

Queensland Sugar Ports : Labour and Technological Change

Darryl Hull

"The mass of humanity is subjected to the labor process for the purposes of those who control it rather than for any general purposes of 'humanity' as such. In thus acquiring concrete form, the control of humans over the labor process turns into its opposite and becomes the control of the labor process over the mass of humans. Machinery comes into the world not as the servant of 'humanity', but as the instrument of those to whom the accumulation of capital gives the ownership of the machines. The capacity of humans to control the labor process through machinery is seized upon by management from the beginning of capitalism as the prime means whereby production may be controlled not by the direct producer but by the owners and representatives of capital. Thus, in addition to its technical function of increasing the productivity of labor - which would be a mark of machinery under any social system - machinery also has in the capitalist system the function of divesting the mass of workers of their control over their own labor."

H. Braverman, Labor and Monopoly Capital,
Monthly Review Press, New York, 1974.

Following the publication of Braverman's important book, a considerable amount of research has been initiated on the effects of the intensification of the labour process in the 20th century. In particular, a number of writers have emphasised the consequences of a greater application of technology on the status of individual workers, and the complex and far-reaching links between corporation, state and technology.

This paper is an historical study of the introduction of major technological changes into the sugar ports of northern Queensland in the 1950s by the Colonial Sugar Refining Company Ltd (now CSR Ltd) and the effects of these changes on the workers employed in the industry who were members of the Waterside Workers' Federation. It also examines the role of the state in facilitating and encouraging such technological change through the introduction of certain crucial pieces of legislation.

The Early 1950s

Queensland is Australia's sugar 'belt'. For the last hundred years it has produced more than 95% of the national output, both for domestic usage and export; but it is the export trade which makes the industry vital in the eyes of those who control the national economy. In the post World War II period, there were a number of ports in Queensland which were the loading points for mill production of bagged sugar, including Bowen, Brisbane, Bundaberg, Cairns, Gladstone, Innisfail, Lucinda Point, Mackay, Maryborough, Port Douglas, Rockhampton, Townsville and Urangan.

Total employment fluctuated on a seasonal cycle, but a typical figure was about 5,000: of which Brisbane was responsible for some 2,500.¹ The Queensland membership of the W.W.F. thus represented approximately 20% of the national membership.²

The ports were mostly seasonal, which meant that the W.W.F. membership consisted largely of itinerant workers, who travelled between jobs in the South and jobs in the North during the lucrative sugar crushing period from July to January each year. These men were, by and large, the roughest and toughest of Australian waterfront workers, often working up to sixteen hours a day at the peak of the crushing season. They owed allegiance to no Company, town or State. Yet, they were almost all militant trade unionists. The W.W.F. branches in these areas were active, well-disciplined and well-financed. It could be said that the union provided a focus for their energies. When it came to stoppages or limitations, they were a solid group, and one which was astute enough to pick the right time and place to exercise industrial 'muscle'. Job control was a way of life rather than an industrial tactic.

In line with their principle of militant action regarding wages and conditions, these branches of the Federation consistently engaged in industrial action against the employers. As sugar movements during the end of vital 'crushing season' were vulnerable to the slightest delay, the W.W.F. took full advantage of this.³ It became a regular event to accumulate grievances and then present them to the employers at a strategic moment. It might have been excellent collective bargaining strategy, but to an industry desperate for continuity of production this tactic was viewed as blackmail.

In September 1954, after success in the elections, the Federal government took steps to draft amendments to the legislation relating to the organisation of the stevedoring industry. The Prime Minister anticipated legislation during the life of the current parliament.

The 'November Struggle' of 1954 is now part of the folk lore of the W.W.F. It has been termed the "Fourteen Days that Shook Menzies".⁴ A massive upsurge of stoppages, public relations exercises, debate and confrontation forced the federal government, even after it had enacted the necessary amendments, to back down. By early 1955 the amendments of the year before were themselves amended, to allow the W.W.F. to continue to recruit wharf labour. However, while the W.W.F. was jubilant, other forces were coming into play. The employers were increasingly concerned over the inability of their own, and the Government's, measures to control the waterfront. The problems of efficiency, restrictive practices, and particularly the incidence of 'job control' were growing. Even the Australian Stevedoring Industry Bureau (A.S.I.B.) was moved to press the Minister for Labour to take action on behalf of the hapless employers.⁵

C.S.R. and Bulk Installations

While the Government reflected, the employers were doing their homework. C.S.R. in particular was ready to take drastic action. It was concerned with the increase in the freight rates for shipping raw sugar interstate from Queensland to the capital cities (where the refineries were located). While the matter was being studied, and installations were designed and built, freight rates continued to rise. The magnitude of the increases can be seen in the freight rate for bagged raw sugar from Townsville to Sydney, which rose from just over 19 shillings per ton in 1939 to 122 shillings in 1956, a sixfold increase. C.S.R. analysis of the

situation showed that this abnormal increase was due mainly to the cost of loading and unloading bagged sugar by waterside workers, and the slow turn around of ships resulting from the reduced effective loading rates per day obtainable from waterside workers.

The Company undertook several years of study of the possible ways of reducing the cost and improving the efficiency of the whole operation, from the mills in the cane districts to capital city refineries. They examined methods used on many different cargoes in various ports of the world. It was eventually decided that major gains in efficiency could be obtained if the ships could be loaded and unloaded by mechanical means without bagging the sugar. This meant that the sugar could be transported in loose bulk, thus eliminating the delays associated with the W.W.F. This decision was taken in 1953 or 1954, and the first bulk installation was operating by 1955. C.S.R. was convinced that this was a way of holding costs down:

Subsidiary gain was expected from the elimination of the bag, but, the greatest gains, justifying the heavy capital expense of the loading and unloading installations was expected to come from the waterfront and from the speedy turn around of the ships.⁶

The first instalment of the general plan was the bulk unloading installation at Pyrmont refinery, Sydney, which was in operation by May 1955. The unloading was carried out by special shore based grabs and cranes of an advanced design. They were able to empty the ships, except for about 100 tons of raw sugar, without employment of any workers on the ship. The capital cost of the installation and the work associated with it at Pyrmont refinery was about £A800,000 (\$A1,600,000). It was, in the view of C.S.R. 'working most effectively'.⁷ The most important feature in the 'success' of unloading at Pyrmont Refinery was that no waterside workers, casual sugar workers, or casual carters were employed. Work commenced immediately the ship arrived and continued for 24 hours a day, weekends as well as weekdays, until discharge was complete.

Bulk sugar was unloaded at the Yarraville Refinery in Melbourne by grabs on ships' gear, but this was regarded only as an intermediate stage of development. Waterside workers were engaged in driving the winches, trimming the sugar during unloading operations and in cleaning out the holds. The rate of unloading at Yarraville continued to be about the same as bagged sugar. The installation of fast unloading shore based equipment for Yarraville was under consideration. If this were to occur, C.S.R. hoped to avoid using W.W.F. members on the equipment.⁸

By 1956, bulk loading installations were being constructed for the North Queensland ports of Mackay and Lucinda at an estimated cost of £A1,250,000 (\$A2,500,000) in each case. These installations would be able to load ships within 24 hours. Similar installations were being planned for other Queensland ports and eventually the whole industry was planned to be on a bulk basis. The Mackay installation was expected to be ready to commence the bulk loading of ships late in 1957 and Lucinda, late in 1958 or 1959.

The bulk loading terminals were designed and planned to operate with the minimum number of men. They would preferably be permanent employees of the operating sugar industry organisation. They were to be drawn from various unions and work under awards appropriate to the nature of the work required, eg. engine drivers, electricians, fitters and maintenance men, plant attendants, etc:

There will be no work requiring the services of waterside workers, however, possibly one man per ship may be required to guide operations by signals from a position in the hold. Under the present legislation it is uncertain whether this employee need not be a member of the W.W.F.⁹

C.S.R. were adamant that the W.W.F. should be eliminated totally from the industry:

It will be obvious that with the employment of even one man who is a member of the W.W.F., an admitted disputatious union, the whole operations would be brought to a standstill by his ceasing working or by the sympathetic action that would be called for by the Seamen's Union in the event of any attempt to replace him or carry on without him. Long experience, including direct experience of W.W.F. labour, as owners of 3 vessels, as shippers and consignees, shipping and receiving over our own and other wharves and experience as direct employers of W.W.F. labour convinces us that continuity of work, reasonable effort, quick, turn-around of vessels and freedom of 'job control' in the shape of controlled rates and periods of works, time of starting, etc. cannot be expected from W.W.F. labour even if new law and administration do bring about some improvement.

... It will be seen therefore, how essential it is for the efficient operation of these installations that there should not be one waterside worker employed in connection with them. This would free the installation from the inherent, and to some extent unavoidably complicated procedures which are associated with the engagement and employment of casual workers, even if assisted by a bureaux system.¹⁰

The 1956 Stevedoring Act

By late 1955, the Federal government was prepared to pass legislation to further curb the W.W.F. The Stevedoring Act of 1956 was intended to do just that. The Act was introduced as part of an overall campaign to restrict the W.W.F. and bring about 'stability' in the stevedoring industry, and also to strengthen the ASIB which would become the Australian Stevedoring Industry Authority (A.S.I.A.) - in matters of recruitment and discipline.

In the first draft to the Bill, a routine 'interpretation' section, Section 7, was included. It set out in some detail the definitions of items in the Act's jurisdiction such as "employer", "register of waterside workers", "stevedoring operations", and particularly "waterside worker". In early 1956, the original draft read:

'waterside worker' means a person who accepts or offers to accept, employment for work in the loading or unloading of cargo into or from ships, and includes a person who is a member, or has applied for membership, of a Union or a person registered as a waterside worker under Part 5 of the National Security (Shipping Co-ordination) Regulations immediately before the commencement of the Stevedoring Industry Act 1947 who accepts, or offers to accept, employment for work in ...¹¹

members of the W.W.F.

When the Bill was read for the first time in the House of Representatives in May, a decision was made to add two further sub-clauses to the exemptions in Section 7:

- m) persons employed, directly or indirectly, at a port or in connection with stevedoring operations which consist of the loading or unloading, into or from ships, of loose bulk cargo by means of equipment based on the shore, not being persons employed in operations of a kind which before the commencement of this Act, were ordinarily performed in connection with the use of such equipment by members of a Union: or
- n) persons in the regular employment of a person engaged in an industrial undertaking, being persons whose duties include the performance of stevedoring operations in connection with that undertaking.¹²

Sub-clauses (m) and (n) were 'hasty' additions to a Bill which was itself seen by those who opposed it as an overt challenge to the power of the W.W.F.

First mention of sub-clauses (m) and (n) came in March 1956, when C.S.R. made it formally known to the Minister that it was concerned with the relationship between the proposed legislation and the planned multi-million dollar bulk loading port expansions in Queensland sugar ports.¹³ C.S.R. requested that the Minister ensure that the legislation did not interfere with the use of permanent C.S.R. employees, not members of the W.W.F., at their bulk loading installations. They explained that the first bulk raw sugar facility at Mackay was expected to become operational in late 1957, and the one at Lucinda, in 1958 or 1959. It was quite plainly stated that a basic assumption underlying such heavy capital expenditure was the belief that the sugar terminals would be manned by persons other than members of the W.W.F. This, in capital terms, meant that C.S.R. was prepared to spend £3,000,000 (\$A6,000,000) to remove the W.W.F. from the industry.

In early April, the situation became more complex, when the large steel producing company, Broken Hill Proprietary Co. Ltd (B.H.P.) contacted the Minister, through the Department of Labour. The General Manager of B.H.P. pointed out that permanent employees of the company, not members of the W.W.F., were employed at many of the port facilities of his organisation. Newcastle and Port Kembla were steel ports, and limestone was loaded in the port at Whyalla.¹⁴ Reference was made by B.H.P. to possible changes in the Act with respect of bulk handling, and they hoped that this would also apply to the current exempt operations, "as long as the last stage is not worse than the first".¹⁵ The Department of Labour agreed, and recommended to all concerned that it might be possible to include specific provisions in the new legislation to cover the B.H.P. problems.

Later in April, B.H.P. wrote to the Department and outlined at length the position as they saw it.¹⁶ They referred to previous representations from other shipping organisations to the Minister, and supported them. They concluded by suggesting the addition of a paragraph to current Section 6(1) as follows:

- m) employees of employers who, at the commencement of this Act, are exempted under relevant awards in respect of the loading and discharging of bulk cargoes.¹⁷

By May, when the Bill was to be introduced, these requests had been incorporated into the proposed legislation. While the companies had strong reasons for placing the requests before the Government, it is doubtful as to whether the government felt moved to accept them for simple economic efficiency reasons, or understood the broader implications of the additions.

Debate in Parliament

Following its tabling in the House of Representatives on 29 May 1956, the Bill aroused a storm of protest and debate. The government was accused of union 'bashing' and conspiracy by the Opposition; and for their part, the government continually raised the fear of Communism to ridicule Opposition speakers.

When Dr. Evatt, the Leader of the Australian Labor Party Opposition in the House, rose to give his Second Reading speech, he was confronted part way through by the Liberal Party Member for McKellar (Mr. Wentworth) on a Point of Order:

... I rise to order. I am wondering whether the right honourable gentleman is quite in order in speaking to this Bill. The House will recall that some time ago he took money as a paid advocate for the W.W.F. to defend the Communists in that federation ... (38) he is speaking here holding a brief for the Communist paymaster.¹⁸

The Speaker ruled the Member as having no point of order, but this set the tone of the debate.

The Leader of the Opposition put to the Minister (in Committee) questions about sub-clauses (m) and (n).

I should like the Minister to make clear what is intended by that paragraph (m). From what ports and from what type of persons is the cover of the legislation to be withdrawn? To what extent will the cover be withdrawn? To what extent will persons covered by the existing legislation be excluded from cover by this legislation?¹⁹

As to sub-clause (n) Dr. Evatt said:

This is an enormously wide power.... To whom does the Minister intend that this exemption shall apply?²⁰

The Minister from the outset had claimed that sub-clauses (m) and (n) were the only real changes to current coverage by the W.W.F. and "it is not a very big change ...".²¹

During the debate in Committee, on sub-clauses (m) and (n), the Opposition pursued relentlessly what had become a weak point in the Minister's Bill. The Minister would not, (or could not) specify who was to be covered by these provisions.²² In a devastating attack, the A.L.P. Member for Blaxland, Mr. E. James Harrison, accused the government of attempting to remove W.W.F. coverage of the sugar ports under the guise of a subterfuge.²³ He expressed the belief that the government was dealing with a dangerous principle, and one which had no place in the legislation. If new installations were opened up, and the government legitimised the exclusion of established unions by an Act of Parliament, this might have wider repercussions across industry. Did it mean (he asked) that any automation, or new equipment in any industry could be manned and covered by

unions other than the established one(s)? This would cut across industrial arbitration, and create many more disputes than it would resolve. The government, he believed, should allow the established industrial authorities to determine the issue.

As the debate progressed to its conclusion, government speakers attempted to refute the mounting concern that these clauses would exclude the W.W.F. from the sugar ports of Northern Queensland, and it was a Queensland member of the Government who made the statement:

The sugar industry in Queensland, and those who will be in charge of the new equipment, will not desire to prevent members of the Waterside Workers Federation from doing work in connection with the new plant if suitable work is available for them, and provided they are prepared to take permanent work.²⁴

The clauses were passed through the House of Representatives with a vote on party lines.

Effects of Technological Change

While this legislative cover provided some advantages for C.S.R., it was ultimately the technology of bulk handling which overwhelmed the W.W.F. opposition. The sheer size of the change gave no opportunity for organised resistance. Table 1 demonstrates the decline in membership of the W.W.F. in the face of the changes.

Such ports as Lucinda Point, Innisfail, Port Douglas and Urangan carried few W.W.F. members, and were the first places to be by-passed when bulk terminals were built. Larger ports, like Bowen, found themselves relegated to "B" class status as terminals at Townsville, Mackay and New Bundaberg came into operation.²⁵ Where terminals were built in existing ports, those ports ceased to employ Federation labour. Thus were Innisfail and Lucinda Point removed from the Australian Stevedoring Industry Authority's jurisdiction.²⁶ Mackay lost over 100 Federation members. Moves to assist the workers in these ports were confined largely to Queensland branch agitation, along with local Trades and Labour Council support. It was not until 1959 that the Federal Council of the Federation took a long, hard look at the situation and adopted an overall policy stand of defending the union's coverage.²⁷

The years from 1957 to 1964 read like the winding down of clockwork industry. Bulk loading was introduced in Mackay during August 1957, 137 W.W.F. members and some 163 other workers were displaced from Lucinda Point. A call went out for community assistance.²⁸ It became obvious early in 1958 that sugar from Bundaberg, Childers and Maryborough would go through a new bulk port, and not Urangan. A call for action went out from Queensland, to Federal Council of the Federation.²⁹

By the middle of 1958 the trend was more obvious. Cairns was expected to load 182,500 tons of sugar in 1958, as opposed to 169,200 tons in 1957. Mossman sugar would go to the bulk terminal in Cairns instead of Port Douglas "which monopolist policy threatens to turn into a ghost town".³⁰ Townsville was losing sugar to the bulk terminal at Lucinda Point; the 1957 output of 194,500 tons was expected to drop to 148,500 tons. Prosperine sugar was to by-pass Bowen, to go through Mackay. Bowen would drop from 115,100 tons (1957) to 71,000 tons (1958). Estimates for Urangan in 1958 saw a loss to New Bundaberg of 31,000 tons in one

Table 1: Decline in Employment - Queensland Ports 1957-1965

	1957		1959		1961		1963		1965		Loss of Employment At end of 1965 from 1957 in sugar ports	
	Quota	Reg.	Quota	Reg.	Quota	Reg.	Quota	Reg.	Quota	Reg.	Quota	Reg.
Bowen	180	191	90	100	90	64	60	55	60	66	-120	-125
Brisbane	2,540	2,542	1,750	2,226	1,750	2,174	1,650	2,046	2,215	2,188		
Bundaberg	-	-	25	10	25	19	25	12	25	16		
Cairns	700	690	700	695	500	529	550	473	275	316	-425	-374
Gladstone	100	122	80	102	80	77	80	85	80	74		
Innisfail	100	83	100	77	*						-100	- 83
Lucinda Pt.	95	137	*								-95	-137
Mackay	80	224	80	98	80	95	80	76	80	92		-132
Maryborough	30	28	20	19	20	20	20	16	20	15	-10	-13
Pt. Douglas	17	26	*								-17	-26
Rockhampton	230	300	200	253	180	206	160	164	160	147	-70	-153
Townsville	750	732	500	607	500	528	450	452	480	461	-270	-271
Thursday Is.	16	15	16	16	16	17	16	15	16	12		
Urangan	70	76	70	38	70	23	*				-70	-76
Total Loss, Sugar Ports 1957-65:											<u>1,177</u>	<u>1,390</u>
											Quota	Actual Loss

Source: A.S.I.A. Reports.

* indicates closed to W.W.F.

year, from a 1957 total of 76,000 tons. In one season, manual ports lost about 109,000 tons to bulk handling (678,000 tons down to 569,000 tons). This did not include the increased tonnage in 1958 which went direct to the bulk ports of Mackay, Lucinda Point and New Bundaberg.

The strategy paid off handsomely for C.S.R. however, and net profits in 1957-1958 were reported as £A2,335,058 (\$A4,370,116) an increase of 18.4% over the previous year. The W.W.F. argued (without success) that:

On net profit alone, C.S.R. has sufficient riches not to notice compensation payments to workers displaced by bulk handling.... C.S.R. could pay compensation, transport and rehousing expenses to workers displaced by bulk sugar handling at Mackay, Lucinda Point and other centres without reducing the dividend.³¹

1959 saw the decline continue. Bowen was reduced to "B" Class port status and the remaining W.W.F. members there lost their attendance money benefits.³² Townsville and Innisfail were also expected to cease as branches. At this point the Federal Council of the W.W.F. started to respond. At the 1959 Council, Healy reported that the Federation had lost 1,000 jobs in Queensland due to bulk sugar. The demand was made for a mechanization 'fund' to offset the losses.³³

In early 1960, Innisfail was closed as a port³⁴ and C.S.R. profits for 1958-1959 were up again. This set the pattern of events. Another port would close, the W.W.F. would call for either compensation or the use of more W.W.F. labour at bulk ports, and C.S.R. profits would rise still higher.³⁵ This continued until the final bulk terminal in Cairns came 'on line' late in 1964.³⁶

The attitude of the W.W.F. to this series of events ranged from calls for resistance:

... 'No mechanisation with consultation and compensation' ... the immediate way is to fight for as much of the work on the wharf as possible, and to protect and retain the conditions that we now hold ...³⁷

to outright condemnations:

... automation in the hands of the capitalists is used purely for reasons of increasing profits and not to improve the general well being of the workers.³⁸

... Socialism of course, is the ultimate answer.... Automation should alleviate the burden of manual labour and can alleviate the plight of the workers.³⁹

By 1959, the Federal Council of the W.W.F. were considering the issues to be much more widespread than the incidents in North Queensland. Secretary Healy raised the spectre of large-scale demarcation disputes, and called for amalgamations between unions:

... In my opinion the time is drawing near when the only way of setting these issues will be by some closer association with or the amalgamation of the unions concerned ...⁴⁰

He meant the Transport Workers Union (T.W.U.) and the W.W.F.⁴¹

Secretary Healy also spoke to Federal Council in 1959 about the inevitability of greater permanent employment and the prospects of a shorter working week:

... not by a couple of hours per day, but by at least ten hours per week ...⁴²

Yet despite this foresight, the next few years brought the W.W.F. into an environment which the leadership confronted technological change in the time honoured fashion of 'making a deal' with employers, rather than with struggle on the job to keep employment.

Conclusions: Job Control and the Waterfront

This is the fundamental issue which deserves special mention. The W.W.F. discovered earlier than most unions in Australia that the real strength of an organisation of labour lies in its ability to control the workplace. The pace of work, the manning levels, the giving of orders could be taken away from the 'boss'. Once the men on the job were solid, militant and secure in their employment, all things were possible. The story is told by one observer of his personal experience with job control by the W.W.F. During World War II Captain J. Gaby was an industrial officer for the Overseas Shipping Representatives Association (O.S.R.A.). One day he was called to a meeting of frantic members. The W.W.F. had boarded a vessel at the beginning of shift and determined among themselves who was going to unload what cargo, and at which hatch. When the supervisors sacked the men, the wharfies then refused to accept dismissal and worked under their own union delegate's supervision. The O.S.R.A. could think of nothing to do. A call for police intervention was rejected, and the meeting referred the matter back to the wharf management to 'do the best they could with it':

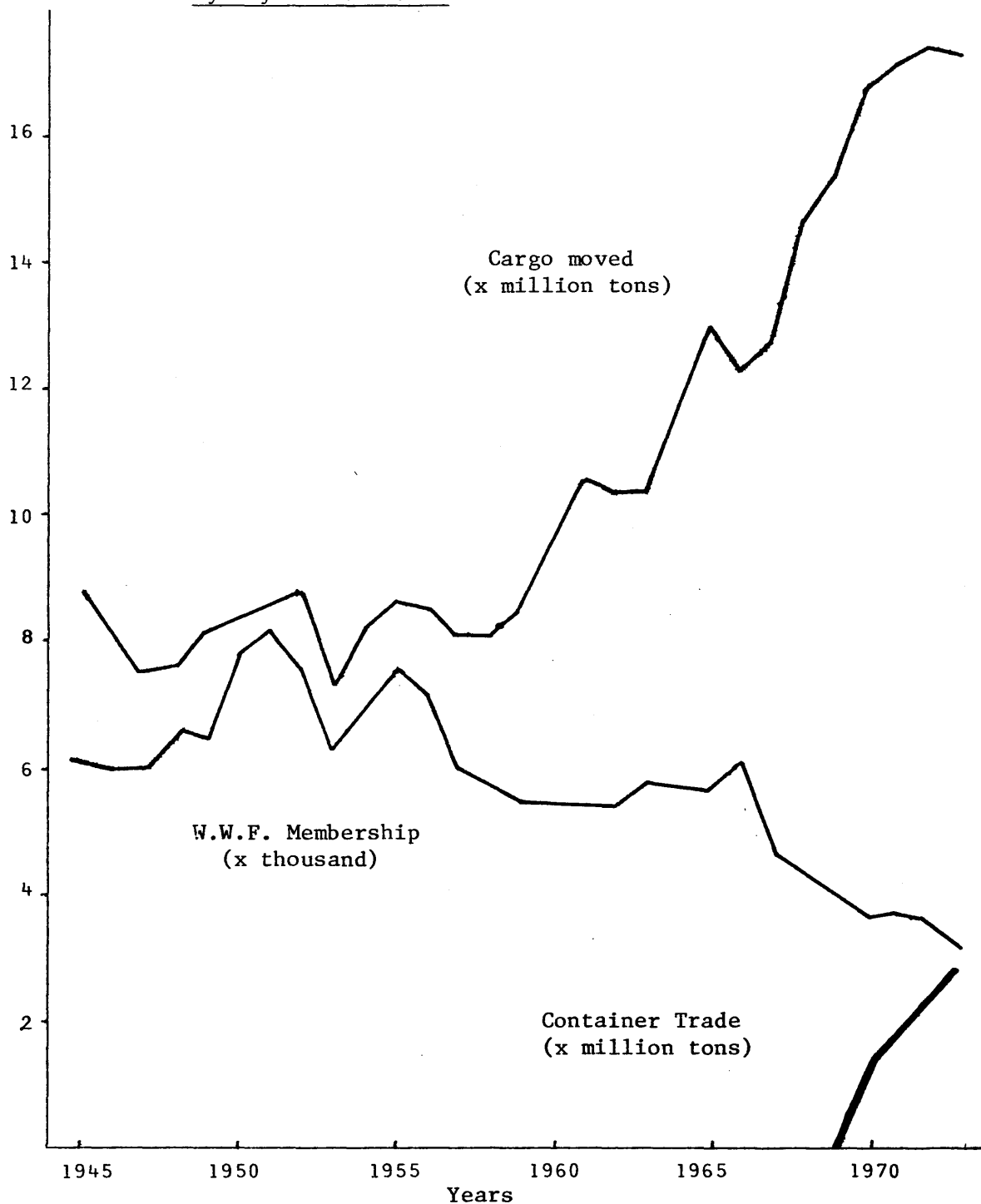
Back to the harassed wharf manager who was in the firing line all the time. It was a tricky one and well thought-out, but only one of the many situations that was to prove Big Jim's (Jim Healy) summing up of his position, "They're all generals in a soldierless army".⁴³

The union was demonstrating that the whiphand was theirs and the employers could no longer defeat this fundamental control over the means of production. The traditional economic control over levels of wages and job security was no longer adequate to do the job. This was especially so when Awards of the Arbitration system gave tenure and good minimum wages.

In North Queensland the more itinerant (but more militant) port workers, had taken strong job control since the war. They dictated terms to the employers before and during the loading of bagged sugar. At other ports during World War II, spontaneous job control as an industrial tactic had proved most successful.⁴⁴ However, it was not until the branches started to hold regular Job Delegates Conventions, that any overall strategy was developed.⁴⁵ At these conferences, job delegates could decide branch policy.

Apart from the obvious advantages, the Federation encouraged this 'grassroots' movement in order to create a flexible yet strong union. In 1955, after the November Struggle of the previous year, the Sydney Branch Secretary observed:

Figure 1: Total Cargo, Port of Sydney 1945-73, and Membership Sydney Branch W.W.F.



Source: M.S.B. Annual Reports and W.W.F. Library (Sydney Branch).

This period of our Union history (was) the most difficult ever. It was an enormous experience for our members ... they fought courageously and well. It was not possible to handle such a complex situation by orthodox methods of leadership. It called for something new. It required initiative in depth, and it was in this period that Job Committee Organisation was formed. Without it the Federation would have suffered serious defeat.⁴⁶

By the middle 1950s it had also become obvious to the employers that these tactics could not be defeated in the traditional industrial arena. There would not be a return to the days when economic incentives could force men to work to the rule of the foreman. The institutional channel for debate - the arbitration system - had shown that it could not contain the wages question to the satisfaction of the employers.

Labour costs as a percentage of total costs were rising dramatically. There had to be an alternative solution, and technological change was sought to provide that solution. By removing the men, the employers believed they might regain control of the waterfront.

This tactic was continued by the employers over the issue of 'containerisation' on the international shipping routes. The graph illustrates the success of that part of the employers' tactics, and it is indisputable that the decline in employment has been due to the widescale introduction of technological change: containerisation, bulk loading, palletisation and roll-on/roll-off ships.

The response of the W.W.F. was determined by the attitude of the new Federal executive. After Jim Healy's death in 1961, the Communist Party influence was replaced by an A.L.P. group led by the new Federal Secretary, C. Fitzgibbon. The new executive decided to get the largest concessions possible from employers as they introduced technological change, in terms of hours, conditions and earnings for those members left on the waterfront. The employers were prepared to pay handsomely for the jobs they replaced with containerisation.

Thus the W.W.F. emerged into the sixties and seventies as a "partner" in technological change. The "job control" issues of the fifties were replaced by disputes over superannuation schemes and redundancy schemes.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Annual Report of the Australian Stevedoring Industry Authority (Sydney: A.S.I.A., 30 June 1957) p. 55.
- 2 National membership of the W.W.F. in 1957 was approximately 26,000.
- 3 Sugar suffers a rapid decline in quality unless it is quickly shipped from the crushing mills to refineries. The major refineries for Queensland were two and three thousand miles away in Sydney and Melbourne.
- 4 Williams, The Years of Big Jim, Lone Hand Press, Perth 1975, pp. 133-141.
- 5 Memo, from A.S.I.B., 15 February 1956, Australian Department of Industrial Relations Archives, Melbourne, 69/1389.

- 6 C.S.R. Ltd., submission to Minister, 28 March 1956, Australian Department of Industrial Relations Archives, Melbourne: SC56/14.
- 7 Ibid., p. 2.
- 8 Ibid., p. 6.
- 9 Ibid., p. 9.
- 10 Ibid., p. 12.
- 11 The original draft of this Bill is contained in the Australian Department of Industrial Relations Archives, Melbourne: SC56/14.
- 12 Section 7 of the Stevedoring Industry Act of 1956, Commonwealth of Australia.
- 13 Memo. from C.S.R. Ltd., 28 March 1956, Australian Department of Industrial Relations Archives, Melbourne: SC56/14.
- 14 Minute, 5 April 1956, Australian Department of Industrial Relations Archives, Melbourne: SC56/14.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Memo. from B.H.P. Ltd., 17 April 1956, Australian Department of Industrial Relations Archives, Melbourne: SC56/14.
- 17 Ibid., p. 2.
- 18 Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, Proceedings in the House of Representatives, 5 June 1956, p. 2771.
- 19 Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, Proceedings in the House of Representatives, 8 June 1956, p. 3031.
- 20 Ibid., p. 3032.
- 21 Ibid., p. 3031.
- 22 Ibid., p. 3037.
- 23 Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, Proceedings in the House of Representatives, 12 June 1956, p. 3053.
- 24 Ibid., p. 3059.
- 25 Maritime Worker (Sydney), 24 March 1959.
- 26 Annual Report of the Australian Stevedoring Industry Authority (Sydney: A.S.I.A., 30 June 1958).
- 27 Maritime Worker (Sydney), 15 September 1959.
- 28 Ibid., 11 February 1958.

- 29 Ibid., 11 February 1958.
- 30 Ibid., 6 May 1958.
- 31 Ibid., 5 May 1958.
- 32 Ibid., 24 March 1959.
- 33 Ibid., 15 September 1959.
- 34 Ibid., 22 February 1960.
- 35 Ibid., 7 March 1960; 7 March 1962; 4 April 1962; 18 July 1962; 10 October 1962; 17 July 1963; 3 July 1963; 17 June 1964; 28 October 1964.
- 36 Ibid., 28 October 1964.
- 37 Ibid., 30 September 1958.
- 38 Ibid., 29 January 1959.
- 39 Ibid., 7 April 1959.
- 40 Ibid., 15 September 1959.
- 41 Ibid., 15 September 1969.
- 42 Ibid., 15 September 1959.
- 43 Gaby, J. The Restless Waterfront, Antipodian Publishers, Sydney, 1974, pp. 197-198.
- 44 Ibid.
- 45 These regular conferences started late in 1953.
- 46 Branch Secretary Nelson, in his yearly address to the Branch. Sydney Branch information sheet, 1955, (W.W.F.).

Copyright of Full Text rests with the original copyright owner and, except as permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, copying this copyright material is prohibited without the permission of the owner or its exclusive licensee or agent or by way of a license from Copyright Agency Limited. For information about such licences contact Copyright Agency Limited on (02) 93947600 (ph) or (02) 93947601 (fax)