrial action unrelated to the Coal Strike.

[15] Williams, V. op. cit., pp.64, 66.

[16] Secretary Melbourne Dockers.

[17] "FCM", 10.11.1949, p.65.

[18] "Lithgow Clarion", Saturday 9.7.1949.

[19] 'boob' or 'booby house': goal.

[20] (…) *and Foster kept on saying and repeating and emphasising that he was the Law, he was there interpreting it, he had special powers, it was a special court, special circumstances.* Roach, Ted. "FCM", 10.11.1949, op. cit., p.67.

[21] SP 1509/2/0; W 52. No. 48. Urgent Telegram.

[22] GA, BCM, 1949, p.33.

[23] Transcript, SP 1509/2/0 24.8.1949, pp.44-54.

[24] Transcript, SP 1509/2/0; W 52. No. 48, op. cit.

[25] "FCM", 9.1.1949, p.23. **Author's note:** Communist Fred Patterson, a member of the Queensland Legislative assembly, was brutally bashed by a drunken, baton wielding, twenty stone policeman, Jeremiah John Mahoney, in Brisbane on St. Patrick's Day during the 1947 Transport Strike. George Stewart, a seaman, warned Patterson that the police were full of whiskey and ready for blood. Fred lay insensate in a hospital bed for nearly seven months. Jeremiah John (J. J.) was not even named in Parliament! Let alone charged in the civil courts. J. J.'s party trick with the constabulary over a few Irish whiskeys was to re-choreograph the way he struck, with his baton, at the brains of the great Fred Patterson. Well done, J. J., Mother Church is well pleased! If only Connolly and Larkin (Irish TU leaders), and Healy, Roach and a few others were there for J. J. to play the xylophone on their skulls!

[26] Ibid., p.2.

[27] Deery, P. "The Age", 9 July 1949, p.60.

[28] Ibid.

[29] CC-CPA, 18.2.1949.

[30] US Senator, Joe McCarthy.

[31] Deery, Phillip. “The Age”; op. cit., p.60.

[32] Louis, Les. ‘Operation Alien’ and the Cold War in Australia, 1950-1953, “Labour History”, no. 62, 1992.

Chapter 16
THE BRISBANE ROTARY HATCH DISPUTE, 1950

"That Rotary Hatch dispute, Ted sowed the first seeds of it.
It was conducted nowhere better than up here in Brisbane. I never saw Ted up here."
Wally Stubbings, Brisbane Wharfies' Executive[1]

"Ted Roach was a 'smartie'. He was of no account."
L. J. "Jack" McPhillips, Industrial Committee
Central Committee of the Communist Party of Australia.

An early tilt at "Secret Ballots"[2], "Deregistration" and "a showdown" came in February 1950 from John Mulherin who was the SIB's representative in Mackay, Queensland.

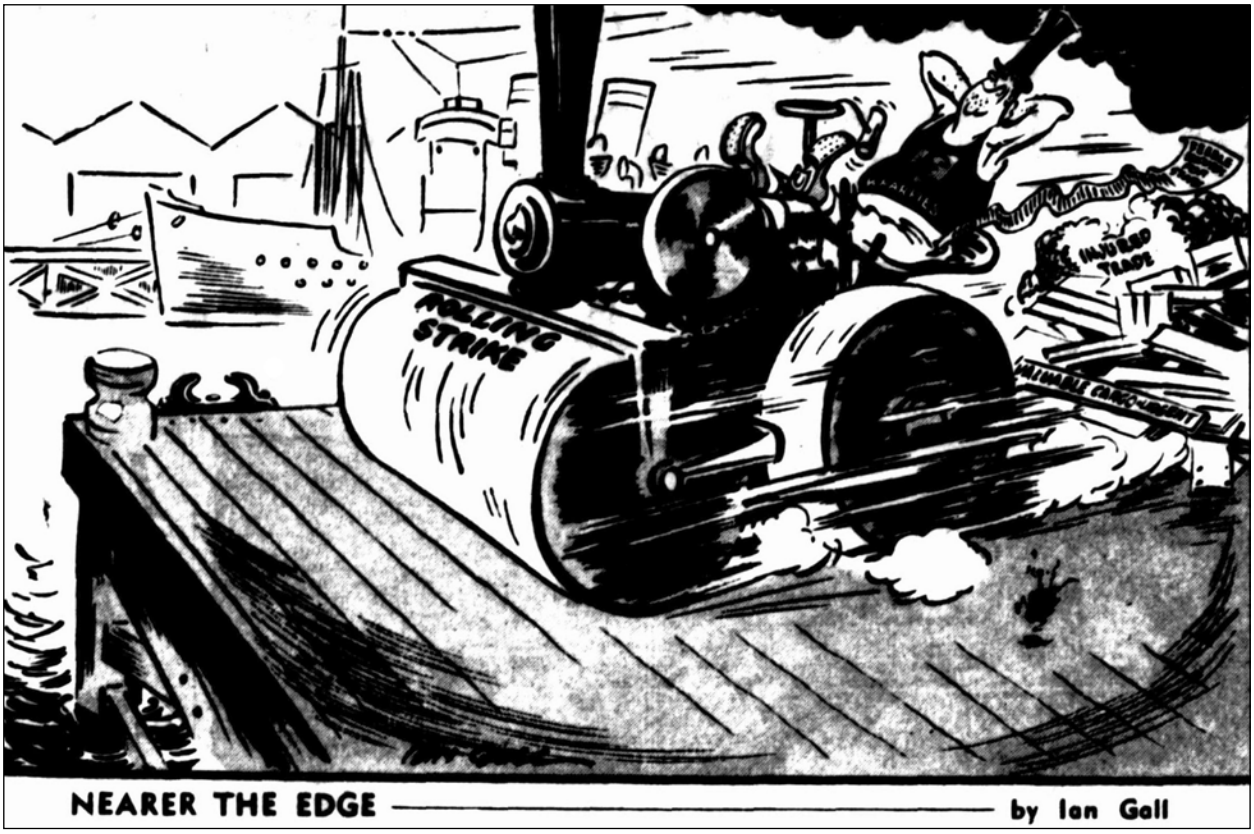
THE FALL OF MULHERIN

The Australian Council of Trade Unions had a resolution on the books condemning Franco's Fascism in Spain. Sheet Metal Workers leader, Tommy Wright, once said at a Sydney Labor Council meeting: "We are a very resolutionary organisation".[3] Ted Roach however, decided to take action over Franco and Fascist Spain. A Spanish ship, the *Arraiz* was shipping sugar from Bowen and Mackay and Ted responded: *Fascist bastards! Let's have a demonstration against these Fascist bastards here. We'll send their Fascist ship straight up to Mackay! It got into all the papers. Oh, they're screaming.*
The author: "Who's screaming?"
Dixon, Healy, the Party! "You make decisions too quickly!" Better make decisions too quickly than not make any bloody decisions at all. Let's get all the publicity we possibly can out of this sort of thing. What's the matter with you? Let's get the politics out of it! Politics flows from controversy! I always said that – politics flows from controversy! Then "The Sun" printed a cartoon showing two fishermen catching a Spanish mackerel. One says: "Of all the bloody fish in the sea, you had to catch a Spanish mackerel, now we'll have to get it past the Wharfies" (Fig 19). *(Laughs!)*

Fig 19 'The Spanish Mackerel'
Source: 'Courier Mail, 1.2.50

And I'm the bullfighter in Spain, with the bulls. (Laughs!) Yes! Oh, the Party's screaming! That was very naughty, you see. Very naughty, indeed! And in Brisbane they're screaming "Rolling Strike". Never been heard of before. I've got cartoons in there, "Portrait of Rolling Roach" — there's a Wharfie driving a big tractor almost to the edge of the stringer (Fig 20) *and I'm the "cocky" urging them on!*

Fig 20 'Nearer the Edge' – Rolling Strikes in Brisbane 1950
Source: 'Courier Mail', 2.3.50



As well, 'Nipper' Ford's Townsville Branch left a bale of hides tallied out to Mazamet (France) on the wharf[4] just in case. Instances like this would have been relayed to Jim Healy by the Big Trumps. ASOA representatives were much amused. "They said 'twas a Fascist ship", said Joe Hewitt.[5] In "The Mackay Mercury" John Mulherin launched into Ted and the Mackay Wharfies over the 'Fascist ship'. John said Ted was 'the Red Emissary'. This is pretty good prose for your average, bush-bred, shipping company rep. More like the prose of Alan Reid who, later, bucketed Wharfies in "The Daily Telegraph" and/or "Edwin Reynolds" (pen name) who wrote "Red Hand Across the Waterfront",[6] parroting a metaphor from McCarthyism in the Great Excited States where they talked of 'the Red Hand on the Microphone'.[7] Coincidentally, both ASIO and John Mulherin were calling Ted, 'J. E. Roach'.[8] John Mulherin says 'J. E. Roach', in his socio-politico treatise in the Mackay "Merc". But what about the unrepaired, bagged sugar elevator in the Mackay sugar sheds? CSR had a full year to fix the sugar elevator but they hadn't done it. Did spooks, Colonial Sugar Refining Co. and the Menzies Government want to create a bottleneck of bagged sugar[9] so they could scream "crisis, crisis, crisis" and then unload the blame onto the Wharfies? Was the unrepaired bagged sugar elevator further evidence of an artificial crisis being manufactured by spooks and Sir Harry Bland?

In the next Bland/ASIO/Menzies manufactured sugar "crisis", a mysterious fire burnt the Inkerman bag store space at Bowen, Qld, in September 1953.[10] Had the ideological poker player, Sir Harry Bland, chosen Mackay for a showdown with 'the Red Emissary', Ted Roach? John Mulherin bravely let fly in "The Mackay Mercury" of Saturday 4 February 1950: "Waterside workers' refusal to load the Spanish ship *Arraiz* is a deliberate attempt by the Communist clique to use the waterside workers in their plan to dictate Australia's foreign policy", Mr J. M. Mulherin said yesterday.[11] Mr Mulherin revealed that he knew Ted Roach's innermost plans "to control all Pacific waterfronts". But rather than Ted's plan to prevent war, John Mulherin said "they firmly believe the time is not far distant when they will, with the assistance of their Russian fatherland, seize power in Australia".[12] If so, said John M., warming to his task, they will have to "change their present excellent conditions, for those obtaining in Russian ports, where the workers get a salt herring, and a chunk of black bread, and encouragement is given by the toe of the stevedore's jackboot".[13] Mulherin called for 'secret ballots'[14] on the waterfront.[15]

On Monday 6 February after the Mackay Wharfies had a meeting, their Secretary Alex Massey wrote to the SIB, Sydney: "I have taken up with Mr Hewitt and Mr Ball (Brisbane) the giving of statements concerning my Union to the Press by Local Representative ASIB (John Mulherin), and was told that he has no authority to do so. If in the scheme of things it came to a matter of which was the more important, about 300 experienced watersiders or a local chairman, we have no doubt of the Board's decision..." yours faithfully, A. Massey, Secretary.[16] Mr Mulherin's apocalyptic fire dampened when he re-capped this step in a letter to his 'pitch and toss'[17], Joe Hewitt in Sydney. Soon after, John Mulherin felt Joe Hewitt's 'jackboot' because Joe unceremoniously 'emptied'[18] John M. on the spot.

The Mercury's subjunctive conditional par "Should the Mackay branch of the Federation be deregistered, it would be likely the ASIB would make a call for labour and register men to form a new branch in Mackay", confirms the three prongs of Sir Harry Bland's tactics against the Waterside Workers Federation: Press, the Groupers and the Shipping Companies. A day later, Brisbane's "The Courier-Mail" editorialised: "Stop this Farce. Mockery was made of the order issued by Judge Kirby in the Federal Arbitration Court last week". "The Courier-Mail" said the new Menzies Government was "the Chifley Government over again". Mr Mulherin had taken "a firm line" but now Mr Mulherin "actually has been dismissed".[19]

BRISBANE ROTARY HATCH DISPUTE

In February-March 1950, Ted instructed the gang leaders of 68 gangs of the Brisbane Wharfies in the tactics he had invented in Kembla to force a Union-controlled roster on the hatches of a ship being unloaded. Hatches contain the cargo and some can take more cargo than others. Hatches can be long jobs or short jobs, clean jobs or dirty jobs, and 'pannos' (foremen) can pick and choose men for jobs and victimise workers. Ted must have had good powers of communication to convey complex instructions in an easy to understand way to the gang leaders, well enough for the gang leaders to instruct their gangs and then go into struggle, like a well-oiled machine and carry on the campaign for three weeks, changing tactics all the time and winning the struggle. These are things Ted would not tell you, or he would say with his usual, exasperating brevity: *I was there, I instructed them and I kept in touch*. The Security Police did not penetrate the gang leaders' meeting in Brisbane.

Ted used the roster tactic first in Port Kembla NSW on a four-hatched ship, the *Keni*, *a little Union Company ship, Australia - New Zealand* (see chapter 7). Once understood, tactics were simple. No matter what the panno said or what number hatch the foreman gave him, each Union member had his Union Roster hatch number, went to that hatch and started work. *Don't argue with the foremen, just go to your hatch and start work,* Ted instructed. *If the engineers turn the steam off and we can't work, we make it clear that we are ready and willing to work on our Union Roster and that we Wharfies are not the ones who turned the steam off and stopped the job. We are willing and able to go to work on our Union* (Federation) *roster.* On 17 February 1950 Ted arrived in Brisbane after one of his regular organising tours up and down the Queensland coast, which led to "the Fall of Mulherin" (see above) and a series of stoppages and stop work meetings. The Brisbane Rotary Hatch dispute, not detailed in any published history of the Wharfies or of

the Australian or World Trade Union Movements, commenced on 27 February 1950. While it has been completely ignored to date, it fully confirms Ted's ability, his tactics and his devotion to his members and the Federation.

Brisbane's hatch roster demand had a long history. Wharfies had been fobbed off by continual delays and procrastinations. Every procrastination was a part of the planned provocation, a part of the Big Trawl by Sir Harry Bland and ASIO for the scalps of Healy, Roach and other Australian Trade Union leaders. In other countries they just shot them dead. In Greece, Cuba, Malaya, India, Africa, Japan, the big chill was on. Union leaders were being murdered and their bodies dumped in ditches, including Antonios Ambatielos (Gen-Sec, Federation of Greek Maritime Unions), Vasilis Bekakos (Pres. Pan-Hellenic Marine Engineers) and M. Kladudatos in Greece (4 June 1948); and Iglesias Dies, J. G. Galloso, and A. Seval in Cuba (4 December 1948).[20] Ted's link by link organisation of Wharfie Branches allowed him to create sudden, dramatic action that won immediate, glaring publicity in all major newspapers, for example in Brisbane's "The Courier-Mail". Communist Party leaders would 'scream' about these headlines. And here in "The Courier-Mail" was a cartoon of 'cockroach' Ted Roach as 'the rolling Roach' with a Wharfie driving a 100kph steam-roller over the edge of the stringer (see Fig 20 above). Roach had hit the headlines again! Oh, the 'conceit'! Tabloid cartoonists could tip buckets of black sludge on Ted and the Wharfies, but as soon as Ted did a cartoon of Judge Kirby doing the thimble and pea trick with the Wharfies' ten bob basic wage increase in January 1951, Ted was fired like a rocket into Long Bay Gaol.

Knock-Backs to the Rotary Hatch Demand

On 8 December 1948, a stop work meeting of the Brisbane Wharfies' Branch unanimously resolved Ted's motion: *That this stop-work meeting endorse the principle of rotation of hatches and declares that this decision be implemented as soon as practicable. With this end in view, a meeting of gang leaders shall be held early in 1949* [to] *decide on a plan for the introduction of rotation of hatches and set the date on which such plans should be put into operation.* (Note the characteristic Ted Roach resolution formula - a meeting *"shall be held"* to decide on *"a plan",* and *"a date"* will be set, to start action.) On 13 January 1949, a meeting of Brisbane 'gang leaders and floaters' resolved unanimously: "that on and from Tuesday 1st February 1949" gangs would work a rotary hatch roster system 'from stem to stern'". Ted Englart, Branch Secretary, made an application to the Waterside Employment Committee (WEC) on 1 February for the Port Order to include a hatch rotary. On 4 February the Secretary of the Employers' Association wrote to the WEC refusing the request, and on 8 February the rotary request was considered by Brisbane WEC but rejected on the Chairman William 'Bill' Ball's casting vote. Brisbane Branch Executive lodged an appeal with the Stevedoring Industry Commission on 14 February. The Acting Chairman of the WEC gave his reasons for the refusal on 2 March saying: "it would be again idle to imagine and entirely against human nature to suppose that the foreman, who has to get the best results from his employees, would place such gangs in the big, or controlling hatch". Later, it was provocatively listed as Item No.553 on the agenda of the Stevedoring Industry Commission. However the Chairman, Justice Richard Kirby, refused to proceed unless Healy and Roach stopped giving "counsels of disobedience" to the Wharfies who had "unprecedented privileges" or unless they both resigned from the SIC.[21] The SIC did not meet again and was wound up by the repeal of the Stevedoring Industry Act, 1947. A new body, the Australian Stevedoring Industry Board (ASIB), Chairman, J. M. 'Joe' Hewitt, was set up under the Stevedoring Industry Act, 1949. On 20 December 1949, Judge Kirby dismissed another appeal.

After the January 1950 stop work meeting, the Branch Executive (including Albie Graham and Ted Englart) called for a Brisbane gang leaders' conference for 19 February 1950 where Ted Roach, the Assistant-General Secretary and Organiser, instructed 68 gang leaders out of 73 in his tried and tested tactics to win the hatch rotary. *I said to them: "this is how you do it; that's the important thing - how you do it".* They fixed Monday 27 February 1950 for the start of the Rotary Hatch campaign in Brisbane. Because 'the honeymoon was over' the new ASIB were digging their heels in. While they were passing memos and giving inadequate briefings to Minister Holt and Secretary Bland, Ted Roach and the Wharfies paralysed the port of Brisbane without going on strike. They were "ready and willing to work", but only on their Union hatch roster.

THE ROTARY HATCH DISPUTE: *THIS IS HOW WE DO IT*

The boys in Brisbane had all that fun that we had on the Keni in Kembla. They'd lap it up. The Boss had done them for so long, and now they were doing the Boss. They'd hold their sides, laughing. I'd say, "This is how we do it. That's the important thing - how we do it". You see, there are four or six (cargo) hatches (on a ship). You go to the hatch, off the Union roster and not where the foreman sends you. The thing is don't argue with them. Say: "Right-oh, mate!" go to your hatch and start work. What can they do? They can't hit you with a lump of 'four by two'? What can they do? Go and turn the steam off? Then they've stopped our boys from working! I was very good at that, if I do say so myself. And didn't they love it? Oh, they'd giggle like little girls! — "Right-oh, mate!" "Right-oh, Bill!" and then they'd go straight to their Union hatch number and start work. Oh, they'd fall over laughing. And the foreman'd be screaming and tearing his hair: "Hey! I told you to go to No.1! Hey! Hey! I told you to go to No.6!" "Right-oh! Right-oh, mate!" I know it was a bit frustrating to them but they couldn't do a bloody thing about it. Now, this is how we do it: you go to where our roster tells you to go and then you start work. When the foreman screams at you: "I told you to go No.4", don't argue with him. Say "OK, mate" and keep on working. And do you know what would happen? They'd race down below and cut the steam off so we couldn't do our bloody work.

On 23 February 1950 Ted addressed a Wharfies' mass meeting in Brisbane Stadium. Taking a lead from CPA President, Dick Dixon, Ted said: *History has taught us new ways to fight the Boss*. Ted said that *rolling strikes* would hit the waterfront, Australia-wide. Dixon had mentioned 'rolling strikes' to the Central Committee when they discussed the failure of the NSW Coal Strike. Dixon didn't think it up himself but had read about its use "in Italy". "The Courier-Mail" got a reporter into the members-only Brisbane Stadium rolling-strike meeting (Fig 21) and the newspaper went into paroxysms of anti-Communist ecstasy over Ted's emotion-charged address to the Wharfies (Fig 22). Leading Communists knew Ted Roach from this kind of report in the Capitalist Press and their attitude to him was coloured by such reports. The "super-conscious vanguard of the most politically conscious section of the industrial working-class"[22] were unconscious of this fact. Giving a lead in militancy, Ted had foreshadowed the rotary hatch campaign when he said, at the Wharfies' Biennial Conference on 24 December 1949, that *after five and half years'* delay, the Wharfies would *campaign for pensions and guaranteed shifts.* He said *a Federation offensive* was necessary.[23] Ted would *give the Employers until January 31, 1950*[24] to get down to business.

"Rolling Roach!"

I bluffed a lot despite what they all say. I'm "Rolling Roach!". I'm a stirrer! I'm going to hold the country to ransom! I'm this and I'm that — that's completely wrong! Maybe you give the impression or you give the employers the impression that you're going to play hell. But you see, you've got yourself a back out all the time. Even the kind of resolutions I used to develop always. You draft the resolution where you let the employer feel the weight of your straight left, and then he's afraid you might hit him with a right-cross next time. You just move along on the basis of his understanding of the situation. This was the time when Dixon and the CC-CPA were emphasising the dangers of 'The Crimes Act' and of Menzies' 'Red Bill'. In the Rotary Hatch dispute, Ted and the Brisbane Wharfies tore up Section 30J of The Crimes Act. The Rotary Hatch dispute victory was Ted's second, extreme public humiliation of the Queen's man, Sir Robert Gordon Menzies. *Not only would we make it impossible for Menzies to govern but we would punch a hole right through the Crimes Act*.

On 1 March 1950, 240 men went to their Union Roster's hatch number in Brisbane port and were sacked. The SIB issued an Order of restraint on the Union canceling their attendance money for 28 days. On 6 March, 1761 men 'forced the roster' (went to their Union Roster's hatch number) and were sacked. With more Court Orders taking away "annual leave credits for three months" and more sackings, the gangs adopted different tactics each day. They would work three days and 'put it on' for the next two.

Fig 21 'Dislocation Plans for Industry'
Source: 'Courier Mail' 24.2.50

DISLOCATION PLANS FOR INDUSTRY

Bris. Courier Mail. 5-2-50

MIXED RECEPTION FOR "ROLLING STRIKES"

By a Courier-Mail Reporter, who attended the watersiders' meeting

THREATS by the Waterside Workers' Federation assistant Federal secretary (Mr. E. Roach), that industry would be dislocated if watersiders' claims were not granted, received a mixed reception at a mass meeting of watersiders yesterday.

Mr. Roach, a communist, announced that the Australia-wide "rolling strike" would be stepped up next week.

Mr. Roach made no mention of any immediate stoppage on the Brisbane waterfront.

He was addressing 1800 watersiders at a legal stop-work meeting in the Stadium at 8 a.m

The feeling of the meeting was indicated by the support given to views expressed by Mr. J. Moriarty, as member of the Waterside Workers' Federation Brisbane branch executive.

After Mr. Roach had spoken of stepping up the "rolling strike," Mr. Moriarty said he felt that watersiders should be assured that there would be no stupid stoppages.

"We don't want any more stoppages like the one recently on a ship which was not even black," he said.

Mr. Moriarty was referring to a dispute on the Dutch freighter, Aagtekerk, following a mistaken belief that the ship was involved in a Sydney ban.

An appeal by Mr. Moriarty to the meeting to "let us forget all about communism and the rest of the 'isms' and present a solid front for Labour," was greeted with "hear-hears."

Technique of rolling strike

OUTLINING plans for the "rolling strike," Mr. Roach said: "We know where the important ships and cargoes are."

Strikes could break out at Port Kembla, Newcastle, or Townsville, he continued.

It was planned that watersiders would report for work

But Roach's boss says:

SYDNEY, Thursday.—**The Waterside Workers' Federation federal secretary (Mr J. Healy) said to-night that the story of a red plot to dislocate the waterfront industry was based on a distorted report of a closed meeting in Brisbane.**

"Reference to any plan decided upon by the federation is just conjecture," he said.

Suggest report to board

WHARF STOP

SHIPOWNERS in Brisbane yesterday urged **that reports of the Brisbane waterside workers' meeting should be taken to the Australian Steve-**

"DIRECT LINK IN STRIKES"

SYDNEY, Thursday. — **Moderate union officials say there is a direct link between strikes on the northern New South Wales coalfield and waterside disturbances in Brisbane and Melbourne.**

Labour affiliated unions have not yet declared their policy, but they regard the waterside and mine disturbances as a direct challenge to the Menzies Government.

In Sydney to-day the Coal Industry Tribunal (Mr. F. Gallagher) said that strikes at 23 northern mines yesterday and other stoppages today were caused by somebody unknown and were a cunning plot to get round the long service leave award.

He asked the Miners' Federation secretary (Mr. G. W. Grant) if the strikes had been deliberately caused.

Cause unknown

Mr. Grant, an A.L.P. supporter, said he thought the strikes were deliberately organised, but he did not know who was responsible.

Mr. Gallagher was told that the men had struck against his decision rejecting wheelers' claims for a 3d. a ton increase.

Miners' Federation representatives later walked out of the hearing when Mr. Gallagher held that he had jurisdiction to proceed with a claim by coal owners for suspension of the miners' compulsory retiring age.

FANATICS ON WHARF

'Actions closely watched'

ADELAIDE Thursday.—The Federal Government was keeping a close watch on un-Australian tactics on the waterfront.

The Fuel and Shipping Minister (Senator McLeay) said this in Adelaide to-day.

He was commenting on the series of strikes which had broken out at Queensland ports. He said:

"The Government is watching the fanatics on the waterfront who were bent on stirring up class hatred, fomenting trouble, and doing everything in their power to prevent peace in industry, cooperation, and goodwill.

"I am very concerned at the constant, irritating rolling strike tactics adopted on the waterfront, which are causing shipping hold-ups in important Australian ports every other day.

"If the people responsible realised how desperate it was to keep ships moving so that shortages could be overcome they would do something to help instead of hinder.

"There is adequate provision in the various industrial and conciliation tribunals to hear legitimate claims."

May outlaw rolling strikes

MELBOURNE, Thursday. — The Australian Council of Trade Unions may "outlaw" the Waterside Workers' Federation if it carries out a "rolling strike campaign" not authorised by the Trade Union Movement.

In Melbourne to-day the A.C.T.U. secretary (Mr. R. R. Broadby) said that the A.C.T.U. had not been informed of the reported intention of the Waterside Workers' Federation to conduct a national campaign in pursuit of its claims.

"As there is an obligation on unions affiliated with the A.C.T.U. of which the Waterside Workers' Federation is one in regard to disputes, I sincerely hope that it will consult, through the A.C.T.U., other unions which must inevitably be affected," he added.

Fig 22 'How Long Must We Take It?'
Source: "Courier Mail", 24.2.50

On 20 March Brisbane's SIB man, Bill Ball, reported to Joe Hewitt the SIB chairman: "on Monday, waterside workers on all but six ships in the port were dismissed after the morning tea break for refusing to continue in the hatches to which they had been allotted. Three of the six ships had one, general cargo and one, freezer gangs. These gangs are not interchangeable and therefore the question of rotation of hatches did not arise. One ship had one gang only. The remaining two ships were placed in accordance with the system of rotation of the hatches."[25] On 22 March, Ball reported: "at 8 am we commenced to pick up labour. The first man selected, G. Godfrey no. 664, was asked by me: 'did you refuse to work as directed by the employer yesterday on the *Denman*?' He replied, 'Yes'. I then said: 'Your registration is now suspended for seven days'. This was in the presence of Mr Kirkpatrick, Acting CIS Superintendent.[26] Immediately Mr Graham, Brisbane Assistant Secretary WWF, intervened and said: 'Are you picking up labour or suspending men?' I replied: 'I am picking up labour'. He then said: 'you suspended an individual and we object to individuals being dealt with. They acted collectively on the job, and the Court Order suspended attendance money payments[27] and annual leave credits on that basis only. Therefore, unless you deal with them collectively, nobody will answer their numbers I am sure of that.' I (Ball) then instructed Mr Walton to proceed with the calling of the men's numbers. He did so. No further day workers answered their numbers. I then told the men through the loudspeaker that those who had failed to answer their numbers were now classed as absentees. At 8.30 am the same procedure was adopted with the night shift workers and two men, Spokes and Crameri, admitted the offence of which I had charged them. I notified them, in the presence of Mr Kirkpatrick and Mr Walton, that their registrations were immediately suspended for

seven days. The remainder of the men did not answer their numbers and I also told them, over the loudspeaker, that they would be classed as absentees. At 9.50 am the same procedure was adopted with all men who had re-registered this morning (absentees for sickness, leave etc) and not one man answered the call. I informed them also by loudspeaker that they were classed as absentees. **In all these calls 1421 men refused to answer**."[28]

Telephone Call to Joe Hewitt

Bill Ball, the Brisbane Port chairman, telephoned Joe Hewitt, the Chairman SIB,[29] and reported: "there were some 1424 waterside workers at the pickup and three were suspended for seven days each. Roach, Englart, and Graham saw him (Ball) and were given the message after which the (Wharfies') Executive convened a meeting commencing at 8.30 a.m." Hewitt continued, repeating Ball's report to him: "Ball set a deadline". At 10.50 am Albie Graham reported to Ball: "The Full (Brisbane) Executive has discussed your requests and has declared that no such undertaking can or will be given, and further our members are available for work and are willing to accept engagement". Ball said "not on those conditions. Englart addressed men and CIS was present. Ball said the D.C.S. (present CIS) took names of 18 men who came back from leave and who did not answer names." Ball also told Hewitt there were:

1. "the usual attempts to confuse the issue;
2. a taking away of right to strike (c.f. Isaacs 12.8.1949);

"They are in [a] special position," Hewitt said. "They get particular privileges such as attendance money, complete monopoly of the whole of waterside work in return for which a code of discipline has been followed in the industry ever since special waterfront tribunals were first set up in 1942.

3. a protest to Ball by Graham, the Committee Assistant Secretary, and Englart, the Committee Secretary against the Board taking action against men."

Then followed [Minister] Harold Holt's personal phone numbers: Sorrento 96 (Mr Holt's weekender), and BJ1126, F0494. Then for Attorney-General (J. A. Spicer) "must be left to court in view of subsequent development".[30]

"Not Show Weakness - Nor Provoke"

In his notes, Mr Hewitt was worried about how to solve this dispute and in a "quandary as to exact line - not show weakness - nor provoke". He suggested this approach be taken with Brisbane Branch: "can Court be satisfied by proper undertakings as to (Wharfies') behaviour, and recourse to Arbitration, in the period of three months?" Meanwhile, Prime Minister Robert Menzies spoke on Radio National, Melbourne on 26 March, climbing right down from his high horse with the big stick of 'The Crimes Act' shaking like a devilled sausage in his hand, telling the Brisbane Wharfies that if they returned to work on Monday morning, "all of you will be eligible for selection". One Brisbane Wharfie heard it: Albie Graham. Then Mr Hewitt, in his shorthand notes, recorded what Judge Kirby "will say": "Kirby **to say** men re-employed by Prime Minister (Menzies) - fresh start - had it not been for this, I make it clear that future orders won't automatically be relaxed. Also (Wharfies') behaviour in three months".[31] These notes show how close and how secret were the communications between Judge Kirby and Joe Hewitt, working with the Menzies Cabinet Sub-Committee.

"Didn't See Ted Roach"

Astute Wharfie Wally Stubbings[32] said he "didn't see" Ted Roach at the Rotary Hatch Dispute. Wally was fair in his estimation of Ted and was able, objectively, to give some genuine observations about Ted in the 1960s. But the Communist Party's furphy that "Roach had nothing to do with it", as claimed by other CPA Wharfie members, is obviously completely untrue. Joe Hewitt, as Chairman of the SIB, knew that the National WWF Organiser, Ted Roach, had everything to do with it and, with ASIO, followed Ted up and down the Queensland Coast from January to March 1950. Here are extracts from Mr Joe Hewitt's notes headed "D.T. of 3/2/5033":

"CAIRNS - (Roach) was there for stop work meeting on 26 January. There were disputes about extra men for work on *Bilkurra,* a cement ship, on 23/2, 24/2, 27/2, 28/2 and 3/3. There were minor stoppages on 12 occasions between 31/1 and 21/2, in attempt to force an issue concerning extra men raised by Roach during his visit."
TOWNSVILLE - (Roach) was there 25 January. Stoppages 28/2 to 1/3 on cement ship - 1232 man hours lost.
BOWEN - (Roach) was there 28 January; men immediately stopped on *Arraiz*, said 'twas a Fascist ship.
MACKAY - (Roach) was there 31 January; men had unauthorised stoppage to hear address by him and on his advice refused to work whilst Bowen men under suspension. Port tied up from 31/1 to 7/2/1950 - 9702 man hours lost.
BRISBANE - (Roach) was there 2 February. Rotation of Hatches strikes were on 1, 3, 6, 7, 13, 14, 20, 21 and 22 March."

The notes also show Ted Roach went on a delegation with Albie Graham and Ted Englart to see Bill Ball (ASIB) in Brisbane on Wednesday, 22 March 1950.

But despite all the bureaucratic duck-shoving and Mr Hewitt revealing, again, how distant the bureaucracies were from both the real history of the wharves and the actual conditions in the holds of stinking hot ships, the Rotary Hatch Dispute which started on 1 March, entered an uncontrollable, critical phase by 23 March. Bill Ball spoke to Joe Hewitt at 9 am who wrote down these details of ship delays:

"STEEL - "*ALLARA*" - idle ten days;
"*RIVER BURNETT*" and "*RIVER NORMAN*" - 14,000 tons held up;
COLD STORES (Hamilton) 60,000 boxes of butter held up;
WOOL - 25,000 bales held up; and ship by ship:
"*MALOJA*" - left 10,000 boxes of butter;
"*MORETON BAY*" - fortnight's delay;
"*ORMISTON*"- 1,500 tons light;
"*CARLISLE*" - 1000 tons light;
"*DENMAN*" - three killings of meat for this ship (have had to dispose of it, because of delay); "*CORINDA*" - 9 days late;
"*CARDROSS*" - 10 days late;
"*CARADALE*" - 6 days late."

Then followed the names of 28 ships held up from one to eight days, for example "*GLOUCESTER*" 4 days, and "*TARANAKI*" 5 days and so on.[34]

Ted revelled in the ringcraft (the tactics, strategy and skill of a boxer) and the rosin. He loved a battle. He was used to winning. Abuse flowed off him (see Fig 23)[35]. Newcastle Stadium in the 1930s and the Queensland track were tough schools. It wasn't only what a man said but what he did that counted. Ted's organising made Wharfies disciplined, focused team members. Ted knew the weaknesses of his opponents, their lack of hands-on knowledge of wharf work and conditions, and their perpetual underestimation of Wharfies who were "only labouring types"[36]. Not only did Ted want to win the Rotary Hatch Dispute for the Brisbane Branch but: *We would make it impossible for Menzies to govern, and we'd punch a hole right through the Crimes Act.*

"A Blind Man Playing Dominoes"

On 17 March an unsigned letter went to Harold Holt, the Minister for Labour. The letter on file[37] is by the Acting Chairman of the Waterfront Employment Committee (WEC). It said: "the present series of senseless and irresponsible strikes" are planned "in the interests of International Communism to disrupt the Australian economy". Ted Roach's work examined throughout this book however, shows that he was both a supporter of independence for his Federation (the Wharfies), and the Australian Trade Union movement, and also a supporter of independence and prosperity for Australia within the context of World Trade.

Fig 23 'Egg Strike' – Roach in Charge?
Source: "Telegraph" (Brisbane). 13.3.50

Ted exposed the piracy of shipping freight rip-offs (1957) and pushed for:

1. trade with Socialist countries;
2. an Australian independent shipping line;
3. Wharfie-farmer unity; and
4. in 1952, Ted Roach was one of the first persons to advocate Australian Trade with Red China.

This 17 March WEC letter denied in paragraph 1 that "ship owners were prone to victimise men who had militant industrial histories, and allocate them to dirty jobs and small hatches". Yet in the same paragraph it said "There is no doubt that ship owners do, in fact, reward the better type of workers with work in the largest hatches. This is, of course, a reasonable line of action".[38] The Acting Chairman was closer to Ted Roach's range of tactics when he said: "Communists do not believe in conciliation and arbitration; they are prepared to accept from industrial tribunals, whatever benefits they can; but their beliefs are founded on direct action, and the rejection of decisions which do not suit them"[39] though the last item is just not true. Again, there is the long-range analysis and subjective opinion instead of fact, for example "the Communists make no secret of their aim to have the Board abolished and the Union de-registered",[40] again untrue. It was Harry Bland himself who said he wanted the WWF deregistered so he could register a tame cat Union (see chapter 19). But so sudden, quick and paralysing was the Brisbane Rotary action that the letter-writer is like a blind man playing dominoes when projecting his "likely course of future events in future (sic)"[41] in trying to redeem the situation.

His summing up reads like a nightmare for someone dedicated to destroying militancy on the waterfront: "at the beginning of this week, 20 ships had been delayed a total of 62 days, and there were a further 17 ships which were being delayed. Cargo is being short-loaded, refrigerator storage space in the meat works is reaching saturation point, there is a delay in the loading of wool, and ships programmed to load the fruit crop, from Tasmania, are being delayed seriously. Mr Redix, whom you know is the Chairman of the Central Committee (of the Commonwealth Steamship Owners' Association, CSOA), had represented very strongly to me that if there is to be a continuation of the behaviours, the port should be closed until

undertakings are given that there will be compliance with the Award and Orders".[42] Mr Menzies's Cabinet in Canberra then issued a proclamation under Section 30J of the Crimes Act and attempted to lock the Wharfies out of the Port of Brisbane.

Healy to Broadby

A letter by Wharfies' National Secretary Jim Healy to Mr Broadby, General Secretary of the ACTU,[43] gives a history of the Brisbane Rotary Hatch dispute, omitting Port Kembla where Ted Roach first introduced the hatch rotation strategy and where the winning tactics had been worked out by Ted. Jim Healy added: "this report, covering a fairly lengthy period, is somewhat abridged but it will serve to give the outstanding points that occurred on the various dates referred to". Jim Healy's "abridged" report was based on the detailed, on the spot report, sent to him by Ted Roach from the Rotary Hatch Dispute in Brisbane. Healy said to the Wharfies' Federal Executive: "Mr Roach has had more close contact so far as the Branch members are concerned and he will be able to report to you from the Branch members point of view".[44]

Jim Healy thought he had a right to abridge Ted Roach's reports when they showed to the ACTU Executive, and the Ship Owners, that Ted Roach was continuing an independent line of direct, militant action in the Wharfie Branches. Ted and the Wharfies' branches had employed "many and varied forms of direct action" since Ted's election in October 1942, as Assistant-General Secretary/Organiser, to win Wharfies' basic demands. To complete Brisbane's claim for the court, Jim Healy then filled in a pro-forma affidavit to the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, NSW, dated "sixth day of April, 1950" and witnessed by "K. Nicholas JP", saying that Brisbane Branch would submit their Rotary application to W. Ball, Chairman, and that they had resumed work apart from "one-stop work meeting".[45] Here was Jim Healy 'signing and sealing' the document of agreement, a formal process usually done by articled clerks in lawyers' offices, resulting from successful industrial action organised by Ted Roach and so fulfilling policy decisions of Wharfies' at WWF Bi- and Tri-ennial Conferences.[46] On 26 March, Prime Minister Menzies broadcast a message on 3KZ, Melbourne, saying that Wharfies who had resumed work on the next Monday, 27 March, would be "all available for selection" without penalty. The Brisbane Rotary Hatch dispute had been won.

EVERY MAN WAS AWARE

On 5 September 1950 Ted reported on the Rotary Hatch Dispute during the delivery of his Assistant-General Secretary/ Organiser's Report at the Wharfies' Biennial Conference in Sydney:[47] *On the Brisbane rotation of hatches dispute, I feel it would be of advantage to say something about the tactics; it would be of advantage to the members in some of the campaigns they wage, from day to day, on the job. This rotation of hatches dispute arose out of the stop-work meeting decision. This decision on policy by the Brisbane Branch was that the Branch was in favour of the rotation of hatches. They decided to call the gang leaders conference. They contacted me. I was in attendance at the gang leaders' conference. I believe there were about 73 gangs in the port, 68 of whom attended this meeting. We had two or three hours' discussion on tactics. I feel that the way the tactics were carried out by the gang leaders was something I hadn't seen, in my experience, inside the Federation before because each gang leader felt he was part of the whole campaign. It wasn't some decision, made and handed on to him to carry out. He took part in the making of these decisions, he understood them clearly, every man went on the job and every man was aware of the part he was to play in the waging of this dispute. Invariably of a morning* ***we were able to change the tactics*** *on the job, in accordance with the experience of the previous day. In the first two or three weeks of the rotation of hatches dispute, our tactics were such that the members were earning, I believe, as much money with waging a campaign for two days a week, and working for the rest of the week, as they did before the dispute. Monday and Tuesday, the fight would be waged and then resort to normal work on the Wednesday.*

Tactics in other ports, visited by Ted, included winchmen leaving their winches, men refusing to answer their names, refusing to work extended shifts, unauthorised stoppages and claims for extra rates.[48] *We reached the point where the employers were so exasperated every time they would develop a move, the*

following day we would develop a counter move, and keep ourselves in a good, tactical position. First of all, the employers would stand at the ship's side when the gangs were sent down. The gang leaders would know the rotation, at which they came off the board, would go to the job and allow the foreman to place them, then without argument, walk to the job designated by the pick-up lists at the pick-up centre. This was anticipated, on the first morning, and they were sacked. Assurances were demanded from the men before they went up the gangway the following morning. It was decided that in view of the experience of the previous day, they would go on the job and not effect the changeover until smoko. The result of it was that when the switch took place, after smoko, many hatches had tents on and the men were sacked with no real disadvantage. The next tactic developed was to take off the tents, after smoko, before the switch.

This campaign went on for week after week; every time the employers and the court would make a move, we would develop a counter-move and kept ourselves in a very good position indeed until the Government was forced to come right into it (through PM Menzies's address on 3KZ Melbourne). *In this dispute, the first move was made against Annual Leave and then they finally locked the whole of the members out of the Brisbane waterfront.* (Perhaps there was a cut here? author) *I feel that the lessons of these tactics were that if the workers are taken into our confidence, and all take part in making the decisions, in this way, and carrying out the decisions, in this way, it will strengthen our whole hand, as they did in Brisbane, where we obtained the absolute maximum amount of unity in the struggle, and there were very few errors in the carrying out of the tactic.*[49]

There appears to be something deleted from Ted Roach's report above, because there is no confirmation of the complete victory Ted and Brisbane Branch had in the Rotary Hatch Dispute. Just as Ted's essential leadership of the Pig Iron Dispute would be omitted, and the fact that he was put in charge of Dutch Ships, three times, would be omitted, so too this complete Rotary Hatch Dispute victory hasn't been mentioned in books; nor the fact that Roach and the Brisbane Branch defeated Menzies' use of 30J of the Crimes Act. It wasn't so much to deny the individual, Ted Roach, his true accolades but rather to deny the tactics and methods he used in generating highly-disciplined "many and varied forms of direct action" to "force the issue". These tactics ran contrary to the growing bureaucratisation of the Trade Union Movement and the entrenching reformism of its leaders, including Communist leaders. The quotes above are the recorded form of Ted's report. The result was a victory for Brisbane Branch and Ted Roach's Rotary Hatch tactics. It was the second time Roach had convincingly defeated Prime Minister Robert Menzies in a major industrial dispute. Ted showed that the biggest stick of all, the Crimes Act, could be rendered ineffective by organised, disciplined rank and file action. The Communist Party of Australia had just made a call for action against the Crimes Act. Roach took action. The matador's cape, the Crimes Act, was waved but Wharfies blew their noses on it and went back to work. But did the CC-CPA notice? Soon after, the Menzies Cabinet Sub-Committee, legal beagles and spooks, redoubled their efforts in the SECRET hunt for the blood of Ted Roach.

Our Strength Will Win this Issue

On 7 March 1950, the Wharfie Bulletin from Brisbane stated: "the Shipping Bosses have always been anxious when in trouble to call on their friends, the Kirbys, in their endeavours to reject our just claims. There have been many threats of suspensions before, but they have fizzled out when we showed fight — remember the freezer clothes argument? If the boss had to depend on his ability to defeat us, we would have a walkover, so he calls on his old backstop, Arbitration, and today they say we are fighting the Board. We are fighting the bosses for Rotation of Hatches in this campaign, and if we find his allies in the way, well, we are not afraid to fight them also."

That Attendance Money

The Wharfie Bulletin continued: "The Ship Owners, through their tool, the SIB, have made much of their threat to take our attendance money away. BUT HERE IS THE JOKE! Official figures show that for the last twelve months, the amount of attendance money we have received is 7 shillings per man, per week. This is the big stick that the Board has been holding over our heads since we won attendance money. It's

about time the Board told the truth, on these issues, and let the citizens of Brisbane know how much attendance money we have received - yes - a lousy deena (shilling) a day.

Ships and More Ships

"The fact that there are twenty-one ships in port strengthens our position which we must take full advantage of. The boss realises this too, hence the absence of suspensions. Imagine the pressure which is being brought to bear on the shipping companies by big business, whose profits have been interfered with, while we are not allowed to work. The stupid ban on Sunday work has worsened their position, and the weather has been to their disadvantage. Workers are often accused of holding the community up to ransom, but here we have a picture of the shipping bosses dislocating shipping transport because we insist on something, which is their recognised way of work, in other ports, by the same companies and on the same ships. Let them be consistent and let us work as our mates in all Eastern ports except Brisbane.

Unity Will Win

"The inspiration to win this campaign has been strengthened further by the unity in action of our Federation and the strict adherence to discipline. "The Courier-Mail" raved and ranted about the dictatorship of our union, on every issue we have faced, but now they are floundering today because 76 gang leaders are applying the tactics in our present campaign, which have been carried out loyally by us all.

Forward to Victory

"Today, we are on the eve of clinching the final point of victory, our answer to yesterday's sackings can only be to apply our rotation principle again today. Let us call on our Executive to instruct our gang leaders on the tactics before we leave the shed. We can win this demand, now let us show how determined we are to win by loyally fighting as one. Unity makes the Working-Class invincible. Let us be bold and fearless but undivided. The ships are in Port, the bosses want them turned around, because their profits have stopped. We will work their ships, as we tried to yesterday. FORWARD ON THE GANG LEADER'S ADVICE TO THE VICTORY THAT IS ALMOST OURS."[50]

The Fun of It

The boys had all that fun, like I had in Port Kembla, you know. The boys in Brisbane, they used to laugh as hard. They knew they were doing the Boss. They'd laugh as hard, they'd fall over laughing. They were diddling the Boss, and the Boss had diddled them for so bloody long. They were like dogs let off a leash, running around with happiness. And the boss tearing his bloody hair: "I told you not to go there. I told you to go to No.1". "OK, OK", they'd agree with him all the time and start working on their Union Hatch number.

ROACH ON THE RED BILL

Ted could see the flow of play in politics. Just as his resolutions on Armistice Day 1937 predicted the Australian Government's position in relation to Japanese Imperialism and Militarism, so on 12 June 1950 at the WWF Executive meeting Ted correctly predicted that Wharfie leaders, Communist and Labour, would be snaffled once Menzies' Red Bill was passed. This is confirmed by Colonel Spry's letter[51] in which Spry gave the early bird hit list of Communists to be 'buckled' once the Red Bill went into operation. It is an axiom that forewarned is forearmed and Ted was good at forewarning events, such as mechanisation of the sugar industry in Queensland. Ted took a lead from the CPA leadership who correctly saw the dangers of the Red Bill.

In Ted's report to the Wharfies' Executive on 12 June 1950 he said: *it was stated that on information received it appeared that the* [Red] *Bill would become law within five or ten days; once it becomes law, then it will be used. Immediately that happens it will operate against a number of officers of this Federation, and then we will have let Menzies move in against us. I do not see how, under any stretch of*

the imagination, Mr Clarke [Grouper Melbourne] *can say that this is aimed at a particular political party* [the CPA]. *Menzies once before declared the CPA illegal.*[52] *He did not have to bring down an Act like this, an Act to put Trade Union officers in gaol and so on. They were able to proceed before. They have on many occasions, proceeded under the Crimes Act against people who indulged in so-called 'subversive' activities. They do not require a Bill like this to do that. But they require a bill like this to hamstring the Trade Union Movement and to impose wage cuts and war on the people of Australia. This Bill is designed to hammer down any resistance. It is not only the Communist officials. It is going to be all officials who try to carry out a job for their members. We have to be able to make up our own minds and to be able to see the reasons why Menzies is bringing down the Bill and be prepared to say if you move against our Union, against the members of our Federation, we are going to take the most effective action in order to prevent you doing that. I would say to Mr Clarke he is quite entitled to vote against any proposition but he does not come here representing the views of the rank and file membership.*[53]

"WHAT SORT OF COURT?" THE ARBITRATION COURT, MELBOURNE

Judge 'Alf' Foster, who attended Melbourne Socialist Sunday School, was the judges' delegate in 1950 and complained about the shortage of judges:

> Mr McCormack: "Most of these unions have now filed claims and those claims will be listed again tomorrow."
> Foster A. C/J: "That means they will require three judges?"
> Mr McCormack: "Possibly."
> 'Alf': "Yes, we will note that. By the way, **I hope the parties will keep the court informed as to what sort of court they want in each case, because it is beyond us to remember**".[54]

When Ted was later 'tried' or processed, for contempt of the Arbitration Court — by Foster, Dunphy, and (new judge) Wright — the issue of "what sort of court" was argued out by Isaacs KC, Ted's defence barrister. A later legal opinion held that it was "ultra vires" the powers of this "sort of court", to constitute itself a 'court of superior record', conduct a criminal proceeding against Ted and sentence him for "contempt of court".[55] So Foster's issue of "what sort of court they want" was crucial for Ted. "They" are the Menzies Cabinet Sub-Committee, Attorney-General's legal beagles, and ASIO. Foster agreed with President Truman and R. G. Menzies about the 'Red Peril'. He said: "A war economy, and so an inflationary one, may be necessary because of the threat implicit in the Korean episode, to which Mr Wright, in the last words of his address, referred".[56]

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[1] To the author, by phone, 11.8.1998.

[2] See Harry Bland's letter, chapter 19.

[3] Author was present at this meeting in the Sydney Trades Hall.

[4] "Spoke to Mr Roach on this. He said Federation later notified Branch Townsville that Federation satisfied re destination of skins, but there was doubt in the first place, and there is a ban on consignments of skins to Spain." SP 1509/2 W 55, "B. B." 8.5.1947.

[5] ST 4 433/Box 1, D.T., 3.2.1950.

[6] Reynolds, Edwin. (pen-name) "Red Hand Across the Waterfront", (pamphlet) Vid. R. C. Archbishop Duhig, Brisbane, September, 1936: "General Franco is fighting for the life of his country, its institutions, and its ancient civilisation, against the ***emissaries*** of Moscow, and barbarism, and atheism which they represent", Hearn, M. op cit., p.7a.

[7] Film on McCarthyism, "Scandalise My Name", SBS, 10.2.2001.

[8] "J. E. Roach", vid Bennett to Bailey, SL 58445/2/RMB, 18.1.1951.

[9] S 1509/2 W 55.

[10] See chapter 20.

[11] "The Mackay Mercury", S 1509/2, 4.2.1950

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid. The ACTU full Executive decided: "We believe ... there is a Communist conspiracy in Australia."

[14] "He (a Sydney journalist) pointed out that for democracy and ballot secrecy, and safeguards against irregularities, no ballot in the Commonwealth could beat it (the Wharfies' ballot) including parliamentary elections," Docker, "FCM", 24.7.1961, p.7.

[15] See Harry Bland's letter, chapter 19.

[16] Massey to SIB ST 4 433 Box 1.

[17] 'pitch and toss': rhyming slang for boss.

[18] 'emptied': sacked.

[19] "The Courier-Mail", Brisbane, ST 4 433 Box 1. 5.2.1950.

[20] "MW", June 1948. In Greece, 18,000 political prisoners were in gaol and 1,327 were executed. "MW", June 1948.

[21] Kirby, J. — letter to each Wharfie — 1949.

[22] Author's paraphrase of self-definition by Communist leaders, in line with definition by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

[23] "FCM", 24.12.1949.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ball to Hewitt, Hewitt to Miss Stafford, ST 4 433/1 Box 1 17.3.1950.

[26] Commonwealth Investigation Service (CIS) established in 1946 and the pre-cursor of ASIO.

[27] Attendance Money from 2 January 1947 to 1955. Wharfies were paid (total) £2,806,389 'attendance money'. A report on file by the Acting Chairman of the Waterfront Employment Committee complains of Wharfie "privileges". It says that the SIC has "a policy of erecting canteen buildings, shelter sheds, and other buildings. Water coolers and innumerable other amenities for waterside workers have been, and are being installed, throughout Australia. In all, the sum of £266,928 has been expended for these purposes. In addition, in the years 1948 and 1949 the sum of £481,899 was paid to waterside workers by way of attendance money throughout Australia". Organiser Ted Roach played a leading role in getting these conditions and in establishing 'Attendance Money'. They were not 'granted' by the SIC but won by struggle and Ted's superior tactics. 'Attendance Money' was a Roach idea, and by struggle Healy, Roach and the Wharfies had won the condition.

[28] Ball to Hewitt, Hewitt to Miss Stafford, op. cit.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Bill Ball, ST 4 433/1 Box 1.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Phone conversation with the author, 1998.

[33] ST 4 433/1 Box 1 D.T.3250.

[34] Ibid.

[35] **Editors' note:** Fig 23 is another illustration of the regular lampooning and insults Ted Roach had to put up with from Brisbane's tabloid press during the city's WWF Rolling Strike period in 1950, this cartoon from the Brisbane Telegraph, 13.3.50. In addition to the cockroach puns (see Fig 20 and Fig 22), 'Roach' is now depicted as the name of someone's rooster who has organised the hens to go on an 'egg strike'.

[36] Harry Bland letter.

[37] Letter to the Minister, 17.3.1950.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Healy to Broadby, 23.2.1950.

[44] "FEM", 25.3.1951, p.26.

[45] AA 51/11, 51/13342.

[46] "FCM", 2.5.1949, p.32. Jim Healy: "We convinced Morrison, and I left the meeting with the document signed and sealed at 16/- etc".

[47] Roach, T. "FCM", 5.9.1950 pp.7-9 and following.

[48] See ASOA statement of Waterside Disputes at Queensland Ports, January to March 1950. ST4 433/1 Box 1.

[49] Roach, T. "FCM", op cit., 5.9.1950

[50] "Wharfie Bulletin", Brisbane, 7.3.1950.

[51] AA M1509/1.

[52] **Editors' note**: In 1940, the wartime Menzies Government banned membership of the Communist Party using the Government's wide emergency powers provided by the Australian Constitution in times of war. In 1943, the Curtin Labor Government lifted the ban.

[53] "FEM", 12.6.1950, p.175.

[54] A 451/50/6709, p.21.

[55] A. E. McIntosh and Henderson, solicitors, "Opinion", 4.3.1965.

[56] A 571/158, 1949/1006, p.21. S. Wright was the employers' advocate in the basic wage case.

Chapter 17
BASIC WAGE DECISION: 1951 - FOSTER GAOLS TED ROACH

In the long drawn out Basic Wage case of 1949-1950, barrister Mr S. C. G. Wright KC, Judge 'Alf' Foster[1], Judge Richard Kirby and Sir Harry Bland, the intrepid Communist hunter[2], were the secret weapons of the Government(s). The court's marathon sittings, and interminable depositions from the employers and their advocates like Sid Wright KC, were a provocation to the Unions and to Ted Roach. For most of the Basic Wage case, Jim Healy was overseas.[3] Ted was chafing at government 'assurances' as he watched opportunities rise and slip away unnoticed in the ideological hangover the CPA leaders suffered after the Coal Strike (NSW 1949). They sang: "Though cowards flinch, and traitors sneer, we'll keep the Red Flag flying here" — and Claude Jones[4] noticed a few comrades "flinching"[5] before the onslaught on the Communist Party and Democracy in Australia, fanned by the anti-Communist fury in the USA. The Yanks had 'lost China', but they weren't going to lose any more. Judge Kirby was an essential player in the open, and secret[6], legal and governmental security operation to trap, 'fit' and goal Ted Roach. According to "Dutchy' Young, Kirby also had a 'leading part' with J. M. 'Joe' Hewitt of the ASIB in drafting the Communist Party Dissolution Act.[7]

Wright KC could fair dinkum talk under water. He could 'backmark' the greatest earbashers on the Sydney Waterfront — out and out champions like 'Have-a-Chat', 'The Balmain Budgerigar', 'The All Night Chemist' and 'Blah Blah from Malabar'[8] — and beat 'em by the length of the straight. Wright KC was a purple ribbon champion. After warming up for nearly a year in the Basic Wage Case, he backed up immediately and was the secret weapon of Sir Ken Bailey, Joe Hewitt[9], Robert Menzies and 'Black Harry' Bland who chose him[10] in coaxing, boring, and precipitating Judge 'Dirty Dick' Kirby to change the way the Wharfies' wages were calculated by changing their 'divisor' from 30 to 32.3 casual hours per week. This change meant the Wharfies didn't get the full increase of twenty shillings or one pound. They only received ten shillings. According to Ted: *They gave us the full quid but they changed our formula of rate per hour and we only got 10/-.* Ted pronounced 'divisor' derisively as "dee-vye-zore", one of those magic terms used to confuse and mystify the illiterate and semi-literate masses. The "dee-vye-zore" scam was a brilliant manoeuvre by ASIO and spooks, worked out in the bowels of the Canberra bureaucracies. Its aim was to trap "the Roach in question",[11] knowing Ted would react to this 'wage robbery' of his members. Ted responded in his Circular 2/51 ER, and in "The Maritime Worker" of 13 January 1951. A judge said Ted had "suggested" Judge Kirby and the court were "corrupt". *No, I didn't "suggest" they were crook. I said they did it. I said they robbed the workers, and they changed it back later.*[12]

A SECRET ASIO report of March 1950 stated: "The ROACH in question is Assistant-General Secretary of the WWF and also I understand, a member of the Central Committee of the Australian Communist Party". The report includes a photo of Ted at Eagle Farm Airport, Brisbane, catching a plane back to Sydney. Ted was not a member of the Central Committee-CPA. This lawyer's phrase, "ROACH in question" shows a common thinking, and concentration on Ted by the legal beagles. My guess is that Sir Robert Menzies, himself, would have originated "The ROACH in question...". Why? Because so many of his legal support team wanted to echo the Prime Minister.

During the long Basic Wage case, the CC-CPA sent Doug Olive to tell Ted: "the Party wants you to 'get into' Kirby in the court". Ted didn't change his style but argued very coolly with Judge Kirby — *ease 'em over, ease 'em over, ease 'em over* — until Kirby became *quite rattled ... and unusually insulting and abusive for a judge of the court.*[13] In the Arbitration Court, R. W. Harvey, who Ted called *the CSR mouthpiece*, said that Wharfies, 'necking sugar' on contract rates at Lucinda Point (Queensland) didn't need any increase in the basic wage. They didn't need any more money, he said, because, in the tropics, all they needed was "a Jackie Howe singlet, and a pair of shorts". *I phoned Lucinda Point, and I told them what this dirty bastard had said, and I said: "Protest! Protest!" Kirby wanted them back. I rang, and I couldn't even get onto the bastards. The bastards went bush. I couldn't even find the bastards, let alone bring them back.*

In the court, Ted said to Kirby J.: *by Mr Harvey's own statement, these two gangs of men handle one-tenth of the total sugar of Queensland, and the ten carries thirty tons an hour which means there are three tons across a man's neck in one hour.* Ted wanted Harvey to apologise. *I would say that 30 tons an hour is as big a tonnage as is obtained anywhere else in this country and the CSR should have been satisfied with the magnificent work our fellows are doing, and should be prepared to weigh that, rather than to come here to this court, and malign these men who are doing such a magnificent job.*[14] Doug Olive bought a second message to Ted: "They (the CC-CPA) want you to 'get into' Kirby, but they don't want you to go to gaol". Ted must have thought he was in one of those 'Gilbert and Sullivan Operas' which he'd noticed in 'Djokja' in May 1947, on the eve of one of the greatest Trade Union assemblies ever in South-East Asia.

"A FAIR INFERENCE": TED ROACH AND THE BASIC WAGE DECISION

In December 1950, Judge Kirby said there were "very, very few (Wharfies) who had not been participants in some sort of stoppage, or some sort of lawlessness" ... "I would put it further, as a fair inference from the information submitted that the rest of them are of the same heart anyhow."[15] Nothing like an impartial, non-emotional, objective, non-prejudicial appraisal of events by a Justice of the Arbitration Court! The thresher shark technique!

A Cargo of Polish Urea – Mackay, December 1950

In Mackay, Queensland, the *Omsk* (USSR) was unloading a poorly stacked cargo of Polish urea (ammonium sulphate), bagged in breaking paper bags. It was the wet season and the urea was rock hard. A photo of the *Omsk* hatch, possibly taken by Ted in "The Maritime Worker" of 13.1.1951, shows "the loose sulphate of ammonia covering the bags to a depth of up to 8 inches. The bags are not stacked evenly and every bag has to be lifted out — as they are *set* in the stack. Also the bags broke easily when they were pulled out of the stack and dropped a couple of feet. This was the hatch where fifteen bag slings were given a trial for the benefit of (port inspector) Mr. Griffiths." According to wharfie Cyril Crouch, it was a: "bastard of a job. They were diggen' it out with picks, and carryen' it in buckets. I nearly left the wharf over it."[16] The job was a series of running disputes, and wet weather stoppages. The principal dispute was about how many men below and how many bags in a sling? Local secretary, Massey, asked for the same number that Townsville won for a similar, cement job but this was **refused**.

At this time the port inspector for Mackay, Douglas Pritchard Griffiths, was in Melbourne "on leave". Melbourne was the headquarters of Frank Galleghan's Commonwealth Investigation Service, intricately involved in "Top Secret" spookery,[17] liaising in secret with ASIO, Attorney-General's Department, Harry Bland, Joe Hewitt and the Menzies Cabinet Sub-Committee. Why did Griffiths go to Melbourne? Whom did he see? What did he discuss? Ken McNamara, of Sydney, was the relieving port inspector. Ted asked that the Chief Officer, Bill Ball from Brisbane, be sent to Mackay as the Board had done in the past but this was also **refused**.[18] In a WWF Circular 2/51 to the forty one Wharfie branches, Ted said: *Kirby refused to deliver judgment in the Basic Wage case, notwithstanding our protests that the Mackay dispute had no relation to the basic wage, and adjourned the case to 11 am on Monday the 18th December.*[19]

Ted flew to Mackay on 17 December and addressed the branch members, saying to Alex Massey that Griffiths seemed "prepared to do something". Massey agreed to resume work on D. P. Griffiths' terms — the Boss's terms.[20] Ted asked Massey to send him a telegram in confirmation, which Massey did. In the Arbitration Court in Sydney (19 December 1950), Bill Baker, a lawyer representing the WWF, read out to Judge Kirby Alex Massey's telegram to Ted: "BRANCH TODAY DECIDED RESUME WORK, AS SUGGESTED BY GRIFFITHS, STEVEDORING INDUSTRY BOARD REPRESENTATIVE AT CONFERENCE FRIDAY, MASSEY." (Tuesday 19.12.50. Time 9:05 am.)[21] But Judge Kirby appeared to be taking a cue because he interposed immediately with: "That is what the men want, but what about the employers, and the Board?" (The men wanted a 12 bag sling in one hatch, and a 15 bag sling in another.) In the light of the 'Top Secret', and 'Most Secret', spookery in relation to Ted Roach, Judge Kirby's sudden interruption sounds like a pre-determined question from a secretly prepared script. Massey's men had left

the job again, because D. P. Griffiths phoned Mr W. M. Paxton Chairman, Adelaide Steam Ship Company, ASOA, Brisbane, and Paxton **refused to endorse** Griffiths's ruling. Isaacs KC confirmed this when he asked Foster J., during Ted Roach's 'trial' (1 March 1951): "what happened when the Ports Inspector, (McNamara), and Mr D. P. Griffiths flew back from Melbourne, and made a decision. And Paxton, CSOA Brisbane, refused to accept their agreement?"[22]

Ted described the *Omsk* events to the Wharfies' Executive in Sydney on 3 January 1951:[23] *I advised the court of my information and produced the telegram. I said I had no reason to believe the Branch had not carried out the terms of the telegram. Lo and behold, after some discussion* ***it became clear that the employers were on strike****. They were not prepared to accept the terms suggested by Griffiths, the real Chairman, and it took some argument to convince Kirby he should not withhold the basic wage decision* ***because the employers were on strike; the employees were ready, willing and able to go to work****.*[24] Adelaide Steamship Company's lawyer, Mr Burt, said to Kirby: "I am in rather an embarrassing position in so far as I do not know what influenced the minds of the employers (that is, Paxton in Brisbane) when they received this proposition."[25] "Judge Kirby is aware that there is an 'acting local representative' in Mackay (McNamara from Sydney) and that D. P. Griffiths has been back 'from some days on leave.' Not on holiday?[26]

Judge Kirby wanted Ted to "direct" Mackay Wharfie branch members to return to work or the judge would withdraw all orders and awards from Mackay Port. But Ted 'studiously avoided' making a joint direction with the judge*: I'm sorry I will not do that — I will not line up with the court and direct my men because independence in the Union is so important to me. Easy for me to say "we give you a direction" — the court and Roach. Well, I wouldn't be in that. No, the court can do as they like. Roach wouldn't do it. So I got the plane. Bang! I'm in Mackay, meeting on the Sunday, got it all fixed up and I'm back to give them a fait accompli.* ASIO were gloating that Ted might not get a plane back in time from Mackay for the court in Sydney on 19 December. But Ted caught a twin-engine, Lockheed S-14, straight down. This was all to no avail **because Paxton cancelled Griffiths' return-to-work agreement with Massey.** On the next day, 20 December 1950 at 4.55 pm, two security officers served Ted Roach with a summons in Wembley Chambers. Ted was charged with "not using his best endeavours" to get Mackay back to work, and with promising "in bad faith, and with reckless indifference".[27, 28]

In the Big Trawl for Ted, Sir Ken and ASIO sought any pretext for a case, clutching at any straw. Ted said to Kirby J.: *Your Honour, I gave the undertaking about this matter relating to Mackay the other day. I gave the undertaking in all faith, and in all seriousness ... I have advised the Mackay Branch that an undertaking was given and I say that I gave the undertaking in good faith. With respect to the undertaking I gave the assurance that it would be carried out and, if necessary, to carry out that assurance. I was prepared to fly to Mackay, and to see that it was carried out. I have done my best to see that this undertaking was carried out.* These Mackay events formed the basis of the first set of contempt of court charges against Ted Roach.[29]

Bennett to Bailey

On 5 January 1951, the Deputy Commonwealth Solicitor, Bennett,[30] wrote to Bailey, the Commonwealth Solicitor-General, and noted: "Kirby J. suggested the Commonwealth might consider advising Registrar that he should take proceedings against Roach:

1. for having given an undertaking in bad faith,
2. if given in good faith, not having taken steps to have it carried out."

The notes also said: "ACTU (Monk) wants a meeting at 2.30 p.m.; L&NS (Bland) agrees; **Don't tell Roach the reason**; Give Roach notice late this afternoon."[31] These are notes about an ACTU meeting which Ted Roach would attend. In contrast, Sydney WWF officials, Tom Nelson and 'Ivo' Barrett, commended Ted's demeanour and behavior in court: "If any fault could be found, it would be that he did not kick up enough noise in the court", said Tom Nelson.[32] Barrett walked out of the court. He felt that "we should have got up and interjected about this attack" but, he said, Ted was "anxious not to do anything to upset the court."[33] These statements answer the false charge that Ted was a 'firebrand' and a 'hothead' who couldn't keep his cool. The point is that Menzies, Bland, Spry, and Spicer wanted Ted in gaol and devised secret intrigues to

put him there.[34] The WWF Executive resolved complete satisfaction with the work of lawyer, Bill Baker, and Acting General Secretary, Ted Roach, in the Basic Wage case.

Kirby J. wanted to bring down the Basic Wage decision, his first. He said: "I don't think there will be anything controversial."[35] Giving all workers a pound (20 shillings) rise, and Wharfies half of that, only ten shillings, is not "controversial"? Well smothered, your worship! Judges Higgins (1914) and Beeby (1936) had stuck to the 30-hour divisor but in Kirby's opinion, and "a reluctant opinion in a number of ways,"[36] he will change it to 32.3. Coal-trimmers in Newcastle will keep their divisor, 27, that would not change. Why had he changed the Wharfies' divisor? Kirby said: "it seemed to shriek aloud for some kind of change."[37] Kirby also said that if he changed the divisor, he "**would be creating a status quo which would be entirely false, and which would have to be changed in a few months time**."[38] "The Sydney Morning Herald", "The Sun" and "The Mirror" said Wharfies had been paid the full pound but then printed the 10/- story the next day. According to the WWF lawyer Bill Baker: "A false report, following the false reports of the previous evening, has done a great deal to stir up discontent and confusion among wharf labourers throughout Australia."[39] Kirby J. was quoted as the alleged source of these false reports which would have further concentrated Ted's indignation on Kirby. Kirby restored the 30-hour divisor on 26 March 1953.[40] The "shriek" had faded away to a whisper.

Foster's judgment in the Storemen and Packers' 'divisor' case shows the genre of high farce operating in the Industrial Courts at the time. "How does the court ascertain the actual hours of work? By evidence adduced by the parties? There is none. Then, by agreement? There is none, though employers admit that a figure of 32 should be adopted. Can there be a decision without evidence? There is none. So? So to the employers who say 'we admit there is no evidence, but we want 32 not 29' - they can have it!" (Foster J.).[41]

Ted had roneoed Kirby's divisor judgment to all Wharfie branches, for members to read, and study. Ted Roach's Circulars 72, 75 and 80 set out what the divisor decision meant to Wharfies' pay packets. Ted's words sing: *The reaction throughout our Federation to the basic wage decision is such that discontent is seething, in such a way on the waterfront that members are demanding the full pound, as determined by the Full Bench, and a reversion to the 30-hour divisor. They have bombarded the court from all directions with telegrams of protest and threatened action. The court and the Government are extremely concerned and apprehensive at the possible way in which the hostility of members is going to find expression in our industry. They are very much concerned that a special Federal Executive was called, specifically for this purpose and, therefore, are making Mackay a national issue. The proceedings against me for contempt of court are a diversionary issue, in the hope that they can select the ground to fight the Federation on rather than the Federation selecting the ground around the 32-hour divisor and the wages steal to fight the Government and the court. The decisions of the Federal Executive have already been conveyed to Branches, and it will be agreed from these decisions that we have not allowed the attempted, diversionary moves of the court and the attempted intimidation to prevent us from commencing the campaign around the real issues. Yours fraternally (sgd) E. Roach, Acting General Secretary.*[42]

Overtime Ban

Ted Roach's idea was that, since Kirby had put overtime into the divisor equation, the Wharfies would use a ban on overtime as a lever to get the 30-hour divisor back. An excellent tactic! The 'overtime ban' was a Roach motion: *"that unless satisfaction is obtained before 5th February 1951 that, on and from that day, the only work to be performed in any branch must be within the hours of:*

1. *Day work 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday inclusive;*
2. *Evening work 5 p.m. to 11 p.m., or 6 p.m. to midnight (whichever is applicable), Monday to Friday inclusive;*
3. *Overtime includes Saturday, Sunday and all meal hours, and no work should be performed on these days, or in these hours;*
4. *No work whatsoever shall be performed on any holidays."*[43]

Brisbane's 'Albie' Graham said: "I believe branches should flood Kirby with protests, not only Kirby but also the Commonwealth Government. As the Crown is the party moving in, I think we should move in first and tell them what we are prepared to do if they go ahead with the proposals Kirby has made."[44] As if

waiting in the wings for their cue, Melbourne Groupers 'Gus' Alford and Bert Clarke started screaming about Bill Baker and Roach's handling of the Basic Wage case. Bland's admitted plan in his secret letter (see chapter 19) to split the Union, and remove the Communist and militant leaders, was jerked into action by the Melbourne Groupers who were in tandem with ASIO and Bland. The Melbourne Groupers said in Sydney's "Daily Telegraph"[45] that they will fight against the overtime ban in every way, "short of breaking with the Federal Council to prevent the ban" (Jim Cummins, President Melbourne Branch, WWF). They went from counter resolutions to action and by March 1951, Melbourne Grouper Councillors had addressed meetings in Fremantle, Brisbane and Newcastle, and tried to bring about a split in the WWF. Albie called them "Holt's Heroes."[46] Ted told the members: *It is quite apparent that if the Arbitration Court is going to determine just what Trade Union officers shall say in Circulars they send to Federal Councillors, branches, or members and what should be said in our Union journal, published for the benefit of members, well then, it is time that the Labor Movement did something about it.*[47]

Sydney Branch held an ebullient, united, stop work meeting on 10 January 1951 at which Ted Roach received tumultuous applause. Even members of 'the Movement', for example Cain, supported Ted Roach and the ban. Here was a 'United Front' — a 'United Front' born from the need for unity in basic industrial struggle for wage justice. The bubbling militancy was peppered by the 'divisor' robbery and anger at being 'dudded' by Judge Kirby, after such a long wait for a basic wage increase. Resolutions condemned Kirby for 'computing overtime hours' with 'ordinary hours' to change the divisor from 30 to 32.3 hours — pointing out that many branches worked as low as 20 hours — and resolved not to work certain overtime. They also resolved that: "this stop work meeting of the Sydney Branch views, with concern, the vicious personal attack on the Federation, through the Acting General Secretary E. Roach, by Judge Kirby during the hearing of the Mackay dispute."[48] "Many declare it was the best meeting ever held by the Sydney Branch for it was deeply stirred by indignation and an impatient demand that the Federation fight back".[49]

Galleghan, CIS, wrote to "The Director, Canberra" on 10 January 1950 saying that "approximately" 1700 out of 7000 Sydney branch members attended this Leichhardt Stadium stop work meeting.[50] He said: "Barrett moved that, in the event of any action being taken by the court against E. Roach, the matter be referred to the ACTU", stating that this would ensure "a complete industrial tie-up". (Naive? Or something else? 'Ivo' had more faith in the ACTU Executive than Ted Roach.) The seconder was Mattie Munro (CPA) saying: **"We will walk off ships if any action is taken against Roach"**. The CIS report continued: "Roach was well received, and cheered, when he advised the meeting of his conversation with Judge Kirby. He concluded by stating that the whole matter of the basic wage adjustment arose as a result of personal spleen between himself and the judge, and that the members of the WWF were being penalised as a result. He asked that the members not strike if he was sent to prison."[51] What Ted also said was: *Don't worry about me, keep your eyes on the ball,* that is the 'divisor' wage steal. Ted said to the author that he certainly expected a mass campaign for the release of himself or anyone else who was unjustly gaoled for standing up for basic Trade Union principles.

"THIMBLE AND PEA" CARTOON IN "THE MARITIME WORKER"

"The Maritime Worker" of 13 January 1951 was the 'divisor' edition. Ted asked Herb McClintock to do a cartoon showing a judge doing the 'thimble and pea trick' with the Wharfies' ten bob and flippering £13,000 per week (from 26,000 Wharfies), to a cigar-sucking ship owner (Fig 24 below). This amounted to over £650,000 a year. Ted Roach said that Kirby's 'divisor' decision was *infamous*, that it was *a wage-stealing decision*, and that it was Kirby's *confidence trick*. The cartoon showed a wide-awake Wharfie holding a pay slip saying 'Ten Bob Light' and captioned: "The sleight of hand of the 1 pound basic wage rise." When, late in his life, Ted Roach received copies of the 'Thimble and Pea' cartoon and other records from Noel Butlin Archivist, Mr Ewan Maidment, his interest in his own story was re-kindled. Ted hung a copy of the 'Thimble and Pea' cartoon up on the wall of his home at Revesby in Sydney. *There it is in all its glory.*

Fig 24 'Sleight of Hand and the £1 Basic Wage Rise'
Source: 'Maritime Worker', 13.1.51

Commonwealth Solicitor-General Sir Ken Bailey pencilled instructions on the margin of the letter from Frank Galleghan (CIS): "Search at R(egistrar) G(eneral's); Get copy Union rules; Find out what branches to subpoena;[52] find out what secretaries to subpoena; what is the method of publication and distribution of paper ("MW") and circular; who roneoed circular? More "Maritime Worker" copies".[53] Ted's Circular No. 2/51 and "The Maritime Worker" (13 January 1951) in which Ted tears the divisor 'wage steal' decision to pieces, formed the basis of the second set of contempt of court charges against Ted Roach. The Deputy Crown Solicitor, A. G. Bennett, wrote to Sir Ken on 14 February 1951, outlining preparations for this second case against Ted: "I am informed that it has been intimated to Counsel for both sides that the court will be available only on 28th February and 1st March, and that if the proceedings do not conclude then an adjournment will be necessary." This was a prepared arrangement for expediting Ted's 'trial'. Bennett continued: "The Deputy Registrar indicated that the views of the Judges were that the summonses should be supported by a short affidavit, and these have been settled by counsel. Three copies of each affidavit are herewith. It is thought by counsel that, at any rate, in relation to the 'newspaper' charge, the affidavit is sufficient to establish a prima facie case".[54] On 5 January 1951, Bennett wrote to Bailey with a note in the margin of the letter: **"Judge Kirby has matter in hand."**[55]

In line with the many strong resolutions recorded by Wharfie Branches over the previous two years in relation to court threats to Trade Union Officials, Townsville Branch WWF resolved "that if any action is taken against Mr Roach, or any other official in this matter, **all work on the entire Australian waterfront cease immediately."**[56] Telegrams poured in from delegates, from Wharfie gangs, ship's crews, factories, workshops and universities. There was a torrent of telegrams of high political content. The whole of the Wharfies' Federation was harnessing for battle. Ted Roach and Jim Healy had trained the Branches to respond and send wires and letters to all appropriate authorities. This flood of telegrams, the Sydney Branch meeting, and many other meetings right across the social spectrum, supported Ted Roach giving the lie to the furphy, still repeated today, that: "The (Wharfie) Branches didn't want to take action over Roach's gaoling."[57] This is a fib, an absolute fib, like a number of porkies[58] invented and repeated about Ted Roach. As he lined up one of the biggest industrial counter punches ever Ted felt, though at first bedding in on the obvious issue of overtime, that ***we are in a strong position.***[59] At the ninth session of the Wharfies' Executive, with Beitz, Clarke, Graham, Lonergan, Nelson and Roach, he reported that, out of the 25,900 Wharfie members in 41 branches, 19,150 (38 branches) endorsed the overtime ban, and 6,440 in two branches (Melbourne and Thursday Island) "do not express themselves in favour of the proposals set out."[60] Judge Kirby, Joe Hewitt and Professor Ken Bailey had acted unwisely in putting overtime in the divisor equation. Albert Monk of the ACTU said at the Wharfies' Executive[61] that it was "not ordinary industrial practice". Albert showed a commendable streak of solidarity when he said, as an aside, that the object was "to put Ted Roach in goal."[62] The speed and enthusiasm of the Wharfies' responses from the 41 branches gave Ted and the Wharfies' Federal Executive the ammunition for the overtime ban. The Menzies Government, the Court, and the Security Police were in a weak position. Ted was organising a Nation-wide Wharfies' response, the culmination of 14 years work and eight years solid organising. It was an historic moment, fraught with potential, requiring leadership.

The 'Dutch Ships' ban had been lifted eighteen months earlier. Organising contacts and extended networks of communication around Australia were alive. Here was an undeniable issue, nothing to do with the 'Communist conspiracy'[63] but the robbery of the members by Judge Kirby on behalf of the Federal Government and the Ship-owners of £13,000 a week, or £676,000 a year. There is little doubt the Wharfies would have finished in front. Roach had not lost a battle, only a few skirmishes, in 13 years of campaigning. And after the Brisbane Rotary Hatch victory, Ted Roach had a decided psychological advantage.

TWO SETS OF CONTEMPT OF COURT CHARGES AGAINST TED ROACH

"We say this is a rebellion against the System."
S. C. G. Wright, KC, 15.12.1950[64]

The first set of contempt of court charges against Ted Roach, over the *Omsk* dispute at Mackay in December 1950, were heard in Sydney on 11 January 1951. Ted's defence barrister, Mr Isaacs KC asked Justice Kirby: "…. for an adjournment of this matter, your Honour. The summons, apparently, was only issued on the 4th [4 January 1951] and it appears on the face of the summons to have been issued **without any evidence; no particulars have been given**, excepting that in some general way there are four charges of contempt alleged...". Isaacs then pointed up the difficulties of the holiday period and continued: "the summons is of **a somewhat extraordinary nature** in that as I indicate to your Honour, on the face of it, it does not appear to have any applicant, does not seem to indicate upon whose application the summons was made, and there is no evidence in support of the summons. As a rule, one sees some affidavit filed in support, **but one sees no such evidence here.**"[65] The prosecuting barrister, Mr S. G. Webb KC, was not fazed that the summons had been issued without any evidence. Like the others in Canberra, he was convinced that 'Roach' was very, very guilty indeed, and said: "this defendant, if I may call him that, may have been stood up by Your Honour and committed out of hand."
Mr Isaacs: "I dispute that."
Mr Webb: "Of course you do, otherwise you would not have made that long speech."[66]
Mr Webb's aggression and interruption of Ted's defence barrister, Sammy Isaacs, set a pattern for the peremptory behaviour of Ted Roach's four prosecutors in his future 'trial'. Without warning his 'learned brother' Isaacs KC, Mr Webb then introduced new charges based on Ted Roach's printed, and written, response to 'Kirby's Wage Steal' in changing the Wharfies' 'divisor' from 30 to 32.3.[67] This sudden, new set of charges threw Mr Isaacs off balance for the moment, and Ted Roach's second 'contempt of court' case was adjourned until 28 February 1951.

After reading *in a newspaper* on 21 February 1951 that he had been named 'the applicant' in two summonses against Ted Roach for 'contempt of court', the chief Industrial Registrar Mr J. E. Taylor[68] wrote to the Commonwealth Crown Solicitor, Sir Ken Bailey. Mr Taylor was more than annoyed that the summons said he, Mr Taylor, "swears" to the contents of "The Maritime Worker" of 13 January 1951, and to Ted Roach's WWF Circular (No. 2/51 ER). In his letter to Bailey, Mr Taylor said that "in both summonses" he was named "the applicant". "But," he said: "in neither case, however, was I informed that summonses were to be filed, **nor have copies of the circular and newspaper, in question, been seen by me.**" Mr Taylor requested that, in future, he "be informed of the intention to initiate such proceedings and so, in cases such as this, he **be given an opportunity to read the articles complained of**". If this isn't done, he said, it could prove "embarrassing" for the (Menzies) Government because in the last paragraph of Bailey's affidavit, it is **sworn** that "Mr Taylor charges that Ted Roach published, or caused to be published, or was privy to the publication of the said edition of the said newspaper ("The Maritime Worker", 13 January 1951) or WWF Circular (No. 2/51 ER) as the case may be. (Signed J. E. Taylor, Industrial Registrar)"

King George VI v. Ted Roach (For A Cartoon And Certain Words)

No. 40 of 1951. James Edward Taylor v Edward Charles Roach Respondent: "George the Sixth, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Defender of the Faith to Edward Charles Roach, 104 Hunter Street, Sydney. Greeting. We COMMAND you to attend the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, 119 Phillip St., Sydney on Thursday the first of March, 1951, at the hour of ten thirty, signed 19th day of February, 1951 - J. Welbourn Deputy Industrial Registrar." I wonder if Ted Roach would be thinking of taking the Eureka Oath,[69] in response to the hearty summons of His Majesty King George the Sixth, "the Defender of the Faith"? What rips of black blood such summonses had rent from the hearts of Patriots in Ireland, Revolutionaries in Africa, and Trade Union militants in every smoky, industrial wasteland of the British Empire? The Special Investigator, W. H.

Barnwell, 'served' the King's command on Ted at 4.55 pm on 28 February 1951 at the Wharfies' National Office, 104 Hunter St., Sydney. *I made them read out the summons*. "This is for next Thursday," Barnwell said. ***I will be there***.[70]

Ted's trial was duly held on 1 March 1951 for alleged 'contempts of court' in a WWF circular, his 'Thimble and Pea' cartoon (Fig 24) and his report in "The Maritime Worker" of 13 January 1951. Ted's case, which began at 10.35 am and occupied about 95 minutes, was heard by Arbitration Court judges Foster, Dunphy, and new judge, Wright, elevated by Attorney-General Spicer for his (Wright's) successful advocacy for the employers in the Basic Wage 'divisor' case. The prosecuting barrister was Webb KC while defending Ted Roach was one barrister, Sammy Isaacs KC. Justice Alf Foster set the tone for Ted's 'trial' when he said in perfect pentameter: "Is that the Roach involved in these proceedings?"[71] Isaacs thrusted home producing the correct argument, predicted by Solicitor-General Bailey,[72] that "'contempt' does not apply to tribunals which do not exercise judicial functions or which are not, at the time, exercising a judicial function".[73] This opinion was confirmed five years later by A. E. McIntosh and Henderson, a long established Sydney firm of solicitors, with their finding that the contempt charges against Ted Roach were beyond the jurisdiction ("ultra vires"[74]) of the Arbitration Court and therefore Ted's trial was illegal. Isaacs said further: "There are many tribunals that have the appearance of a court, the trappings of a court. There are many tribunals that make authoritative and binding decisions but not only the Privy Council, but the High Court, has pointed out time and time again that those features notwithstanding, the tribunal does not exercise judicial powers."[75] But Justice Foster insisted: "It is a court of superior record", which were Bailey's instructions.[76] The four judges interrupted Isaacs, talked across him, and mocked the KC to the point of flippancy — Dunphy J: "You missed out the bit about hair splitting lawyers."[77] Foster J. also put words in Isaac's mouth: "Perhaps it is an answer to another thing you said, that the court is one-eyed..." Mr Isaacs: "I did not say that, Your Honour...".[78]

Justice Foster used a telegram of protest from Port Lincoln Wharfies to attempt to intimidate Isaacs, who responded: "so far as the telegrams are concerned, I do hope Your Honour absolves me from any part of them". Foster J. said: "Of course, I do. No one of any moment ever suggests you had anything to do with it, or that you would have countenanced it." Isaacs replied: "I appreciate what Your Honour has said and I will have your remarks conveyed to the association (Wharfies). I would remind Your Honour that in these proceedings I appear only for Roach."[79] Not "my client Mr Roach", or "Mr Roach ", but "Roach"! Isaacs KC was in the know. He was not representing "the defendant Roach", nor "the defendant Mr Roach", nor "the defendant, Ted Roach". The 'Roaching' of Ted had spread to his barrister in defence. How many times would you have needed to have heard it, and from whom, to adopt it for your client?

Foster had to coach prosecuting barrister, Webb KC:
Foster J.: "Very well, go ahead. I assume you can get it in. If you cannot get it in, in the end, we will rit all. You want to tender it as an exhibit of what? You have already had it admitted that the contents of this document are the circular?"
Mr Webb: "Yes."
Foster: "What is the next step?"[80]

Isaacs KC attacked the integrity of the legal process, presided over by Acting Chief Judge Foster. Isaacs said: "and one must bear in mind again the very strong attack made by the article upon the judge in question, **suggesting that he was a political Judge, subservient to the political bodies that appointed him, and, in effect, dishonest in the judgements that he was delivering**."[81] Is Isaacs, by implication, describing Judges Foster, Wright and Dunphy, now 'processing' Ted Roach for contempt of the Arbitration Court? Foster showed his mood of anticipation, predetermination, and prejudice, in this exchange about the word 'infamous'.
Isaacs: "It all depends on the circumstances and context in which the word is used."
Dunphy J.: "And the people to whom it is addressed."
Isaacs: "I concede that. That is what I said earlier, that that is a circumstance which must be born in mind."
Foster: "If it were addressed to a group of people who were very anxious that the court should be destroyed, would that be a matter of aggravation or mitigation?"

Isaacs: “I do not know what Your Honour means by addressed to a group of people who were very anxious that the court should be destroyed.”
Foster (Acting Chief Judge): **“That cannot be quite right.”**[82]

But Dunphy, Wright, and Foster were vaudevillians, real Prom Artists. They kissed puns to each other, and kissed them back. They made in-jokes at Roach’s expense: “He’s going to gaol, and he doesn’t know, yet.” (Laughter.) The three were in the know. They’d just completed a full season in the long-running Great Basic Wage Show, provocatively drawn out, and out, and out. Their script, their verbal interplays were like Soccer greats warming up; their combination had become an instinct. “Who is this earnest little man? This Trade Union leader?” Another ‘divisor’ type word was bowled — a googly, ‘gravamen’ as in “that is the ‘gravamen’ of the situation”. Alf bowled that one. And ‘incarceration’: Wright J. smiled and said: “For my edification what types of incarceration are there at the Long Bay Penitentiary?” (Chuckle!). Ted could hear the rusted, leprous pipes of Long Bay Gaol’s sewerage system making digestive noises for him. Foster sentenced him to two lots of twelve months, served concurrently, in Long Bay Gaol — “prisoner simpliciter”.[83]

> “ROACH GETS 12 MONTHS FOR CONTEMPT”: (Fig 25) “Roach (sic) who was wearing an open-neck sports shirt, and sports clothes, was taken to Long Bay gaol a few minutes before 1 p.m. He was led (cuffed, author) from the court by uniformed and plainclothes police to the basement of the building where a police car was waiting in the section occupied by TAA freight office (Fig 26). As Roach was escorted to the car by police, he smiled and made no attempt to dodge the battery of cameras” [84].

Fig 25 Ted Roach Taken to Long Bay Gaol, March 1951
Source: photo kindly provided to Author by Ted Roach

Note that the Capitalist Press (see Fig 26) persisted with the policy of painting Ted Roach as an irresponsible 'lair' who dressed casually for court, and who didn't try and dodge the cameras. Ted Roach told me that he had tried to hold up his hand-cuffed hands, so the Press would take a photo and print it, to show how he was handcuffed and whisked from court to solitary in Long Bay Gaol, after the briefest and most farcical of 'trials'. Harry Bland confirms in his letter (chapter 19) that ASIO and the Menzies Cabinet Sub Committee have a policy of using the Press to create false pictures of people, to divide loyalties, and to smear and lie about militant leaders.

Fig 26 'Roach Gets 12 Months for Contempt', March 1951

Source: 'Sun' (Sydney), 1.3.51

ROACH GETS 12 MONTHS FOR CONTEMPT

Edward Charles Roach, assistant general secretary of the Waterside Workers' Federation, was sentenced today to 12 months imprisonment for contempt of court.

A stay of proceedings with a view to appeal was refused by the Full Bench of the Arbitration Court and Roach was removed in custody.

Roach was not sentenced to hard labor, the Acting Chief Judge (Mr. Justice Foster) saying that this was because the court did not want him to associate with criminals.

Roach appeared on two summonses issued by the Industrial Registrar, following publication of a circular, an article and cartoon in the Maritime Worker.

The circular read in part: "It will be seen that Kirby became quite rattled at the fact that his attempt at intimidation of myself as a federation officer by the use of his security police and his bright idea of a summons backfired on him and, as a consequence, he became unusually insulting and abusive for a judge of the court."

"Deliberate"

Mr. Justice Foster said the Maritime Worker contained articles which made a deliberate attempt to destroy the authority and prestige of the court.

It was one of the most serious attempts the court had been subjected to in its long history of 50 years.

"It is hard to understand how any section of the community should seek to destroy an institution which has done so much to settle the industrial disputes of this country," he said.

"The court regards it of extreme importance that prompt action should be taken to protect the court against the attacks from not only this defendant but to deter people of like mind from thinking they can attack the court without suffering the consequences."

Mr. Justice Foster said the attempt had not only been on the signity of the court, but it was also intended as a method of intimidation directed deliberately in Idissuading Mr. Justince Kirby from doing his public duty in the administration of the court.

Mr. Simon Isaacs, KC (for Roach), asked for a stay of proceedings for 21 days, to allow him to consider whether Roach should appeal.

The court rejected the request.

On the bench with Mr. Justice Forster were Mr. Justice Dunphy and Mr. Justice Wright.

Roach, who was wearing an open-neck sports shirt, and sports clothes, was taken to Long Bay gaol a few minutes before 1 pm.

He was led from the court by uniformed and plainclothes police to the basement of the building where a police car was waiting in the section occupied by TAA freight office.

As Roach was escorted to the car by police, he smiled and made no attempt to dodge the battery of cameras.

● **Police guard court —Page 3.**

E. C. Roach . . . gaoled.

Ted's gone, he's abandoned, but he's not alone. "Within a few minutes the men decided to strike." … "About 6000 wharf-labourers stopped work early this afternoon as a protest against the gaol sentence imposed on E. C. Roach, their assistant general secretary on a charge of contempt of court." (Fig 27).

Fig 27 'Cargo Working Halted'
Source: "Sydney Morning Herald', 2.3.51

CARGO WORKING HALTED

Reaction To Gaoling

The Arbitration Court yesterday sentenced Edward Charles Roach, assistant general secretary of the Waterside Workers' Federation to 12 months' imprisonment for contempt of Court, for the second time in two years. **(See page 4.)**

Within an hour of his conviction, work on Sydney wharves had come to an almost complete standstill. A mass meeting of Sydney watersiders has been called for this morning.

In Maryborough (Q.) last night the general president of the Miners' Federation, Mr. I. Williams, said it could be "confidently expected" that protest stoppages would occur on the coalfields because of Roach's imprisonment.

NO STATEMENT ON MEETING

The executive of the W.W.F. did not issue any statement explaining why the meeting had been called for this morning.

Officials said there had been a spontaneous demand for the meeting from members when they learned that Roach had been sentenced.

During the afternoon the Sydney branch secretary, Mr. T. Nelson, said a meeting would be held at the Leichhardt Stadium at 9 a.m. today.

He would not say what recommendations would be put before the men.

Last night the Federal executive of the W.W.F. issued a statement calling on all members to record "by all legal means available to them their protest against this heavy and extreme penalty" against Roach.

The statement said a £200 fine had been imposed on the metal trades employers for a contempt of the Arbitration Court and a Sydney newspaper had only been fined £200 and its editor £50 for a "scurrilous attack upon the Justices of the High Court."

But, said the statement, a "Left-wing union leader" was condemned to prison.

This statement was issued after a five-hour meeting of the executive.

CRIMES ACT

Before it issued the statement on Roach's conviction, the executive had issued one on the Government's warning that it would invoke the Crimes Act if the overtime ban was not lifted.

This ban was imposed as a protest against a decision of Mr. Justice Kirby on the application of the £1 basic wage increase.

The statement said in part:

"The attempt by Mr. Holt (Federal Minister for Labour) to revive the story of a cunningly devised Communist plan to promote industrial disruption centred on the waterfront to excuse the introduction of the Crimes Act against the waterside workers in this country only serves to expose the fact that the waterside workers' case is industrially sound.

"The intimidatory efforts by the Government to compel waterside workers to forgo their claims cannot succeed no matter to what lengths the Government attempts to go.

"It cannot be denied that the waterside workers are fully entitled to the same amount of increase as was granted to other Australian workers."

The executive yesterday conferred with officials of the Australian Council of Trade Unions and of the N.S.W. Labour Council.

MONK'S ADVICE

The president of the A.C.T.U., Mr. A. E. Monk, said last night that he had advised the W.W.F. executive to apply to the Arbitration Court for a review of Mr. Justice Kirby's award.

This advice was in line with the A.L.P. policy of arbitration and conciliation.

Mr. Monk said that while he was in Canberra to-day for the triennial A.L.P. conference he would discuss the waterfront dispute with the Prime Minister, Mr. Menzies.

Watersiders In Three States Stay On Job

Although Sydney wharf-labourers stopped work yesterday, those in Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth continued to load and unload cargo.

IN BRISBANE 1,400 men walked off the job as a protest against the sentencing of E. C. Roach, but 495 continued to work their ships last night.

Last night the Brisbane branch president of the Waterside Workers' Federation, Mr. W. Carrington, ordered the men back to work to-day.

He said the stoppages had not been directed by the union.

After the 3 p.m. smoko yesterday men walked off the freighters Afric, Royal Star, and Baninda.

Men on the freighters Overijsel, Taranui, and Enfield, and on the liner Esperance Bay, continued to work.

On the freighter Caloundra the men decided by a two to one majority to continue to work and only two gangs left.

The men on the General Guisan opposed a stoppage but walked off when watersiders left the Afric at a neighbouring wharf.

IN MELBOURNE there was no stoppage.

The Melbourne branch last week by a three to one majority issued an ultimatum to Federal officials stating that unless they approached the Arbitration Court on their basic wage claims, the ban on week-end work would be lifted from Saturday.

The Melbourne president, Mr. J. Cummins, said last night that there would be no cessation of work (if any) before the branch executive meeting this afternoon.

IN ADELAIDE it is understood watersiders have not decided on any immediate protest against Roach's imprisonment.

They are expected to report

Autumn But Six 100's

Six towns in north-west New South Wales had temperatures of more than 100 degrees yesterday—the first day of autumn.

They were Wilcannia (111 degrees), Cobar (110), Bourke (109), Hillston (105), Nyngan (103), and Broken Hill (101).

The Weather Bureau last night forecast cooler weather, with a few showers and southerly winds, for Sydney to-day.

(● Cause of Humidity, p. 10)

[1] 'Old Beetle Brows': Wharfies' nickname for droll Acting Chief Judge Alfred Foster, jurist and civil libertarian, who went to Socialist Sunday School in Melbourne, and was charged with treasonous utterances in WWI for criticising conscriptionist PM Billy Hughes. *Alf used to give a couple of hundred of pounds to Sheepskins for Russia.* Foster agreed with Menzies about the need for a war economy — "A war economy, and so an inflationary one, may be necessary because of the threat implicit in the Korean episode, to which Mr. Wright, in the last words of his address, referred". Foster, A. 571/158 1949/1006 p.21.

'Dirty Dick' Kirby: Wharfies' nickname for Judge Richard Kirby.

[2] Sir Harry was one of the planners of 'Operation Alien', a Top Secret, military-style plan, to declare, arrest and gaol Communist Trade Union leaders and their families (see Les Louis). Part of this planning was Menzies' Communist Party Dissolution Bill (the Red Bill) in 1950, but it was declared unconstitutional by the Australian High Court. Menzies then asked the Australian people through a referendum whether his Government could ban the Communist Party of Australia. They voted "No!" by a small majority.

[3] Jim Healy was overseas from 14.11.1950 to 17.2.1951, i.e. 95 days, and "visited Moscow, Leningrad, and many English and French ports" ("MW", 17.2.1951). Jim Healy was a delegate to the 82 Communist Parties "Partisans for Peace" Conference, banned in London, and moved to Warsaw, titled "SWIATOWY KONGRES OBRONCOW POKOJU", in "Warsawa". Second Congress of Partisans for Peace, Warsaw, 82 countries, 2000 delegates. Jim Healy and Rev. Hartley were elected to the World Committee of the Peace Conference. Jessie Street, Australian activist, peace and human right campaigner, was a delegate.

[4] Claude Jones in Party documents, a CC-CPA member, R/1/48 Vol.2, 8.7.1949, pp.110-115. See Claude Jones speech to CC-CPA, 1949, R/1/48 Vol.2 Exhibit No.1.

[5] "Though cowards flinch, and traitors sneer": lyrics from "The Red Flag" by Irish Socialist and Fenian, Jim Connell (1889).

[6] See SECRET Menzies Cabinet Sub-Committee Minute, 28.5.1951, Decision No. 10: "Cabinet agreed that prosecutions should be launched against Healy, Doyle, Donegan and Bird and that a public statement or statements should be made dealing with the use of toops on the waterfront, and the launching of these prosecutions". Signed A. S. (Allen) Brown, Secretary to Cabinet. A 4940/1 C 357 – SECRET – 10 copies only. Obviously, Ted had attracted Security and Cabinet Sub-Committee attention for many years. See Section 48 Crimes Act, 1914-1941: "Any person who attempts, in any way not specifically defined in this Act, to obstruct, prevent, pervert, or defeat the course of Justice, in relation to the judicial power of the Commonwealth, shall be guilty of an offence." A 432/80 51/150. See Crimes Act File M 146/1. See A 432/82 No. 1949/391.

"Proposed prosecution of Persons behind unauthorised stoppages of work by Waterside Workers in various states on 28th March, 1949." See annotation on A9790/1, 1434 Part 3, document 5947/42/954 H (1946), Strictly Confidential: "it was decided to goal Ted Roach."

[7] "Justice Kirby and Chairman of the SIB, Mr J. Hewitt, took a leading part in drafting the present Act", 'Dutchy' Young. "FCM". 12.6.1950, p.176. "An Act to provide for the dissolution of the Australian Communist Party and of other Communist Organisations, to disqualify Communists from holding certain offices and for purposes connected therewith", 51/13342, p. 3.

[8] From "The Scallywags" manuscript by Johnny 'Scooterboot' Duggan, or "The Lemon Drop Kid", entrusted by John to the author.

[9] Joe Hewitt appears in Jim McClelland's autobiography, attending a special Grouper meeting at Epping, Sydney, with Santamaria, Jack Kane, John Kerr, Harry Hurrell (FIA) and barrister Hal Wootten. McClelland, J. "Stirring the Possum: A Political Autobiography" op. cit., pp.107-108.

[10] Bland said: "Mr. Wright's summing up turned out to be a masterly and *extensive* (200 double-spaced type written pages) and extremely well presented (bound in book form) survey, covering not only the employers' evidence, but also the general state of the economy. It must have very considerable influence upon the Court in reaching its decision", H. A. Bland, Basic Wage Case, Day 115, Monday 7 August 1950. A 571/158 1949/1006 No.3.

Mr Wright was made a judge of the Arbitration Court, later a Liberal Senator. The Basic Wage case spread over 18 months, with judges dying (Drake-Brockman) and new ones appointed (Dunphy). Employers and ACTU advocates presented "6950 pages of transcript; 440 exhibits and 125 witnesses", and "sat for 120 days reserving judgement on 22nd August, 1950." CA 451/1 50/670.

[11] "The ROACH in question is Assistant General Secretary of the WWF and also I understand, a member of the Central Committee of the Australian Communist Party" — SECRET ASIO report, Brisbane 13.3.1950, with a photo of Ted, at Eagle Farm Airport, Brisbane, catching a plane back to Sydney. (A 6119/79 1212, No.55.) **Author's note**: Ted was not a member of the Central Committee-CPA. This lawyer's phrase, "ROACH in question" shows a common thinking, and concentration on Ted

by the legal beagles. My guess is that Sir Robert Menzies himself would have originated “The ROACH in question...”. Why? Because so many of his legal support team wanted to echo the Prime Minister.

[12] 1505/1 Item 1370. The original, penciled, simple maths for the divisor change can be found in this document with the initials J. H. or Joe Hewitt.

[13] Circ. 2/51 E 250/366 5.1.1951, p.2.

[14] Ted Roach to author.

[15] T/S SP 186 ITEM S 8445, 13.12.1950, pp.31-35.

[16] Cyril Crouch, WWF rtd., to author, Dapto Leagues Club, NSW.

[17] Commonwealth Investigation Service, Security Police, headquarters Melbourne.

[18] “FEM”, 3.1.51, p. 64, Pt.3.

[19] WWF Circular, 2/51 ER 5.1.1951.

[20] Ibid.

[21] “Return to work” telegram from Massey, Secretary Mackay Branch WWF.

[22] Issacs to Paxton, T/S, 12.1.1951, p.12.

[23] “FEM”, 3.1.1951.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid

[26] Ibid

[27] Kirby, SP 186/1 SL 58445, 18.12.1950, p.1.

[28] ASIO ‘gloating’, A432/80/51/11, p.2. The S-14 did not leave from Mackay but from Townsville or Cairns. Ted would have been driven there.

[29] Sir Ken thought it was a weak case.

[30] “This was a separate contempt, consisting of failure to honour an undertaking given to his Honor, by *Roach*. This case was not a strong one.” N 55596/20.

[31] Bennett - Deputy Commonwealth Solicitor, Bennett to Bailey N55596.

[32] Tom Nelson, Secretary, Sydney Branch, “FEM”, 7.3.1951, p.9.

[33] ‘Ivo’ Barrett, “FEM”, 7.3.1951, p.39.

[34] Menzies Cabinet Sub-Committee Order to prosecute. See A 4940/1, C 357.

[35] “…controversial” quote cited from Kirby, SP 186/1 SL 58445 pt.1, 15.12.1951, p.88.

[36] Ibid., p.97.

[37] “…shriek aloud” quote cited from ibid., p.99.

[38] Kirby, SP 186 S 8445, p.56.

[39] T/S 20.12.1950, op. cit., p.5.

[40] E 250/369 27.3.1953.

[41] Storemen & Packers, “FEM”.

[42] Annexure No.2, Young p.3.

[43] Circular No.2/51, ER 5.1.1951.

[44] "FEM", 7.3.1951.

[45] Sydney "Daily Telegraph", p.3., workers call it "The Smelligraph".

[46] "FEM", Graham, 7.3.1951 T/S.

[47] Circ. 2/51 E 250/366 p.2.

[48] "FEM", 12.1.1951.

[49] Sydney Branch News, affirmative vote was 1500 to 4.

[50] Galleghan to Bailey (10.1.1951) N 55596.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Subpoenas were prepared for 'concerted' (i.e. a conspiracy) protest telegrams, and telegrams said to "threaten" the court and judges. Searches for authors and their addresses were ordered. Telegrams were traced to "vacant blocks of land".

[53] T/S 1.3.1951, p.64.

[54] Galleghan to Bailey and SP 186/1 SL 58445 Pt.2.

[55] Hand-written note in margin of letter from Bennett to Bailey, A 6119/79/1214, 5.1.1951.

[56] Townsville telegrams, "FEM", 12.1.1950.

[57] Heard from a number of Wharfies.

[58] 'porkie pies': rhyming slang for lies.

[59] Roach Executive "FEM", 12.1.1950.

[60] Ibid.

[61] Albert Monk, T/S 11.1.1951, p.47.

[62] "put Roach in gaol", "FEM", 11.1.1951.

[63] 'Communist Conspiracy', or Red Plot, domestic version; a commonly held belief in ruling circles, and by ASIO and Menzies e.g. Menzies speech on Melbourne Radio (3KZ), and drive to ban the CPA e.g. Red Bill. Police raids etc on CPA, violent suppression of civil dissent, attacks on democratic organisations, increased ASIO surveillance. Violent and sensational newspaper articles and propaganda. Dozens of provocations of all kinds. Menzies used the 'Red Plot' to win elections. See early bird Hit List of 52 Communist Trade Union Officials for 'Operation Alien' (No.91 of M1509/1, No.36, 19.1.1951). See Bland Letter (chapter 19). **The 'Red Plot' was rejected by Justice Lowe.** Lowe's Commission dismissed the claim that Communists "had promoted or engaged in strikes or stoppages for the purpose of damaging Australian security or defence, or that the Party received instructions from a foreign country, or that the Party received money from a foreign country ("MW", 25.8.1951, p.1). Communists Campbell and Gibson submitted to Lowe that: "The Party has as its objective the establishment of a classless socialist society based on the public ownership of the means of production, so as to guarantee a fully planned economy, and so as finally to eliminate wars arising from competition between great capitalist monopolies for markets, sources of raw materials, and cheap labour, and so as to eliminate the recurring cyclical crises caused by anarchy in production which in turn creates vast numbers of unemployed persons", 6(a) p.4. A432/80 51/11. Ted Roach's organising ability made him a threat to the Capitalist State, and its repressive apparatus.

[64] SP 186/1 SL 58445, Pt.1. **Author's note**: Ted Roach openly declared his intentions — issuing deadlines, and verbal ultimata, a psychological weapon. The 'conspiracy' was the secret life of the working class, unknown to the rulers — any expression or organisation must therefore be a conspiracy and not a genuine flowering of revolt or opposition based on actual conditions of life.

[65] SW T/S SP 186/1 SL 58445 Pt.1.

[66] Ibid., p.2.

[67] Filed in the NSW Registry on 14 February 1951, they were the second set of contempt summonses against Ted. Dated 19.2.1951 series A 432/ 180 Item 51 No.21.

[68] Mr J. E. Taylor was the Industrial Registrar of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration whose address was "Principal Registry, 468 Lonsdale St., C.1. Melbourne".

[69] Ted used to administer the Eureka Oath at rallies, and to the Wharfies' rank and file in Kembla. *It's a very uplifting thing,* Ted said. *"We swear, by the Southern Cross, to stand truly by each other, and fight to defend our rights and liberties." They used to join in*. *It used to give them a big lift at meetings.* At the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, Communist Anti-Nazi Hero, Georgi Dimitrov, proclaiming "the people's front against Fascism", said: "Communists who do nothing to encourage the masses on the past of the people in a genuinely Marxist spirit, who do nothing to link up the present struggle with the people's revolutionary traditions and past, voluntarily hand over to the fascist falsifiers all that is valuable in the historical past of the nation." Communist leaders Miles and Sharkey read Dimitrov's speech, and they, then, started talking about Eureka's importance. Ted was probably the only Australian Communist who carried out this policy in just this way. His action would conflict sharply with the beliefs and tenets of British Shipping Company chiefs, and the prevailing "God Save the King" atmosphere in official circles in Australia. Ted's later stand on the British re-invasion of Malaya (1948) was described by ASIO as "an anti-British trend". (ASIO, 4.8.1947, R/1/48 Vol 1/29, Malaya.)

[70] A432/180 51/11 and Ted Roach to author.

[71] SW T/S SP 186 Sl 58445, Pt.1, op. cit., p.6.

[72] A 6119/79 1214 26.1.1951.

[73] Ibid., and A 6119/79,1214, 30.1.1951.

[74] A. E. McIntosh and Henderson 4.3.1965.

[75] SW T/S SP 186 Sl 58445, Pt.1, op. cit., p.8.

[76] T/S, 28.2.1951, pp.35-37, 39, 40, 49, 50, 53, 54, 57 and p.83, T/S 1.3.1951.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Ibid.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Ibid.

[83] **Editors' note**: originally a term in Scottish law meaning an ordinary prisoner, nothing special. In this case it referred to the fact that Ted was not sentenced to 'hard labour' although later requesting it. According to L.J. Louis (2004) The Cold/Class War, and the Jailing of Ted Roach, "Labour History", 86, p. 168, Ted Roach's Counsel (Isaacs KC) pleaded that the Crown's initial recommendation, a sentence with 'hard labour', was unwarranted because it would mean he would be held with common criminals. So Acting Chief Judge Foster sentenced him 'simpliciter' which had the practical consequence of Ted Roach being segregated in Long Bay, thus held effectively in solitary confinement. A later request by Ted's solicitor to restore 'hard labour' to the sentence, which would hve allowed him to serve the rest of his term at a prison farm, was rejected by the Arbitration Court.

[84] "The Sun" (Sydney) 1.3.1951, p.1.

Chapter 18
LONG BAY GAOL, 1951: "KEEP STEP, ONE HUNDRED AND THREE"

In gaol, Ted has been learning Henry Lawson's "One Hundred and Three":

> "With the frame of a man, and the face of a boy, and a manner strangely wild,
> And the great, wide, wondering, innocent eyes, of a silent-suffering child,
> With his hideous dress and his heavy boots, he drags to Eternity –
> And the Warder says, in a softened tone, "keep step, One Hundred and Three".

It's got so many verses in it.

Still, the Wharfies'd come soon and get him out or demonstrate. He knew they'd come. What had he slept under bridges for? Walked round Queensland for three years, blackening in the sun? Organised the Unemployed Workers Movement at Mackay, and slipped away; organised the Communist Party in Newcastle, and slipped away; transformed Kembla? Smashed the Bull system? Taken control of the port? Led and won the Pig Iron Dispute? Brought the United Australia Party, and its Attorney-General, Robert Gordon Menzies crashing to the ground! The Wharfies knew he had done his best, and that his best was pretty good; the Communist Party must know how well he had organised the Communist Party in Kembla, and afterwards in the ports? Must know! They'd have him out, in no time. Political question. He was a political prisoner. He could hear their feet coming in between the long rush of the waves, and the whoosh of the ocean rollers cresting past Boora Point, and breaking on the sand and rocks of Long Bay. Flags waving! Banners! A bit of sting in the slogans! Hang 'em on the bloody gates of the gaol! Vagg's[1] knees would shake! Where's Roach? We want Roach? Get him out! We want Roach! Get him out of there! Hey, Ted, come on, mate, we're waiten' for you! Funny what your idle fancy and imagination might dream up. But they didn't come, in April, May, June, and they never came.[2]

As for the Communist leadership, Ted was turned into a scapegoat.[3] Bill Burns,[4] editor of "Tribune" and gaoled at the time for "sedition", was turned into a ghost and forgotten. The Party was in retreat, "Peace! Peace! Peace!" after the Warsaw Peace Conference.[5] But was there a secret message about China, Indonesia, and the Asian-Pacific from "Joseph the Builder"[6] in the Kremlin? Were they told to discourage organisers of Pan-Pacific Dockworkers' Unions, full of workers loyal to Mao Zedong? Somebody knew. Nobody was talking.[7] "Individuals don't count"[8] — but they do when they lead the Pig Iron Dispute! Or slice ten "grand" off the Middle East Co! But not when they're shanghaied into gaol. No, that's when they don't count. Shit is trumps now. There's a fair bit of "flinching"[9] going on. Those who've seen "boob"[10] don't like it, and 'Roach' is buried in Long Bay Gaol, Sydney.

Apart from his family, Ted had no visitors for three months. Then, *they gave me a special visit, one special visit, of twenty minutes.* It was Lance Sharkey and Jim Healy. They came in the car with Ted's partner, Wyck, and jazz-singing sister, Blanche. *Ronnie was doing the chauffeuring.*[11] *I was getting all the Tribs, and "The Maritime Workers". I knew what was going on. They probably wondered where I got all the information from. To make it appear that Justice had been done — this was the only reason they'd come out to see me. First visitors I'd had in three months. Twenty minutes I had. The first was Jim Healy. I got stuck into Healy for the full ten minutes: "What? You've got me buried here, have you? And you've come to kick the dirt over me? Why did you cancel the "Caravan to Canberra", the "Release Roach Caravan"?* (It was underway, a caravan of a Branch Secretary, or President, to release Roach). *Why was it cancelled? What about the monthly "Roach Day"? What about the letters to Monk and Menzies? What about the "Release Roach" pledges? What about the articles about me in "The Maritime Worker"? Where are they?" I never let up on Healy for the full ten minutes. Then I turned to Sharkey: "Now your turn, Lance!" "What about the Party journal? "The Tribune"? What about the articles for my release? What about the examination of the trial? What about the interviews with democratic lawyers? What about the Party branches protesting? What about the Sydney District resolutions? What about the mass political campaign for my release? There was no answer.*

The author: “No answer from either of them?”

Neither.

The author: “Do you think you were harsh on them?”

*No, I was venting my hostility on them, and what they were not doing. Do you think I’d say: “I’ll reward you fellers when I get out”. I don’t have to tell them how to wage a campaign, the Secretary of the WWF, and the Secretary of the Party, I don’t have to tell them how to wage a f****g campaign, do I?*

The author: “Didn’t they answer?”

No answer at all. They showed guilt, they showed a lot of guilt. I said all you’ve got to do is throw the dirt over me, to bury me. I started on Healy, and then moved over to Sharkey. I accused both of them of burying me. Ronnie wrapped my eggs in the papers (see Fig 28).[12] *I knew more about what was going on outside than those outside knew, because I had plenty of time to read them. I blasted Healy for the full ten minutes, and then Sharkey. Ten minutes for Lance. They never came back. Sharkey sent out his Xmas cards for 1951 but he didn’t send one to me. And they’re the ones that talk about “Revisionism”*[13] *— burying the comrades in gaol and doing nothing about it!”*

Fig 28 ‘Carrying the Struggle into Long Bay Gaol’

Source: ‘Maritime Worker’, March 1979

Carrying the Struggle Into Long Bay Gaol

By RON MAXWELL, former Sydney Branch Vice-President, continuing his historical series

The shipowners in 1950 successfully applied to the Arbitration Court for a reduction in our hourly rate, through the device of the “divisor” — and in the struggles that followed the gates of Long Bay Gaol were to close on Assistant General Secretary E. Roach.

The 30-hour divisor had governed our casual rates of pay for many years.

The Judge, in calculating the hours worked by our members on a national scale — there had been an increase in hours worked — raised the 30-hour divisor to 32 hours.

This meant that the hourly rate paid to watersiders would be determined by dividing the basic rate plus margins by 32 instead of by 30.

This divisor change from 30 to 32 imposed a definite cut in watersiders’ hourly rates.

The first increase under the new divisor of 32 hours was ten shillings and fourpence ($1.03).

Under the former 30-hour divisor the increase would have been one pound or $2, instead of ten shillings and fourpence or $1.03.

Thus we lost very nearly half the adjustment of wages that followed the divisor judgment.

There were many stoppages and struggles over the attack on the divisor and other conditions.

We won restoration of the divisor to 30 hours in August 1953.

LEAN DAYS

At that time watersiders were having a very lean time.

The Menzies-Fadden Government had imposed credit squeezes and import cuts affecting trade.

Our hours fell to 26 a week, but the Court did not take this into account to grant us a 26-hour divisor, as the temporary increase in average hours had been taken into account to lift the divisor to 32 and reduce hourly pay.

YEAR'S GAOL

The Federation's Assistant General Secretary, Ted Roach, was gaoled for contempt of court during the divisor dispute, following appearance of certain material in the **Maritime Worker**. (General Secretary Jim Healy was overseas at the time).

Ted Roach received 12 months on each of two charges, but they were to be served concurrently — a total of one year.

The atmosphere in those times was not favourable to militant trade unionism, with the Menzies Government going all out to shackle trade union rights, through Arbitration Act amendments and the Communist Party Dissolution Bill.

DEMONSTRATIONS

There were more stoppages over the gaoling of Ted Roach.

His release was demanded at many demonstrations.

But he had to serve the full term, except for the ordinary, formal remissions stipulated in the penal regulations.

Vicious and hardened criminals were, by contrast, allowed parole, often before they had served half their sentences.

I was given the responsibility of watching the interests of Ted Roach, so far as the prisons bureaucracy would allow, while he was in Long Bay Gaol on Sydney's Pacific Ocean coast.

POLITICAL

Ted Roach was in the political section at Long Bay.

He could fend for himself there, meaning that he did his own cooking.

But his prison routine was the same — “early to bed and early to rise”, like all the other prisoners.

I visited Long Bay Gaol three times a week with food rations and reading matter.

CENSORSHIP

Literature for reading was very limited under prison rules.

All food, documents, newspapers and books were thoroughly inspected before Ted Roach was allowed to receive them from one of the “trustie” prisoners at the Bay.

Along with his wife, I was allowed to see him only once a month.

One warder was so prejudiced against militant unionists that he created petty difficulties.

THOSE CHOCOLATES

I remember that at the start of Roach's sentence I included a few dark chocolates and other “delicacies” in the box of rations.

The warder, after tossing this and that out, left very little in the box.

Well, we had a nice old blue right there.

For one moment, I thought that I, too, would be locked up.

I called for the warder in charge, but no way was I able to see him.

So another warder poked his bib in and said some nasty things about trade union officials.

RIGHTS

I was then told what prisoners were allowed and not allowed.

Chocolates were on the banned list, so he claimed.

I stood firm on what food should go in to Ted Roach that night.

After what seemed hours I must have convinced him that political prisoners had some rights, and that as Roach had to do his own cooking, he should have something to cook.

“All right!” he finally said. “Everything but the chocolates back into the box.”

I had to be content with this: it was getting late.

GOT THEM BACK

“I'll have my chocolates, please, and be on my way,” I said to the warder.

He was adamant that the chocolates were to stay right there.

So I asked for a receipt for the chocolates.

The warder refused.

The blue started all over again at the grim entrance to Long Bay.

He eventually gave in, handed me the chocolates and, courteous gentleman that he was, shouted at me: “Get!”.

RON MAXWELL, photographed when he was Sydney WWF Vice-President.

WORN DOWN

It took about two months for the warders on duty to get used to me.

I wore them down bit by bit.

All but one of them were finally convinced that Roach was not in for any criminal offence, but for trade union activity.

At least my visits became less subject to unpleasantness.

MORE READING

I objected every time I visited Long Bay Gaol to the scarcity of books and papers allowed to prisoners.

I contacted State Government departments, officials and politicians and told them they were behind the times in penal reform.

Censorship and banning of newspapers and magazines should be reviewed, I submitted.

These representations, I believe, did some good.

Many more newspapers and magazines appeared on the lists allowed to go into the prisons.

One can only imagine what Ted Roach sounded like that night. Here he was, the National Organiser of the WWF, and they couldn't organise to get him out. Former 'bagmen'[14] like Ted hated gaolers, gaols, coppers and did anything to avoid gaol. Of course, this was different — Ted had been gaoled illegally and by a conspiracy from the top, which included Sir Ken, Sir Charles, Sir Robert, Sir Harry, Call Me Herb and the CIA. In other countries though, blokes like Ted Roach were just shot dead. Their bodies were 'found'. In Japan, Korea, Grenada, Brazil, Greece, Iran, Malaya, Cuba, in the Southern States of the USA, and in mafia-controlled cities of the USA, Trade Union leaders' bodies were 'found'. That night, behind the salt-rusted, grille wire of Long Bay, Roach's voice must have sounded vehement, annihilating, revengeful. All those years on the track, never gaoled, although found guilty once. He was too cunning, too swift, too silent, too secret and moved a shadow ahead of the Law and their informers and assassins, protected by his mantle of honesty and sincerity, and the fists and eyes of his brothers and mates.

"HE MUST'VE GONE BOOB-HAPPY"

Their car pulled away, the red taillights winked in the near empty street and the cold wind kicked up from the Pacific. Old newspapers, picked up by the wind, blew around like the non-binding resolutions, confirmed with majority votes for the past three years; those such as "I would like to see out of this resolution a vote of confidence and, if carried, that Conference later carries a further resolution: **that if any democratically elected official of this organisation, whether it be Healy, Alford, Clarke, or anyone else, has a hand put on them by Menzies, that no man takes a hook out of his home"** (Clarry Reilly[15]); and, **"that if any action is taken against Mr Roach or any other official in this matter, that all work on the entire Australian waterfront cease immediately"** (Bill "Nipper" Ford[16]). 'Roachy', the anger and indignation that had cooked in his guts for months, waiting for action, now souring and sickening, was led back by the witnessing screw, to his beetroot wine, his mortice lock, and his ducks and drakes on the wall.

Soon after, in June 1951, a team of thirteen selected CPA comrades sailed out of Sydney heads headed for the Communist Party's highest school in Beijing, to learn how to be good Communists in Australia. Like Billy Lane's Socialists going to 'Cosme' in Paraguay in 1896, these comrades were off and out of Australia. At the time there was a threat from 'the Red Bill' and the Beijing move might preserve potential leaders of a future Party. Yet the man who had most confronted the Capitalist State in Australia, who had organised the branches of the Wharfies, led the Pig Iron Dispute and had been put in charge of the Dutch Ships dispute, languished in Long Bay Goal. Again, local Communists had to go elsewhere to find out how to be good Communists in Australia! Couldn't they think for themselves? Or weren't they allowed to think? What did the Chinese Communists, great as they were in their environment, know about Australia? What did Malenkov know? Zhdanov? Nothing.

Wyck Roach told Ted that when they got back in the car after that early June meeting at Long Bay with Ted, Jim Healy said: "Wasn't he upset? He must've gone boob-happy".[17] So everything and anything Sharkey had been warned about the 'hothead' Roach was now clearly evidenced at the gates of Long Bay Gaol! And the old alibi reflex came up with a beauty: "Roach has gone boob-happy". Add that one to the other smears of the prelim boy from Newcastle! No, Ted wasn't really angry about a genuine grievance — and he didn't know the full story of how all the action was turned off, or how 'Big Jim' had breathed out the phrase "he is incarcerated"[18] with a long sigh of relief at the Wharfies' Executive. No, Ted wasn't reacting as a man of principle, passion, and fighting spirit would react! No, he'd gone "boob-happy"!

So when I came out of gaol, to speak to Sydney Branch, Bob Mac[19] said "Nelson says that you've gone boob-happy and you're not to speak." I challenged Nelson[20] and he denied it. Bob Mac said: "He's a liar." When I was speaking, Jim Young's[21] tugging my trousers: "Hurry up, we've got a lot of speakers." Della[22] then said to me: "Jim Healy said there's not to be a welcome out meeting for you. But I will organise it, myself." This was the meeting in the Sydney Town Hall from which there is an excellent photo. This photo (Fig 29) shows 'Roach' looking fresh and slim, his open-neck shirt characteristic of his dress, carried shoulder-high into the meeting as he was, later, carried shoulder-high by Brisbane Branch into the Brisbane Stadium meeting. Right along the sugar ports, they picked him up and carried him round smiling, and in

Melbourne[23] and wherever he went, there were large gatherings of mates, comrades and fellow workers for Ted Roach's 'coming out' parties.

Fig 29 Ted Roach Outside Sydney Town Hall, 17 Dec 1951
Source: Photo kindly provided to Author by Ted Roach

GAOL COVER UP

"He (Ted Roach) had a right to be angry."
Della Elliott, to the author.[24]

On 8 March 1951, CPA's weekly newspaper the "Tribune" reported that a Sydney 'Release Roach Committee' was set up following "a spontaneous walk off throughout Sydney port, and a stop work meeting of about 5000 at Leichhardt Stadium". At the Stadium Meeting there were fine demonstrations of TU Unity. Well-known right-wing members of the Federation stepped into the ring to call for a united front declaring "any man who will not fight for the release of Roach is not a Unionist".[25] "Miners at 17 pits in the South and 9 in the north stopped last Friday to demand release of Roach. The resultant loss of 16,535 tons of coal was the direct responsibility of the Menzies Government."[26] The "Tribune" heading was: "WHARFIES UNITED IN DEMAND TO FREE TED ROACH – MASS WALK OFF". Ted's comment about the above meetings was: *No programme, no policy, no Executive direction*. On 15 March the "Tribune" reported: "Eleven Victorian Unions, representing 100,000 workers, last Friday protested strongly against the gaoling of Ted Roach, A/FS of the WWF and 300 workers at Eveleigh Railway Workshop",[27] with a cartoon, by

Herb McClintock, "Blue Print for Better Arbitration".[28] Despite this upsurge of mass support across the political spectrum, there was a cover-up of the details of Ted's 'trial' and his sentencing. Why weren't details of the 'trial' printed and participants and observers interviewed for their opinions? Details of Ted's 'trial' were buried until this book, "Ted Roach – from Pig Iron Hero to Long Bay Gaol".

Jim Healy sent a circular titled "Gaoling – Assistant General Secretary **Roach**" to the Branches on 16 March 1951, in which he suggested:

1. "campaigning for signatures to a Commonwealth-wide petition
2. seeking cooperation and assistance from the trade union and working class bodies in their particular area
3. organising the sending of mail to Ted Roach, his address being Mr E. Roach, Long Bay Penitentiary, Malabar, NSW
4. such further activities as would assist our campaign."[29]

The Committee for Release of Roach[30], proposed for all ports by the Wharfie Federal Council on 17 March 1951, came into being in Sydney on 16 June 1951 with Clarry Reilly as the Secretary (Fig 30 and Fig 31) [31]. Documents and paperwork of the 'Release Roach Committee' were almost immediately stolen by persons unknown.

Fig 30 Ted Roach Banner, Park St Sydney, May Day 1951

Source: photo kindly provided to Author by Ted Roach

*Ted Roach banner, left centre

Fig 31 'ACTU Condemns Savage Sentence of Ted Roach'
Source: 'Maritime Worker', 13.10.51

A.C.T.U. Condemns Savage Sentence Of Ted Roach

Unconditional Release Demanded By Sydney Branch

(By Clarrie Reilly on behalf of the Sydney Release Roach Committee.)

Ted Roach was gaoled by the Arbitration Court on the 1st March last for his criticism of Judge Kirby's basic wage decision which Roach described as "infamous—robbery", and for publishing a cartoon which depicted a Judge doing the thimble-and-pea trick and passing behind his back 10/- to the shipowner.

THE jailing of our National Official was strongly resented by Sydney wharfies who, to a man, walked off all ships when Roach was sentenced and when his appeal was denied.

At all subsequent Stop Work meetings a strong demand has been made for the immediate release of Roach.

Sydney members are still determined in this demand.

Roach has already served 224 days —all except 17 days of it in complete isolation.

Incidentally, in these 224 days the shipowners have benefited to the extent of £640,000 in the wage decision arising from which Roach was jailed.

A Release Roach Committee was set up three weeks after Roach's going to jail, at a stop work meeting. Since then the committee has never let up —meeting regularly.

In all we have raised by voluntary subscriptions, donations, the sum of £720/13/1 to finance the work carried out by us.

Our meetings have been held on the jailing of Roach at most of the main workshops and factories throughout Sydney. We have carried our propaganda work into the country and Interstate.

We have addressed the Newcastle, South Coast and Sydney Labor Councils on the matter and all these bodies supported our appeal and now the A.C.T.U. has decided to take up the question of securing the release of Roach.

In both the May Day and Six Hour Day processions very fine banners were carried through the city streets bringing before the public the position of Roach. These banners received very warm receptions from the huge crowds who watched the marchers.

Protest Crowds Fill Sydney Town Hall

On the night of June 28 this year the public packed the Sydney Town Hall, which was obtained with great difficulty and much work on the part of our committee as a ban had been placed against militant organisations using the town hall.

We broke through the ban for the first time after waging a very fine campaign and the meeting was one of the largest held in the Sydney town hall in recent years.

TAKE
HARDY'S
AND
ENJOY
Your

The enthusiastic meeting was chaired by Jim Young, Sydney president, and the speakers included the general secretary, general president, Reverend Brand, Mr. Dowling, secretary Newcastle Labour Council and Miss Thistle Harris, a Bachelor of Science.

The packed crowd threw in the sum of £332 and spiritedly demanded the immediate release of Roach and condemned the harshness of his sentence.

We organised a broad committee which represented 18 Federal Unions plus rank and file and shop committee representatives.

We published a number of pamphlets, including two very fine printed ones which were freely distributed throughout N.S.W.

We organised a petition demanding the release of Roach. Thousands of signatures were obtained and will be presented, we plan, to the Government by a deputation seeking Roach's release.

We raised the matter at Sydney stop work meeting and got the unanimous support of the members there calling on the Federal Council to hold a monthly "Roach day" in an attempt to secure his release.

Unfortunately the Council would not go as far as that. They did adopt, however, our other proposition to have a deputation comprising the President of all branches in the capital ports to approach the Government in Canberra on the matter. The A.C.T.U. have been asked to arrange this.

Realising that if the Referendum was carried it would lead to the imprisonment of other of our Federal leaders, we decided to back the "No" campaign and work hard for it right from the outset.

First in The Field

I was elected to act as liaison officer with the Federal and State bodies of the A.L.P. and in the early stages of the campaign we organised these vital meetings which were addressed by Senator McKenna. The meetings were at the Sydney Branch Rooms, Walsh Bay, Eveleigh Railway workshops, Chullora Railway workshops, Sydney Seamen's Stop Work meeting, Sydney Greek Community, Atlas Club, Miners' Federal Council.

We worked hard in the organising for these meetings. They were outstanding successes. Senator McKenna admitted they were an inspiration to him and the "No" campaign in Sydney got off to an enthusiastic beginning.

The early start of the campaign undouttedly had a good effect on the ultimate result in N.S.W.

Our committee is now preparing a further pamphlet against the jailing of Roach and we will in no way finish our efforts to free our leader whose imprisonment we regard as a shocking attack on this Federation and the Trade Union movement in general.

The Communist Party press and "The Maritime Worker" (Fig 31 above) were full of the rhetoric of struggle, for example a story in the "Tribune" of 12 April titled: "An Empty Chair Was Left". This said: "Loud applause rang through the Ironworkers' Hall last Friday evening when the ACP General Secretary, Lance Sharkey, pointed to an empty chair with the label 'Ted Roach Working-Class Fighter' and pledged that the Communist Party would fight for the immediate release of Roach".[32] "He led the Wharfies' fight against the sending of pig-iron to Japan in the *Dalfram,*" Lance Sharkey said. But by early May, this had been 'revised' by the Communist Party's leaders and changed to: "Ted Roach was one of the **main** leaders of the boycott on pig iron".[33]

"ACTION QUICKENS IN FIGHT TO FREE ROACH"

A large 'Release Roach' rally was held at Sydney Town Hall on 28 June 1951. ASIO reported that nearly 2000 people attended despite the inclement weather. Speakers were Beitz (WWF President); Rev A. D. Brand; Thistle Harris, Sydney University Teachers College; Stan Moran, Treasurer, Sydney Branch WWF; Jim Healy, Federal Secretary; A. Dowling, Newcastle Trades and Labour Council; Clarry Reilly; and Nick Origlass, Painters and Dockers.[34] A very good pamphlet was produced to advertise this meeting. Its original was written by Bill 'Nipper' Ford, Secretary Townsville Wharfie Branch, for the Townsville T&LC's 'Release Roach' meeting on 27 March 1951, which was addressed by Ford. Nipper and Ted were mates and comrades. The pamphlet — "Release Roach Fight For Free Trade Unions" — examined and contrasted court decisions over contempt of court cases similar to Ted Roach's. Sydney Branch may have reprinted the Ford pamphlet to advertise the Sydney Town Hall meeting. But where was the examination of Ted's 'trial' and the lead up to the 'trial'? The pamphlet has an excellent drawing of Ted by Herb McClintock, and was printed by Edwards and Shaw, 171 Sussex St., Sydney (Fig 32 and Fig 33)[35].

Fig 32 'Release Roach"

Source: WWF Pamphlet (Sydney Branch), March 1951, p. 2; kindly provided to Author by Ted Roach

Fig 33 'Release Roach' (p. 2)
Source: WWH Pamphlet, March 1951, p. 2; kindly provided to Author by Ted Roach

RELEASE ROACH!

EDWARD CHARLES ROACH was the leader of the Pt. Kembla Wharfies when they staged that historic struggle of refusing to load Pig-Iron to the Japanese in 1938.
Later in the National Secret Ballot he was elected by the Waterside Workers to be their Assistant General Secretary of the Federation.
On March 1st of this year he received heavy gaol sentences from the full Arbitration Court for statements that he had written in the Union Journal, the "Maritime Worker".

★ HERE ARE THE FACTS OF THE CHARGES LAID ★ AGAINST ROACH

We ask you to read them, consider all factors surrounding the case against Ted Roach, and after comparing his case as against other charges of contempt laid against the Press and Employers' representatives, we invite you, THE AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC, to judge for yourselves as to whether the sentence of imprisonment against Roach was justified or not.

ROACH GOT 12 MONTHS' GAOL FOR THIS

Roach was criticising an Industrial Decision which meant that Waterside Workers received only half of the 20/- Basic Wage increase of last year.

In the "Maritime Worker" article, he stated that the decision of Judge Kirby was "infamous". He branded the decision of the Court as a "Wage steal" and used strong criticism such as that.

The view was taken by Mr. Webb who appeared for the Crown that these words were sinister, wicked, and of a very evil nature. The Court sentenced Roach to twelve months on each of two charges, sentences to be served concurrently.

Roach was taken from his wife and children and is now in Long Bay Gaol serving this sentence against which there is no appeal.

Australians have been used to a free and easy choice of words in the past, and the imprisonment of Roach came as a shock to all liberal-minded people.

At the Sydney Town Hall meeting, Wharfie Clarry Reilly revealed the cleavage between the Wharfies' Sydney Executive position on how to release Roach and the Rank and File position, when he said: "I can tell the general public of Sydney this, that the rank and file of the WWF, whose members have sweated over their filthy newsprint, may be not too particular as to how they handle it, or if they handle it, in the future. I am not saying that as an Official of the Organisation, nor am I saying it as an Executive of the Federation, or any authoritative body has given that order, but I say it as the feeling of the rank and file members of the Organisation."[36] ASIO'S SECRET report records the fact that "a complete transcript of each speech (was) taken in shorthand" at the Sydney Town Hall meeting.[37] Confusion reigned. ASIO reported: "that a reliable and authorative (sic) informant states that there is talk of putting on a sudden strike regarding the boaling (sic) of Roach. NELSON, YOUNG and BARRETT have had a disagreement, and they are meeting Jim HEALY this afternoon (3 May 1951). It is believed that the disagreement is over the ROACH matter, and will be discussed this afternoon. Union Organisers and Delegates have been approaching the wharfies on the job regarding their feelings on a "Walkout" on the ROACH incident".[38]

ASIO's "Industrial Report" on 16 May 1951 said: "The first of these (Sydney Support Roach) meetings, (on the wharf at lunchtime) was listed for today when J. (Jack) McPhillips, Federal Secretary of the Federated Iron Workers Association was announced as the speaker. However, **he failed to put in an appearance**".[39] Reports continued to appear in the "Tribune", for example: "Release Roach" (16 May 1951),[40] "Free Burns and Roach Rally" (17 May 1951)[41]; and "Sister keeps up campaign to release Roach" (31 May 1951)[42] which said: "Mrs Eve Taylor, sister of Mr E. J. Roach, is doing a fine job to win the release of her jailed brother". But the "Tribune" couldn't get 'Roach's' (not Ted Roach's) name right. Ted's name was Edward Charles Roach, E. C. Roach. Like ASIO, the "Tribune" was calling Ted, E. J. Roach. 'Mostyn's Industrial Report' from the Shipping Companies, was mimicking the Communist Party's simplistic psychological patter about Ted Roach. It says that Ted Roach was "full of conceit".[43]

BED AND BREAKFAST IN LONG BAY GAOL

According to Ted: *it was the Debtor's Prison in Long Bay. Bed and breakfast - a bit of a screws' amenity area - they weren't locked in. I'd have a brew on and these remand blokes would say: "Where can you get a cup of tea, here, mate?" "Just a minute, mate, I'll be out in a minute." I had a half a knife to unscrew my morticed lock, to let myself in and out. Some of them used to duck in for a cup of tea. It was good to be able to talk to some bastard. Then I said to the Governor, who was a silly old ….. , "A man's on his own here, a man might finish up drawing ducks on the wall and feeding them bread-crumbs". "Don't start drawing ducks on the wall, son, you'll get into trouble." That was the kind of bloke he was. He was very officious but not with me. You see I was on side with most of the warders, and I used to sneak books into some of them with a bit of militancy in them.* Ted's hamper was brought in by Ronnie Maxwell (see Fig 28 above). Ted couldn't speak highly enough of him. *Ronnie did such a terrific job. Tobacco was the currency and a lot of our blokes didn't smoke. I'd cut the weed in half, one ounce for the two trusties, and one ounce for the butcher… They* (the other prisoners) *had to dress up, like the Army and the Navy, every morning. I didn't bother. I wore a Jackie Howe and a pair of mini-shorts. You made them. I sewed up a pair of shorts for the Summer and wore sandshoes. I used to exercise three or four hours a day. I'd have a full fillet for breakfast. And the boys at Bowen were sending down boxes of tomatoes and mangoes. The Chinese sent me in a duck stuffed with mushrooms. Books? I finished up with a library. I was a Political Prisoner and no-one said a word to me, except the Governor, the Comptroller-General.*[44]

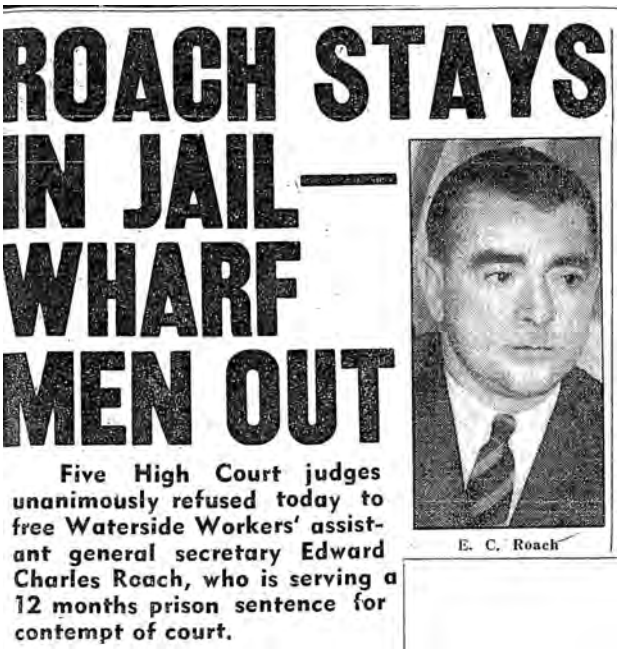
TED'S WIFE AND CHILDREN -- 'PRISONER SIMPLICITER'

Ted Roach recalls the visits of his partner, Wyck, and their two daughters, Yvonne and Suzanne: *Wyck came once a month. The Screw says: "You're wanted over at the gate — Suzanne, Yvonne and Wyck." You couldn't kiss them or anything, and the screw's standing behind you in uniform. On my monthly visit, my two kids could look at me, through the chain-wire. Suzanne, on the local bus, she grabbed a young copper*

by the hand, and said: "When are you going to let my Daddy out of gaol?" "What's he in gaol for?" "He's in there getting his contempt out, isn't he Mum?" Her schoolteacher said to her one day: "Suzanne can feel proud because her father is in gaol over a principle." She came home walking on air. Another time, at Tea Gardens, a tent and a fridge, we had it for two weeks, on holidays. Lots of miners there. The kids were talking about their fathers, what they did, and so on. I said to Wyck: "Come and listen to this." There's young Suzie: "Ted Roach?" she says, "You don't know Ted Roach? Why he goes to gaol and everything!" She thought it was a great honour.

Ted was "Prisoner Simpliciter". Four times Ted appealed and four times it was rejected, once by the High Court (Fig 34)[45]. Ted was not granted the usual seven days remission given to "the lowest class of criminals" — Menzies's Attorney-General, A. Spicer, wrote to 'His Excellency, the Administrator', Northcote (5 December 1951) and said: "I respectfully recommend, therefore, that Your Excellency may not be pleased to remit any portion of the sentence imposed". On 7 December 1951, "Tally" (the leaflet of Sydney Waterfront Tally Clerks) reported: "HUSH-HUSH on Roach Release. Jailed Union leader Ted Roach is due for release on December 18. Seven days grace is usually granted the prisoners at the end of sentences, but the authorities will not give the Roach family any precise information on the exact date and time Ted can expect the gates to close behind him. **Perhaps they fear a spontaneous demonstration of welcome from Ted's thousands of supporters on the Waterfront."**[46]

Fig 34 High Court Appeal Quashed
Source: 'Sun' (Sydney), 10.5.51


ROACH STAYS IN JAIL— WHARF MEN OUT

Five High Court judges unanimously refused today to free Waterside Workers' assistant general secretary Edward Charles Roach, who is serving a 12 months prison sentence for contempt of court.

E. C. Roach

I had a big garden at [home in] *Revesby.*[47] *One bloke called 'Hec' Cook, an ex-miner whom I sponsored into the Union, came out to help Wyck. They were always "going to" get a working bee out. When Rupert Lockwood's place burnt down they got a big team. Mainly because he was out, and helping them to organise. But I was in, and no bastard would do anything about it! What I should've done — I should've come out and called a big conference and exposed the lot of them. In retrospect I say that, but I was too loyal to the Party. I was turning the cheek, turning the other cheek too much. I was topped up by Jack Miles when I came out. He grabbed me when I was going to the 'bin'*[48] *and he said: "We couldn't do much for you, Teddy, when you were in gaol. You were in the same boat as Lance Sharkey." "Jack," I said, "Lance*

was in for a stupid statement about the Red Army and I was in over workers being robbed of half the increase in the Basic Wage!!!"
The author: "Did you notice the Party's political line while you were in gaol?"
I noticed the publications of the Unions became more right-wing. Jim Healy was stumpen' the country, running as the Senate Candidate. Nothing was done to release me. If Healy'd been in, and I'd been out, I would have had him out in three months.
The author: "How would you have done that?"
I would have hit Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, millions of dollars of ships held up there. There wouldn't have been a gaol big enough to hold Healy. I would've rolled it round the ports. I would have hit them where the shipping was thickest — a big ship, tomorrow, in Brisbane, out of the blue. Healy wouldn't do it, and he couldn't.
The author: "Could you do that?"
Of course! Of course! You don't go into the Boss's own court, and say: "Your Honour, please release Ted Roach." You don't go begging to the Boss's Court, and beg for crumbs off the Boss's table. Imagine a worker talking, and saying: "Please, sir, let us have a bit from the Billionaires' tables?" No, down the drain you go. They said they'd use "every legal means" to get me out. You don't get anything "legally". They put me in gaol "legally". They'd have to take some action to get me out!

ILLUMINATED ADDRESS WATERSIDE WORKERS FEDERATION SYDNEY BRANCH

Presented by the members of Sydney Branch to Edward Charles Roach, Assistant-General Secretary, Waterside Workers Federation, on his release from solitary confinement after twelve months imprisonment in Long Bay Gaol:

E. C. Roach was gaoled by Justices Foster and Dunphy, his "crime" was fighting for the rights of his members and the Trade Union Movement.

He was imprisoned from 1st March, 1951, to 18th December, 1951.

The Industrial and Political Movement and lovers of peace and freedom, will gratefully remember the name of Ted Roach as the Internationally famous leader of the *Dalfram* Dispute at Port Kembla in 1938 after the Lyons/Menzies Government had attempted to send pig iron to Japan.

Nor shall we forget that Mr. Roach was imprisoned by the Federal Arbitration Court for showing solidarity with the coal miners in their National dispute in 1949.

The courage and self-sacrifice displayed by Ted Roach, on behalf of his Union members, and the working-class earns him an honoured place in the History of the labour movement and the Australian people.

We welcome back our Assistant-General Secretary into the struggle, to carry through the hopes and aspirations of the peoples of the world for World Peace.

14 signatures[49]

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[1] Vagg: gaol governor.

[2] **Editors' note**: There was no campaign by union leadership to protest about Ted Roach's gaoling despite a surge of support and protest among rank-and-file unionists. This contrasts with the lengths to which union leaders had often gone to help unionists and other workers in trouble, clearly documented by authors such as Rupert Lockwood in "Black Armada" (op cit.). Ted was effectively left to rot in Long Bay.

[3] A scapegoat for the Communist Party leadership's mis-judgement in the NSW Coal Strike, (1949).

[4] W. F. 'Bill' Burns (NZ). Editor of "Tribune". Gaoled for 'sedition', for questioning Menzies sending Australian troops to Korea.

[5] The 2nd " Swiatowy Kongres Obroncow Pokoju" — 2nd Congress of Partisans for Peace, Warsaw.

[6] "Joseph the Builder": Stalin, also 'St. Joseph'.

[7] The then USSR made huge sacrifices on its Far Eastern border, fighting the Japanese Imperial Army (JIA), in solidarity with the Chinese people. On 8 August 1945, fulfilling its Yalta agreement with anti-Nazi allies, Churchill and Roosevelt, the USSR launched a huge offensive against the 600,000 strong Japanese 'Kwantung Army', and annihilated the JIA, in rapid time. See Yefimov, Dmitri. "Our Common Victory: World War II and the Peoples of Asia, Africa, Latin America and Oceania", Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow. 1988, pp.76-79. "The rout of the Kwantung Army brought about a radical change in the military and political situation in the Far East, making it possible to bring WWII to an end, much earlier than the USA and Britain had anticipated." Ibid., p.78. The USSR gave material and military assistance to the new Chinese People's Republic, building up its industrial capacity. When Mao Zedong later started 'rattling the sabre' and attacking the USSR, the USSR was bitterly disappointed.

[8] "Individuals don't count" — one of the many non-dialectical, and pseudo-philosophical shibboleths of Stalin, repeated in Communist Parties around the world.

[9] Claude Jones, 8.7.1949, R/1/48 Vol.2, No.115.

[10] 'boob' or 'booby house': slang for goal.

[11] Maxwell, Ronnie. Sydney City Councillor, Executive Member, Sydney Branch, WWF.

[12] Regarding "the papers", Ted means the "Tribune", "The Maritime Worker", etc.

[13] 'Revisionism': altering political principles and theories, to suit social circumstances

[14] bagmen: carried food etc. in bags — graduated to 'one strapper', or 'two strapper' swagmen.

[15] Reilly, Clarry. ("FCM", 7.9.1950, p.145.) Clarry was a moving reciter of Australian poetry, one of the best. He raised funds for WWF, CPA campaigns by reciting and made a record.

[16] Bill 'Nipper' Ford, Special "FEM", 10.1.1951, p.2.

[17] 'boob-happy': unbalanced by confinement in goal. Ted Roach was not in the least boob-happy. Sound as a bell, he made the mistake of telling the truth.

[18] J. H. "FEM", 3.3.1951. See 'Operation Alien': "On the eve of the (Menzies) Cabinet meeting of 1st March, Bland prepared a comprehensive appreciation of the situation and contingency plans for his minister (Holt). This included "our tactics of forcing the Federation (WWF) to extend the area of the dispute, and offering targets for prosecution... which involved the collusion of ship owners. On 2nd March the 'Alien' Warning order was signaled: "be prepared possible start emergency stevedoring, on or after 6 March with all (sic) practicable", pp.7-8. "But Monk was able to persuade Holt to delay application of the Crimes Act. Faced with the severe penalty of the Crimes Act, and press reports that the government intended to man the waterfront with troops, the WWF (Jim Healy), on 6 March, lifted the overtime ban, and a few days later the miners voted to end their stoppages (over Ted Roach's gaoling). Official coercion had paid off." Louis, L. 'Operation Alien' and the Cold War in Australia, 1950-1953, op. cit., pp.7-8.

[19] G. D. B. 'Dud' MacKay, Sydney SIB.

[20] Tom Nelson.

[21] Jim 'Dutchy' Young, Sydney Branch Executive.

[22] Della Elliott.

[23] "MELB FETES ROACH: Melbourne Wharfies organised a fine social on 26 April (1952) to express appreciation of A/GS Ted Roach's sacrifice in defence of the Federation and living standards. Ted Bull, well-known Melbourne Branch member, reports that the hall was crowded to capacity. Amid warmly expressed enthusiasm, Federal Councillor Charlie Young gave Ted Roach and his wife a presentation which bore the inscription: "To Mr. and Mrs. Roach in appreciation of their struggle for higher living standards and peace, from Melbourne Wharfies, 1952". "MW", 26.4.1952, p.7.

[24] Della Elliott, (Zenodohos), a richly credentialled CPA activist, organiser, Union official, journalist and editor of the SUA "Seamen's Journal". She was a delegate to the Sydney Labour Council and ACTU and was working in WWF Office. Partner of E. V. Elliott (Secretary ASU).

[25] "Tribune", 8.3.1951.

[26] Ibid., p.7.

[27] "Tribune", 15.3.1951.

[28] Ibid., p.21.

[29] J. H. Circ. No.51/19, 16.3.1951.

[30] Release Roach Committee: Dutchy Young President, Glen Fingleton (Brother of Jack Fingleton, cricketer) Vice President, L. Fitzhenry Secretary, Clarry Reilly A/S, Charlie McReady Treasurer. A meeting was held on Tuesday 27 March to examine plans for the release of Ted Roach. (R/1/48 Vol.2 No.64, 5.4.1951).

[31] **Editors' note:** Clarrie Reilly, on behalf of the Sydney Release Roach Committee, wrote an article in "MW", 13.10.51 (Fig 31) in which he reminded Wharfies that in Sydney's 1951 May Day March, the WWF marchers carried "very fine banners … bringing before the public the position of Roach". Fig 30 shows the Ted Roach banner in the May Day March in Park St, Sydney with Sydney Town Hall in the background.

[32] "Tribune", 12.4.1951.

[33] "MW", 3.5.1952, p.4.

[34] A 6119/79,1213, 28.6.1951, No.77.

[35] R/1/48 Vol.2 & A 6119/79,1213, No.66, 18.6.1951.

[36] Clarry, Reilly. A 6119/79,1213, No.76, p.2.

[37] Ibid.

[38] A 6119/79,1213, No.95, May 1951.

[39] N 43926, pp.1-2.

[40] "Tribune", 16.5.1951 p.3.

[41] "Tribune", 17.5.1951 p.6.

[42] "Tribune", 31.5.1951 p.7.

[43] 303/16/5/83, 43926 Z, 3.1.1951.

[44] Comptroller General, Mr C. L. Nott.

[45] R/1/48 Vol.2, C 90508. Full Bench, High Court: Justices Webb, Fullager, Dixon, McTiernan and Kitto. **Editors note:** in his judgement, Justice McTiernan described the attack on Justice Kirby of the Arbitration Court through publication of the 'Thimble and Pea' cartoon (see Fig 24) as "gross and outrageous". An immediate response to the Court's decision was a spontaneous walk-off by 5,500 wharfies reported in the Sydney "Sun", 10.5.51.

[46] "Tally", 7.12.1951.

[47] *I was a Federal Councillor, and first, at Revesby, we lived in a leaking caravan, till I built the house. It had no walls at first. All I had was a big packing case and two little packing cases. Built it on a 'Starr Bowkett' loan, no interest.* Ted used 'Starr Bowkett' loans all through his life, and had the paper work and receipts for a no-interest 'Starr Bowkett' loan on his dining table, in the last few years of his life. Blanche Roach had said: *When the baby was born, they lived in a caravan. They had to put the table down to make the bed, and hold their knees up, so she wouldn't get wet.*

[48] 'bin' — Wharfies' pick up centre. Ted Roach also used "bin" for the fob pocket of trousers, or 'kick'.

[49] Only a copy of Ted Roach's "Illuminated Address" from Sydney Branch Wharfie members, has survived.

Part 4

After Long Bay

Chapter 19
BLAND'S SECRET LETTER TO HAROLD HOLT, 22 MAY 1951

The intrepid Communist hunter Sir Henry Armand 'Black Harry' Bland, Head of the Department of Labour and National Service, sent a letter to the Minister for Labour, Harold Holt, dated 22 May 1951. It reveals the complete secrecy, and previous, current, and projected tactics and strategy of ASIO, the Attorney-General's, and Bland's Department of Labour and National Service, the Cabinet Sub-Committee of Prime Minister Menzies and other State and Commonwealth security agencies. These were linked with MI6 and the CIA in their surveillance of militant Trade Union leaders and Trade Unionism in Australia.[1] Australia's Attorney-General Mr J. A. Spicer, appointed by Prime Minister Menzies, stressed the "great importance of maintaining entire secrecy".[2]

Ted Roach had an "offish manner" according to Ronnie Maxwell, one of the most respected Wharfies on the Sydney waterfront. Ted's eye was trained and his experience on the track, on the street, and in the fight game, had taught him to be aware of infiltrators, pimps, and police spies. He didn't like drinking in pubs or clubs like The Ironworkers Club in Upper George St. Sydney, because of the unknown ears that were there. He 'got on the toe'[3] and went home to Revesby to Wyck, Yvonne and Suzanne. As a result, 'the Oracle' said: "Roach didn't drink."[4] *It used to run out of the pores of my skin on my organising stints in Queensland. I didn't have money to drink in Sydney, and I wanted to get home*. The then quiet, bushy suburb of Revesby was an hour from Sydney. He used to give Jack McPhillips a lift in his car, in the mornings into the city. Ted's consciousness about constant, pervading surveillance of himself and other militant Trade Union leaders, Communist or otherwise, is indelibly underlined by official ASIO records. Remember that only a few, selected documents have been allowed to survive. One wishes they were all there on file. There are enough, however, and, thanks to the professional perceptions of Australian Archivists, enough to make a clear narrative of the security sleuths and their surveillance of Australians like Ted who fought for a better life for Australians and the workers of the world.

ASIO had a permanent 'informant' about Wharfie matters who was "a reliable and authoritative informant".[5] ASIO's predecessor, the Commonwealth Investigation Service, quotes from "**a most reliable source**" as early as 1947.[6] "ASIO had agents inside the Communist Party and regular detailed reports were supplied to Menzies and Bailey,"[7, 8, 9, 10] according to Professor Les Louis, Associate Professor of History, University of Canberra.[11] Louis thought ASIO "had an informant on the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Australia" because they had a list of all CC-CPA names. However, they could have 'flummed'[12] this list during raids on Marx House. They opened people's mail, listened to their phones and interfered in their employment and promotion, for example in Universities. The Menzies Government, through police raids on Marx House in Haymarket, Sydney (8 July 1949) and other means, had gathered sufficient information to "declare" lists of Communist Trade Union leaders and gaol them. In their place were put compliant leaders and 'tame cat' Unions. For example, a letter from Colonel C. C. F. Spry, Director-General of Security, to "Dear Professor" (Ken Bailey), lists the names of well-known Communist leaders "for whom Declaration Particulars are now being prepared". Very precise English from a very precise English spook and British Army colonel![13]

Then there was the plan of 'Operation Alien', a Top Secret, quasi-military operation, to lock up Communist and militant Trade Union leaders and their families in concentration camps. This depended on the passage of the Communist Party Dissolution Bill, which was rejected by the High Court [see chapter 17, endnote 2], and the 1951 Referendum to ban the Communist Party, which was rejected by Australian voters. *"Operation Alien" meant thousands of women and kids in gaol. The evil face of Fascism. It doesn't matter the Nationality, the evil face is there.* Mr Bland's SECRET six-page letter, set out in 29 paragraphs, to the Minister for Labour, Mr Harold Holt was a detailed plan of action with much, unreal, wishful thinking by Sir Harry, parallel with the wishful thinking of Communist Secretary Lance Sharkey and the CC-CPA. Mr Bland said there were only "two years" before "our special legislation" was in place, and said 'Operation Alien' was ready to go, just needing "to redraft the movement orders".[14] 'Movement orders' does not mean

the Groupers, and Catholic Action Groups. It is a military term. One of the top-secret executives of the most secret 'Operation Alien' was an Australian Brigadier.

On Friday 16 May 1951 in Melbourne, the ACTU right-wing Executive did a Pontius Pilate on the New Zealand Wharfies' dispute, resolving: "We are therefore of the opinion that Australian Trade Unions and Unionists should not become involved in the dispute, and should carry out their normal duties of manning, loading, unloading, and repair of ships, and the transport of goods to and from wharves for New Zealand, or in transit from New Zealand to other international ports."[15] This would have been the fate of Dutch Ships in January 1946 if Ted Roach had not used 'Rule 13' to seize hold of the dispute and, with Barney Smith, taken control of the dispute out of the hands of the 'sell-out' right-wing ACTU Executive consisting of Monk, Clarey, Kelly and King.

In his letter, Bland said:[16] "I have reported to you (Harold Holt) on the many discussions I have had with Mr. Monk on this whole issue." Allowing for Sir Harry's Empire-building, and therefore exaggeration of the effectiveness of his secret and conspiratorial strategies against 'the Communist Conspiracy',[17] and also Australian Democracy, it must be asked whether Albert Monk and his Executive were privy to the Government and ASIO's plan to curb militancy in the Unions? The Grouper-dominated Melbourne Trades Hall said: "We believe the Communist Party in Australia is utilising the Industrial situation in Australia to further the Communist conspiracy."[18] Ted Roach said *they believed their own propaganda*. Sir Harry's letter was, to coin a phrase, rotten with conjecture, conditional tenses, conditional clauses, would-be's, might-be's, if's, possibilities and probabilities. I emphasise this because Mr Harry Bland had a very important job and was wielding a lot of secret power. But his hands-on knowledge of working-class lives was nil. Harry and his co-workers, like Joe Hewitt (ASIB), lied to Roach's face when he came to them in good faith, in February 1951, secretly organising to gaol him.

This is further highlighted in the lead-up to the Bowen dispute (in September 1953), when Sir Robert Menzies sent troops into the port of Bowen in Queensland to load ships. Promises to Roach by Hewitt of the ASIB were broken. 'Roach' was being ignored in the Communist Party and by the authorities. 'Operation Cain' at Bowen collapsed in 48 hours, but neither Sir Harry nor Mr Holt got one smutch on their Liberal escutcheon for the fiasco. The Secret 'Operation Alien' remained Secret till the 1990s when Professor Louis uncovered it. Mr Bland, by then living in Bowral, NSW, said, before he died: "I'm surprised Louis got onto it".[19] But Ted was fighting for job conditions, existing awards, and Federation policy decisions, and what is subversive about that?

Harry Bland was very pleased with the ACTU Executive resolution telling Australian workers to scab on New Zealand Wharfies. This request was to no avail, however, because leadership of the Australian Wharfies (Jim Healy), Melbourne Painters and Dockers, (G. A. Doc Doyle, and M. J. Donegan), and Ironworkers (Flanagan, Melbourne) ignored the ACTU and launched solidarity actions with the New Zealand Wharfies on the ships *Wanganella*, *Glenlyon*, *Port Halifax* and *Lambrook*. Ted Roach was, of course, in goal during this period. On 15 May 1951, G. A. Doc Doyle (Branch Sec) and M. J. Donegan (Melbourne Painters and Dockers Union), speaking at their Lorimer St., Melbourne pick up, said that New Zealand ships were 'black', and "made threatening remarks about Mr Monk".[20] This drew an 'opinion' from the central spinning spider Sir Kenneth Bailey, Head of the Attorney-General's Department: "Professor Bailey has advised that the report of the Commonwealth Investigation Service establishes a prima facie case (against Doyle and Donegan) under the Crimes Act."[21] More secret memos with scribbles in the margins, initialled calligraphically. A SECRET Menzies Cabinet Sub-Committee Minute of 28 May 1951, ordered prosecutions against Jim Healy, Doc Doyle, M. J. Donegan, and Bill Bird (SUA). Bland wanted full use of the press and "a public statement or statements should be made dealing with the use of troops on the waterfront".[22] On Saturday night 18 May, Albert Monk's house was "plastered with scab signs". Albert Monk requested Bland "to speak to the Victorian Police Commissioner" which he did. "I have reported to you on the many discussions I have had with Mr Monk on this whole issue", said Mr Bland.[23]

Sir Harry also expanded on his favourite preoccupations: "My inclination is to think that the ACTU won't let matters rest where they are, but much will depend on whether Mr Monk goes to Geneva. If the ACTU does dis-affiliate the recreant Unions, the way would be easier (but not easy because of traditional

Labour attitudes) for subsequent affiliation of new unions in place of de-registered unions. Of course, if the Communist Unions are dis-affiliated, they may at last form a Congress of Trades Unions, and link up with the WFTU to Departments of which the Seamen and WWF are now linked. At that stage, if the present Unions are deregistered, the ACTU may well admit new unions in opposition."[24] Disaffiliation? Registering 'tame cat' Unions? These were the Government's plans. "Recreant" and "defiant" are two Sir Harry words. He must have soaked up those Prince Valiant comics when he was a kid.[25]

This clinical distance of top bureaucrats, ministers, and secretaries from the hard reality of working life is characteristic also of the legal officers of Attorney-General's Department led by Sir Ken Bailey and many other Departmental lawyers and officers. But Fred Wheeler (Assistant Secretary, Department of Trade) offered this cautionary thought to Bland: "As I explained to you, we are very cut off from both the facts and the atmosphere of industrial matters, and the newspapers are a most unreliable guide."[26] Bland was convinced of 'the Communist conspiracy' but did not want to risk a 'showdown' in case "we would walk into a Communist trap".[27] Nevertheless he thought ultimately "a real showdown will provide the rationale for real legislation against the Communists".[28] Later, Harry Bland and Joe Hewitt organised the 'crisis' at Bowen in 1953 to precipitate Bland's constantly disappearing 'showdown' with the Wharfies and the 'Commos'. Indeed, Sir Harry's showdown seems to have been erratically pursuing Lance Sharkey's 'decisive battle'.[29]

In the 1951 NZ ships dispute, Bland relied on the right-wing Executive of the ACTU: "We have the outspoken attitude of the ACTU and of some sections of Labour, and we will, if we handle things properly, have the tacit, if not open, support of the ACTU and some sections of Labour. We have a potential split in the WWF in Melbourne."[30] "Tacit" is astonishing! A nod of the nut is worth a thousand words! Bland, ASIO, and the Liberal strategists worked very closely with the Melbourne Groupers on the Waterfront led by V. G. Gus Alford, a member of Moral Re-Armament and Vice President of the Victorian Labor College which was not part of the Labor Party. But the Melbourne Groupers were about to be 'hammer and tacked'[31] by Healy and Roach from the Federal Office.

Sir Harry's six-page epistle to Mr Holt is packed full of probabilities and possibilities rather than hard facts. Henry Bland has got into a powerful position and waffles on and on, puffing on his meerschaum, visualising in the shag-baccy fumes, ziffy, bomb-throwing, Bolsheviki, cargo hooks stuck in their brewery-horse thick leather, trouser belts, shouldering Karl Marx and Stalin, from 'No.2 the 'Loo'[32] up Cathedral St. to seize power in Macquarie St., Sydney! It's a bloody joke! But who's laughing? Sir Harry's supporters could say that this catch-all, amateurish, pathetic account of Top Secret guesses and stabs in the dark about working people, their lives and families in Australia's democracy, helped pave the way for the 'victory' by the Shipping Companies, the Liberal and Labour Governments, the World Bank, and the global corporations in later years, over Trade Unionism. But how can you conquer your own people? The silence of the waterfront, the seamen and the 'dockies' was very difficult to penetrate. And the organisation of the Wharfies by Ted Roach, with Healy as a central figure, meant for quick communication of Executive directives to Branch Secretaries, and from them to the rank and file Branch members. Wharfies' 'consciousness' was not only a book consciousness but also the irreplaceable consciousness of hard and bitter experience.

Crystal-balling Sir Harry continued his prognosis of future events: "The Unions likely to come out following action against Healy and Doyle, Donegan and Bird are: the Seamen, the Ships Painters and Dockers, the Ironworkers (there is a split here in Newcastle and Sydney, and elsewhere also)."[33] "If these Unions (and the Miners) do come out, then 'Alien' goes into operation and the National Service Scheme is suspended."[34] But Harry admitted there were worrying qualifications to any perfect plan: "I should think we could rely on the Transport Unions and the Railways (except Victoria which is doubtful) though if the Miners come out, there'll be few trains until 'Alien' gets going. I doubt whether the AEU would stop in sympathy."[35] Fully wound up, the head of the Department of Labour and National Service, later knighted for his services to the nation, said to Menzies' Minister for Labour, Mr Harold Holt: "the Unions might persevere with the ban only of NZ vessels". If so "we'll have to aim first to clear the ground with the ACTU for use of servicemen to handle waterfront work and tugs". This manoeuvre would require "delicate handling" but Sir Harry with unblushing confidence said, "I think we could pull it off". Unlike Albert

Monk, he was not worried about the Painters and Dockers who "are really only labouring types who precede shipwrights (etc)" and who will "abide by the ACTU lead". Like any good general, Mr Bland had his reserves in mind but, again, it was "probably" — "We can probably rely on the British seamen to help if the ACTU is on side."[36]

Acknowledging the presence of a ghostly Napoleon, Harry said: "If I'm right about this element of inevitability, the Government's strategy should be that it selects the issues and has the initiative. As in war, this is a matter of calculated risks."[37] Bland had more quivers to his bow. "If the WWF comes out we will need to push on with the legislation we've spoken of — cutting down the privileged position of the WWF, requiring build up to quotas, (vid Bowen, 1953), and de-casualisation to bid for support for the formation of new unions."[38] And that "if the Communists **do not react** to the proceedings against Healy, Doyle, Donegan and Bird", then "we should proceed in the first Parliamentary session only with the secret ballot legislation".

As usual, events must be coordinated with the Press and "a dramatic announcement of execution of a search warrant on Tuesday, May 29, 1951 in the afternoon's press, and issue of information (against Healy, Doyle, Donegan and Bird) in Friday morning's press, will give the public all the excitement they want and be the proof that the Government hasn't been idle",[39] perorated Sir Harry. Sir Harry wanted "the best press people" and "to use Noel Dickson as we proposed before".[40] In Sherlock Holmes' tradition, "Noel Dickson" sounds like a journalist's ASIO code name. Later in the 1950s, it was Alan Reid who poured buckets of bilge on the Wharfies in "The Daily Telegraph", Sir Frank Packer's Sydney daily tabloid.[41] Like Watson, of Holmes and Watson, Sir Harry issued a timely, conjectural and tautologous warning: "and a raid on the WWF and the Seamen's Union — the latter only if we think we can find something?"[42]

ASIO's files are incomplete. In Ted Roach's file,[43] about thirty items were permitted from a possible hundred. The rest were burnt in the big chimney stack behind the old Archives. Items were marked for destruction in the year 2035 AD. Hence the author must use Sir Harry Bland's pastiche of policies, in this secret 1951 letter, to show how expensive, organised, co-ordinated and ineffective were the secret campaigns to trap, arrest and gaol militant and Communist Trade Union leaders. And also, though the hidden facts are undiscovered, to set up one provocation after the other in the hope to 'jag'[44] them. (Sir Harry's 'showdown' came at Bowen, Queensland, in September 1953 and was an ignominious failure, as united Trade Unionists across the board collapsed 'Operation Cain' in 48 hours flat.)

GROUPERS IN 1949 AND 1952 WHARFIES' ELECTIONS

In the 1949 elections, after three Communist Party errors — the Coal Strike, the Red Army statement of Lance Sharkey and the printing of signed articles by Dixon and Sharkey, in "The Maritime Worker" — Ted Roach had scraped in with 10,051 votes to Grouper P. Cain (9,068) and the ALP's J. Crow (1,999) (see Figs 35 and Fig 36). In the election for General Secretary, Jim Healy polled 11,822 to Melbourne Grouper Gus Alford's 9,492.

In July 1952, elections were held for the positions of Federal Secretary and Assistant-General Secretary of the Wharfies. Melbourne ASIB official, Mr H. G. Neil, who was to keep detailed notes of his leading role in 'Operation Cain' (at Bowen in September 1953), was concerned about how many votes Melbourne Grouper Tom Healy[45] was polling against 'Commo' Ted Roach in the election for Assistant-General Secretary. Not only was Mr Neil sweating on the result but so was Mr J. M. 'Joe' Hewitt, Secretary of the ASIB. Would Ted, after his gaoling, lose ground in 1952? Ted's work as WWF National Organiser, his sincerity, his 'coming out parties' up and down the coast, and a truthful electioneering pamphlet written by Henry McCarthy[46] increased Ted's vote. H. G. Neil let Joe Hewitt know, during the count: "Tom Healy not doing well enough here to succeed."[47] Sir Harry Bland was foiled again!

Fig 35 United Federation Candidates for the WWF 1949 Elections

Source: WWF Pamphlet, 1949, p.3; kindly provided to Author by Ted Roach

KEEP THE GOOD WORK GOING

VOTE

JIM HEALY for General Secretary

TED ROACH for Assistant General Secretary

Sid Barrett
Albert Dunn
Charles McCready
J. (Dutchy) Young
Tom Nelson

For Federal Council. (5 to be elected).

You are asked to work and vote for the above United Federation Candidates who, in recent years, have led the Federation in all the gains now enjoyed by the members.

(Authorised by C. Berry, 59 Banks Rd., Earlwood.)

In this leaflet we present the

UNITED FEDERATION CANDIDATES

FOR THE

Waterside Workers' Federation

1949 ELECTIONS

JULY 4th - 8th

JIM HEALY *again for General Secretary.*

TED ROACH *again for Assist. General Sec.*

At the 1945 Federal Council the late G. P. (Barney) Mullins said this of them:—

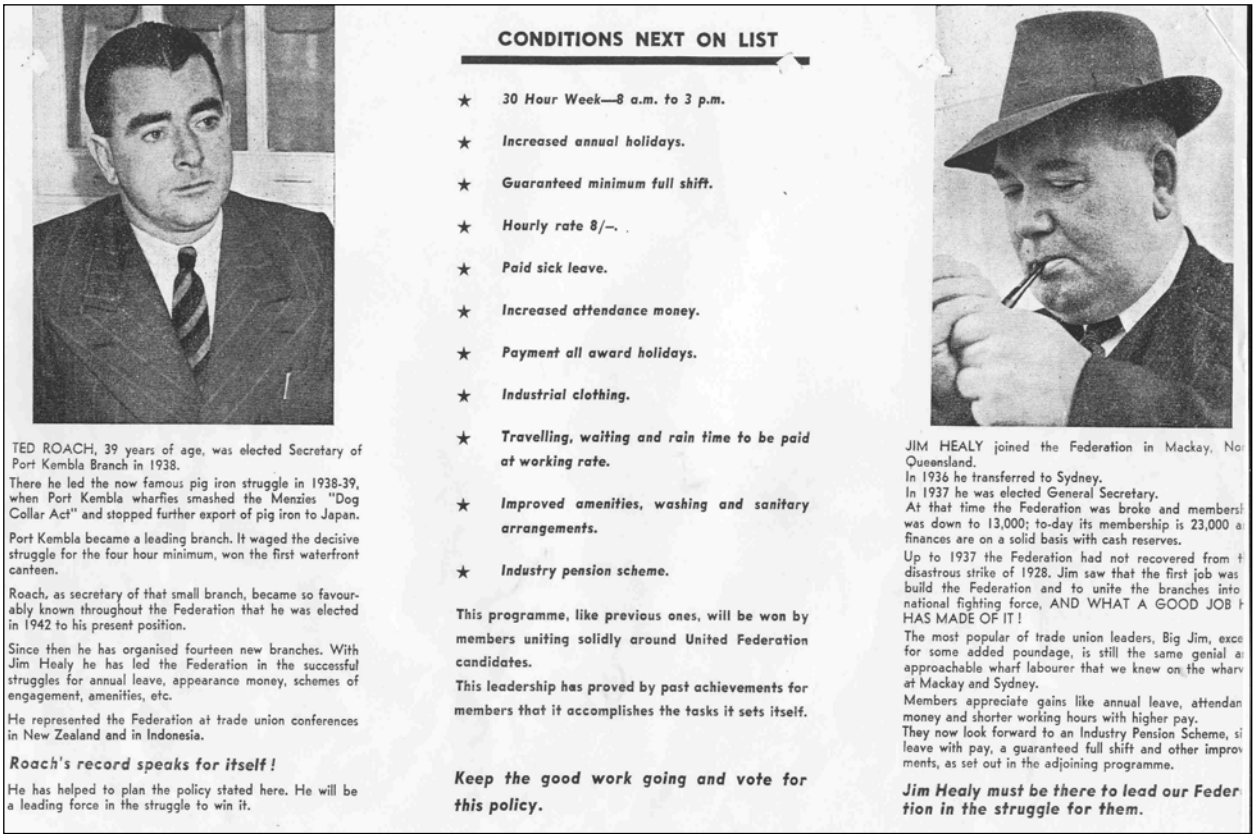
"Our Federal leaders are the best in the country. Never in my thirty odd years in the Federation have we had such good and able leaders, and that can be proved by the gains the Federation has made."

Members are warned that the shipowners, through the daily press, will try to swing votes against Healy and Roach.

Reject the intrusion of the shipowners and their press into our Union affairs. Return the United Federation Candidates whose leadership has made our Union one of the world's foremost.

*Jim Healy(standing) and Ted Roach (seated, right) addressing WWF Conference

Fig 36 United Federation Candidates for the WWF 1949 Elections
Source: WWF Pamphlet, 1949, p.3; kindly provided to Author by Ted Roach



TED ROACH, 39 years of age, was elected Secretary of Port Kembla Branch in 1938.

There he led the now famous pig iron struggle in 1938-39, when Port Kembla wharfies smashed the Menzies "Dog Collar Act" and stopped further export of pig iron to Japan.

Port Kembla became a leading branch. It waged the decisive struggle for the four hour minimum, won the first waterfront canteen.

Roach, as secretary of that small branch, became so favourably known throughout the Federation that he was elected in 1942 to his present position.

Since then he has organised fourteen new branches. With Jim Healy he has led the Federation in the successful struggles for annual leave, appearance money, schemes of engagement, amenities, etc.

He represented the Federation at trade union conferences in New Zealand and in Indonesia.

Roach's record speaks for itself!

He has helped to plan the policy stated here. He will be a leading force in the struggle to win it.

CONDITIONS NEXT ON LIST

- ★ *30 Hour Week—8 a.m. to 3 p.m.*
- ★ *Increased annual holidays.*
- ★ *Guaranteed minimum full shift.*
- ★ *Hourly rate 8/–.*
- ★ *Paid sick leave.*
- ★ *Increased attendance money.*
- ★ *Payment all award holidays.*
- ★ *Industrial clothing.*
- ★ *Travelling, waiting and rain time to be paid at working rate.*
- ★ *Improved amenities, washing and sanitary arrangements.*
- ★ *Industry pension scheme.*

This programme, like previous ones, will be won by members uniting solidly around United Federation candidates.

This leadership has proved by past achievements for members that it accomplishes the tasks it sets itself.

Keep the good work going and vote for this policy.

JIM HEALY joined the Federation in Mackay, No Queensland.

In 1936 he transferred to Sydney.

In 1937 he was elected General Secretary.

At that time the Federation was broke and members was down to 13,000; to-day its membership is 23,000 a finances are on a solid basis with cash reserves.

Up to 1937 the Federation had not recovered from t disastrous strike of 1928. Jim saw that the first job was build the Federation and to unite the branches into national fighting force, AND WHAT A GOOD JOB H HAS MADE OF IT!

The most popular of trade union leaders, Big Jim, exce for some added poundage, is still the same genial a approachable wharf labourer that we knew on the wharv at Mackay and Sydney.

Members appreciate gains like annual leave, attendan money and shorter working hours with higher pay.

They now look forward to an Industry Pension Scheme, si leave with pay, a guaranteed full shift and other improv ments, as set out in the adjoining programme.

Jim Healy must be there to lead our Feder tion in the struggle for them.

ASIO RECORDS “SECRET” WHARFIE COMMUNIST MEETING

Ted Roach did not trust, politically, people like J. J. Graves whom Ted said had been on Jack Lang’s ALP (NSW) ‘inner group’ which had fought for the removal of Communist Trade Union leaders since the mid-1930s. This ‘Lang inner group’ was described by the Communist Party Secretariat as “the most extreme reactionary right-wing group inside the Labour Party”.[48] When Ted saw leading Communists talking to J. J. Graves, and others who may have been completely innocent, he wondered because he could feel ASIO everywhere. ‘The Security wallopers’ had come into the Arbitration Court after he (Ted) was given his impressive-looking summons, which climaxed with “God Save the King!”, and he saw them lounging in waterfront bars trying to pick up information. Time and again, Ted warned the Wharfie Executive and Council of the activities of ASIO and gave them examples.[49]

The letter from Harry Bland to Harold Holt shows the web of intrigue and deception woven by the Government, Bureaucracies and Police to trap workers’ leaders. Once named in a secret departmental memo, the individual was ‘guilty’ even before charges had been squeezed out of whatever evidence there was. The Red Bill, had it been passed in 1951, would have made this much easier because, if you could be proven by its criteria to be a Communist, then you were guilty according to the Act and faced the penalties. Ted’s suspicions and powers of observation, honed on the track, in the gym, streets and wharves around Australia, are more than proven by ASIO records. One stunning success by the ‘Security Coppers’ was to tape, or transcribe, a secret Communist Wharfie Fraction meeting held in Sydney on 22-23 November 1952, or receive a copy from someone who did.[50] The Secret Report opens with a list of Wharfies who attended.

It revealed that prominent Communist Dick Dixon, President of the Communist Party, was really "Clifford Reginald Walker", and that Communist Tom Nelson, Secretary of the Wharfies' Sydney Branch, was "Charles Andrew Smith".[51] Opening the discussion, Dixon said that after the losses of the Coal Strike, the CPA had re-discovered "the United Front". He said: "The year 1952 was an important one in the history of the Waterside Workers' Federation ... The National position was at first difficult, (with a) loss of positions in other elections. In order to meet this, we worked out the tactics of the United Front, linked this with the margins, and the results were important for the Working Class, the WWF, and the Communist Party of Australia. We have to recognise that the basic tactics employed were the correct tactics, (achieving) ACTU participation in struggles from our angle."[52] Dixon said that "Every comrade here should carefully examine the report by Comrade Malenkov" — a ritual salaam in the correct direction. This was "Malenkov On Criticism", a report on taking and giving 'criticism' within the Party. *They criticised every bastard*, said Ted. The Party's new interpretation of 'United Front work' was to work with anyone, including Groupers, who expressed a verbal willingness to struggle round working-class policies. This policy proved successful, they said, leading to the 1954 'Margins' struggle.

But Ted Roach did not agree to forming 'United Fronts' with Groupers and had disobeyed the Party's instructions about candidates for the Wharfies Executive on the South Coast of NSW. Claude Jones, a CC-CPA member, also disagreed with Dixon's 'United Front' with Groupers.[53] Jim Healy opened the recorded discussion on Dixon's report, and said: "You will recall that in Queensland our forces fell back from the previous years, and the indications were that our position in Queensland, at the time of the election, was relatively worse than it had been for a period of twelve years, and the conclusion that we came to was that it flowed, in the main, from this sectarianism, and the failure to understand the real meaning of the United Front work."[54] Healy continued: "We had found in Port Kembla a resistance to the efforts to get United Front activity, and it flowed in Port Kembla from a feeling that we can't trust these people." Ted Roach spoke next. This is ASIO's verbatim report on what Ted said:

> "17. The next speaker was Comrade ROACH who dealt mainly with his visit to Queensland ports and organisational matters. On the question of the practicability of the Fraction,[55] ROACH expressed the opinion that *the Fraction lacked something organisationally, but felt that by no means should it be wound up. The Fraction has been of outstanding value to the Party, and to the Federation. During his tour of Queensland ports, ROACH said that he found that members felt that the Fraction was of no value at all, and a waste of time and money.* He said that *sectarianism was most evident in Queensland and the majority of members had lost touch with up-to-date affairs. This was due mainly to the delay in receiving communications from the couriers of the Party's apparatus. As far as the Waterside Workers' Federation was concerned, campaigns could be waged satisfactorily, without reference to the Party*."

Ted's final quoted phrase *without reference to the Party* would be heresy to the listening Dixon. But Ted Roach knew that in 1949, mechanical Central Committee intrusion in Wharfie affairs by Sharkey and Dixon caused big problems in the Federation. The cliché covering this was 'bringing out the face of the Party', which Ted did all the time on his organising tours but no-one seemed to know. Ted was under a permanent delusion, from Kembla on, that the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Australia knew what he did and how he did it. But they didn't. Nor did they know how he organised the South Coast Branch, which made the victory in the *Dalfram* Dispute a certainty. Jim Healy reported all Wharfie matters to the Central Committee of the CPA. Ted Roach was not on the Central Committee, where he should have been. Sharkey and Dixon's signed articles in "The Maritime Worker" in 1949 had inflamed anti-Communist organisation among the Wharfies, and caused dangerous splits. Healy and Roach had to clean up after these major Central Committee errors, which were not allowed to be accurately analysed and 'criticised' in print by anyone. Hence, the outgoing tide of CPA membership from 1945 to 1952.[56]

The SECRET ASIO report continued:

> "18. ROACH said that *although some good decisions were arrived at during the Biennial Conference, no **decisions** were taken around a National Campaign to improve conditions on the waterfront. Nor were any **decisions** made on the defeat of Menzies, or a Log of Claims.* ROACH said: *The Melbourne Delegation out-manoeuvered us at the conference, and from this we should learn some lessons*."

Ted was open and honest in the expression of his opinion and criticism among his Party comrades. Now came Ted Roach's success in Queensland, in recruiting new members for the Communist Party. He had recruited rank and file Wharfies, and three Secretaries of Wharfie branches, for the Communist Party. These Wharfie branches were an organisational base in working-class, farmer, and community struggles in these ports. Ted's success was little short of stunning, but he was not congratulated. It was hurried over, as if nobody believed him:

> "19. *From Gladstone, north, I was able to recruit **thirteen** new Party members; **three** of them were Branch Secretaries, and, in Gladstone itself, **the President and Secretary** have promised me, that they're going to have a joint discussion, with their families, and so on, and they are prepared, I believe, that they'll be joining the Party, in a very short time.*
> "20. Continuing ROACH referred to broad meetings in northern Queensland ports, and his further success in recruiting, saying: *I was able to get one member in a little port like Port Douglas; a half a dozen in Cairns, and, in Innisfail, the Secretary of the Branch, in Bowen, the Secretary of the Branch, and one other. In Mackay, I missed out Rockhampton unfortunately I didn't have enough time.*
> "21. ROACH said that *there is a Party of twenty-five in Townsville, but at a conference of the Townsville Branch, only nine attended, and he felt that the State Committee should give this Branch some detailed attention. He stressed the importance of a closer worker-farmer unity, generally, and the need for this in Queensland, between the sugar farmers and the watersiders.*"[57]

No-one was recorded anywhere congratulating Ted on his outstanding Communist Party recruiting performance in the 'Build the Party' campaign. He had clearly bounced back after his gaoling, despite the acid gall running in his guts in Long Bay from being 'buried' there by the Communist Party. He had gone north on one of his regular organising trips and achieved what would be close to a record, in quality and quantity, of new recruits for the Communist Party. Didn't the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Australia want new members, and new Wharfie members, and Wharfies' Secretary members, in a haemorrhaging Party for which it always preferred industrial workers? 'Roach' was being ignored, not believed, and trivialised. And it was affecting his personality. People who worked with Ted on Wharfie films, like Norma Disher and Jock Levy in 1953, found his personality very difficult. It wasn't the same Ted Roach who was farewelled from Kembla, in 1942. Stress, a seven day week, and the "deep grievance"[58] of being dumped and ignored in gaol for fulfilling his duty as a Wharfie and a Communist were niggling at Ted Roach. Just as there is a taint about the cover-up of Ted's gaoling, there seems to be something wrong with this treatment of Ted after his outstanding success in the emulation competition to get new members for the Communist Party of Australia.

Before I had read this SECRET report, Ted had commented on this meeting, and the reaction of CPA President, Dick Dixon, or "Clifford Alan Walker", to Ted's recruiting for the Communist Party. Ted said: *I'd go to Queensland, I'd concentrate a lot in Queensland. In most places there'd be a Party meeting, in bigger places there'd be a broad meeting, and then there might be a Party building meeting. I'd take part in these all the way down the coast. I used to get the poor bastards to sit there and I'd go for two hours. The bastards couldn't get away from me. Pump the politics into them. I didn't say I think you ought to have this and I think you ought to have that. I'd say this is what we need and this is the way to get it. Here's how we go about it. Always about the conditions and so on, forward, forward! On one organising trip, I'd come back, after seven weeks work, till seven o'clock (each day), in Queensland, or something, and then I'd get*

home, and I didn't attend my Sydney Wharfie Party Branch meeting. And there'd be a scream from these, on the Sydney Waterfront: "The bastard doesn't attend his Party meetings!" They'd scream: "Roach won't attend his Party meetings" — Munro "Ya! Ya! Yo!", and Healy! And I was doing it all up and down the coast, raising money, recruiting members, and so on. One recruiting campaign, I remember I did, one trip I came back and I reported to the Party that: "All right, here's something for the competition. I have been responsible for the recruitment on this trip of thirteen new members to the Party." Dixon said: "Oh, no, we can't take that. We can't take the credit for that." No bastard was going to get the credit, and neither was I.

The author: "Did Dixon ever have a heart to heart talk with you, and congratulate you on your work?"
No, no.
The author: "Did anyone from the Central Committee ever do that?"
Never, never ever. All these little things used to give me the shits. I did it from here (Ted points to his heart), not for them. And then, some of the boys'd say: "Oh, well, it's all right Roach you'll recruit the members here, but we've got the job of holding them, when you go back to Sydney!" I said: "Do you think I'm going to sit up with them, and make their bottles up for them, at night, and change their nappies for them!" They amaze you! Addressing the Central Committee just three years before, Claude Jones had said: "About the building of the Party. This is a very serious question, for despite all our good work in the Ironworkers, Wharfies, and railways, the number of recruits gained in the last two months is absolutely shocking."[59] Yet, Ted Roach's effort, above, was not welcomed as a recruiting success.

NEWCASTLE BRANCH

ASIO'S SECRET transcription of the 1952 Communist Wharfie Fraction meeting continued with Jim Healy reporting on the Newcastle Branch: "So far as some of the criticisms are concerned on the Newcastle position, I agree that I accept responsibility" and "I think myself ... that it's only a question of going up there and dealing with it" ... "but, unfortunately I'm booked to go to Hobart tomorrow, and this is how it seems to work out all the time". (Jim Healy had just had two weeks off, "for health reasons mainly".) Healy continued: "Well, I don't know, Comrade ROACH has only just come back and he may not be ready to go up tomorrow." … "Well, then, one day this week we'll decide that Comrade ROACH will go up there and deal with the question" (of combining Newcastle No.1 and No.2 Branches). Then, Vic Campbell, of Sydney, said: "We must treat women and wives as the Revolutionary reserve of the Party — activise them as we are doing in the Union of Australian Women. This bourgeois idea of male superiority, adopted towards members' wives within our Federation should cease."[60]

As National Organiser, Ted Roach had organised Women's Committees in Branches round Australia, and certainly shared this view of Vic Campbell. And the theoretical depth of the comment points to Ted Roach as a co-author. What a coup for the spooks! ASIO was able to record "secret" discussions of the Wharfie Communist Fraction without being exposed or detected. Ted Roach kept his lead shield firmly between himself and the spooks. Why were other Communists so lax, and unobservant? There are many pages of reports by other speakers at this WWF Communist Fraction, secretly recorded by ASIO in Sydney on 22-23 November 1952. Ted Roach's success in recruiting for the Communist Party was ignored. Ted was being cold-shouldered by the Party leadership, by the Sydney Branch Executive and by the representatives of employer organisations. Yet I feel that Ted Roach spoke fearlessly and honestly.

A UNITED FRONT WITH GROUPERS

Claude Jones, who noticed the 'flinching' among some comrades, had spoken about the Groupers at a CC-CPA meeting on 8 July 1949. His speech was stolen in the Police raid on Marx House: "I think it is about time that many of our comrades in the trade unions, and in the factory branches, woke up to the fact that there is a real conspiracy in Australia, to destroy the position of the trade unions, a conspiracy that embraces governments, both Labor and Liberal, the employers' federations, and the newspapers, and the right-wing,

and the fakers they have been running around the jobs — the so-called industrial groupers. There are still some of our people who have illusions about Labor Governments, who want to draw back from a real struggle against the right-wing, who say that some of our chaps are being a bit too provocative, because they drag some of these louts out, and show them up to the workers for what they are.[61] I think we need a real campaign on the job, to clarify the issues facing the workers, and, in some of our factory branches, to remove such people out of Party leadership, because what they are doing is flinching in the face of onslaughts on the working-class, and so weakening the position of the working-class. The right-wing only win where our people back down, where they get tied up in all sorts of fantastic illusions about unity, or are scared about being provocative and so fail to line them up before the working class for what they are — the agents of the boss".[62] But the Jones' line on Groupers was defeated by Dixon's 'United Front' with Groupers. *You can't have a "United Front" with Groupers,* Ted said. *That's like the devil uniting with the Pope*.

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[1] Bland letter to Holt, A 4940/1 C357.

[2] Louis, L. J. Communism as a hanging offence in the cold war in Australia, 1950-1953" "Journal of Australian Studies", Vol.19, 1995, p.3.

[3] 'got on the toe': proceeded with expedition.

[4] 'the Oracle': rumour and furphy, word of mouth.

[5] OF 3/267 (Sy. 3.5.1951).

[6] Ballard to External Affairs, 17.5.1947 (AA:A 1838/278,401/1/3/1, ii).

[7] For example, ASIO made a full transcript of a secret Wharfie communist meeting in Sydney e.g. National Fraction CPA wharfies, A 6119/79, 1212 pp.165-186, A 619/79, 1212. 22-23.11.1952.

[8] Precis reports on enlarged Sydney City Section, CPA wharfies, R/1/48, Vol.3, pp.108-109, 18.6.1957.

[9] Sydney "Street" Branch, R/1/48 Vol.3, 13.1.1954, pp.15-16,

[10] See ASIO Monthly Summaries in CRS 1508/1 item NN. Louis, L., op. cit.

[11] **Editors' note**: Les Louis is a retired associate professor of history at the University of Canberra, noted for his pioneering work and publications on the Great Depression and the Cold War in Australia. He supported Denis Kevans's work on Ted Roach, including hosting a meeting between Ted Roach and other supporters at his Canberra home.

[12] 'flummed': stumbled across, fluked.

[13] M 1509/1, No.36, No.92, Secret.

[14] Bland letter to Holt, A 4940/1, C357, op. cit., pp.1-6, 17, 17a, 19, 20, 22-33.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Issued by Melbourne Trades Hall Council, 22 February 1950, in WWF FCM 9.3.1951 Annexure No.1.

[19] Telephone call from author to Sir Harry Bland.

[20] Bland letter to Holt, A 4940/1, C357, op. cit.

[21] Ibid.

[22] A 571/158, 1949/1006, F. H. Wheeler, A/S Dept of Trade, 28.2.1949.

[23] Bland letter to Holt, op. cit.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Mr Bland's impressionistic style of social analysis, and absence of direct knowledge of Trade Unions, were characteristic of the Australian Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Mr Peter Reith, MHR, in 1997-2001, and Mr Tony Abbott, MHR, 2001-2003 in John Howard's second and third Liberal Governments.

[26] Bland letter to Holt, op. cit.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Lawrence 'Lance' Sharkey, General Secretary of the CPA, liked to repeat the Comintern spokesperson's phrase a "decisive battle", the often prophesised day when the working class and their allies would wrest power from the Ruling Class. For example: "These strikes, at first skirmishes, sometimes result in weighty struggles; they decide nothing, it is true, but they are the strongest proof that the ***decisive battle*** between the Capitalist class and the working class is approaching." Sharkey, L. "The Trade Unions", Sydney: Australian Communist Party, 1948, p.4.

[30] Bland letter to Holt, op. cit.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Rhyming slang: Woolloomooloo, Sydney.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Sir Frank Packer was formally Lieutenant Frank Packer of the "Allied Works' Council".

[42] Bland letter to Holt, op. cit.

[43] A 6119/79/143.

[44] **Editors' note**: jag — when a fish accidentally impales itself on an unbaited hook.

[45] Grouper J. H. Cummins was WWF Branch President, Melbourne, Mr V. J. McNamara Liaison officer, Mr F. McMahon, Mr J. Skinner, and Mr J. Kelly. In fact, 23 out of 24 officers were Groupers. ST 4 433 Box.4 (no number).

[46] Henry McCarthy (CPA), Wharfie, journalist, boxer, knew the author's father, Clyde Kendall ('Mick') Kevans, who was a tally clerk, or 'Moonee Valley', on the Sydney Waterfront. The author worked with Henry McCarthy on the "Tribune", 1964-65.

[47] ASIB 14 McKillop St., Melbourne, to J. M. Hewitt. ASIB, Box 556 GPO, Sydney. 17.7.1952. Melbourne's Tom Healy was standing against Ted Roach. ST 4433 Box.4 (no number).

[48] CPA PB Meeting 21.3.1936, MLMSS 5021 P/L/ACC 721616 (76).

[49] *The picture in Brisbane was amazing. Security officers and detectives were all over the place*. Roach, T. "FEM", 30.3.1950.

[50] A 6119/79, 1213, Nos. 177-186.

[51] It says "Charles Andrew Smith, alias Tom Nelson".

[52] A 6119/79, 1213, Nos. 177-186., op. cit.

[53] Jones, Claude. R/1/48 Vol.2, 8.7.1949, CC-CPA pp.110-115, being a copy of Jones' address to CC-CPA re. Groupers, stolen from Marx House.

[54] A 6119/79, 1213, Nos. 177-186., op. cit.

[55] A group of Communists working in the same industry, who have a loose organisation.

[56] Falling from about 26,000 members to 6,000.

[57] A 6119/79, 1213, Nos. 177-186., op. cit., pp.19-20.

[58] ASIO SECRET REPORT: "Ted Roach has a deep grievance. He is smarting under alleged lack of Party interest whilst he was serving his gaol sentence." (And a pen annotation) — "This is interesting in the light of the present struggles in the leadership of the WWF". ("B. B.") No.134, 14.2.1952; A 6119/79, 1213, op. cit.

[59] Jones, Claude. op. cit., p.111. **Author's note**: Once the Communist Party hierarchy had decided to dump a comrade, or had decided to ostracise a comrade, they did so without mercy. Bill Orr, the Secretary of the Militant Minority, in the early 1930s, had outstanding success organising coal miners. He had also mastered the art of communicating with hostile oppositions. When you read his writings, you could conclude that Bill Orr had mastered "United Front" tactics before the Bulgarian Communist, Georgie Dimitrov. On Saturday 20 March 1943, the brilliant Bill Orr, who was going through a personal crisis, was dumped from the Central Committee of the Communist Party in this manner. Jack Miles: "Comrade Orr was removed from the Central Committee. His degeneration was both a physical and mental degeneration, largely due to drinking, and to bad organisation of his own time and work. It lead to political degeneration. I would not call either heads or tails, as to what is likely to happen to him in the future." No sentiment here! Executed, annihilated, obliterated. And McWilliams: "I think we should know that we do not wish to regard him as an unclean thing", etc. No summary of his brilliant work; no extenuating circumstances; no milk of human kindness; no mercy. Just label him and extinguish him! Yes, Bill Orr was "biten' weed and bummen' beer" (Fred Moore), but where is the mateship and comradeship? Bill Orr, the most brilliant Communist Trade Union organiser before Ted Roach, executed by his comrades, off the Party podium! Goodbye and good riddance! (author). Jack Miles and R. McWilliams, Central Committee Ml MSS 5021 pp.18-19. Add-On March 20, 1943.

[60] A 6119/79, 1213, No.177, op. cit., pp.19-20. Vic Campbell or Vic Gore.

[61] Jones, Claude. op. cit., pp.114-5.

[62] Ibid.

Chapter 20
UNITY … THE WINNING WEAPON, 1953: KWINANA AND 'OPERATION CAIN'

In 1953, Ted Roach defeated Anglo-Persian Oil, the West Australian right-wing Labor Government and the right-wing Australian Workers Union. The dispute concerned was which Union would do the work in the proposed Oil refinery at Kwinana, 90 miles south of Perth. *Millions of tax payers' money was being spent in harbour construction and dredging*.[1] The previous Australian Workers Union (AWU) President, Mr Hegney, was now an elected member of the incoming WA Labor Government. He had a proposed AWU cover agreement ratified by Judge Jackson of the West Australian Arbitration Court. It looked 'home and hosed' for the AWU who contended with the Wharfies Federation in the north-west for the right to cover wharf work, but only getting dwarf size coverage for their members. In a series of brilliant manoeuvers, uniting Unions across the political spectrum and discussing and negotiating with all the main players, Ted Roach ousted the AWU and won coverage for the Wharfies at Kwinana. For this, he was given little credit! His big win was doubted, then denied, and his name was omitted from some of the "The Maritime Worker" reports on the dispute!

The Wharfies' fortnightly paper "The Maritime Worker" said: "Some 35 Unions in WA appealed to the AWU not to go on with its application to the State Arbitration court to alter rules to cover all unskilled labour at Kwinana."[2] Wharfies' Secretary Fremantle, Gordon Harris, reported: "This meeting of Port workers condemns the action and tactics of the officials of the AWU in proceeding with their application for an amended constitution, in absolute defiance of the expressed request of the Trade Union Industrial Council representing the overwhelming number of trade unionists in this State (WA)."[3] At about this time, Wharfie A. McVeigh wrote about the "verballing" of Paddy Troy — "whether by design or only by thoughtless expression, an erroneous impression is being formed regarding that well-known Fremantle waterfront identity, Paddy Troy".[4]

In March 1953, Ted told the Wharfies' delegates at the Federation's Biennial Conference: *Arising out of Federal Executive discussion, I proceeded to Fremantle to look at the Kwinana position; and after having informed my mind, felt that the drive being directed to the breaking up of maritime unity required in reply a strengthening of this unity. I proposed to the Executive of our Fremantle Branch that a Joint Executive of the Union be called for the purpose of drafting a strong resolution, and arrangements be made for a combined Union deputation, led by myself, to meet the new Labor Premier,* [Albert] *Hawke, and other interested members of the Government.*[5] The deputation met Mr Hawke on 31 March and *pointed out to him that we did not intend to interfere with the affairs of other unions but under no circumstances were we prepared to allow other unions to muscle in on our traditional right of waterfront work. We stated that a report was to be made at 4 p.m. that afternoon, 31 March 1953, to the Combined Maritime Executives, also that night to a Special Summons Meeting of the Fremantle waterside workers and to a stop work meeting of the Seamen on the following morning, and to the Maritime Services Union during the week.* A bit of 'organising' here, isn't there? Well, Ted was the Organiser. Ted always adopted a business-like approach, attempting to put "pressure, organised, pressure" on the opposition. *You've got to put the onus on the Boss.*

Premier Hawke "saw the gravity of the situation", and "promised to have the matter closely investigated at an early date". On the Wednesday, the WA Cabinet decided to elect a Special Committee comprising Premier Hawke, Mr Tonkin (Minister for Works), and Mr Hegney (Minister for Labour) who was also President of the AWU in Western Australia.[6] On 20 April 1953, H. H. Styants (Minister for Transport) acting for Mr Hegney, sent a letter to Hon J. B. Sleeman MLA, Parliament House Perth, from the minister's office in Perth. The week before, a deputation from Waterfront Unions had asked Mr Styants to arrange a meeting between the Secretary of the State Executive, the Secretary of the AWU, and the State Cabinet Sub-Committee. Styants reported that: "As a result of the meeting, the AWU agreed to give an unconditional guarantee to withdraw any intention that it may have had in its application before the Court of Arbitration for the right to handle the loading and unloading of ships in connection with the proposed Oil Refinery, and BHP Steel Rolling Mill at Kwinana. A letter from the AWU secretary to this effect is attached."[7, 8]

Ted told me on tape you have to understand the role of the Arbitration Court is *to maintain peace in industry*. So when mounting challenges, give them the impression that a challenge to peace in industry is imminent and that ***unless you get an understanding, by a certain date, stop work meetings will be held, in every port, to decide what action you may take, if any, in the future.*** *There's the Art of it — how to understand and work and handle the State. The State, not the geographic State, but the political State which is protected by all sorts of organisations. Its main role is the maintenance of peace in industry. Give the impression to the court that peace in industry is threatened, but don't leave yourself flat-footed. In the Kwinana one, you're not flat-footed, even though the Labor Government (WA), the AWU, and the State AWU are united, and backed up by a court decision. The AWU had coverage all up the north-west of WA and they had an application in the court for Kwinana. Peace in industry, that's their role — flay 'em with it, and flay 'em with it. Fremantle branch was affiliated with the ALP, and there was an AWU force behind the Government. The court had de-registered Paddy Troy's Union. Finally we were able to impress the new government with the injustice of the situation. We were able to impress the BHP, because we got a consent award. Healy and Docker had nothing to do with it. I handled if from go to whoa, and I only went to the court and nodded my head to the consent award, nodded my head to it.*

OPEN TRADE WITH CHINA

Ted Roach, Clarrie O'Shea, Gerry Dawson, Jim McPhee, and Jim 'Dutchy' Young[9] were delegates to the 'All China Federation of Labour Seventh National Labour Conference' on 2 May 1953 (Fig 37). The five Australian Trade Union leaders then travelled with an international delegation of 149 delegates for three weeks, and covered some 8,000 miles through the People's Republic of China. The visit was inspiring and, naturally, Ted saw new markets in China for Australian products which could keep Australian Wharfies and workers in work: *Australian coal miners have been sacked, coal mines are to be closed. Australia is seeking markets to sell our coal, but the Menzies Government refuses to recognize the Chinese People's Government and is not prepared to open up trade negotiations.*[10] Ted saw this clearly and stated it off public platforms, such as Sydney Town Hall, and wrote in "The Maritime Worker" that extra coal for China would employ Wharfies in Newcastle, Port Kembla, Gladstone and Bowen.

Dr E. E. Collocott and Mr N. Hoffman (Chamber of Manufacturers), Mr G. Dawson (delegation leader), Mr A. Lock (Chinese TU leader), Miss H. Palmer (teacher and author), Mr E. Roach (Acting Sec WWF), Mr J. Young (President, Sydney WWF), Mr J. McGeorge (Sydney businessman) and Mr J. McPhee (delegation) were on the platform at Sydney Town Hall for a combined declaration on the need to open up trade with People's China. Labor Mayor, Pat Hills, tried to ban the use of the Town Hall for the meeting. Ted addressed 2000 people and said China needed timber (e.g. rail sleepers), coal, processed milk, meat and other agricultural products. While the words of conservative politicians were pathetic, Ted's words, again, were prophetic: *Australian trade with China will grow into one of the most important issues in Australia. It is a question of the clothing, shelter, and food of Australian workers, and their families. Australia cannot be denied this market because Wall Street doesn't want to recognise Red China.* Ted, the National Organiser, described in intimate detail the loss of jobs from the mechanisation of the Australian Sugar Industry. *But if each person in China were to consume two pounds of Australian sugar per year, it would mean 544,000 tons, or almost 100,000 tons more than total sugar exports from Australia in 1952-53. Therefore, is not the question of China trade an important one for wharf labourers, their wives and families as well as other workers, as well as being an international political question?*[11] *If the Chinese people used only three pounds of Australian flour per head, per year, it would mean a market for 816,000 tons, or 81 shipments of 10,000 tons*.

Fig 37 Ted Roach with 'Dutchy' Young in China, May 1953
Source: photo kindly provided to Author by Ted Roach

Ted was one of the first voices declaring the need for trade with Red China and defining it in real terms, real jobs for real workers, and real investment for real Australian capitalists. Ted then detailed trade potential for Australian wheat, dairy products, and heavy industry with China, Indo-China, and Korea: *We must demand of the* [Menzies] *Government, that trade discussions be opened with China forthwith; and we should do everything in our power to influence people to take part in, and organise,* ***an independent trade delegation***. Ted gave as an example a British delegation led by John Boyd Orr,[12] which won fifty million pounds worth of orders from China. However, the Australian Liberal-Country Party Coalition, who were supposed to represent Australian farmers, were *completely in the pockets of Wall St and are committing the Australian people daily to plans of US billionaires. We have been committed to the aggressive Wall St, anti-Asian block by SEATO*[13] *for the bottling up of markets for Yanks and aggressive wars against Asian people.* ***War is very terrible, but very profitable***. He noted that the North Americans had stockpiled 375 million pounds worth of farm products *to dump on the markets which Australian primary producers depend on.*[14] Ted's words and analysis were prophetic, and he asked *our Branches and our members, to raise their voice for peaceful relations, trade and prosperity with the peoples of Asia, as against the aggressive policy of war, destruction, and poverty sponsored by the Menzies* [Liberal] *Government.*

Roach and Young on Trade with China

Addressing 600 Wharfies at the Towns Bond Sydney Pick-Up, Ted spoke on the importance of opening up trade negotiations with People's China. China would buy hides and skins, wool and woollen textiles, butter, meat, sugar, dried and canned fruits, agricultural machinery, earthmoving equipment and many other items. China could place enough orders in Australia to keep Australian industries and the waterfront fully occupied for years.[15] *Dutchy Young said: "Hungary had made a '5 million bicycles' for a start order from China. This gives an idea of the unlimited Chinese market." Six hundred Sydney Wharfie Branch members unanimously carried the following resolution: "That we ask the Federal Council to make immediate representations to the ACTU calling upon them to request the Federal Government and the Leader of the Opposition to take the necessary steps, forthwith, to open up trade negotiations with People's China and with any other country that is prepared to trade with Australia."*[16]

Mechanisation of the Sugar Industry

Queensland was Ted's stamping ground where he could sit in a pub and enjoy the Wharfies' company as the till rang and the publicans kept filling his glass. *It used to run out of the pores of my skin, up there with the boys*. In his 1954 report to the Wharfies' Federal Conference, Ted detailed the mechanisation of the Sugar Industry. The details were mind-boggling: a bulk sugar loading apparatus loading 100 tons per hour as against the then backbreaking "19-26 tons per gang per hour".[17] CSR would save hundreds of thousands of pounds per year on imported jute bags at 24 bags to a ton; of the 1,250,000 ton annual crop, half the bags replaced per annum. *An enormous initial saving by the CSR*. Sugar discharge would be by 'grab', with or without a gang of 'trimmers', or by the 'blow principle' without trimmers. *It will be too late after the bulk sugar installations are already working for us to start fighting against the resultant unemployment*, Ted told the Wharfies' Conference. Ted's reports on mechanisation, linking up with his Sugar Bureaux, and Rupert Lockwood's research, were among the first warnings to the Australian Unions, and populace, of the new technological revolution in production in the form of mechanisation, automation, and computer technology. China was and must be a new market for Australia. Ted Roach said this, over and over again. This new market would keep Australian farmers and workers afloat. Menzies ignored this good advice from the delegation of Australian Trade Unionists — Roach, O'Shea, Young, McPhee and Dawson. Instead, Menzies aped the USA's policy and would not recognize Red China. Unknown to Liberal Party leaders, however, the USA arranged secretly to go and talk US trade and US business with the Chinese Communist leaders.[18]

HEALY AND ROACH SACK THE MELBOURNE GROUPERS

After years of campaigning against the Melbourne Grouper leadership of Bert Clarke, Gus Alford, Skinner and Co, Bert Clarke gave Healy and Roach a presentation issue to sack all of them.[19] This was Bert's "defalcation" [Ted Roach] of Union funds. *He borrowed some money from the Union to buy a sand truck, and he didn't pay it back. Docker, Healy and Nelson were talking about getting legal advice. This was their form. I said: "Legal advice? My arse! We take the bull by the horns. We take our Federal Executive to Melbourne and we see the books. We investigate this report by our Federal Councillor, and we take one full week for our investigations. Each day, we see that a bulletin, a "Wharfie", goes out to the Melbourne membership, and, after one week, we call a special stop-work meeting of Melbourne Branch*."

The author: "Were you in Melbourne with Healy and Nelson?"

I was down there. I didn't go to the daily meetings. I was moving round the waterfront, getting a bulletin out.

The author: "What was it called?"

"Wharfie." I wasn't distributing them. We had all the troops distributing them — Ned McCool and his brother, Ted Bull, Joe Latta, Geoff and Tom Hills. I was having shipside discussions, spreading it out, preparing the ground psychologically for the stop-work meeting on the Monday.

The author: "Did you lay plans for the stop-work meeting?"

Nelson and I had a big, broad meeting, of all the militants, on the Sunday night, prior to Monday's meeting — all the Melbourne militants and us. I pointed out to the Melbourne militants to separate, and "put yourselves through the whole crowd", and, by acclamation, to psychologically take control of the whole meeting.

The author: "What happened at Monday's meeting?"

We all went to the Monday meeting. Our General-President was Jack Beitz. Jim Healy addressed the meeting. The Groupers did what we expected them to do. Big 'Bluey' McMahon was calling out: "Jim (Cummins) close the meeting! Close the meeting!" He couldn't close the bloody meeting. We had the whole Federal Executive there, and we would've promptly opened it again! I did the organising work for the preparation of the meeting. The motion was "No confidence in the Melbourne Branch Executive". It was carried with an overwhelming majority. The whole of their Executive were Groupers. They never had the guts to close the meeting. We sacked the whole lot on the spot. They were over-confident, all along, they were getting someone's support. At the Fremantle meeting, I looked up — who was on the stage? Three Groupers — Clarke, Alford, and Skinner. They bobs up. They're getting the full treatment. In Adelaide, on stage? The Groupers – all full fares and accommodation, not paid by the Branch, not paid by the Groups, wouldn't be paid by the Oil Companies? Would they? They only paid for their rotten oil ads in their journal. All their actions were linked with Security.

In the Great Britain Hotel, next door to the Wharfies' office this little bloke was speaking on the mike, a little bloke in a leather coat, a militant we didn't know. And Chapple grabbed him, like that. Gerry Chapple, the dirty, filthy, mongrel thing! So confident! Frankie Bates, a little bloke, a Party bloke, punched Chapple on stage, in front of the multitude. Gave Chapple such a hiding inside the pub. Chapple had his face wrapped in a towel, blood streaming from everywhere, like a stuck pig, during the week of their trial. We dismissed them all, and an election was held for their positions.

The author: "Did they attempt a comeback?"

No, they were finished. We made a big job of them stealing workers' money. They were like curs with their tails between their legs.

The author: "That was the biggest defeat the Groupers had?"

Not the biggest. It was the final. They'd set themselves up as an alternative Federation leadership. We sacked the whole Executive — a bit of 'the back of the axe', but we ousted the bastards. They were on their own after that. One of them ate a bit of corn after.[20] *But that was not a result of what we did. This was a political action. It was the complete destruction of the Groupers. They had their headquarters in Melbourne. They had no influence elsewhere, except for a few personalities. We destroyed them in one fell swoop. They never lifted their heads again.*

'OPERATION CAIN' – TROOPS IN BOWEN, SEPTEMBER 1953

> "He (J. B. Miles) stated that political understanding solved all things. Organisation, in itself, counted little."
> F. W. Wiggins, 13 May 1937, Letter to the Polit Bureau, CC-CPA, Secretariat.[21]

You're never far from some sort of flagella-filled subconscious when dealing with Sir Harry Bland and Comrade Ernie Thornton.[22] Were they both victims of childhood humiliation? Sir Hal, stumbling once again towards the 'showdown' with the 'Commos', picks 'Operation Cain' as the name for the fiasco that unwound in Bowen in September 1953. Yes, it was in the cane-State, Queensland — but Sir Harry, who spoke of Healy and Roach as being "bad boys", was sure that this time he would catch them with their pants down and deliver six of the best. But, no, it was not to be. The fiasco of the Bowen 'military coup' by Menzies — when Menzies deployed soldiers to the Bowen dispute — is not clearly understood enough in Australian political and labour history because 'Roach' was involved and played an important part in scuttling Harry's plans. But, you've already guessed, the furphy says "Roach had nothing to do with it" and so the story wasn't told in detail or in its entirety and, as a result, important documents are missing. In fact, **all the Minutes of Bowen Wharfies' Branch for 1953 appear to be missing, probably destroyed**[23] — these were workers' records, the story of their unbreakable, unbeatable solidarity, and their victory in 48

hours. And of all the workers in Bowen who said: "No!", and sat round drinking beer from 'nines'[24] with soldiers until the small hours of Monday morning, after their victory. Are you starting to get the picture? It took the author a long, long time, so don't you worry, you will probably get onto the theme of the destruction of carefully-selected 'Roach'-related documents, at some time or other. If you don't, don't worry, because nobody else did.

Harry Bland had been looking for an occasion for a 'showdown' with the Wharfies and Unions. The Queensland sugar season was always hectic and delays to shipping sugar and meat were good newspaper copy. Months, maybe years, of "Most Secret" planning went into 'Operation Cain' at the Queensland port of Bowen.[25] Ted Roach could see it coming because Senator McLeay, the Minister for Shipping, attacked the Wharfies in Parliament, screaming headlines filled newspapers and Ministerial parties toured Queensland ports. Jim Healy had an operation for bowel cancer in May 1953 and lay so ill, in Mater Misericordiae Hospital in North Sydney, that he was not expected to live. In this, a new "crisis", Ted Roach was once more Acting General Secretary for three or four months. The mechanisation of sugar had started. Hundreds of Wharfies would be displaced, and machines would do the work. The 'Sugar Heaven'[26] of Queensland ports, one of Ted's militant networks, would change forever.

On 12 December 1951, six days prior to Ted's release from Long Bay, J. M. H. 'Joe' Hewitt, Secretary of the Australian Stevedoring Industry Board (ASIB), had written to Jim Healy: "Furthermore, in my office, late yesterday afternoon, you told me that, **after the return to Sydney of your Assistant, you would wish to confer with me**...."[27] Is this an example of surrendering Ted's status, or of taking the necessary precautions against a repeat of Ted's 1950 'March Through Queensland'? By 1953, in the lead up to the dispute at Bowen, Ted Roach was being snubbed and ignored by Joe Hewitt of the ASIB and others. Ted was Jim Healy's "Assistant" and was not to be taken seriously. Leading up to the Bowen dispute Ted spoke with, and made agreements with, Joe Hewitt, promises which Hewitt subsequently broke, suggesting Ted was being 'set up' again. He was going to be blamed and scape-goated for any failure at Bowen. And, in fact, the furphy is that "Roach made a mess of it" and "Healy told 'em what to do, and they never did it".

The Bowen dispute in September 1953 was Harry Bland's Napoleonic moment, a 'showdown' with the 'bloody Commos' which started and fizzled almost simultaneously. This happened because of the level of organisation, communication and solidarity of every trade unionist in Bowen and districts, and across Queensland. J. B. Miles didn't think organisation was important. Lenin, Orr[28] and Roach did, saying that in action the workers' consciousness grows most rapidly. You can study the Marxist classics for a lifetime but two weeks of struggle together, when you are winning as Ted usually did, could give you an incandescent cerebral glow — an archon[29] lamp with which to suddenly see the forces of oppression in the class struggle as clearly as stage lightning, lighting up a climactic scene in a tragic melodrama. As Ted said: *"The Bosses have the Law, but we have the organisation."*

Since Ted's 1951 gaoling, Joe Hewitt and the ASIB would use Bowen to deny and attack existing Wharfie conditions, for example "Temporary Mobile Groups"[30]. When Ted dug his heels in and fought to keep the conditions he was abused. Whenever the Press attacked Ted Roach, senior Communists did not check the facts with Ted. His lifelong communication problem with them continued. Minister Holt and Hewitt had named a number of ports as "below strength" and unable to deal with tonnage increases. *They issued ultimatums against several Branches handling steel, sugar and meat.* On Friday 14 August 1953, Ted met ACTU leader Albert Monk and the NSW Trades Hall Emergency Committee about these claims. The meeting decided to meet Mr Holt in Canberra on the afternoon of Monday 17 August. When told there was a Cabinet meeting on the Monday afternoon, they went to see Mr Holt on Monday morning. What was the Cabinet meeting about? "Most Secret", no doubt! The iron wheels of Harry Bland's showdown with the 'Commos' were cranking into life.

Ted negotiated on all ports and they were taken off the list but Bowen needed men. *We told the Minister that the situation was not as had been reported to him, and that the responsibility for the backlog of cargo was primarily the result of employer and Board provocation,* for example the *'whistle dispute'* — a provocation by the employers in which tens of thousands of Wharfie man hours were lost. Ted pointed out he was "*prepared to proceed to Bowen, **forthwith**, to examine the position locally*". Ted Roach and Joe Hewitt went to Bowen. *I attended discussions that included the managers of the sugar mills and the*

meatworks. In Bowen, Ted *convinced the Branch* to bump up the Wharfie quota in the port of Bowen from 130 to 180 — *but they knew better, and they didn't proceed to do it*. Ted discussed a 'Temporary Mobile Group' with Joe Hewitt. This was being organised though not popular with Brisbane Wharfies. Hewitt was stonewalling on conditions, telling Ted the Wharfies could stay in a disused, seaplane shed with one cold shower. When Ted objected, they said that Ted Roach was a very, very nasty man, indeed. 'The honeymoon' was certainly over.

On 1 September Harold Holt, Minister for Labor, wrote to Jim Healy, now returning to work after a life-threatening operation: "I have come to the conclusion that we must treat the situation as one for immediate action, on an emergency basis. I, therefore, propose arranging immediately for Army personnel, to be moved to Bowen, to load the meat ships, so that the full waterside worker labour force can be free, to handle sugar loading, until the position is relieved."[31] Called 'Operation Cain',[32] this was a "Top Secret" or "Most Secret" operation of Sir Harold Bland and R. G. Menzies to use troops instead of Australian Wharfies to load sugar and meat at Bowen. It ended in ignominious failure. For months before, an hysterical campaign was screamed against the Wharfies in the press saying there was a "crisis, crisis, crisis" in the sugar sheds. To assist this 'crisis', an unexplained fire burnt the Inkerman Mill sugar bag store and more storage space was lost. Troops had been used on *Port Halifax* (1951, Melbourne), *Devonshire* (1952), and now on *Port Wellington*, *General Guisan* and *Kookaburra* in 1953 at Bowen. There was also the ultra-ridiculous, long-running 'whistle dispute'.[33] *Then, all of a sudden*, *on the 1 September 1953 we received a mid-day letter from the Minister (Mr Holt), notifying that soldiers were being flown to Bowen that night, to speed up the work of loading sugar and meat*.[34] 'Operation Cain' was a part of the 'Operation Alien' thinking and strategy of Bland, Menzies, Spry, Thwaites, (along with organisations like the CIA and MI6) to gaol militant Australian Trade Union leaders, and destroy militancy in Australian Trade Unions. Under 'Operation Alien', 52 militant Australian Union leaders, and their wives and children, were to be arrested and gaoled in concentration camps. Mr J. F. O'Neill's details, below, of 'Operation Cain' are one of 'the missing links' in the story of the September 1953 Bowen dispute.[35]

Confidential Report On "Operation Cain" by Mr J. F. O'Neill of ASIB, Melbourne

> Tuesday 1 September 1953
> "I departed Melbourne by TAA Rocket Service at 6.00 p.m., arrived at Brisbane at 9.45 p.m. I proceeded to Army headquarters, Brisbane, where discussions (with) Colonel McCaffery and other Senior Army Officers, involved in the operation. (They were) - Major W. Jamieson R A Regiment, Commanding Officer of all the troops being sent to Bowen and, as such, liaison officer between ASIB and the Army; Major Hardiman RAR; Major J. Parry Engineers; Major B. Kelly RAR, Lt. Fawkner Engineers and Lt. Dobinson RAR."
>
> Wednesday 2 September 1953 (in Bowen)
> "In company with Brigadier Monaghan and Major Jamieson, Mr. Murphy and I proceeded to the Army Drill Hall, where the Army was to establish its headquarters for this operation. Tents were pitched on the Parade Ground, and this constituted the camp for a large proportion of the troops. Mr. Murphy and I were also encamped in this area. The remainder of the troops were stationed at a disused seaplane base not far from the jetty. Mr. McKenzie ASIB, Bowen, picked up 'for sugar'. I called a meeting of all parties directly concerned with the operation of loading frozen meat onto this vessel."[36]
>
> Thursday 3 September 1953
> 'Operation Cain' Award Conditions: "Sergeant Doyle, O/C[37] Bowen Police, (convened) meeting in the Court Room, 10.30 a.m. of Mr. J. F. O'Neill, Mr. T. Murphy, Mr. McKenzie, local representative Bowen (all ASIB), Brigadier Monaghan, Mr. Saker (Manager Meat Works), Captain Fegan (Harbour Master), Mr. Robertson (Adelaide Steamships Co.), Mr. Allison (Bergl Ltd, Stevedores and Agents), Mr. Paradine (Railways), Mr. Lynch (Meat

> Inspector and also Sub Collector of Customs). Two gangs of troops arrived at 2 pm: work proceeded well and without incident, until just prior to 6 p.m. when a request was made by the troops to be allowed to work right through the tea meal hour and finish the remaining cargo.[38] In view of the fact that the amount of work remaining exceeded the 30 minutes by which, under the Award, the meal hour could be postponed, this request was refused. The men went to tea at 6 p.m. Work resumed at 7 p.m. and finished at 8.30 p.m. All available freezer cargo had been loaded, and the hatches covered."[39]

By this time, however, Bowen workers knew about the Menzies fait accompli and wharf shunters said they would not haul (frozen meat) trucks to the wharf for the troops. The Bowen Trades and Labour Council had met, and "banned" the troops. Mr O'Neill continued:

> "Following these discussions, Mr. Saker advised me that a complete stoppage was threatened at the meat works, if troops were used to load rail trucks. This would seriously affect the killing of 2000 head of cattle, that were at the meatworks waiting to be killed."[40]

Army personnel commandeered a rail engine, which they stalled and damaged. Rail Unions issued ultimata. The State Premier, Ned Hanlon (ALP), was very angry about the Commonwealth's use of troops in Queensland. Mr O'Neill continued:

> "At 8.45 a.m., Waterside Workers again refused to accept engagement. The engine was returned to the Goods Yard and all troops were away from the area by 1 a.m."
>
> Friday 4 September 1953
> The Bowen WWF Branch Secretary, Howard Connors (CPA), told O'Neill that the Wharfies would not start work. Mr O'Neill wrote: "I told Mr Connors that we were here to call the men for work. He said there would be no work unless the troops were withdrawn."
>
> Saturday 5 September 1953
> "Seven gangs of soldiers were to start at 9 a.m. to load sugar. Brigadier Monaghan sought advice from General Secombe.[41] No further stevedoring operations were performed by troops and, at 12 noon, Brigadier Monaghan declared the wharf area out of bounds to all Service personnel."

Ted said: *Farmers weren't paid for sugar till it was loaded. It was not hard to inflame farmers against Wharfies. I convened a Conference in Townsville and we put six blokes on full time for agitation among sugar farmers, north and south of Townsville. This is how we had such magnificent support in the Bowen dispute. They couldn't use farmers because of our magnificent relations with them. Our good name was established, although we had a bad name from the Press.* The Menzies Cabinet decided to pay a bonus to the troops for "Emergency Tasks Performed by Army" but Harry Bland decided that the troops' bonus would go into Army Welfare Funds.[42] Australian Army officers and men behaved with exemplary self-discipline and in strict conformity with instructions during the Menzies-Bland Bowen fiasco. Soldiers joined Trade Unionists, round kegs, after the combined Union victory, in Bowen. Ted warned the Bowen members that it was *part of a provocation. But I didn't know how deep the provocation was. We didn't know about the involvement of all these other forces. I didn't know about 'Operation Alien'. It stuck out like a sore thumb. It was linked with the Shipowners, and we were able to see through it, and won the day.*

The author: "How did you get your message about Bowen to the rank and file?"
Following normal procedure, I sent a telegram to each Branch, to all Branches and Federal Councillors. Then a Circular on 13 August 1953.[43] *Then, the Townsville Branch of the Wharfies called for a National Stoppage of all Unionists. 'Nipper' Ford and the boys up there. 'Cause this was given terrific bloody headlines everywhere. "Crisis situation." The Menzies Government wanted to give it plenty of publicity!*

They got hoist on their own petard! I was in Bowen and all the information was going out from there. Unionists could see what was happening and the very fact that they were putting troops in, well, you could see the pattern. They worked a ship in Williamstown, they worked a ship in Sydney, they manned a naval ship to go overseas with the naval ratings, all a part of this plan, and they had a General or bloody Brigadier, leading this Army group in different states. Yes, 'Operation Alien' and the Brigadier, at first, said: "Ah, oh we don't want to use troops, you should use the volunteer labour". He didn't want his troops being used. It wasn't because he was sympathetic to the workers at all, but they were a bit short of troops. As explained by Professor Les Louis, the Liberal Cabinet met on 1st March, 1953 to start 'Operation Alien'. These lists contained targets for prosecution among Maritime Union leaders with collusion from the Shipowners.[44]

It was all in the midst of that I warned the Bowen Branch it was a provocation. And we tied them up and we stuffed them up. They had army trucks and couldn't get petrol, couldn't get a beer in a pub, catch a taxi, milk off the milkman, meat off the butcher, a feed in a restaurant, couldn't get accommodation. They had to camp on an oval. They seized a rail engine. The rail workers promptly pulled the fires on other engines in Bowen, and said: "Bring that engine back, or we'll pull the fires on the north and south bound Mail" and that would have stuffed the State up! The Premier of Queensland protested over the Commonwealth Government using territorial rights! Commandeering! The bastards left Bowen with their tails between their legs! The authorities, the army, the lot! 'Operation Alien' was in the middle of all this. ***Whenever there were other Unions involved, there were always victories, when it was all connected up properly. Unity was always the winning weapon.***

THE *BOHEME* CHALLENGE

In December 1953, *the employers decided to challenge the right of the Kembla* [South Coast] *Branch again to a rotation of hatches. I happened to be there this day. It was a ship called the Boheme and the employers decided also to challenge our right to ships being picked up in their order of tying up. They switched a Port Order giving the Boheme labour out of turn. The Boheme had been sixth on the list, and suddenly, without warning, was shifted to third.*[45] To maximize fairness in the roster, the Branch had, under Ted's leadership, made the BHP agree to working ships, in their order of arrival. Without this *the BHP could jockey the ships and labour about to suit themselves*.[46] *Now the BHP had arbitrarily altered that portion of the Order, for the Port, providing for priority of ships to be worked.* Six ships were working, three of which were involved in the issue. The Branch members refused to work the ships, left the job, stood *flat-footed*, and sent a deputation to Ted in Sydney.

In discussions Ted said*: our applied tactics were wrong, that it was much better to fight on the job, than off the job, and we should change our position from one of defending, to one of forcing the employer to defend himself. Ease 'em over, ease 'em over, ease 'em over* — Ted's time honoured slogan of struggle. Ted went down to the meeting in Port Kembla on the Monday morning. The members decided to accept the pick-up notice displayed by the Board and go to the job but to go to their old positions on the roster, rather than the new ones proposed by the Board. This would enable three ships to work, without being involved in the dispute. The other three ships would most likely stop work, but for the members on these ships not to take the sack, but continue loading cargo, forcing the employer, in order to stop the ships continuing to work, to cut the steam off.[47] *20 to 30 lorries, containing 7 to 8 tons of pig iron were lined up along the jetty. We were able to show by our tactics we wanted to load their pig iron, but it was the employer who refused to allow us to do so.* There was a combined lunchtime meeting on this Monday of all workers on the waterfront including seamen, lorry drivers and crane drivers. When they returned to work, they found the gangway pulled up on the pig iron ship, *Boheme*, and 'No Trespassing' signs hung on the top of the gangways of the *Iron Master* and *Iron Warrior*. The men climbed aboard under Ted's direction. The Captain, after much *loud threatening* and *gesticulating* finally cut off the steam, with a sling of rails in the air. The dispute went on for nearly a week. Ted suggested they work the *Boheme* to a finish, and get it away, and the iron ships would *fall back into their correct* order. *This would allow the BHP to* save face,

teach them a lesson they would not readily forget, and show that the Federation could re-apply the same tactics, if necessary.

Ted recalled the latter end of the dispute: *So the employer rolled out this big challenge this day. I happened to be down there, and I addressed a smoko meeting. It was a ship loading two hatches of 40 foot rails* (see Fig 38)*, and two hatches of long, big rolled pipes. I said: "We've got to go aboard, and start work, and make sure there's a sling in the air, all the time." It was rail and pipes only, with four gangs working.*

Fig 38 A Cargo of Steel Rails

Source: photo kindly provided to Author by Ted Roach

First of all, I go back to get aboard. There's a big fat mate, the 'Rag Doll' standing there, like a big copper, with his arms folded, and a NO TRESPASSING sign out on top of the gangway. I said to Billy Harkness, the Secretary: "Look at them, bloody milling round down there. Go and tell them to get aboard, and start work." "Oh," he said "they can't go up the gang-way, the mate won't let them." "Tell them to climb up the bloody net." "But we fine them for that." "Not today we don't — tell them to climb up the bloody net, to get on board, and get the steam started!" Up they go, all up the bloody net, action stations!

Come lunchtime, and I'm standing up on No.2 hatch, and these big, sixty foot rails are coming down, and the employers have run down, and turned the bloody steam off, but a forty foot steel rail was hanging over the side. So I said: "Push them out! Push them out!" and, as they come back, there's about twelve foot of rails hanging over the side of the ship. Well, immediately, when that happens, "Maritime Regulations" come into play! Automatically! Safety of the ship! The whole of the Ships Navigation Act was being violated. And the captain's got to take action! The seamen have got to take action! Have got to take action! So that is what happened. This knocked the arse out of the employers' argument. So they had to turn the steam back on, and let us do our bloody work. So we got them all going nicely, and I walked over to see Captain Harvey, the chief over there. And I said: "Oh, Captain, just paying a courtesy call, it's not important." He said: "All I want to know from you, Mr Roach, is when are you, going home?" We used to do that regularly, and that's the way we operated down there. I wish that a lot of other ports had operated more so. Sydney could have operated well this way.

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[1] N 114/24 p.9.

[2] "MW", op. cit., 22.11.1952 p.3.

[3] Ibid.

[4] McVeigh, A. "The Maritime Worker", 31.1.1953. **Author's note:** Like Paddy Troy, Ted Roach was subjected to a life-long, intense and at times ridiculous 'verballing' campaign.

[5] N 114/24, op. cit.

[6] Ibid., p.10.

[7] Ibid., p.11.

[8] *This legislation was known as the Oil Refinery Industry, (Anglo-Iranian Oil Co. Ltd. Act), and the BHP Steel Industry Act,* Ted Roach, Wharfies' Council. N 114/24. In his report of 14.7.1953 to the Wharfie Council, Ted detailed the background to the planned attack on Trade Union rights in Western Australia. He said: *It is important to know that the American Oil Barons, known as WAPIT, have been given the sole drilling rights over 221,000 sq. miles or about two thirds of the total land area. It runs from the furthermost point north, to the furthermost point south, along some 2000 miles besides a number of other holding companies, such as Freeneys. In addition, hundreds of thousands of square miles of station country are owned by monopoly interests. Tremendously rich, mineral and ore deposits have been taken over by the big combines. The CSR is exploiting what is reputed to be the richest deposits of blue asbestos in the world.* Ted said the picture was that the whole of Western Australia was controlled by 'the monopolies', who were *conducting a drive against the militant unions* and the Trade Union Movement. Ted saw the nexus between United States mineral and oil exploration and a control of Uranium, with their Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation's plans for wars against Asian people who "are on the march to their independence and freedom". (N 114/24, op. cit., p.16.) Ted had just returned from an inspirational trip with an invited Australian Trade Union delegation to China, and said: *Where do our best interests lay, and the best interests of our wives and families? Do they not lay in the direction of trade and peace?* (with South-East Asia). Ibid. *We can see why the war drive of Wall Street is being stepped up. Only maximum profits satisfy the "Salesmen of Death". War is very terrible, but very profitable. Our Federation, our Branches, and our Members, then must raise their voice through all of the adjoining areas, posing the question of peaceful relations, trade and prosperity, with the peoples of Asia, as against the aggressive policy, of war, destruction, and poverty, as sponsored by the Menzies-Fadden Government.* Ibid., p.19.

[9] Clarrie O'Shea was from the Melbourne Trammies — "All the way with Clarrie O'Shea"; Gerry Dawson from Brisbane; Jim McPhee from Hospital Employees; and 'Dutchy' Young from Sydney Wharfies.

[10] N 114/190 FCM May 1953, pp.19-21.

[11] Ibid., p.20.

[12] **Editors' note**: Lord John Boyd Orr, Scottish winner of Nobel Peace Prize. Despite his aristocratic background, Ted - and Denis - would have admired him. Apart from being one of the first to engage with China at a difficult time, his recipe for world peace, as

a Nobel Peace Prize winner, was "Sack Senator Joe McCarthy and bomb the Pentagon". Source: http://www.scottishreview.net/JohnBoydOrrSeptember17a.html

[13] Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation.

[14] Ibid.

[15] "MW", 30.5.1953.

[16] Ibid.

[17] *They used to give them a hood. It came down over their shoulders, because the bags of sugar used to chaff. All day they'd be dropping them on their necks. They'd bring them down, and they'd floor off, and keep flooring off, and build it up. They'd drop them straight into place. They were so adept at it. Brutal work in the tropics. They'd have to rig wind-sails and all up to catch a bit of wind, to drive it down into the holds.*

[18] See Mutsumi, S. "China's foreign policy examined: its confusions and contradictions during 20 years since 'Cultural Revolution'", Tokyo: Japan Press Service, 1987.

[19] "Mr. Kelly (Melbourne Branch Executive) reported that the Secretary of the ALP, Mr. Lovegrove, said that, in the interests of the ALP and the Industrial Groups, Mr. Clarke was not to be suspended but sacked." "MW", 9.12.1953.

[20] 'eat corn': spend time in gaol. Gaol porridge was corn porridge, or hominy.

[21] MLMSS 5021 ADD ON 1936 30 (76).

[22] Ernie Thornton, British orphan and 'Barnardo' boy. Former Secretary of the Federated Ironworkers Association. Militant Minority activist during the "Depression". Member of the Industrial Committee of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Australia. Enemy of Ted Roach.

[23] Not in Z 387 4-11 Bowen.

[24] A nine gallon keg of beer.

[25] As far as is known, this is the first printing of details of 'Operation Cain', ST 4 432/1, ST 4 433/1.

[26] 'Sugar Heaven': see Ferrier, Carole. "Jean Devanney: Romantic Revolutionary", Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1999.

[27] ST 4433 Box 4. File No.2

[28] Miners' leader, Bill Orr. Invented 'Dimitrovism' i.e. 'the United Front', before Dimitrov. Bill Orr, the unsurpassed leader of Miners in NSW, was guilty of a 'revolutionary' act in France in WWI where he was charged with "inciting to murder". He said: "I was in the 15th battalion of the Highland Light Infantry when two regiments went on strike and, when they did, each man went on strike with a rifle and 500 rounds of ammunition. That is the way you miners should go on strike (Hunter Valley, 1928) and meet the armed forces of the state and the police". Police Inspector, W. Mackay as evidenced in Edmonds, Ross. op. cit., pp.53-5. **Editors' note**: In the author's working files for this book he had written: "No-one on the Central Committee CPA said they'd noticed how much Miners' leader, Bill Orr, was carrying out the United Front himself, when they, later, became familiar with Dimitrov's ideas, their minds wedded to the Moscow-printed text from overseas, and its regurgitation, here, by permanent party officials. They did not perceive that the spirit of Orr's thinking and practice was the same as Dimitrov, but that it was home grown, and preceded Dimitrov."

[29] **Editors' note**: archon lamps — a brand of scuba diving lamps.

[30] *Temporary Mobile Group*, like *Attendance Money*, another of Ted Roach's original phrases.

[31] Holt letter to Healy, ST 433/1, p.2.

[32] 'Operation Cain' GTF ST 432 /1, pp.1-4.

[33] TR 53/33, 13.8.1953, E 250/369. http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article134272182 Regarding the whistle dispute, the "Newcastle Morning Herald" and "Miners' Advocate" 20 July 1953 reported: "The dispute developed last week when employers insisted that waterside workers should not be late in resuming after meal or smoko breaks. A two-whistle warning was introduced. The first whistle was blown three minutes before actual resumption time to warn the men to get ready to resume. The second whistle denoted the actual starting time. Last week the men observed a union decision not to leave where they were having a meal or smoko till after the second whistle had blown. Wholesale dismissals by stevedores followed, sometimes nearly 500 men being sacked in one

day." Speaking at the September Wharfies' Biennial Conference, Ted said: *First I want to deal with and link the Smoko Dispute, Quotas and the Bowen incident, and to show them as part of a premeditated plan, and part of a policy worked out and developed and implemented against our Federation in stages.* AGS Report, 1953, p.7.

[34] Ibid.

[35] 'Operation Cain' GTF ST 432 /1, op. cit., pp.1, 4.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Officer Commanding.

[38] 'Operation Cain' GTF ST 432 /1, op. cit., pp.1, 4.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid. The Bowen Wharfies' Executive in 1953 was President T. G. Barker, V-P, G. Burton, Secretary, H. Connors, Treasurer, W. Green, Trustees, W. Thicker, G. Stanfield, Committee F. Goldup, T. Hogg, W. Tapp, J. Malone, H. Schultz. The Bowen (1954-1956). The 'General Strike Committee' comprised R. J. Reed, L. Green, J. Vennard, H. Mortensen, T. Kelly, M. Ryle, F. Condon, J. R. Weir, W. Paterson, H. Reed, E. Valentine, B. Mackie, F. Talbot, J. Carter, J. Donohue, K. Butterworth, E. Hockings, T. Geaney, E. Cairns, A. Watego, C. Martin, D. Osborn, P. Fruitier, R. McLean. (255, Box 6). Ted Roach's Circulars to Wharfies Branches dealing with the 1953 Bowen Dispute are ER 33/53, 35, 38, 39, and 43/53.

[42] No.867, 23.10.1953 GTE ST 4 433/1, p.1.

[43] No.53/33 in E 250/369.

[44] 'Alien' Hit Lists, see No.91 of M 1509/1, No.36, 19.1.1951. See also Louis, L. J. 'Operation Alien' and the Cold War in Australia, 1950-1953, op. cit. Bowen/Kwinana Report to WWF Conference, 1953, for further details of the combined obstruction and resistance by Shipping Companies and Sugar Bosses to Ted's positive plans for solving the dispute. There may have been a **cut** in Ted's Report on p.6., after the phrase — "to be the responsibility of the Adelaide Company". N 114/24 A/G S Report, 1953. From 1938, Ted Roach's Reports were annotated as having been "stencilled and edited".

[45] "MW", 8.12.1953, p.4.

[46] N114/140, p.22.

[47] Ibid.

Chapter 21
TED ROACH IN THE 1950s: SHAKING THE SHIP OWNERS

"The organisation was superb."
Margo Beasley[1]

In reflecting on his continuing work as National Organiser of the Wharfies during the 1950s, Ted made special mention of: his work organising regional ports; the 'margins struggle' in 1956 and his role in bringing unions together nationally in a Special Congress — a culmination of his organising abilities; his focus on the spread of WWF Women's Committees; his hammering of occupational health and safety issues; and his fight against ingrained conservatism even within the Wharfies (**editors**).

SUGAR PORTS, NORTH QUEENSLAND

In October 1952, after the Wharfies' Conference where Ted led the discussion on bulk sugar loading, he *proceeded to North Queensland to address stop work meetings, and then: **I convened a conference of delegates from Mackay, north, to Port Douglas**, with two delegates from each port.* The Conference, under Ted's leadership, set up a 'Sugar Research Bureau' with headquarters in Townsville, and committees in each port, and resolved on a motion by Ted: *That this Northern Queensland Sugar Ports Conference is of the opinion that a **Central Sugar Research Bureau** within the Federation, should be established, and based in the port of Townsville, and that small, selective Sugar Research Committees be set up in each Branch, comprising members who understand the sugar industry. The Colonial Sugar Refining Company threatened farmers. The CSR decided what cane would be cut, how it could be cut, and how often it could be cut, burnt or not, and how much they'd pay for it. Farmers were only paid when the cane was received down south. It was easy therefore for sugar farmers to blame the Wharfies for delays in shipping. So we set out to break that down.* Ted wanted 'selected' members ***who had worked on farms, or in sugar mills*** and in sugar production, to do the research. So, during wharf disputes, Wharfies went out *with leaflets and speakers* and explained the problems to farmers. Burdekin sugar producers then invited three Townsville Wharfies to a discussion of industry problems. The farmers were shown that it was 'the employers' who caused bottlenecks, not the Wharfies. Sugar farmers told the Wharfies that "sugar farmers only see the Wharfies when there is a dispute" and wanted "more frequent meetings of the sugar producers and our Union".[2]

I convened a conference of all the Sugar Ports. "Wellpack" was a Mackay dispute earlier, where they used the farmers to work the ship. In one of my reports I dealt extensively with that — how that escaped Healy, I don't know. In the "Wellpack" dispute they were able to use the farmers to work the sugar ship – scabs sort of thing. The problem had to be addressed, so I addressed it. I convened this conference of the sugar ports of Queensland and held it in Townsville; a couple of reps from each of the branches, from Brisbane, north, all the ports that dealt with sugar … Bundaberg, Bowen, Townsville, Cairns, Port Douglas, Lucinda Point, Innisfail, Brisbane. We decided to set up what we called 'the Sugar Bureau' and made plans for working with the farmers. We set up the organisation, based in Townsville, in the Federation office under the leadership of old Bill Ford. He was a good Party bloke.[3] *The idea was to get out and talk to the farmers and undermine the influence of CSR with the farmers. The "Wellpack" was an example of what they could do and what they did do. They took over and worked the whole ship. It was a talking point to build this unity with the farmers.*

***Our Plan of Action** was to go out and meet the farmers with leaflets and discussions, seek admission to their meetings, invite them to our meetings, and develop a reciprocal understanding of each other's problems. It reached the point of being so effective where the CSR was trying to prevent the farmers from meeting the Wharfies and the Wharfies meeting the farmers. Farmers were coming to the wharves and we were able to show them that the bottlenecks the employers were blaming the Wharfies for, it wasn't our fault at all. CSR then started threatening farmers' organisations. Bottlenecks were caused by employers' incompetence, bad facilities, no berths, not enough labour and a rush of ships. They were sometimes desired*

by employers to create the necessary embarrassment to blame Wharfies. We didn't need any proof that CSR did it deliberately because the proof was obvious, everywhere. I went up and set the organisation up. I had a whole Federation to look after. I set the job up, for the boys in the north to do, and they did it. Bowen ['Operation Cain', September 1953] *was a classical example of how effective it was. I used to ring regular(ly). We got information daily about it. Lines of communication were quite clear all over the Federation. A report would come through to the office about what was happening somewhere. You didn't have a private secretary in your office, like a boss. Different ones would do your typing, whoever was there. You've got your plans set, and you're just getting progress reports (about) how the whole plan was going. This was part of the general process that bought Bowen into focus. As a result of this new approach to our problem in the northern industry, our Branches really got down to the job of making contact with farmers in the farming area. Immediately a dispute occurred on the waterfront they took their problems to the farmers, out to the farming communities, with leaflets and speakers, and for the first time in history* ***during the earlier part of 1953, in particular, we were able to establish very good relationships with big sections of farmers and their organisations***.[4]

NSW Northern Ports Conference

As directed by the last Biennial Conference of 1952, Ted said he convened the *NSW Northern Ports Conference* in late July 1953. Ted's tasks as the Organiser were laid down by the Conference or the Executive. When he was put in charge of the Dutch Ship Dispute in late 1945, it was the Wharfies' Council that "directed the Assistant-General Secretary (and Organiser)" to handle the complex, organisational details of the dispute. Who else would want the job, in any case? In the northern ports, Wharfies were losing "10,000 pounds a year" because others were doing their work, for example at Broadwater and Harwood Sugar Mills. Conditions at river ports at Kempsey, Grafton and Lismore were discussed. Ted spent a day in each northern port, and convened the NSW Northern Ports Conference, which directed "the Acting General Secretary" (Ted) to negotiate. *We were able to force the employment of Union labour and conclude an important agreement about travel, pay rates and working conditions at Byron Bay*.[5]

Port Lincoln and Wallaroo (South Australia)

In South Australia, the WWF now had *complete coverage of all the labour from the ship back to the yards,*[6] because Ted bought the needlemen and the bag sewers into the Wharfies' Union. At Wallaroo he signed up the tractor drivers, who shunted on the wharf, to give the WWF coverage of "all work in the Port of Wallaroo".[7]

NYOONGAHS IN CHAINS

Ted was indignant about *the shameful and criminal administration of the Native Affairs Act* in WA. There were 25,000 'natives', and unless they were given citizenship rights, controlled by the Native Patrol Officer stationed in each of the towns, they couldn't join any Union, for example the AWU, and were not "entitled to Award rates".[8] *Over a period of five years, there have been citizenship papers issued for approximately one in 800 of the population per year. This means that only one in 800 of the population per year is entitled to claim Award rates of pay. Or, indeed, entitled to claim the right to any privilege, other than living in a mia mia, to keep his family in destitution, and to be an abject slave.*[9] Ted noted there was a curfew on 'natives' in Roeburn, *through which flow the vast deposits of the CSR asbestos for shipment through Port Sampson.*[10] Ted named a tycoon, Sir Langlais Lefroy, Chairman of Directors of the Western Australian Newspapers, and one of the biggest pastoralist and industrialists in the State, as *one of the main administrators of the Native Affairs Commission. So, Langlais Lefroy has a super abundance of cheap labor, for a fraction of the pay.*[11]

Ted Roach, a Communist, had to fight ingrained conservatism, even forms of racism among Wharfie Councillors. As National Organiser, Ted Roach made two organising visits to the north-west of Western Australia in 1953, saw the conditions of Aborigines first hand, observed conditions and tried to form

Wharfie Branches for wharf workers. He recorded these observations about pearl luggers: *I understand from discussions with Indonesians and Australian native divers, that the wages now paid in this industry, have been forced down to a level of £15 pound per month for the crew, and £10 a month, with a tonnage bonus, for the divers; while the lugger owners are making fabulous profits, receiving up to £700 a ton for shell. The average haul per lugger each season is 20 tons, with the best hauls ranging up to 26-30 tons. The profits can be readily gauged when it is understood that a lugger crew averages 9 men and 2 divers, and the season covers approx. 8 months. The luggers are out as long as 2 months at a time. The divers are in their suits at 6 a.m. and do not finish until 6 p.m., 7 days a week.*

Ted also recorded that the AWU and the employers were: "pitting one section against the other, Malays, Koepangers, Indonesians, Australian natives, and, last but not least, have now brought indentured Japanese divers and workers into the pearl industry."[12] He made a strong, verbal protest and brought back a photo which he gave to Rupert Lockwood. Rupert printed it on page one of "The Maritime Worker". Clive Black (Fremantle), a WWF Federal Councillor, was annoyed and complained that "Photos of (WA) Aborigines in chains … were sent to "The Maritime Worker", and it had been proven conclusively that those photos were taken a long time ago".[13] Ted also saw and described in detail the working conditions, pay and safety, of pearl divers and pearl lugger workers in Broome.

Don McLeod[14], Dooley Bin Bin and Clancy, led the walk off of Nyoongah Aboriginal slaves from Port Headland in 1946. A letter from Jim Healy to Don McLeod was one of only two times that Jim Healy describes Ted Roach as the 'Organiser' in Wharfie records. Jim Healy wrote: "For some time we have been thinking of sending our Organiser, Mr. Roach, round to have a look at the position on the (WA) NW Coast, but distance and pressure of other work has operated against us." Another WA Wharfie Councillor, Charlie Webber, however, described Don McLeod as "a trouble maker".[15] Ted Roach himself used a camera and took photos during his organising tours. A notable one was a ship, the *Koolinda*, with its keel on the sand, after the huge ebb tide at Broome. Ted Roach may have also taken the photo of the jumbled trays of breaking bags of urea in the *Omsk* in January 1951, which was printed in "The Maritime Worker". Ted did not volunteer this kind of information in his interviews.

MARGINS STRUGGLE: "FOURTEEN DAYS THAT SHOOK THE SHIP OWNERS"

Ted was organising before, and after, his gaoling even though [Norm] Docker was appointed industrial organiser. Docker helped Jim Healy with legal cases. Ted's networks were still there. The 'Margins Struggle' and the Special Congress of 1956 were the culmination of Ted's organising in the WWF. His circular of 11 January 1956[16] seems pedestrian today but it was carried out, and it was the basis of the Wharfies' victory. The essence of the circular was the forming of Committees of Wharfies for every task during the dispute, and one of the main tasks was deputations of Federation members, answering media lies and taking the Wharfies' case to the people.[17] This circular concentrated the experience and wisdom of twenty years (1934-1954) of Ted Roach's practical activity as an Industrial and Communist organiser. *I told them how to do it, that's the important thing, how to do it.*[18] He placed emphasis on the use of new equipment like film projectors, megaphones, leaflet production, well-presented and prepared delegations to the media, the use of radio time and local newspapers. It was a very successful qualitative lift in practical activity.

In the 1954 dispute, the (Wharfie) branches and the Labour Councils developed it up to a pyramid point, I would send telegrams to the branches. It would go from the branches to the regional Trades and Labour Councils, to the State Labour Councils, and then into the ACTU. Our 1954 dispute was a strike over margins,[19] wages, and recruitment. With Rule 13, the ACTU Executive could not interfere. But Rule 13 did not apply. A fortnight out, and you've got to give it to the ACTU Executive. And we gave it over to Albert Monk (ACTU Secretary) on the Friday night. On the Saturday he saw his brother-in-law, Harold Holt (Minister for Labour, Menzies Liberal Government), at Sorrento (Victoria) and the dictum was to 'sell out'. Albert Monk said he was going to accept the terms of the court and we had to resume work pending a decision of the (Arbitration) court. We were ordered back to work by the ACTU Executive which was a

'sell out' as a result. All right we demanded that the ACTU Executive re-discuss it. The Minutes will show that that took a lot of ringing up and telegrams, and I told all our branches to get all the other Unions, through their State and Federal, depending on their affiliation, to move up and demand a re-hearing. Next morning, there were a heap of telegrams like that on Monk's desk, and Healy rang me again from Melbourne and said: "They've done us again!" And I said: "I think the only thing we can do is to see if we can get a Special Congress of the Unions to handle the bastards." And he said: "But how can we do that?" On the phone this was, and I said: "Just leave it to me". Ted then prepared Circular No. 56/39 ER (Edward Roach) which, in great detail, outlined a plan of action for the Wharfies' membership. The Wharfies were used to this kind of activity and were eager to take their side of the story to the people.

SPECIAL CONGRESS OF UNIONS - 1956[20]

I sent the circulars out calling on our branches to get a Special Congress of Unions. We had a majority of the Federal Unions and a majority of the State Labour Councils, five Labour Councils. So I sent the circulars out and I said now this is what we want you to do — every branch go through the Labour Council and demand through the Unions, of each of the delegates, depending whether they're Federally, or State-affiliated, to take the necessary steps, to go up to their top organisation and demand a Special Congress to deal with this important thing. Up through your Labour Councils, you see, provincial Labour Councils, State Labour Councils. ***I dealt with all the organisational details.*** *We organised in every State, and we got a majority of Federal Unions and State Trades and Labour Councils, to demand this Special Conference of Trade Unions, to discuss the handling or sell-out of our dispute. In order to convene this Special Congress of Unions, under ACTU rules, there had to be a majority decision of the Trades and Labour Councils of Australia, with this campaign moving up from all sides, from all directions, State and Federal.* [It took some weeks but] *finally every State was in, with West Australia still to vote. Finished up, the sixth — the last Labour Council — was the ALP body in Western Australia. Finally, Joe Chamberlain, the Federal Secretary of the Labor Party and the Secretary of the Trades and Labour Council in WA, decided in favour of the Special Congress which must give some indication of the enormous pressure which was developed from below in this campaign, to force for the first-ever time — and it'll never be done again — a special Congress of Federal Unions, delegates from every Union all over the country, to deal with the sell-out by the ACTU Executive, of the waterside workers in the dispute. There's a lot of politics soaked in this! Hey, what an achievement it was!*

On the eve of our Special Conference, the date was set, down came the Ashburner Award.[21] *The Arbitration Court came down with the best, single award that the waterside workers ever had from a court! The importance here is to see the close relationship of the right-wing, the ACTU and the State Apparatus in the struggle against a militant organisation and the necessity of the ACTU being let off the very sticky spot that our organisation had placed the right-wing Executive in. This put them in the position of being able to come out at the Special Congress of Unions, and use the good award to substantiate the role that they had played earlier. We had the whole right-wing of the ACTU by the short-hairs and then Ashburner brought down his award. At that meeting, we might've been able to arsehole the whole right-wing leadership of the ACTU. This was a mammoth task but we brought it off. It was a clear demonstration of the collaboration of the court and the right-wing leadership of the Trade Unions. The Press said: "What's wrong with the Wharfies? Can't the Wharfies see this is a good result? Why do they persist in this militancy?" Monk said to me: "Now you've got this, and you've got that, what more do you bloody want?" And Monk's the Secretary of the Australian Council of Trade Unions. "What else could you possibly want?" I nearly fell out of the bloody car, fair dinkum.*[22]

See, I pointed all this out. I dealt with this, all these organisational details, in my report to [the] *Conference. I dealt with all that, in detail, in my report to Annual Congress. I drew all the lessons. All that was printed about my report was "the Labour Movement bought about a Special Congress of Unions". It wasn't wrong in saying the Labour Movement bought it about. But it denied the militant role that caused it to be bought about, and how I organised it. My 30-odd page Report? — "abridged" to 14 pages. It was boiled down and they've written that "the Labour Movement had organised a Special Congress of Unions*

*to discuss...” and “this report has been **considerably abridged**”, not “... How did the Labour Movement organise it? Why did the Labour Movement organise it? What caused them to do it?” Lenin didn’t say: “What should be done?” He said: “What is to be done! And how to do it!” Those were all the important lessons left out of the doctored report. That “considerably abridged” report constitutes a forgery. There were so many important organisational lessons in it and I did it in such detail. All my reports were typed and stencilled but I think they didn’t send them out. I’ve got to re-write everything from that (1956) campaign. In the abridged report, there’s no initials at the top. My report would have GH (Gwen Hinds) in the top right hand corner. In this report, the abridged report, there’s no marks. I would hand a copy to each of the Councillors. It wouldn’t have happened under Della Elliot. Della would’ve told me. We had them, in the little room, with all the other records. I took it for granted they were all sent out.*
The author: “That the whole of the contents of the Nation-wide Organising Reports, which you made to Wharfie Conferences were sent out to Wharfie Branches?”
Yes.

This discovery cut like a knife into the heart of the 85-year-old Ted Roach. Would his work, his ideas, be recorded? Would his methods of organising and his way of winning conditions and concessions, on the job, be recorded? *These things are so important — important lessons for the future.* Archives officers report that ten Roach WWF Biennial Conference Reports are not on file. Two reports admit to being “abridged”, for example, the all-important Brisbane Rotary Hatch Dispute Report, and Ted’s 1956 ‘Special Congress of Unions’ Report (above). The nagging implication is that there are cuts in Roach’s other reports, and like bandages cut off in a surgery, they are gone forever. Some of these cut off points can be searched for, for example the cut in the Rotary Hatch Dispute Report (chapter 16). Wharfie Eric Parker said he was shocked when he saw a senior Sydney Wharfie official hoiking bundles of Wharfie records out onto the footpath for the ‘garbos’.[23] “What the ***** hell are you doing that for?” asked Eric. “That was History. We are making History,” came the reply. Ted recalled at the end of the Special Congress, which the Ashburner Award had “trumped”, his Kembla comrade, Jack ‘Bomber’ Williams, leaning over the gallery rail and sending this booming addendum reverberating through the Melbourne auditorium: “Monk! You’re a liar!”

SAVING THEIR FACE: *CLASSES EXIST*

I found that in all these campaigns, it was always important to allow the opposition to be able to save their face. And it was always good to know that, once you’d forced a position, by your organised strength, that you knew that they knew that if any of their veiled assurances weren’t carried out, you could have them in the same position tomorrow, or next week, as you had them in yesterday or last week. You knew they were conscious of that and you were able to accept some brief kind of promises that “we will look at it, possibly favourably” or “we will perhaps recommend it” or “we’ll do something else of that character if you’ll go back to work”. The newcomers on the scene would want to say: “No, that’s not good enough. We want “Yes”, or “No”, from them.
The author: “But you don’t get “Yes”, or “No”, in these conferences.”
So you’ve got to be able to read the politics from a position of strength. And understand that you know that they know that if the assurances they’re giving you are not carried out, then you can have them back in the very same position tomorrow.

See, you’ve got to be convinced that classes exist. If you’re not convinced that classes exist, well, you’ll fall by the wayside. Hey, you could become a Lib, you could become anything. See you forget the class struggle and so Socialism is gone — unless you understand the class struggle, unless you understand the class structure — not the class struggle so much, as the class structure. Yeah, the organs of the class structure, the organs of the State and the class structure. If you understand that — that’s what I am trying to bring out, in this latest document — the class structure and how important it is to understand it; understanding the role of the State. We were able to create a situation, to bring that role, a real thing, into our struggle, to bring them mostly onto our side without having to create a strike but, rather, by giving the impression that there will be stop work meetings and the possibility of strikes unless we get some satisfaction. This then causes a real quick result from the authorities and the State. They think of the State

as an abstract sort of thing — you've got to understand the ramifications and the part of the State that affects the Trade Unions, is the industrial section of the Boss's apparatus. And they've got to learn how to use this apparatus, to turn it back onto them and bring them down on your side by (nothing flat-footed) a kind of 'guerrilla' approach to your problem. I didn't do it once. I did it a hundred times over the years. I don't know any other Union that did it. But it was second nature to me. I did it so many times in all the Branches. Because I learnt that the hard way. I learned how to do it because their role is the maintenance of peace in industry. It's necessary to understand this clearly and be able to cleverly use it to your own purpose. Hey, and I don't know anyone else in the Trade Union Movement who was able to apply this. I'm not saying it's my invention, but I don't know anyone else that's done it. And you know what, every Wharfie I run into, now, they say: "There's nothing left. They've destroyed everything we ever had, and the Boss controls the bloody waterfront."

WOMEN'S COMMITTEES 1956

The following is an address to the Wharfies' Biennial Conference (19 October 1956) by Assistant-General Secretary (Ted Roach, not identified):

> *Mr Chairman, ladies, and conference delegates:*
> *I think this Biennial Conference should congratulate the women's organisation. It has been established in a number of ports, and the very fine work that they have done, over the recent period. It is only in the recent experience that there was only one delegate outside of Sydney. Now we can point out that we have 20 Women's Committees throughout the Federation — that is a very fine thing, but it is not enough. I feel that we should resolve here, as an objective, that by next year we will have 56 Women's Committees, as well as the 56 Branches of our Federation. I think it will be agreed here, that listening to the reports this morning, that the Women's Committees are of real and outstanding value to the work of our Federation. I think it will be agreed that the sterling service rendered by the Women's Committee to us, in the strike, convinced members of the important role that can and must be played by the women. In all Branches in January when women took their place alongside men-folk, it strengthened considerably our organisation. This is one way by which we can strengthen our organisation in a national way. I think the very capable way in which the reports dealt with the problems should do much to assist with the problems we are dealing with and I think speaks volumes for the high development, and understanding, of the women in these Committees. The Federal office played an important part in building this women's organisation and has a more important part to play in the future, and here I want to make some comment about the badges. The organisation is of mushroom growth. We thought that we were doing a good service but we realise now that we should have circularised the women — and we realise, also, that there should have been some democracy in the matter.*[24]

Ted said that he and Tom Nelson organised the Women's Committee in Sydney. *I pushed for the Women's Committees. The Party used to get into me over it. I was always organising something new. If I hadn't done it, nothing would have been done I can assure you of that*.

CONTINUING THE CAMPAIGNS IN 1957

Reading "The Maritime Worker", the official fortnightly journal of the Wharfies, one finds from 1942 article after article signed by Ted Roach and issue upon issue, handled by Roach. Ted had a column in the journal "Around the Ports" and he organised inclusions like the photo of chained Aborigines, "Nyoongahs", from north-west Western Australia. Photos from the journal are proof of Ted's active leadership and involvement in every organisational move and in the implementation of Federation policy — further proof

of the work done by Ted Roach as National 'Organiser'. After proposing and organising the successful 'Special Congress of Unions' in 1956, which the employers trumped with the Ashburner Award, Ted had a very busy year in 1957. Jim Healy's health was deteriorating, and because of the high esteem for him, he was sent in March on a world trip to the International Labour Organisation Conference, in Hamburg, Germany (the ILO is a specialised agency of the United Nations), and to the Moscow World Youth Games, visiting ports and observing work practices. In "The Maritime Worker" (26 March 1957), for example, Ted analysed bulk handling of sugar in Queensland and the resulting unemployment and small business collapse in an article headed "CSR Bulk Sugar Darkens North's Future - Union Answer to Monopolist Drive". It opened: *Recently I visited Mackay, seeking first-hand knowledge of this development.* Then Ted gives his usual, detailed analysis of bulk sugar handling developments. He sees the danger of Wharfies being squeezed right out of sugar with the new Stevedoring Industry Act. A lengthy report in "The Maritime Worker" tells us Ted put the "WWF case on bulk sugar to the ACTU". In another example, *new bulk crane elevators*, used throughout Australia and in the new aluminium plant at Bell Bay, Tasmania, threatened the jobs of Wharfies. But Ted had gone to Bell Bay and *with the assistance of the TU Movement, won the fight*. *We can win the fight in these other areas, too, but not without a full recognition by our members of the problems workers face with mechanisation and automation in industry".*[25]

Ted described a move by ship owners to reduce Wharfie gang size at Port Alma, Rockhampton, from 29 to 20 as *sheer provocation. They must know it would cause a dispute interrupting Australia's overseas meat trade.*[26] Ted negotiated directly with Meat Supremo, Mr Harry Tancred, to win this dispute. Similarly, in the Newcastle Fork Lift Dispute, the Bosses tried to drop Wharfies and use drivers and fork lifts from Bramble and Sons on the *Patonga*, and two months before on the *Perrin*. Ted had organised the Committee of the Waterfront Group of Unions under the Newcastle Labour Council who declared the work was Wharfies' work.[27] In Melbourne, in April 1957, Wharfies' right to work the three battery fork lifts in ships' holds was upheld at a conference between the Melbourne Harbour Trust, the WWF, the Transport Union and the ACTU. Wharfies did not want Trust drivers driving Trust machines in ships' holds. Mr McKenzie, Chairman of the Harbour Trust, said he would reserve his decision. Wharfies were represented by "AGS Roach, and Melbourne Branch Sec, Charley Young".[28]

Ted also continued the Wharfies' campaign for trade with China, to make *busier wharves* and to give Australian farmers *a guaranteed and expanding market.*[29] This edition has the "Special Maritime Worker Supplement on Ship Cartel" which was printed in 500,000 copies. Wharfies gave them out all over Australia. This supplement, another Roach initiative, united opinion in Australia from Company Executives down to the washrooms of greasy factories about the continued, savage rip-off of Australian producers by freight charges made by overseas shipping cartels. It contains brilliant art work and cartoons by Herb McClintock. It was in such demand that a Company Executive paid five pounds for one copy.[30] It was a Ted Roach initiative, with Rupert Lockwood's research, and Ted wanted the ACTU to print supplements exposing monopoly rip-offs. Ted's sums showed that the lead type of the first print run could be kept, to make cheap 100,000 runs as supplements for National distribution. But, again, it was a case of "Good idea, we won't do it".

During 1957, the cartoons in "The Maritime Worker" became more 'political', the headlines more pointed and challenging, the language a little sharper. On 25 April, Ted represented the WWF at the opening of the Mobile Medical Centre. Present were Harold Holt, Minister for Labor, ACTU's Monk and Kenny, Gibson and Shortell from the Australian Stevedoring Industry Association, and USA 'Labour Attaché', Martinson. In May, Ted took on Menzies' new penal clauses in the Arbitration Act, recently directed at five unions. The clauses, drafted by Sir Robert Menzies and his A/G, John Spicer, were included, after the Privy Council rejected the use of the Arbitration Court, to impose penalties. Whom do you think Prime Minister Menzies then appointed as Chief Judge, to administer the new penal clauses? Right, his Attorney-General John Armstrong Spicer, the man who drafted the penal clauses, to sit with Justices Dunphy and Morgan. Finishing his analysis, Ted said: *we* (still "we", and always "we") *should call factory gate meetings, street meetings, stop work meetings, Labor Party meetings, meetings of every character, for the repeal of this legislation that is designed to take away the independent rights of workers and unions...* Ted

said the ACTU had been asked to convene a 'Special Federal Unions' Conference', about the 'Court of Pains and Penalties'.[31]

In June, Ted sent greetings to Japanese Dockers' President, Ikeda, at their National Convention. He congratulated Japanese Dockers for winning a 1500 yen wage increase for permanent dock workers. Ted hoped that the splintered organisations of Japanese dockworkers would soon *become a united fighting organisation of the working-class*, in one big Japanese Dockworkers' Union.[32]

SAFETY, HEALTH & HYGIENE

On 29 June 1945, Ted proposed a 'National Safety Council'. He kept hammering at Safety until he retired. On 10 May 1947, he wrote in "The Maritime Worker" about "Negligence Endangers Sydney".[33] In June 1965 he warned in "The Maritime Worker" about asbestos in "Lung Dangers in Asbestos Work",[34] and about asbestos again in 1969.[35] Right from the jump, Ted Roach was concerned about the safety and health of his members and everyone in the community. Ted was health conscious, so much so that when, in his eighties, his hands started to bulge and contract with arthritis, he wrote to the Mayo Clinic in the USA, and was sent what proved, for him, to be a curing formula using lemons. He cured himself. When he was eighty years old, he laid the concrete in his backyard and tiles in his pathways. He grew his own vegetables and, with every evening meal, he ate seven or eight varieties of vegetable. One of his standards was sliced onion and cabbage, cooked in water — *Good for your guts*. As a training athlete who lived with an Australian Champion, Spider, who wouldn't train, Ted was conscious about diet, exercise, the sun and stress. He proposed all-embracing policies for workers' safety on the job, and wanted a WWF National policy and programme decided on and put into practice. He proposed this in Kembla, but it wasn't until the 1960s that a Nation-wide policy began.

During 1939, whilst the (Wharfies') Federation was attempting to have improvements made in regulations covering the safe working conditions on the waterfront, a serious difficulty was discovered in the fact that Commonwealth legislation did not fully cover the work on wharves, docks, and jetties, and no real attempt had been made in previous years to have the necessary legislation enacted in the various States".[36] Ted then prepared a Safety Code, which Gen-Sec, Jim Healy read and edited, *designed to give the maximum protection to waterside workers in each State*. The code was first submitted to the NSW Government, and was later adopted by the State Executives in other States; and presented to their respective Governments".[37] Typical of Ted's reports were: "Masks Wanted for Bulk Grain";[38] "Handling Cyanides - New Safety Proposals";[39] "National Health and Medical Research Council";[40] "Brisbane JDA, list of conference safety, Ted Roach."[41] Ted also wrote a column "On the Safety Front" for "The Maritime Worker". Here are some of the reports: "Handling Frozen Cargo", Jack Liddell's report;[42] "Dangerous Fumes Revealed in Roll-On Ships", (Bass Trader)[43]; "Protection Neglected", E. Roach;[44] "New Safety Measures for Roll-On Vessels", E. Roach;[45] "New Agreement Reached on Safety Foot Wear", E. Roach.[46] When Ted negotiated and won, among other things, safety boots for all 26,000 Wharfies, the manufacturer told him it was the biggest order his factory had had since WWII. "Combustion Engines", E. Roach;[47] "Importance of Regular Medical Examination", E. Roach;[48] "Callous Disregard for Workers' Health, Safety", A/GS E. Roach;[49] Lung Danger in Asbestos Work", E. Roach;[50] "Dust Hazards Require Serious Attention", E. Roach;[51] "Firemen Requested at Sulphur Unloading";[52] and Meeting No.38 of the Accident Prevention Committee; "Petrol Engines in Ship Holds", E. Roach;[53] "First Aid Newcastle"; "Asbestos", E. Roach;[54] "Carbon Monoxide", E. Roach;[55] "Six Collapse From Combustion Gas", E. Roach;[56] "Heart Attack: No Equipment", E. Roach.[57] This is only a handful of Ted Roach's articles, and actions, about Safety, Health, and Hygiene for the Wharfies. In his "Safety, Health and Hygiene" Report to the Wharfies' 1959 Conference, Ted outlined the "Queensland Safety Convention 1959", and the prelude to the Safety struggle and victory. Ted got artist Clem Millward to do a safety poster. He went into much detail in composing slogans and getting the safety message across to Wharfies. *Safety and health, in industrial conditions, are inseparable,* Ted said. He worked with Dr Christopher, Victorian Department of Health and Hygiene, and Dr Rathus, Director of Industrial Medicine, and Dr Jarvis.

Later on, Jim Healy was keeping me away from the branches (see Fig 39 and 40)*[58] and tying me to the office. Court work was done by Jim Healy and Norm Docker. It left me nothing to do. So I started off 'Safety, Health and Hygiene'. I went to the Special Safety Conference and I got up and demanded of the employers, and condemned the employers, for not setting up a 'Safety, Health, and Hygiene' organisation on the waterfront. Finished up the employers, the ship owners, and the ANL decided to set up waterfront safety committees. On this Safety Committee were their doctor, Dr Jarvis, Frank Taylor from the Foremen Stevedores, and six blokes from the employers. So she was well weighted. I was the only Wharfie. In those days, you'd go to the Mitchell Library, and you'd say: "Well, I want everything related to the lungs, or asbestos, or everything related to carbon monoxide, and its effects on the lungs. You'd come back, there'd be a heap of books that high, with a flyleaf in them all, as a reference. They'd charge you a shilling a folio to have it photographed while you were there. I'd go back to the Committee, and I'd have Professor-this here, and Professor-that there, and I'd already have the ball rolling. Well, when I got all this stuff from America, and elsewhere, I threw this on the table in front of them. They couldn't escape. Then, I'd say, let's get all the statistics on hand injuries, head injuries, or foot injuries, you see. So I kept leading things up to them, all the way. In no time, on that Committee I was able to reef all the combustion machines out of ships' holds, all over Australia. I was able to get head protection, steel-capped safety boots, overalls, gloves, air-flow respirators in the wheat, and phostoxin, this shocking thing they were using, I discovered its dangers. Phostoxin, these were large tablets, in the wheat, just laying about, quite happily. It goes through all the wheat, and kills all the bugs, and kills a few blokes, as well. It's deadly at one part per million.*

Deaths From Phostoxin In Geelong Wheat Silos

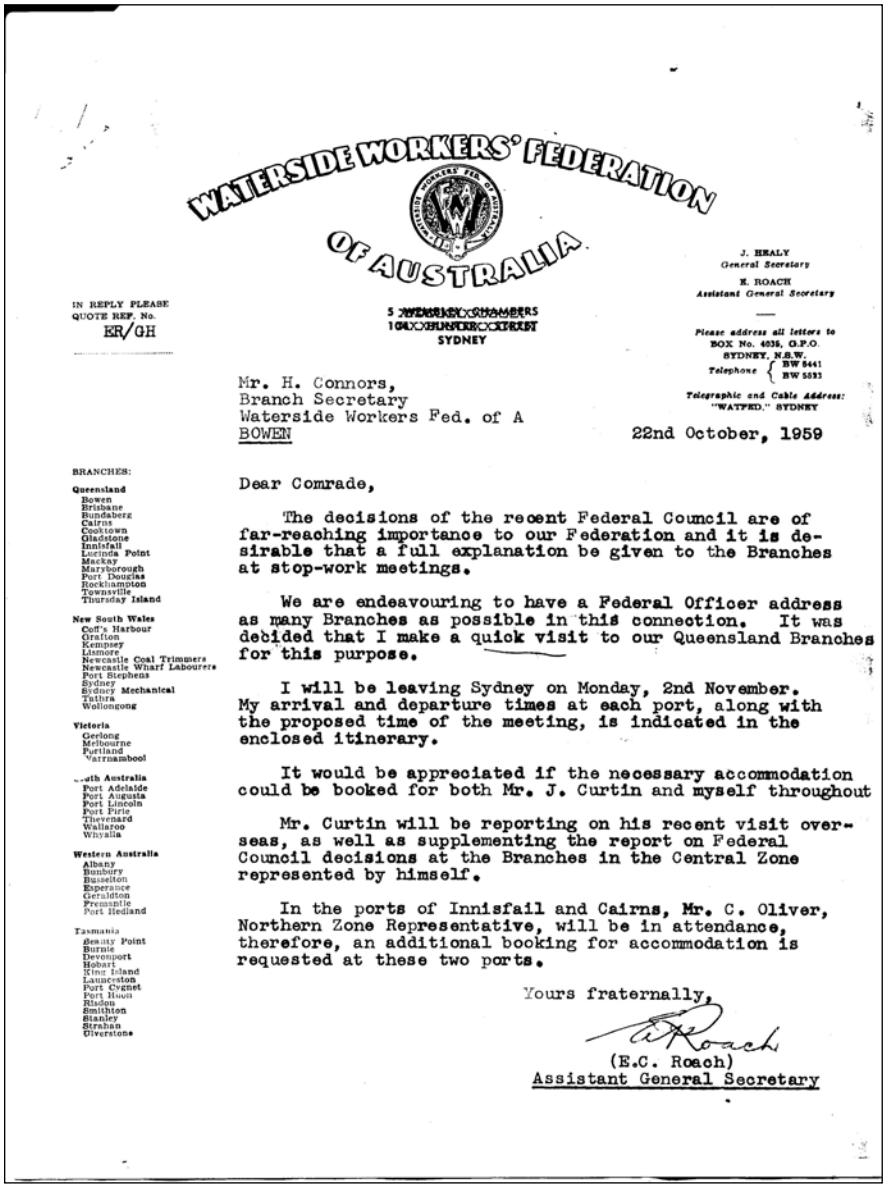
And so I go to Geelong. I go down to the wheat wharf, and there's blokes with a little diaper on their mouth! I said to the foreman: "Hey, where's the masks?" He said "Up in the boot of the car." I said "Listen, mate, it was your organisation that decided this — the "Employers Accident Prevention Committee", I want 'em out of the boot of your car, I want 'em down here. Right away! I said to the boys, "Right! I'll be back Monday. Stop work meeting!" Over the weekend, two members of the AWU died in the holds of these wheat ships, overcome by these phostoxin fumes. They called it heart attacks, frothy bloody mouth, oedema and so on, same symptoms as a heart attack, but it was this phostoxin. When the stop work meeting started on Monday morning, two AWU delegates came in to report two fatalities over the weekend. Bloke says: "There's a deputation from the Storemen 'n Packers, and the Foremen Stevedores from the silo, that want to come in." Two men had died, two men had died in the silo. Wharfies had been dying for years, going to work, and going home from work. Just dropping dead — they'd say - "Coronary occlusion". A coronary occlusion! This was this phostoxin. Anyway I said, let's get on with this. I go down to the silo. I find out that these phostoxin tablets are like a great, big aspro (aspirin tablet), and they put them a foot, or eighteen inches interval apart, and this was the most effective thing for killing bugs. Then they dropped the sideboards down and there's some of these aspros falling down at the feet of the blokes. So I pulled the bloody job up, quicksmart and lively. And I go to find out from the scientists at which stage the residue of the phostoxin disintegrated, and at what stage this residue was harmless? None of these scientists could tell me. Dr Jarvis, the head of Occupational Health there, said: "we are ahead of the rest of the world" in the use of phostoxin. He said: "We wet the truck, the base of it, then we put five or six inches of wheat in, and put our tablets in, and it disintegrates a lot faster."

I wanted the experts to tell me, at what stage did the residue from these tablets become harmless? They couldn't tell me. I took (barrister) Ted Laurie up. Later he became a judge to the (silo) enquiry. But we couldn't get in because our member wasn't involved. They bought the Chief Chemist across from I. G. Farben[59] *as a witness even. He got up and said "we gave some of that, to a little girl — a little girl, eight. She drank some of that, and it didn't do her any harm". He told the best lies in the court. That's how important they thought it was. We tried to get an open finding but we couldn't get it. They just done us like a dinner. We were thrown out because our own blokes weren't in that particular death. We got a decision that phostoxin could not be used anywhere except in the remote country sectors and the carriages had to be aerated then, under Government supervision, before the wheat was bought into the silos. From my experience in Kembla, I applied it over there. Each month we'd go down to the Wheat Board, and there*

was all this stuff. There were all these statistics, collected by the hatchmen, and workers on the job. This was all detailed in my reports to (Wharfies') Council. All bloody destroyed!! It showed me as the bloke doing the job. Dr Christopher, Occupational Health in Victoria, he was a top bloke, and during the coronial enquiry, he came to me and said: "Ted, come and have lunch with me." He wanted to talk with me. He said: "If we keep pressing on the way where we are going, we'll all lose our jobs." He and his chief scientist (his Dad was a Wharfie) were very good.

Fig 39 Ted Roach's Visit to Queensland Branches Nov 1959

Source: kindly provided to Author by Ted Roach



WATERSIDE WORKERS' FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA

J. HEALY
General Secretary
E. ROACH
Assistant General Secretary

IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE REF. No.
ER/GH

5 [redacted]
104 [redacted]
SYDNEY

Please address all letters to
BOX No. 4035, G.P.O.
SYDNEY, N.S.W.
Telephone { BW 5441 / BW 5893
Telegraphic and Cable Address:
"WATFED," SYDNEY

Mr. H. Connors,
Branch Secretary
Waterside Workers Fed. of A
BOWEN

22nd October, 1959

BRANCHES:

Queensland
Bowen
Brisbane
Bundaberg
Cairns
Cooktown
Gladstone
Innisfail
Lucinda Point
Mackay
Maryborough
Port Douglas
Rockhampton
Townsville
Thursday Island

New South Wales
Coff's Harbour
Grafton
Kempsey
Lismore
Newcastle Coal Trimmers
Newcastle Wharf Labourers
Port Stephens
Sydney
Sydney Mechanical
Tathra
Wollongong

Victoria
Geelong
Melbourne
Portland
Warrnambool

South Australia
Port Adelaide
Port Augusta
Port Lincoln
Port Pirie
Thevenard
Wallaroo
Whyalla

Western Australia
Albany
Bunbury
Busselton
Esperance
Geraldton
Fremantle
Port Hedland

Tasmania
Beauty Point
Burnie
Devonport
Hobart
King Island
Launceston
Port Cygnet
Port Huon
Risdon
Smithton
Stanley
Strahan
Ulverstone

Dear Comrade,

The decisions of the recent Federal Council are of far-reaching importance to our Federation and it is desirable that a full explanation be given to the Branches at stop-work meetings.

We are endeavouring to have a Federal Officer address as many Branches as possible in this connection. It was decided that I make a quick visit to our Queensland Branches for this purpose.

I will be leaving Sydney on Monday, 2nd November. My arrival and departure times at each port, along with the proposed time of the meeting, is indicated in the enclosed itinerary.

It would be appreciated if the necessary accommodation could be booked for both Mr. J. Curtin and myself throughout

Mr. Curtin will be reporting on his recent visit overseas, as well as supplementing the report on Federal Council decisions at the Branches in the Central Zone represented by himself.

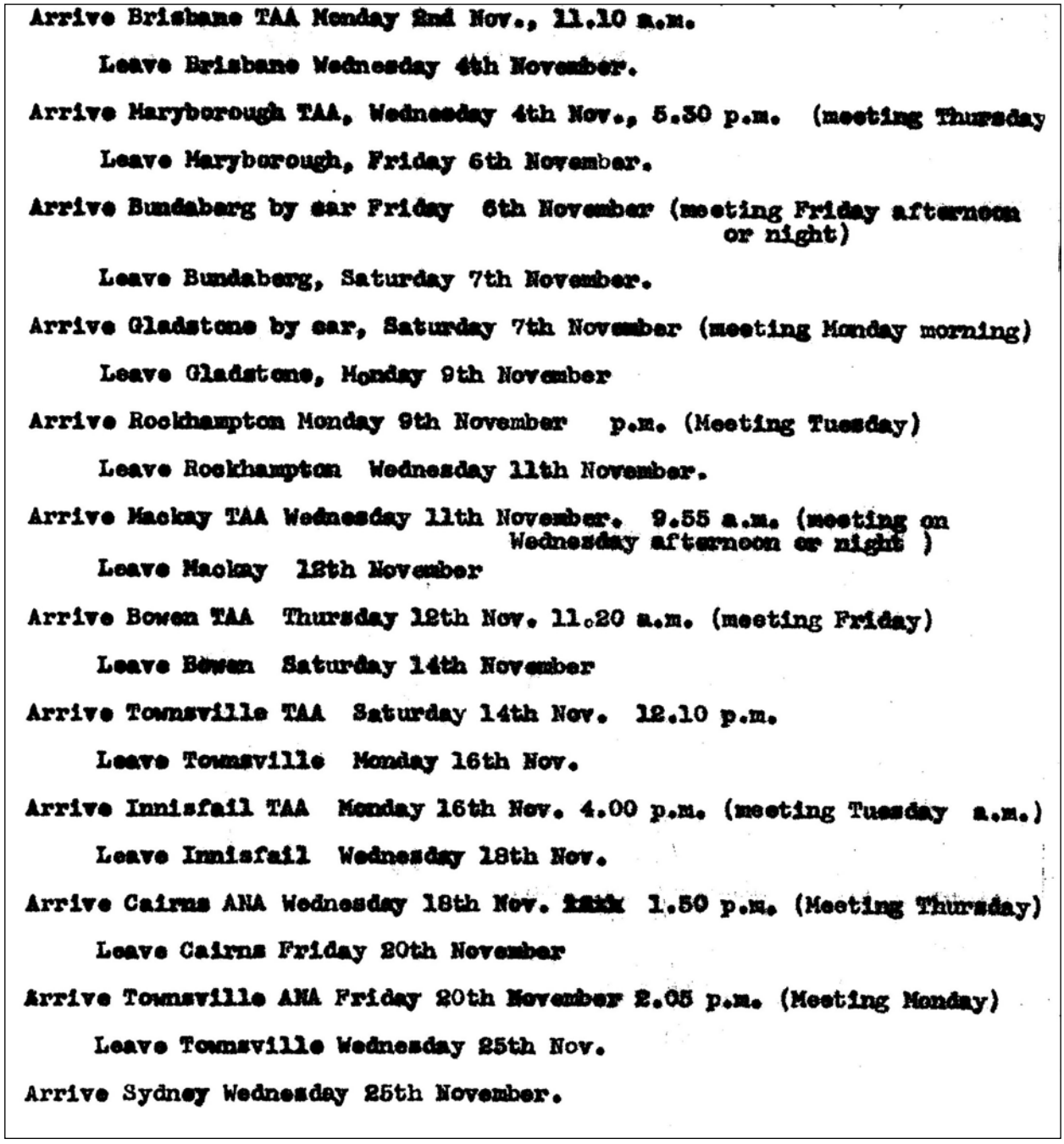
In the ports of Innisfail and Cairns, Mr. C. Oliver, Northern Zone Representative, will be in attendance, therefore, an additional booking for accommodation is requested at these two ports.

Yours fraternally,

E.C. Roach

(E.C. Roach)
Assistant General Secretary

Fig 40 Ted Roach's Itinerary of Branch Meetings, November 1959
Source: kindly provided to Author by Ted Roach



Arrive Brisbane TAA Monday 2nd Nov., 11.10 a.m.

Leave Brisbane Wednesday 4th November.

Arrive Maryborough TAA, Wednesday 4th Nov., 5.30 p.m. (meeting Thursday

Leave Maryborough, Friday 6th November.

Arrive Bundaberg by car Friday 6th November (meeting Friday afternoon or night)

Leave Bundaberg, Saturday 7th November.

Arrive Gladstone by car, Saturday 7th November (meeting Monday morning)

Leave Gladstone, Monday 9th November

Arrive Rockhampton Monday 9th November p.m. (Meeting Tuesday)

Leave Rockhampton Wednesday 11th November.

Arrive Mackay TAA Wednesday 11th November. 9.55 a.m. (meeting on Wednesday afternoon or night)

Leave Mackay 12th November

Arrive Bowen TAA Thursday 12th Nov. 11.20 a.m. (meeting Friday)

Leave Bowen Saturday 14th November

Arrive Townsville TAA Saturday 14th Nov. 12.10 p.m.

Leave Townsville Monday 16th Nov.

Arrive Innisfail TAA Monday 16th Nov. 4.00 p.m. (meeting Tuesday a.m.)

Leave Innisfail Wednesday 18th Nov.

Arrive Cairns ANA Wednesday 18th Nov. 1.50 p.m. (Meeting Thursday)

Leave Cairns Friday 20th November

Arrive Townsville ANA Friday 20th November 2.05 p.m. (Meeting Monday)

Leave Townsville Wednesday 25th Nov.

Arrive Sydney Wednesday 25th November.

Hatch Cards And Watches

I said this is what we've got to do. I re-introduced hatch cards. The employers wanted to blame the Wharfies for all the delays taking place. Hatchmen had to write down on the hatch cards, the causes of the delays. And I gave them watches, too. We had this in Port Kembla. Every month there's a big conference of the Wheat Board, very important people there. They blamed us. The blamed us for stoppages. We were responsible, we caused this, and we caused that. So I got hatch cards and watches for each hatchman to

record stoppages, times and reasons for stoppages which we could produce when they were talking about us causing stoppages. Incompetence caused the stoppages and not the Wharfies, you see. I was able to take charge of the bloody meetings each time.

NEGOTIATING SKILLS

In negotiations, they will say we can "possibly" agree to this, and you say: "All right then." When that assurance is given, you only give it because you know it can be kept. And they learn to take your word, it's a kind of trust that, they want to trust you, a left-winger. I was talking to Dave Preston. He was the head of one of the biggest stevedoring companies in Australia. He was the rep of the employers on the "Accident Prevention Committee" that I was a member of and I had forced them into a position of setting up this "Employers' Accident Prevention Committee".[60] *Dave said we can "possibly agree" to this, and I said: "All right then." He wanted to trust my word as a negotiator. And I said: "We agree, then." Others will want a strict "Yeah" or "Nay." But I knew from experience that we had an agreement, and it worked out that way. I was able to handle it all. Waving the hammer and sickle? No! No! Oh, experience taught me that and I'd present them with the information about it all, and before they knew where they were I had the bloody leg-irons on 'em.*

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[1] Beasley, M. "Wharfies: the history of the Waterside Workers' Federation", op. cit., p.176.

[2] NB 114/140 Biennial Conference, R 1954, pp.2-3.

[3] *I voted for Bill when the Russians sent an invitation for someone to go to Russia. Nominations were Jim Healy and Bill Ford. And it was my vote that sent Bill Ford, against the head-counters at Federal Council. They were screaming. I said: "I have the right to vote for whomever I like."*

[4] NB 114/140 Biennial Conference, R 1954, pp.2-3.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Roach, T. Report to Wharfies' Council. N 114/24, 14.7.1953, p.17.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid., pp.16-19.

[12] Roach, T. "MW", 1.4.1954, p.4. Ted recorded that the AWU and the employers were: "pitting one section against the other, Malays, Koepangers, Indonesians, Australian natives, and, last but not least, have now brought indentured Japanese divers and workers into the pearl industry", ibid.

[13] "FCM", 14.11.1949, p.116.

[14] Jim Healy, letter to Don McLeod, 23.10.1947, p.1. E E 211/15.

[15] "FCM", 1949.

[16] WWF Circular No.56/38 ER (Edward Roach). See 1954 "Federation News", Strike Bulletin, N 114/1761. The strike edition of "The Maritime Worker" has a photo of Ted Roach talking to Wharfies. Instead of being captioned TED ROACH it is captioned "CAPTAIN BRYANT". The central and main article in the strike issue of "The Maritime Worker", 23.11.1954 p.2, is by Ted reporting strike and solidarity activities, and news from the Wharfie Branches, factories, workshops etc.

[17] Examples of Ted's recommendations regarding Organising in 1956 include: *The Branch Strike Committee should call daily meetings of all members for the purpose of hearing reports on the progress of the struggle, and to hear the plan of action for the*

day. Members and leaders of other Unions, should be invited to attend, as they may express a desire to speak in support of, and give active assistance to the WWF. (p.1), and *The Publicity Committee should organise public meetings, with special attention to reaching every factory and railway shop in their area, as well as arranging the maximum amount of meetings, in country halls, country centres; the booking of advanced radio times, letters to the press, factory gate meetings; and arrange for the purchase, or hire, of a film projector, loud speaking apparatus; arranging of transport etc.* (p.2); and *Every effort should be made to seek support, in every possible form, from local members of Parliament; both State and Federal. This should be done, in the friendliest way possible, showing that we don't aim to stand over people, we are only asking what we are entitled to. Endeavours should be made to have members' wives included in such deputations.* (p.2) These are a few quotes from Ted Roach's three page, tightly packed circular instructing Federation members "how to do it" in January 1956.

[18] Future researchers could spend some fruitful time collating Ted Roach's Circulars from the Wharfies' Federal Office and tracing the direction and development of a fighting, intelligent, industrial policy, in their contents.

[19] **Editors' note:** 'Margins' were a part of Australia's centralised wage-fixing system from the Harvester Decision in 1907 until 1967. The 1907 decision set a 'Basic Wage' as the floor for wages set periodically by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration. Margins were additional awards made by the Court to particular classifications of employees based on the nature of their work including skills or its laborious nature.

[20] **Author's note**: In 1956, Ted stood on the Communist Party ticket for South Ward, Bankstown Council. The Communist group was E. C. Roach, A. F. W. Driver, and R. M. Scott. Three groups were standing: Labor, Independent and Communist. Ted Roach had a film made by Norma Disher, of the Waterside Workers Film Unit called "A Question of Health". The film dealt with Bankstown which was unsewered and flowing into the George's River, and Bankstown Hospital, unfinished. It was "one of the rare films of community protest". Ted wrote to the "Bankstown Torch": *We claim that the money required for the complete installation of sewerage and a garbage disposal plant in the whole of the Bankstown Municipality could be completed by diverting the £520,000 daily being spent by the Federal Government on defence. Sixteen days of this war spending diverted from purposes of death, to life and health could do the job. The money is available if people fight for it. The Federal (Liberal) Government recently spent £2,500,000 reconditioning the warship "Hobart". The ship was not put back into commission, and is now awaiting a tug to tow it to Japan for scrap. This is a criminal waste of people's money. It would be better spent on hygiene, health, parks, playing fields, gymnasiums, social centres, amenities for pensioners, in places like Bankstown Municipality.* Ted Roach, "Bankstown Torch", 22.11.1956 p.3. Two 'Independents' and one Labor representative were elected.

[21] *The Ashburner Interim Award laid the basis for considerable decrease in manning scales throughout the industry; and the elimination of sling load schedules opened the way for a drive for greater sling loads. This linked with increased mechanised equipment handling, introduction of containerisation, and pre-slung cargo, linked with the problem of some diminution of markets, adds up to a sizable problem with redundancy in the industry,* Ted Roach, AGS, Report, 1961, pp.41- 42.

[22] Ted recalled ACTU Executive member Souter, 1954: *Souter, he ran me out to the airport. He asked me: "Is this a Communist plot?" Fair dinkum, I could've fallen out of the bloody car. They get convinced by their own propaganda!*

[23] Garbage collectors.

[24] Roach, T. "Biennial FCM", 19.10.1956, p.20.

[25] "MW", 26.3.1957, p.1.

[26] Ibid., p.5.

[27] Ibid., p.6.

[28] "MW", 9.4.1957, p.7.

[29] "MW", 25.4.1957, p.1.

[30] Ibid.

[31] "MW", 29.5.1957, p.1.

[32] "MW", 11.6.1957, p.6. Note: by 1957, Ted said that because of his non-attendance at his Party Branch meetings, his membership of "Deep Branch" (one of four Sydney Waterfront branches) had lapsed and he was now "a non-financial member" of the Communist Party of Australia.

[33] "MW", 10.5.1947, p.1.

[34] "MW", 9.6.1965, p.2.

[35] "MW", 17.11.1969, p.7.

[36] "MW", 7.9.1940, p.10.

[37] Ibid.

[38] "MW", 20.1.1965, p.1.

[39] Ibid., p.2.

[40] "MW", 3.2.1965, p.7.

[41] "MW", 20.1.1965.

[42] "MW", 3.2.1965, p.7.

[43] "MW", 17.2.1965, p.3.

[44] "MW", 17.2.1965.

[45] "MW", 4.4.1965, p.2.

[46] "MW", 9.6.1965, p.7. "The AGS, Mr. E. Roach has found a type of glove which we think would be suitable for the handling of freezer cargoes", M. Wallington to H. Connors (Bowen) 21.1.1960, ER/GH 2709.

[47] "MW", 30.1.1965, p.2.

[48] "MW", 28.4.1965, p.7.

[49] "MW", 12.5.1965.

[50] "MW", 9.6.1965, p.2.

[51] "MW", 11.8.1965, p.2.

[52] "MW", 25.8.1965.

[53] "MW", 9.8.1964, p.4.

[54] "MW", 17.11.1969, p.7.

[55] "MW", 25.1.1967.

[56] "MW", 29.3.1967, p.2.

[57] "MW", 12.4.1967, p.7.

[58] **Editors'note**: Figs 39 and 40 illustrate Ted Roach's continuing work as A/GS in personally communicating and discussing Federal WWF Council decisions with rank-and-file wharfies "at stop-work meetings" throughout the 1950s. Fig 39 is a letter from Ted to branch secretaries to arrange visits to Queensland ports in November 1959 and Fig 40 shows Ted's itinerary of visits to 11 branches from 2-25 November 1959.

[59] I. G. Farben, (post WWII). See SBS film, on death of US, biological-war, research leader, Eric Olsen, who headed post-WWII, USA biological-war experiments. Drugs, torture, and diseases were tried on captured intelligence officers in a special operations room inside the I. G. Farben complex in Germany. Olsen, a sincere Christian, criticised these murders inside the biological-war program. The film said that in 1953 Eric Olsen was murdered by the CIA. He was thrown through the 14th storey window of the Hotel Pennsylvania, New York.

[60] Note the clever and positive language, which Ted Roach chooses for the title of this important, employers' safety committee.

Chapter 22
DEATH OF JIM HEALY, 1961: TED AND THE CPA

The legendary leader of the Wharfies, Jim Healy, died at the early age of 63 after a long fight with bowel cancer. The Communist Party leadership knew Jim Healy was sick but, as usual, did not make organisational preparations in case of his likely death. Ted Roach was very confident that he could win the resulting by-election because he was "so well known in the Branches". Other Communist Wharfies did not want Ted to stand, and there was a series of meetings about the 'succession' to fill the big shoes of Jim Healy. Most Wharfies knew that Tom Nelson (CPA) [Secretary of WWF Sydney branch] would not win the position of Wharfies' General Secretary against Charlie Fitzgibbon (ALP). They also knew Tom Nelson did not want to stand for the position. Ted had worked on many campaigns with Tom Nelson such as the Wharfies' All States Sports Carnivals (*the Workers' Olympics*) and the Women's Committees. Ted was not impressed with Tom's ability to think on his feet or word a resolution. Others, like Eric Parker, who heard Nelson operate under duress, thought he had the ability.

When Healy died, I was visited by all the top (Communist) brass — Dixon, Aarons, Sharkey. They all wanted Nelson. I was of the opinion Nelson couldn't do the job if he'd have won it. The top brass wanted Nelson to run. I said: ***"Nelson can't win it."***

The author: "Did you stand for Assistant-General Secretary?"

No, I was still AGS. I was still that. I didn't have to stand for anything. The Labor Party was waiting for the AGS to be declared vacant. The ALP had hookups in all the branches.

Jim died during the counting of the votes for the 1961 Wharfie ballot. Progress votes were Healy 15,402 to (Grouper) Gus Alford 3,505. Writing from Studley St., Abbotsford in Victoria, Gus Alford told Jim Young[1]: "I am the only person validly entitled to carry out the functions of the Federal Secretary", and "I have no doubt that I must be declared elected as General Secretary … (etc)".[2] Ted Roach, as Acting-General Secretary, immediately countermanded Gus Alford's clumsy, amateurish grab for power. Nobody noticed Ted's **decisive** action in refuting this nonsense, saying the ballot had not been declared, and there would be a new election. But who would be the Party candidate to replace Jim Healy?

General Secretary After Healy

Ted dearly wanted to be General Secretary. He had built up communication and organisation during the twenty years since 1942. Who else knew as much as he did about the Wharfie Branches, and the working of the system? You only have to read "The Maritime Worker" to see Ted Roach's work laid out there, week after week, in front of you in black and white. *When we had the broad (CPA) Party meeting, there were a whole lot of Wharfies there, Party members from Sydney and Melbourne in a hall. Eddie Robertson[3] from Adelaide ran the meeting. I made the announcement that I supported Nelson. I didn't want to rock the boat. The ALP were limbering up for the Assistant-General Secretary to become vacant. Phil Healy in Brisbane and Harry McDowell in Adelaide linked up with Fitzgibbon, and they were ready to run for Assistant-General Secretary. I would have been unopposed as Secretary. They (the Labor Party) were concerned about the Assistant-General Secretaryship. I was Acting-General Secretary and no-one could have possibly touched me for that position.*

The week before nominations closed, on the Friday, at 5 p.m., I pointed out we didn't have to announce who was running till nominations closed. Then (Jack) McPhillips, on behalf of the Trade Union Committee (CC-CPA), said: "You've got to make an announcement that Nelson is running for the position of General Secretary." "I said: "Why?" "Well, the Party said you've got to make an announcement." I said: "The announcement hasn't got to be made till 5 past 5 on Friday (15 September 1961) when nominations close. McPhillips said: "No, we can't trick the workers, you've got to make an announcement that Nelson's going to run. We've got to make the announcement now." Had this not been done, Nelson would have been General Secretary, unopposed, because the Wharfies all expected me to move up into the position of General Secretary. While all this was going on, all their screaming, Thornton rings up and says: "If you can't make your minds up, I'll come down and stand myself." Then, immediately, Tom Nelson put his nomination in so the Labor Party had the rest of the week. Immediately that happened, Fitzgibbon threw

his hat in and the Labor Party machine went into action and Fitzgibbon toured the Branches. So then the Party said Nelson had to go to the Branches, too. And Fitzgibbon outshone Nelson at all the meetings. Fitzgibbon done him like a dinner. Fitzgibbon was much more impressive than Nelson. This resulted in Fitzgibbon being overwhelmingly elected. They (the CC-CPA) made the announcement that put Fitzgibbon in, and Fitzgibbon took the Federation straight over to the Labor Party. They handed the Federation to the Labor Party. Nelson was not a good speaker. Fitzgibbon was a good speaker. This was what the ALP wanted. They didn't expect Nelson to stand. They expected I was moving up to the position of General Secretary.

The author: "Was there any soul-searching in the Party after such a monumental error?"
No.
The author: "So Fitzgibbon got in?"
I knew Fitzgibbon was going in. There was no way Nelson was going to beat him. Nelson was stolid, sometimes oafish. It was a Party decision through McPhillips that bought the whole roof down. The Party had developed this Jesus Christ image of Healy, and the Party could do no more than develop it further. As Fitzgibbon was in, they decided he was "doing a good job for the Federation". Docker or Wallington didn't come out criticising anything he was doing or come out fighting for Trade Union independence. In all my work and discussions, Trade Union independence was fundamental to me! Fundamental!

Wally Stubbings, in Brisbane, said: "Tom Nelson? – that obviously was a terrible error when Jim died. Phil Healy[4] was cock-a-hoop when we told him Nelson would be running for General Secretary. He was sure Fitzgibbon would win." Wal Stubbings added: "I agree with Ted there was a Cult of the Individual built up around Jim (Healy). Then, there was a Cult of the Individual everywhere, including Ted Roach, who was given the greatest praise and adulation. One thing that was deeply ingrained, if anything goes wrong, leave it to Jim (Healy) to fix. Jim was a very intelligent man, full of sincerity. He had the ability to get on with people, and this made it easier to put him on a pedestal."

The voting for General Secretary between Fizgibbon and Nelson was Charlie Fitzgibbon 11,175 and Tom Nelson 8,348. If, all things considered, Tom Nelson got so many votes, then one could confidently say Ted Roach would have got more votes than Tom Nelson and even enough votes to win. Despite his rejection by the Communist Party for candidate for General Secretary, a position he had filled over and over again during extreme crises, and up to three months at a time, Ted Roach swallowed his anger and threw himself into the campaign to get Tom Nelson elected. He did not whinge but privately, he was deeply wounded.[5] *I could've gone along to the Party and said: "You can all get stuffed! I'll tell you what you can do. You can bring in Jesus Christ, and all his twelve apostles, and I'll give you 10,000 start, the lot of you, and get elected." I could've said that without any problems because I was the bloke who was so well known. Then, after all the bastards'd done to me, I didn't want to upset the applecart.*

Tom Nelson Diary Notes

Notes about 1960-61 in Tom Nelson's diary are instructive. They were certainly not written as an ecclesiastical exercise in modesty, but are the thoughts of someone so worried by feelings of inadequacy. He wrote: "my job is a worry. I think it is beyond me. Could give it up without a moment's trouble." And "I have been working in a complete vacuum I'm being divorced from the Federation"; and, further, "I don't know what is going on. Any work I do, I create it myself."[6] Tom admitted he had broken a decision that Ted Roach was to handle the correspondence. He wrote: "I open the mail before 9.00 so that the officials can put it into their folders when they come in. ... not aware of decision that Roach should get the correspondence."[7] The writer pointed up what he felt were weaknesses in Ted Roach. "Roach's manner, impatience, not popular with the staff", and "Roach has a persecution complex, jealousy of his getting the job as Assistant-General Secretary in spite of my assurances. Every time I make a mistake, he makes an issue of it."[8]

TED'S ENEMIES ON THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE CPA: ERNIE THORNTON AND JACK McPHILLIPS

"Ted Roach was not a good Party member."
Jack McPhillips, (Central Committee-CPA)

Ever since the *Dalfram* Dispute, which Ted Roach led 'from go to whoa', he had jealous enemies on the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Ted was not an 'insider' in internal Party politics and intrigues. He was not on the Central Committee, where he should have been. For Ted, at that time 'the Party' was *a kind of a holy thing*. Ted could be abrupt and did not pay homage or compliments to anyone purely on their reputation. Like a lot of fighters, he ate reputations. When he wanted advice from a senior Communist he would see CPA President, Jack Miles. There was a certain torment for Ted in not being in the discussion, and debates, on the Central Committee. Ernie Thornton was elected to the WFTU in 1945, returning to Australia in May 1945. "Mr. Ernie Thornton, Australia's delegate to the World Trade Union Congress returned to Sydney last week [...] Mr. Thornton was selected to the Standing Orders Committee, as the one representative of the British Commonwealth Group. Mr. Thornton was later elected to the Committee which made recommendations on the constitution of the new World Federation of Trade Unions Organisation, and finally onto the Conference Committee, charged with carrying on until the Conference next September in San Francisco. Mr Thornton will deliver a report at the ACTU Congress to be held next month."[9]

An early organiser of the Militant Minority, Ernie had missed out on election to Secretary, ACTU, by only a few votes. Ernie was almost a VIP but Ted didn't worry about VIP's; he had urgent work to do, organising the Wharfies in Australia. Ernie thought he was going to be one of the Australian delegates to SOBSI in May 1947, to the first-ever Congress of Indonesian Trade Unions. Kuppers, Dutch TU leader, was on the WFTU Executive with Ernie. A 'spook' reported: "I was advised that a subsequent broadcast by Campbell, mentioned that there would be three delegates to attend the Indonesian Labour Conference, who would be (Mick) Healy from Brisbane, (Johnny) Brown from Melbourne, and Ernie Thornton from Sydney."[10] But Ted beat Ernie to the punch. Ted was put in charge of the Dutch Ships dispute by the Wharfies, and by using ACTU 'Rule 13' on the ACTU Dutch Ships Sub-Committee, controlled it in the difficult, early stages (1945-1946). Thus, Ted created vital contacts and unwritten compacts of trust with the Indonesian revolutionaries like 'Tuk' (Tukliwan), and they trusted him. Mick Healy (Brisbane Labour Council) and Ted were specifically requested, therefore, by the Indonesians to be the Australian delegates to advise the Indonesians on Trade Union organisation at the SOBSI Conference.

Ted's reports from Indonesia and his report from Malaya upstaged Ernie who was on the WFTU Executive. Ernie, a CC-CPA member, became an enemy of Ted Roach. Ted had already been smeared by Judge Beeby for "treason", by Sydney Grouper Loshi Baroni for "mishandling" *Dalfram* strike monies, and by Arthur Finlay over Harry Montgomery's big compensation payout. In the *Dalfram* Dispute Ted had defeated Menzies, and the Transport Workers Act. And it was Ted who had refused the ten-pound compo bribe, from Aidan Devereaux, in Kembla. The intrigue deepens with Jim McClelland's remark: "Thornton was Evatt's mate."[11] Ted didn't tug forelocks to anyone, including those in the centre of power inside the CPA, who felt they were very important people. Weren't they the bearers of 'the Holy Grail' of Communist wisdom, and philosophy? And the tactics of the Communist International? Wasn't Lance Sharkey the Comintern's representative in Australia?

*Some of these full-time Party functionaries got so swellheaded, you'd think they were full brothers to Marx and Engels. Thornton? Not without ability. He wanted to fight me in Peking. Just lost his job on the WFTU, his sinecure, to the Chinese delegate. Living off the fat of the land! Thought he had a God-given right to the job. Half-drunk on "Maotai". "F**k Liu Shaoqui!" "Maotai"![12] Burns a hole in your chest! Abused the lot of us. And you, Roach! You! You! Who does this Roach think he is? Wanted to fight me, or anyone else in the delegation. Could've got himself a fair sort of a hiding, too! Cuppla split lips and a cuppla black eyes wouldn't have done him any harm at all. They arse-oled him pretty quick after that.* Years later at a party at Ted and Wyck's in Victoria St., Revesby, Ernie attempted to kick Ted's sister in "the

crotch". Ted found this behaviour, in a Central Committee member, to be almost incomprehensible. *I should've flattened him.*

Ernie, describing himself in China, as a "Professor of Trade Unionism",[13] was lecturing at Peking University. Eric Aarons said: "the Asian Bureau of the WFTU which Ernie headed was at least in part intended as an avenue through which the Soviets could keep some check on what the Chinese CP was up to in the region."[14] In 1958, Ernie wrote a pamphlet "The Trade Unions and You". In my opinion, this work is far inferior to Ted Roach's theory, and practice, of militant Trade Unionism. "Who does this Roach think he is?" was a question asked by many in authority, as Ted sent up challenge after challenge from 1935. Ernie Thornton underwent a Party "criticism" in 1932. The Control Commission accused Ernie of "refusal to engage in self-criticism". Ernie replied: "I am not convinced my mistakes are any worse than the mistakes of others." Ernie, they said, "factions a lot, and is an anarchist disrupter." Ernie engaged in "**lying and slander** to conceal his individual errors." Ernie's methods they said, lined him up with "the agents provocateurs of the Boss class". (Notice the good, sweeping, all-encompassing kick in 'the orchestra stalls',[15] a simply unanswerable generalisation!)

Self-Criticism by Comrade Thornton

> "In criticism of my action relative to my removal from the Secretariat, I wish to state that the charges contained in my appeal to the C.C. are false and without foundation. And that, in making them, I was actuated by personal reactions to comrade Jackson. I acknowledge the error in my manner, which indicated **conceitedness**, and led to a domineering and bureaucratic attitude to another member, and will do everything possible to correct this weakness."[16]

"Domineering and bureaucratic" – unfortunately, self-description is not self-realisation and Ernie, the 'Barnado's boy',[17] who recited 'Young Albert' at Party piss-ups, and had been bullied and victimised as an orphan child, retained those characteristics. But you couldn't bully Ted Roach. Nobody bullied Ted. You'd have to start another favourite Party game, rumour-mongering and smearing. Ernie's ally was L. J. 'Jack' McPhillips. Whenever they had Party parties at their own or comrades' homes, Ted Roach was not invited. Later, Ernie galloped off in the opposite direction, to the Far Right. Oh, no, not a "Right-Deviation", Ernie. Yes! In 1944! And worse, "Earl Browderism", an early form of neo-liberalism, of dropping the 'outmoded ideology' of class struggle, and loving the Big Boss. Ernie, like the Party itself, at times, had swung the full circle — and he had "to sit on the emery wheel"[18] again and endure another Party criticism from CC member, Jack Henry: "Cde. Thornton fell under the spell of Cde. Browder in the USA in 1944, who said "violent class struggles should be avoided like the plague". Henry said Ernie's resume of 'Browderism' was "chock-full of inaccuracies in regards to Marxism".[19] Didn't Ernie long to give the castor-oil to that "conceited" Roach who looked a bit like the matinee idol, Clark Gable, was always in the headlines and always a couple of punches in front of the Boss? Did he ever? *I delivered the goods. They hated my guts*, said Ted.

Ernie would use language, even off the CPA Conference platform. This was his Party 'persona', his proletarian badge. During the 1935 Seamen's Strike, when seamen's leader Joe Keenan, was under attack, Ernie said the cafe for Keenan's Melbourne meetings was "a brothel and a sly grog shop".[20] When Johnny Brown, ARU Melbourne, refused to stand on a Unity Ticket with a Grouper in the Victorian ARU Union elections, Ernie said from the platform at a major Communist Party Conference: "*And I hope you get fucken' beat.*" Brown stood against the Grouper and beat him. Unity Tickets in Union elections, with chosen Rights and even Groupers, was the new Party policy of the 'United Front' which Dixon said he "discovered" in the early fifties. Ernie was demonstrating his understanding of and loyalty to Party policy, right out in public so nobody could mistake it. Ernie came up with some pretty good smears, for example describing 'Diamond' Jim McClelland as: "A petite bourgeoise blow in from the Trotskyite sewer."[21]

Leaving a functionary's position inside the Communist Party, on the important CC-CPA Industrial Committee, Ernie Thornton returned to work. Workers called Ernie "Week in Lieu". As soon as bosses rang ASIO, Ernie got the sack and a "week in lieu". Ernie Thornton's last job was driving a crane in "a filthy, dirty foundry in Gardener's Rd., Mascot, Sydney".[22] He took his first pay packet into the Party, and

said: “How much for you, how much for me?” So Ernie was “a good Party member”. And Ernie Thornton died of a heart attack on that crane.

Jack McPhillips - CC-CPA Industrial Committee

Jack McPhillips who said he had ‘special responsibility’ for the waterfront, also said he didn’t know Ted Roach was the Wharfies’ National Organiser. This is astounding! When the nine Union leaders were in gaol during the NSW Coal Strike, 1949, Ted took Jack’s slippers, too big for Jack, and replaced them with Ted’s slippers, too small for Ted. Jack felt that this action showed that Ted was a ‘smartie’. “Roach was a smartie. He was of no account”, Jack said. By swapping sizes, Ted was doing something done, all the time, in gyms, in camps, and on the track, testing the touchiness of people, sorting them out. During those years, Jack didn’t waltz Matilda but worked in Lever Bros Soap Factory in Balmain, Sydney.[23] These kinds of cloistral shenanigans about whose slippers were whose, would be a joke to the boys from Maguire’s Gym. Any newcomer would be sorted out, and tested for touchiness. Call a bloke ‘a smartie’ for changing slippers? Oh, Jeez-sus!

Jack and Ernie lost the Ironworkers’ election (1949-51) in controversial circumstances and were then denizens of the Party ‘burrow’, seeking new interpretations of theory to explain why the Party didn’t fulfill the vainglorious boasting of the permanent leaders. And if those leaders failed badly, for example in the Coal Strike, or the Ironworkers, or if the 20,000 Party members of 1945 shrank to 6,000 in 1954, the permanent leaders weren’t asked why, nor were they publicly pilloried as bloody awful Party members! Just as you can fill a page with smears about ‘Roach’, so you can fill a page with negative stories about Jack. Suffice it to say that Communists who worked in the grind and bruising battle of heavy industry did not have many kind words for Jack. Ernie? Yes, but Jack? “Everything he touched turned to tinsel,” they said, or words to that effect. ‘Two Minute’ Jack, they called him when he was Ironworkers’ President because he didn’t have time to talk to the rank and file: “Hurry up! I’ve got two minutes.” When he was gaoled in 1949, hard-bitten Wharfies said: “Leave the bastard in there, it’ll do him good!”[24]

Ted Roach – “Not a Good Party Member?”

Ted Roach’s understanding of Marxism, based on the class struggle, did not deviate in his forty years of struggle (1929-1969)[25] or after. His line of organising workers in industry and spreading from there to the battles of surrounding communities, did not swing like Ernie’s from the far left to the far right. Ted’s faith in the Communist leadership was shaken when they did not use his 1951 gaoling to mount a mass political campaign to get him out of Long Bay. And Ted’s energy was sapped by *atmospheric poisoning* by the Wharfies’ Sydney Branch Executive. Ted’s secretary Gwen Hinds (GH) used to come into Ted’s office in tears because of the crap said about him by Sydney Branch Executive members. Again, Ted’s gaoling broke the continuity of his powerful position as Second Executive Officer of the Wharfies. Ted often operated, he thought correctly, without informing Jim Healy: *I never told Healy*. As the Organiser he built, link-by-link, the chain of Wharfie organisation round Australia and could reach them quickly by urgent telegram or phone. Wharfie Executive and Council Minutes are clear proof that Roach laid down the theory and the tactics of organising, and he enunciated lines of militancy and the way to put those ideas into practice. It is down there in black and white. The Wharfies’ Executive of five to eight persons was, surprise, surprise, not especially militant. Ted, Albie Graham, Ivo Barrett and Jim Healy pushed the militant line. Ted wanted to implement policy by “many and varied forms of direct action” and Jim wanted “to wait till the right time”.[26]

Ted Roach was “not a good Party member”. He didn’t make public protestations of his loyalty or his militancy. In fact, he kept these things so low key that self-important people didn’t notice them. Ted Roach’s achievements were commendable. But few, except Wharfies who knew him at his best, knew what he had done. ASIO knew a few things about Ted, but not much. And, irony of ironies, the proof of Ted’s final testimony comes not only from the printed record of the Wharfies’ Federal Council and Executive Minutes, and “The Maritime Worker”, but also, from the few ASIO records that have survived the ever-patiently burning government incinerators. Ernie Thornton and Jack McPhillips hated Ted’s guts but Roach

didn't lose an election, didn't have anything to do with the Coal Strike plan, and kept on scoring tries while his team was getting beaten. It was not until 1957 that his CPA enemies lined Ted up for six of the best.

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[1] Jim Hugo 'Dutchy' Young, Wharfies' Sydney Branch Executive.

[2] Z 248/61 B, 17.7.1961, pp.1-2. Totals were Healy 16,031, Alford 3,683, Roach 14,733, P. J. Gleeson 4,917.

[3] Eddie Robertson — highly regarded Communist leader who died suddenly.

[4] Phil Healy (ALP), Wharfies' Brisbane Branch Executive.

[5] According to ASIO, Ted Roach's "deep grievance" commenced in 1951-52; for example ASIO 1952: "Ted Roach has a deep grievance. He is smarting under alleged lack of Party interest, whilst he was serving his gaol sentence." NSW Secret Report No.210 No.134. 14.2.1952. This handwritten comment was added: "This is interesting in the light of the present struggle in the leadership of the WWF." Ibid.

[6] Tom Nelson papers MLM SS 6138/1/N/C, p.16.

[7] Ibid., p.15.

[8] Ibid., p.16.

[9] "MW", op. cit., May 1945.

[10] N.39083/4Z 2.5.1947.

[11] Jim McClelland's remark to Ted Roach at the NSW Mitchell Library public meeting on the Hilton bombing, Sydney, 1996.

[12] **Editors' note**: a popular brand of distilled Chinese spirit made from fermented sorghum.

[13] Hewett, Dorothy. "Wild Card - An Autobiography 1923-1958", Melbourne: McPhee Gribble/Penguin Books, 1990, p.206.

[14] Aarons, Eric. "What's Left?", op. cit., p.81.

[15] the orchestra stalls: balls. Rhyming slang.

[16] CPA records MLMSS ADD-ON, Box 5: "Report on removal of Thornton from No.4 D.C., and his appeal to the CC." (Org. Department) 1936.

[17] **Editors' note**: An orphan. Dr Barnardo's is a British charity founded by Thomas John Barnardo in 1866, to provide institutional care for vulnerable children.

[18] To endure a painful, public humiliation.

[19] Jack Henry, CPA-CC, MLMSS 5021 L 691/70, 14-15 October 1944, p.7.

[20] CPA records MLMSS ADD-ON, Box 5, op. cit., 1935-6.

[21] Appleton, Gillian. "Diamond Cuts: An Affectionate Memoir of Jim McClelland", Sydney: Pan Macmillan, 2000, p.100.

[22] Hal Alexander.

[23] "I was employed in the Palmolive Soap Factory, Jan. 13, 1930 to Feb. 12, 1937," L. J. McPhillips.

[24] Eric Parker, WWF, a historian with knowledge of WWF/CPA history, from the 1950s.

[25] Ted stepped down from his role as Assistant-General Secretary and National Organiser in 1967 but remained active with the Wharfies until 1969, including organising the "Seals" ticket in the Sydney Branch elections.

[26] Jim Healy to Taylor (Whyalla), WExM, 1945.

Chapter 23
"COMRADE, FAREWELL!"

If you didn't ask him the questions, he wouldn't volunteer the information, even then he would speak in general, no specific person was mentioned, no-one could be singled out. It was done by "us" by the whole Federation – until he found out he was not credited and his reports were no longer on file. It is appropriate that Edward Charles, 'Ted', Roach should have the last laugh because he also had a subtle, hidden sense of humour, almost the silent humour of the silent movies. Those 'in the know' knew they could laugh over a beer or two, and it was only a beer or two, in the nineteen-thirties, laugh inwardly with their bruises and black eyes when Ted thumbed his waistcoat, and 'coated'[1] ships and jobs, in Port Kembla Harbour. All the workers knew, but not the bosses. It is appropriate he should have the last laugh as Comrade 'X' because there were hundreds of Comrade 'X's' who didn't get into books, who weren't taped and whose pictures weren't hung. Neither did the Ruling Class want it done, nor did the bureaucrats in the Communist Party and the Unions. Workers, industrial workers, have a habit of saying what they think, of telling the Truth.

Ted's sense of humour, his chuckle, like that conspiratorial chuckle of a little boy letting you in on a secret, a chuckle that became an outpouring of lungfulls of laughter, resounding and reverberating from No.4 Jetty, Port Kembla Harbour (1938); to the Black Bans on Dutch Ships (1945-1949); to the Brisbane Rotary Hatch dispute (March, 1950), when Menzies invoked the Crimes Act before surrendering a second time to Ted Roach; and to the 1956 Special Congress of Unions to discuss the ACTU's handling of the Wharfies' Margins campaign, the organising of which was one of the culminations of Ted Roach's life-time's work as an Organiser.

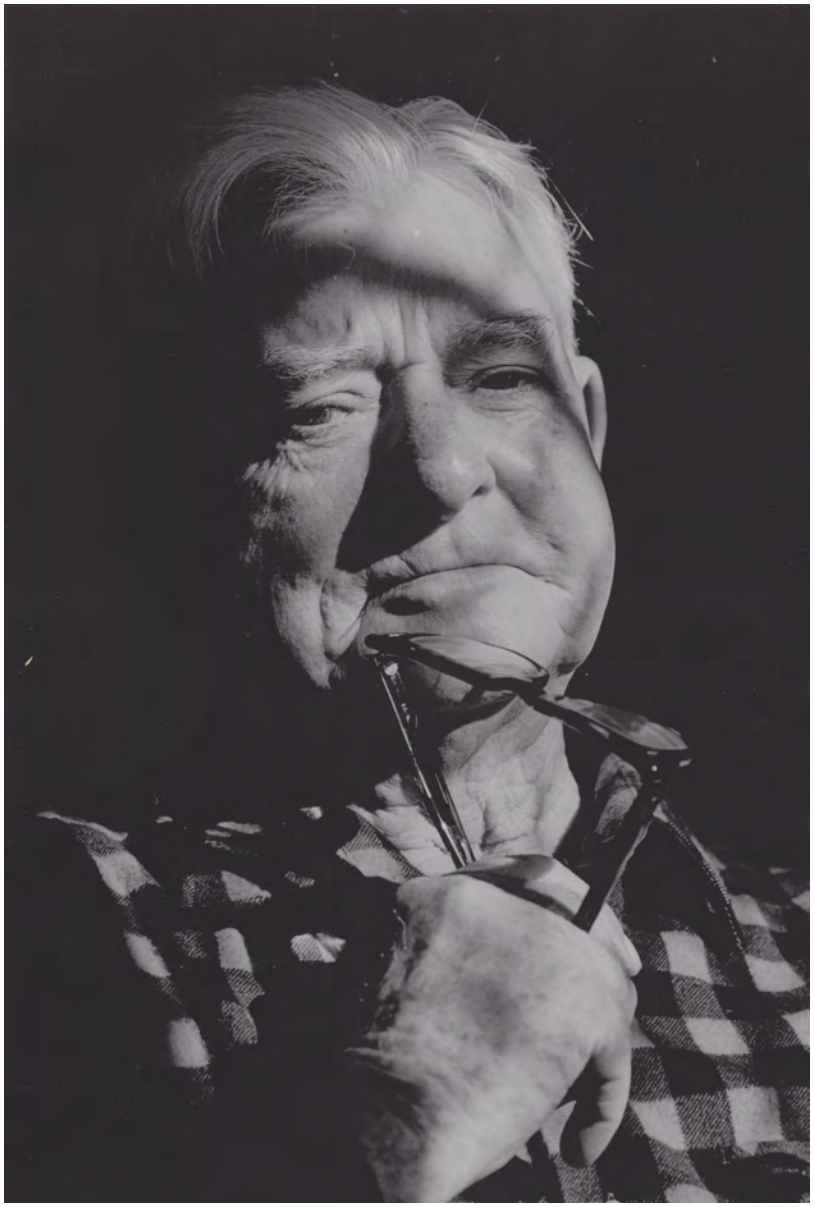
His laughter still echoed, as he knocked the top off one of his fridge-cold bottles of home brew: "They said you never drank, Ted", and his laughter would start again and go on echoing down the stoney aisles of Long Bay Gaol, Sydney; to the garlands of flowers and embracing welcomes of "Australians, Bagus! Bagus!"[2] in Indonesia; to the marathon relay with the comrade rickshaw pullers, taking him to chat with Chin Peng; through the windy, cold, gritty, dirty, boiling hot, and stifling wharves of 64 branches of the Waterside Workers Federation of Australia; and through the bagmen's camps under the Queensland bridges with Gerry Leonard, Alec McDonald, and Mick Healy, spilling his golden syrup in his swag, skidding under a wire fence away from the wallopers and remembering how, in Indonesia, he couldn't finish "this great big fish", looking at children harvesting single grains of rice spilled in the dust of the street, and, when remembering, hearing his voice break again and seeing his tears gleam, as he once again, pushed out the half-eaten fish to them.

I used to say:"Now we've done this; now we've done that; now, unless by a certain date, we receive some indication that you intend to avert the threat to industrial peace, and unless you give us a firm assurance of appropriate steps for a resolution of the dispute, then we will have to seriously consider whether or not we will hold meetings to discuss what action, if any, we may take in the future". Look, I don't know any other Trade Union official that used it, but I used it time and time again. And it was always successful. Always! (Laughs) Thinking back to when Ted and his Kembla Executive took the Authority away from the BHP and the Stevedores (1938-42), and the Union controlled the Port, and when Captain 'Poppa' Crompton saw Ted coming, he used to say: "What is it, Ted? You've got it", and Big Bill Brodie would be "giggling like a little girl" and saying: "Geez, Ted, isn't it easy to win these things". (Ted laughs)

And Inspector Roser's request when Bob Menzies visited Kembla (January 1939): *"Mr Roach could you and the Wharfies provide a body guard for Mr Menzies when he comes out of the hotel?" "Certainly, Inspector, certainly!"* And Communist Wharfies lined up, shoulder to shoulder, and without abuse, let Menzies through. Menzies, who became forever more and forever after 'Pig Iron Bob', and Wharfies and their mates re-told the story from 'The Hearth Furnace' at Kembla, to the 'Quarryman's' at Pyrmont, in popular pubs up and down the East Coast, from bleak Melbourne across to the sunny West. "And what did Roach say, then?" *"He said certainly, Inspector, certainly!",* and they laughed till the tears ran out of their eyes. And you, Ted, you were there, always there, laughing, beer in hand, dark eyes remembering – *"Certainly, Inspector, certainly!".* Ted laughs.

Teddy Roach, Comrade, Farewell!!!

Fig 41 Ted Roach in Retirement
Source: photo kindly provided to Author by Ted Roach



[1] to ‘coat’ or ‘put on the coat’: to show disapproval by putting thumb(s) in lapels, or by gripping waist-coat. The opposite was ‘dip the lid’: to lift, or touch the hat, or ‘castor’, to show approval.

[2] bagus (Indonesian): good, very good.

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Noel Butlin Archives Centre, Canberra[1]

Deposit E171 - Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia, Federal Office deposit 2

Including Branch correspondence, 1940-1949; correspondence with individuals, organisations, unions, shipping companies, Stevedoring Industry Commission, Arbitration Court and members of the Government, 1933-1949;

Relevant box **83** ("Indonesian Exile Report", investigation by A. Ely into Indonesian communist internees in Cowra P.O.W. Camp, NSW).

Deposit E211 - Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia, Federal Office deposit 3

Correspondence, memoranda and working papers, files relating arbitrations, appeal cases and associated legal transactions;

documents relating to the Committee of Inquiry appointed under the Stevedoring Industry Act of 1954 to inquire into matters relative to the stevedoring industry.

Relevant boxes include:

4 file 6B. "Indonesia Part II": Black ban on Dutch-Indonesian trade with Australia in support of Indonesian Independence.

34 file 40B. 'Incentive Payments'.

81 file 146B. 'No.2 Branches -recruitment and/or absorption'. Question of amalgamation of multiple state branches.

90 file 164B. 'Radnor' - dispute reloading etc.

121 file 216B. 'Equalization of earnings'. Circular.

129 file 305B. 'Overseas Visit – Ceylon 1958 – E. Roach'.

151 Waterside W.F. South Coast Branch. Personnel & industrial disputes.

154 Black bans on Dutch-Indonesian trade with Australia and support for the Indonesian Independence movement.

155 'Indonesia' Black ban on Dutch Indonesian trade with Australia in support of Indonesian Independence.

160 Notification to R.J. Skinner and V.C. Alford to appear before the Federal Council of the WWFA. James Edward Taylor v. E.C. Roach. Subpoena no.40 of 1951 and no.41 of 1951.

190 11 1949 Circulars to branches & Council 194911 • Subjects include matters of membership~ finance, administration, arbitration, production & work conditions.

Deposit E250 - Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia, Federal Office deposit 4

Office files, 1947-1961; 'A' files (matters involving arbitration or some form of legal industrial action), 1935-1963; ACTU files, 1954-1964; circulars to Branches and Councillors, 1950-1953.

Relevant boxes include:

63 Office files: ACTU, Maritime Worker, Federal Council, Shipping & Fuel, Shipping Companies.

64 Commonwealth Bureau of Census & Statistics, Trades & Labour Councils, Government Insurance, ASIB., J. Healy Personal, E. Roach Personal.

83-87 ACTU, J. Healy Personal, E. Roach Personal, Stevedoring Industry Board, Anonymous. Includes various circulars to Branches and Councillors.

97 Office files: Organisations, Overseas Trade Unions, Parliamentarians, Press Statements, E. Roach Personal, Shipping Companies, Shipping & Transport, Australian Trade Unions, WFTU., Port & Fishery.

112 Same as 97.

366-369 Circulars to Branches & Councillors.

Deposit N114 - Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia, Federal Office deposit 5 (Minutes of Federal Council and Biennial Conference)

N114-114-127 Minutes of Federal Council and Biennial Conference.

N114-122 Minutes of Federal Council.

N114-146-149 Federal Executive Minutes.

N114-177 Ballot files and rolls.

N114-180 Ballot file.

N114-190 Indonesia.

N114-1588 WWF - Rules - NSW - South Coast Branch (1916, 1955).

N114-1760 Duplicated manuscript entitled "Brief History of the Australian Waterfront and the Waterside Workers Unions" by Jim Healy.

N114-222 Brisbane - rotation of Hatches 1950. Correspondence.

Deposit N303 - Chullora Workshops Shop Committees deposit

Minutes, correspondence and papers for five committees at Chullora Railway Workshops.

Deposit Z240 - Amalgamated Metal Workers' Union, Queensland Branch deposit 2.

Box 53: Ipswich Committee minutes 1959 – 1968.

Deposit Z248 - Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia, Sydney Branch deposit

Z248-61 B Crimes Bill, Death of Jim Healy, Disputes, Election of General Secretary.

Z248-65 Hursey Dispute, Indonesian Independence Struggle, International Disputes, Inventory of Sydney Wharf Labourers' Union.

Z248-80-82 Various photographs.

Z248-93-95 Copies of Minutes of Federal Executive Meetings (known as Federal Committee of Management 1942-43).

Deposit Z429 - Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia, South Coast/Port Kembla Branch deposit

Relevant boxes:

28 Minutes South Coast Labour Council.

46 Subject files: including copies of minutes, correspondence, reports and agreements.

53 Branch Minutes 1931-1939, 1947-1958.

Deposit Z387 - Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia Branches deposit

Z387-4-11 Bowen Branch.

Z387-12-13 Urangan and Maryborough branches.

Z387-9 Bowen Branch correspondence (5 volumes).

Deposit Z438 - CSR Limited Hambledon Mill deposit

Relevant boxes:

1 Brisbane Office Correspondence: (Head Office to Hambledon Mill).

2 General Correspondence: (Hambledon Mill to Head Office).

Deposit P81 - C H Campbell collection

Correspondence and press cuttings related to Campbell's positions as an official in the Australia-India Association (1944 - 46), as Indonesian Trade Commissioner in Australia (1946 - 47), and his interests in the Indonesian independence movement. Also includes correspondence and printed material re conditions of Papuan seamen, operation of his companies, and photographs.

See also:

Deposit N235 - Ted Roach papers

http://archivescollection.anu.edu.au/index.php/ted-roach-papers

Australian Archives, Canberra

NAA: A11431, A367/1 PART 3 (Bar code: 6970103)

NAA: A432/85 1938/1301 (Bar code: 72689)

NAA: A432 1939/395 (Bar code: 72758)

NAA: A432 1951/11 (Bar code: 636488)

NAA: A432 1951/1334 (Bar code: 73854)

NAA: A432, 1951/150 (Bar code 636483)

NAA: A432, 1955/28 (Bar code: 541105)

NAA: A432, 1949/391 (Bar code: 73688)

NAA: A451, 50/6709 (Bar code: 209226)

NAA: A571, 1949/1006 (Bar code: 209061)

NAA: A571 1950/3453 (Bar code: 209062)

NAA: A705, 163/1/1401 (Bar code: 166708)

NAA: A816, 40/301/379 (Bar code: 170910)

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NAA: A6119, 1212 (Bar code 1115817) Roach, Edward Charles Volume 1

NAA: A6119, 1213 (Bar code: 1115823 Roach, Edward Charles Volume 2

NAA: A6119, 1214 (Bar code: 1115828) Roach, Edward Charles Volume 3

NAA: A6119, 1215 (Bar code: 1115831) Roach, Edward Charles Volume 4

NAA: A6119, 1714 (Bar code: 1367477) LOCKWOOD, Rupert Ernest - Volume 6

NAA: A6119, R/1/48 VOL 1 (Bar code 1115817) Roach, Edward Charles Volume 1

NAA: A6119, R/1/48 VOL 2 (Bar code: 1115823 Roach, Edward Charles Volume 2

NAA: A6119, R/1/48 VOL 3 (Bar code: 1115828) Roach, Edward Charles Volume 3

NAA: A6119, R/1/48 VOL 4 (Bar code: 1115831) Roach, Edward Charles Volume 4

NAA: A9790, 1434 PART 3 (Bar code 256904)

NAA: M1505, 1370 (Bar code: 749142)

NAA: M1509, 36 (Bar code: 748502)

NAA: SP186/1, 58445, Box 173 [parts 1, 2 and 3] (Bar code: 1037559)

NAA: SP1509/2, W8, Box 21 (Bar code: 1988831)

NAA: SP1509, SP1510, SP1515 and SP1525, located Archives (NSW) see "Stevedoring industry – Fact sheet 141" http://www.naa.gov.au/collection/fact-sheets/fs141.aspx

NAA: SP1714/1, N43926 (Bar code: 447618)

NAA: ST4433/1/1/0-148-1956 Not on-line - Location Brisbane. See Stevedoring Industry Fact Sheet link above.

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[1] **Editors' note**: Butlin Archive records are organised under Deposit names (e.g. N114 or E211). N114 includes material relevant to the Waterside Workers Federation of Australia. Within Deposits, individual collections are known as Items (e.g. N114/Item 146). Item 146 refers to the Federal Executive Minutes of the Waterside Workers Federation, abbreviated in this book to FEM. Similarly, Item N114/115 refers to the Federal Council Minutes of the same organisation, abbreviated as FCM, for May 1949. Page number references within an item may be to a folio number over the whole item, or to a page in minutes of a specific meeting.