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A paper for the people? : The Sunday Times 1897-1905

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A PAPER FOR THE PEOPLE?: THE *SUNDAY TIMES* 1897- 1905.

By Karen Byers

A dissertation submitted as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Bachelor of Arts (History) - Honours

Edith Cowan University

1993

Date of Submission: 29th October, 1993

Declaration

I certify that this dissertation does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

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Introduction

Those infamous publications...inflamm[e] [working people's] passions and awaken their selfishness, contrasting their present condition with what they contend to be their future condition - a condition incompatible with human nature, and with those immutable laws which Providence has established for the regulation of civil society.¹

The *Sunday Times* was born of regional and mining dissent and survived a precarious infancy in conservative Perth. Established in December, 1897, under the banner of "A Journal for the People," (later "A Paper for the People") it announced both its political and journalistic stance as an opposition newspaper. Unlike its nineteenth century anti-establishment predecessors, the *Sunday Times* endured because of the significant and permanent demographic changes in Western Australia commencing in the 1890's and the consequent shifts in the origin and distribution of wealth. The paper later published metropolitan and goldfields editions and its circulation also extended to other parts of the State.

The paper's political and journalistic opposition and its support of reform reflected divergent outlooks in Western Australian society at the end of the nineteenth century. Branded a radical publication by conservatives, the *Sunday Times* also portrayed the nature of some Western Australians' political and literary radicalism. Just as the radical movement in England was changing direction, so too, did Western Australian radicalism view the interaction between governed and government from a different perspective. The paper's style of journalism, particularly after 1901, was a rejection of the cultural values of the political elite. This "literary journalism"², with its simple parochial jingles, was contrary to the acceptance of British literature as the cultural

1. Dr Philimore, M.P. to the House of Commons, 1819, quoted in Curran, J and Seaton, J. *Power Without Responsibility. The press and broadcasting in Britain*, (3rd ed.), (London: Routledge, 1988), p. 20.

2. Grant, D. 'Literary Journalism,' in Bennett, B. (ed.). *The Literature of Western Australia*, (Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press, 1979), p.272.

yardstick. It added a new dimension to the opposition press in presenting an alternative view of issues and personalities.

From 1829, groups of Western Australians had striven to break the shackles of their isolation and exclusion from the world, the eastern colonies and each other, through journalism. The newspaper world reflected a divisive society dominated by a landed and commercial clique who controlled the access to decision-making and the press. Those newspaper voices who disagreed with this inequitable structure emanated from middle class, convicts and 'othersiders' who felt excluded from the corridors of the Legislative Council and therefore isolated in their own community. The dissident press avoided Perth, the focus of the Establishment. Early Fremantle manuscripts and journals were supplanted by Geraldton publications and then a flurry of Murchison and eastern goldfields' newspapers which expressed their geographical isolation and dissatisfaction with the coastal order. But the forces of conservatism and their own idiosyncrasies were overwhelming and most of the pre-1890's newspapers were ephemeral publications which lived and died by the sword of dissent.

All of the nineteenth century newspapers, regardless of patronage, struggled to survive as commercial enterprises. A very slow population growth, to only 48,502 by 1890, limited the market for sales and advertising.³ The precursor of *The West Australian*, Charles Macfaull's *The Perth Gazette and Western Australian Journal*, of 1833, was the only early publication to survive the nineteenth century. By accepting the contract for government notices and leasing Governor Stirling's Stanhope printer, Macfaull was identified with the Establishment and at least a neutral editorial position.⁴ This explicit publishing and financial dependence on the authorities was reinforced by a more covert support from the landed gentry who could afford to purchase newspapers and advertise. Despite W.K. Shenton's 1848 declaration that in future, "hereafter in our power to be truly independent which hitherto...we can scarcely call on the public to believe it has

3. Appleyard, R.T. 'Western Australia: Economic and Demographic Growth 1850-1914,' in Stannage, C.T. (ed.). *A New History of Western Australia*, (Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press, 1981), p.235.

4. *The West Australian*, 5.1.1933, p.3.

been."⁵ the paper could not shake off its image as a medium for Establishment propaganda, the "government mouthpiece."⁶

Early opposition to the nineteenth century order in Western Australia was expressed in newspapers which advocated the extension of voting rights and responsible government in the interests of the working classes. In the absence of these reforms before 1890, critical journals concentrated on revealing the inequity and inefficiency of a representation limited to delegates of a sectional interest. Capt W.T. Graham, in his manuscript *The Western Australia*, set the tone of nineteenth century opposition, "Public men, as well as Public measures...are open to the comments of Public writers...the best service we can do is to expose abuses."⁷ Such critical journalism was unlikely to attract the patronage of the ruling clique. As the vitriol became more extreme, so did the libel cases become more frequent. Libel actions were inevitable as the opposition press was concerned with the conduct of individuals in society. Nairn Clark's scathing vilification of Macfaull and the authorities in his *Swan River Guardian* from 1836 to 1838 exhausted the paper's finances and prompted the first libel Act in 1837, a modification of Lord Sidmouth's Six Acts of 1819.⁸ The Western Australian hierarchy would no longer tolerate such defiance and abuse as, "we tell him [Governor Stirling] that his policy has been a CURSE to this Colony.....Surrounded by a horde of fawning parasites."⁹

Thereafter, the opposition press moderated its demands and style. Memories of the *Swan River Guardian* and "the death of the free press in Western Australia in 1838"¹⁰ blunted aggressive journalism from 1840 to the 1880's. In the 1860's and 1870's, James Roe, James Pearce and William Beresford, former forgers and convicts, published the *Fremantle Herald*, a newspaper which championed the workingmen's cause through calls for self-government. Still, the *Perth Gazette* was viewed as the public face of

5. *Ibid.*

6. Anderson, M. and Gill, A. 'The history of the *Swan River Guardian*, or, the death of the free press in Western Australia in 1838,' *The Push From the Bush*, No. 10, (September, 1981), p. 4.

7. *The Western Australian*, 29.10.1831, p.2.

8. Anderson and Gill, *op. cit.*, p.15.

9. *Swan River Guardian*, 1.12.1836, p.35, Anderson and Gill, *op. cit.*, p.4.

10. Anderson and Gill, *op. cit.*, p.4.

conservatism, "it should henceforth...run as follows - edited and published at the office of the Colonial Secretary." ¹¹

A tradition of newspaper opposition to the existing social order had been established by the 1880's. Although the 1890's gold-seeking immigrants are credited with an escalation of political and journalistic dissent, the *Geraldton Express* was the local vanguard of the revival of critical journalism. By 1890, John Drew, the editor, and Kenny were the proprietors.¹² They maintained the long established opposition tactics of fierce criticism of the perceived incompetence and corruption of public officials in the Forrest, Leake, James and Daglish Ministries. Drew and Kenny's imprisonment for libel in 1894 became renowned as the "Free Press Incident," and Drew evoked echoes of Nairn Clark in his response to Attorney-General Burt, "The *Express* ...is the scourge of injustice, the scourge of inhumanity, the scourge of oppression of the poor and of public robbers of every degree."¹³

The tradition of nineteenth century newspaper opposition was taken up by many of the 37 newspapers which proliferated on the eastern goldfields in the 1890's. Although many did not survive into the twentieth century, a population increase to 179,967 by 1900 did provide a wider reading market.¹⁴ Expansion of business activity also enabled the regional newspapers to attract advertising revenue. As commercial enterprises, they were on a sounder financial footing to withstand the numerous libel actions lodged against them. These new immigrants and their journals on the eastern goldfields confronted the traditional Western Australian hierarchy with a working class radicalism. By 1901, the proportion of native-born Western Australians had declined from 55.8 per cent in 1891 to 28.8 per cent. Stannage traces the changes to parliamentary representation as a transfer from the "ancient colonists" to the "recent

11. *Fremantle Herald*, 21.3.1874, p. 2.

12. John Drew was born in Northampton in 1865 and, after a short time at the *Western Australian Record*, joined the *Geraldton Express* in 1890. See Smith, B.J. 'Western Australian Goldfields Literature,' *University Studies in History*, Vol. 4, No. 2, (1963-4), p. 82. Henry Kenny was the M.L.A. for North Murchison 1897-99 and the Oppositionists' party whip. See *The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians*, Vol. 1, (Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press, 1988), p. 2238.

13. *Geraldton Express*, 28.6.1895, p. 8.

14. Appleyard, *op. cit.*, p. 220.

arrivals"¹⁵ The *Sunday Times* referred to these protagonists as groppers and t'othersiders.

With bitter memories of the 1890's depression and strikes in the eastern colonies and disillusioned with laissez-faire capitalism and officialdom, these t'othersiders brought a legacy of contempt for corruption, monopolies and inequitable political representation. Gold discoveries had stimulated an economic boom in Western Australia. Secker suggests that an optimistic, prosperous society is more tolerant of diversity.¹⁶ Eastern goldfields' newspapers such as the daily *Kalgoorlie Miner*, the weekly *Coolgardie Miner* and later the *Sunday Sun* expressed the goldfields' political exclusion and geographical isolation from the coast, through scathing columns, verse and cartoons which belittled and mocked the ruling clique in Perth.

In several important ways, the *Sunday Times* was the offspring of this Geraldton and goldfields' based dissidence. Many of its journalists and two of the editors in this period had come from goldfields newspapers or the *Geraldton Express*. Windschuttle classifies the theories of the media and the concept of news according to the intentions of the owners, editors and journalists. This analysis ranges from a free market model of an objective body of truth which reflects society; a manipulative model of self-interested owners distorting reality; a bureaucratic model of selected routine news; to an ideological consensus model which portrays a cohesive society. The ideological consensus and manipulative models would seem to be most relevant to the various newspapers of the late 1890's.¹⁷ The *Sunday Times* presented its own view of reality through the particular beliefs of the journalists and editors.

Frederick Charles Burleigh Vosper and Edward Ellis, the original co-proprietors, printed the initial edition of Western Australia's first Sunday newspaper on the 19th December, 1897. Ellis, the inaugural editor, declared his credentials for Sunday journalism, claiming a long editorial career and particularly the distinction of

15. Stannage, C. T. 'The Composition of the Western Australian Parliament: 1890-1911,' *University Studies in History*, Vol. 4, (1966), p. 2.

16. Secker, L. ' "Mightier than the sword:" The power of the press. Constructing radicalism in the Western Australian conservative press 1930 to 1934,' Honours dissertation, University of Western Australia, (1990), p. 43.

17. Windschuttle, K. *The Media* (3rd ed.), (Ringwood: Penguin, 1988), p. 270.

introducing Australia's first Sunday paper, the *Sydney Sunday Times*.¹⁸ Vosper, a Cornishman, had arrived in Australia in 1886 and his journalistic career had been centred on mining districts, firstly in Queensland on the *Northern Miner* where Thadeus O'Kane was the editor.¹⁹ Vosper left the *Northern Miner* in 1890 to become editor of the *Australian Republican* to 1892. His connections with critical working class journalism continued with the Melbourne *Workman* and the *Sydney Truth*.²⁰ But the mining lure called and he accepted Alexander Livingstone's invitation to join the *Murchison Miner* in 1893, as sub-editor.²¹ By 1894, the *Miner* had closed and Vosper followed W.E. Clare, the founder of the *Coolgardie Miner*, as its editor. In an early attempt to bring the miners' grievances to Perth, Vosper founded and edited the short-lived 1894 *Miners' Right*, but with little success in the conservative heartland. By 1895, he was at the *Geraldton Express* as editor during Drew's absence in the "Free Press Incident."²² and then intermittent editorial stints at the *Coolgardie Miner*.

As one of the seven new goldfields representatives elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1897, Vosper moved to Perth and, with Ellis, established the *Sunday Times*. This partnership did not last long, the *Sunday Times* announcing a revision of it in March, 1898.²³ Vosper then assumed editorial and managerial control after the paper went into receivership.²⁴

On Vosper's sudden death on the 11th January, 1901, his wife, Venetia, took over as proprietor with Thomas Walker as editor. He had regularly contributed to the *Sunday*

18. *Sunday Times*, 19.12.1897, p.1.

19. Thadeus O'Kane was a colourful character, passionate in denouncing both his opposition and his support of personal causes such as separation, Irish Home Rule, republicanism, miners' interests and liberalism. He had been described as "the best Radical in North Queensland." See *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol. II, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1966-79), p.362.

20. Bastin, J. and Stoodley, J. 'F.C.B. Vosper: An Australian Radical,' *University Studies in History*, Vol. V, No. 1, (1967), p. 44.

21. Alexander Livingstone, a former Charters Towers journalist, had vowed "never to cease the battle for democracy." See the *Murchison Miner*, 12.1892, p.2. He was also credited with the origin of Western Australian goldfields journalism. See Smith, 1963-4, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

22. Jaggard, E. 'Bread and Democracy: F.C. B. Vosper in the Roaring Nineties,' *Westerly*, Vol. 4, (December, 1977), pp. 30-31.

23. *Sunday Times*, 20.3.1898, p.4.

24. *Ibid.*, 8.5.1898, p. 4. In November, 1898, Vosper floated a limited liability company, "The Western Australian 'Sunday Times' Ltd" in which Billy Clare owned shares and Vosper purchased Ellis's remaining interest on the death of the former editor. See the *Sunday Times*, 27/11/1898, p. 4., Reid, A. *Those Were the Days*, (Victoria Park: Hesperian Press, 1986 ed.), p. 47. and Tauman, M. *The Chief: C.Y. O'Connor*, (Nedlands: U.W.A.P., 1978), p. 282.

Times since its inception.²⁵ The paper had publicised and praised his series of lectures at the Mechanics Institute. These discourses covered a wide range of topics from early Sunday journalism to "Martin Luther and the Devil."²⁶ In April, 1901, Venetia Vosper sold the *Sunday Times* to James MacCullum Smith and Arthur Reid, the proprietors of the *Kalgoorlie Sun*, a Sunday paper established in October, 1898.



Thomas Walker²⁷

C.W. Andree Hayward, lawyer, poet and editor,

was installed as editor of the *Sunday Times* in

December, 1902.²⁸ He had left the *Geraldton Express* to be the first editor of the *Murchison Advocate* and by 1900, the *Sunday Times* was referring to Hayward as "the smartest all-round journalist at present."²⁹ From 1901 to 1902, Hayward edited the *Sun* before moving to Perth and the *Sunday Times* where he remained until 1905. J.E. Webb, a young twenty-two year old *Sunday Times* journalist then took over the editorship.

Throughout its early years, the *Sunday Times* maintained close links with the regional opposition press and the goldfields. While Vosper probably wrote most of the editorials and articles from March, 1898 to January, 1901, many columns were devoted to excerpts from regional newspapers which agreed with the *Sunday Times*.³⁰ The connections were consolidated when MacCullum Smith and Reid purchased the paper and a family of freelance journalists, poets and cartoonists contributed to both the

25. *Spectator*, 9.7.1903, p. 5.

26. *Sunday Times*, 3.12.1899, p. 1.

27. Reid, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

28. Hayward, born in England, was an Oxford law graduate and after a brief practice in South Africa, arrived in Western Australia in 1892 to found the *Murchison Times*. From Cue, he moved to the *Geraldton Express*, writing also under the pseudonym of 'Viator' (the wayfarer). See Smith, B. 'Heyday of the Goldfields. The New Journalism,' *Westerly*, No. 3, (September, 1976), p.66 and Miller, E.M. *Australian Literature. From its Beginnings to 1935*, (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1940), p. 204.

29. *Sunday Times*, 2.12.1900, p. 1.

30. *Ibid.*, 29.5.1898, p. 1.



The press ban
No. 3.

"The pen is
mightier than
the sword"—and
safer.

goldfields' press and the *Sunday Times*. These writers usually adopted pseudonyms, possibly to avoid libel actions. When Ellis left the paper, so did many of the original poets and journalists, including Edward Newton McCulloch ('Cambuscan').³¹ 'Amphictryon' was probably Vosper, as the series of "Public Letters to Public Men" ceased after his death and George Hope contributed regularly, as 'Bungarra.' Not until early 1901 were the goldfields' literary talents employed, notably Edwin 'Dryblower' Murphy with some poetry from John Phillip Bourke ('Bluebush'), Thomas Henry Wilson ('Crosscut') and Francis William Ophel ('Prospect Good').³²

The *Sunday Times'* radicalism can be measured in the context of the background and traditions of Western Australians and the new immigrants. The majority of Western Australians in the late 1890's were of British origins or descent. Some of the landowners had assumed the status and privileges of the British landed gentry and this British heritage also extended to traditions of Westminster government, liberalism, radicalism and the close relationship between Church and State. From a phenomenological perspective, radicalism can be judged in the context of contemporary values and traditions. It is a relative evaluation according to more conservative outlooks which endorse the status quo or only tolerate minor adjustments.

Late nineteenth century government in Britain oscillated between the Liberal and Conservative Parties. Both tended to be heterogeneous amalgams of aristocracy and commerce, but the Conservatives were more aristocratic, with a strong rural support base. Conservatives supported the status quo and were identified with defending the Established Church. They feared a lower class 'irresponsible' majority threatening their exclusive political and economic advantages, but Tory democracy allowed some social reforms. The Liberal Party, although including some aristocratic Whigs, was generally associated with urban middle classes inspired by individualism and the right of property. Changes were justified in the interests of national efficiency, but Liberals still clung to orthodox free market principles. Like Conservatives, they held that a laissez-

31. *ibid.*, 30.9.1900, p. 2.

32. Smith, 1963-4, *op. cit.*, pp. 108-11.

faire government did not have a mandate to compel or direct individuals on how to conduct their affairs or businesses. However, the Liberal Party was distracted by factious disunity, between Whigs, moderates and Radicals over Irish Home Rule, tariffs and social reform and how it should be achieved.

Rationalism and non-conformity underpinned the Radicals liberals' demand for equality of social and economic opportunity through legislative reforms of the franchise, representation, disestablishment and education. From the 1880's, Radical influence, led by Joseph Chamberlain, increased within the Liberal Party whose leader, W.E. Gladstone, attempted a precarious balancing act to present a cohesive front.³³ His 1891 Newcastle Programme was an attempt to unite the diverse elements of the Party, but it contained little deviation from established Radical precepts. Still the Radical movement was dominated by traditional elements represented by Stanhope, Labouchere and Dilke. From 1885 and Chamberlain's "unauthorized programme" ³⁴ of social reforms a new breed of Radical had emerged in the Liberal Party. Chamberlain had turned to imperialism and tariffs and the *Sunday Times* reviled him as "this dishonest and unscrupulous man."³⁵ By the late 1890's, the "New Liberalism"³⁶ espoused now by Lloyd George, Hobson and Hobhouse symbolised the Radicals' disenchantment with the pre-eminence of foreign policy. The *Sunday Times'* foreign news reflected the concern for the Empire, the Boer War and trade. The 'New Liberals' objected to the relegation of social legislation and also sought to unify the assorted Liberal and Radical causes. While opposing socialism, they accepted the use of taxation revenue to ameliorate urgent social problems. This was a revision of the concept of state functions as it deviated from the Conservative, Liberal and traditional Radical consensus on economic orthodoxy, but it was not the collectivist social and industrial intervention demanded by labour socialists. The labour movement, also revived by a new and younger generation in trade union leadership, was no longer content to have labour

33. Barker, M. *Gladstone and Radicalism. The Reconstruction of Liberal Policy in Britain 1885-1894*, (Hassocks: Harvester Press, 1975), p. 165.

34. McCord, N. *The Short Oxford History of the Modern World. British History 1815-1906*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 377.

35. *Sunday Times*, 8.6.1902, p. 4.

36. Derry, J.W. *The Radical Tradition*, (London: Macmillan, 1967), p. 370.

candidates, the Lib-Labs, under the Liberal Party umbrella. In 1900 the Labour Representation Committee was established to promote a distinct Labour group in the Commons, to lobby the dominant parties for "labour" legislation.³⁷ Social and industrial reform was to be an evolution of pragmatic legislation to intervene on behalf of the working classes, not a doctrinaire socialism.³⁸

From 1897 to 1905, Western Australian politics was influenced by the movement from personal politics to organised party politics. The individualism of the 1890's government and the faction politics of 1901 to 1905 resulted in divisions drawn according to the major issues of the era. From the beginning of responsible government in 1890, the Forrest Ministry concentrated on economic development and public works, the face of prosperity and progress. Most early Oppositionists agreed in principle with this policy, only differing with Ministerialists on its administration. However, with more liberal, radical and working class representation, from 1897 to 1905, the most vigorous debate moved to electoral, social and industrial reform, although at times distracted by the other great issues of Federation and the Boer War. The exposure of corrupt and inept officials and practices was viewed as justification for reform of the existing institutions. Federalism and imperial relations dominated the political agenda between 1899 and 1901 and symbolized the sectional dichotomy which had developed during the 1890's.

In Western Australia, definite party divisions were indistinguishable in the 1890's, as neither conservatives nor liberals owed allegiance to set programmes or personalities. Conservatism was associated with the landed and commercial interests of the Forrest ministerialists from 1890 to 1901, which despite independent parliamentary voting, was able to command a majority and unity on most issues. The Western Australian conservatives maintained that government should be represented by those who were born and educated to rule. It was their paternalistic obligation to protect the interests of the working majority, who were expected to fulfil their functions as cogs in the laissez-

37. Feuchtwanger, E.J. *Democracy and Empire, Britain 1865-1914*, (London: Edward Arnold, 1985), p. 264.

38. Emy, H.V. *Liberals, Radicals and Social Politics*, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1973), p. 70.

faire machine. With Bismarckian guile, Forrest had undermined liberal and radical demands for reform with palliative legislation such as manhood suffrage and some redistribution of seats. The *Sunday Times* regarded Western Australians as the 'gropers' entrenched in the nineteenth century hierarchy.

Western Australian liberals were a small band of businessmen and professionals who formed part of the 1890's Opposition. In the early years of the decade, they pressed for liberal reform but were always outnumbered by the Ministerialists supporters. George Leake provided some Opposition leadership and promoted secular education and Walter James called for social and industrial legislation. After the 1897 redistribution, reinforcements arrived with more goldfields' members, who had experienced a broader franchise in the eastern colonies.³⁹ They agitated for electoral redistribution to cater for the growing numbers on the goldfields, but it was not until the late 1890's and early 1900's that some liberals and radicals were prepared to promote some comprehensive state social legislation.

Working class organisation and opinion in Western Australia had been limited to the older craft associations, Mechanics' Institutes and Workingmen's Club. In the late 1880's, eastern colonies' migrants usurped the leadership of the trade union movement. Like their British counterparts, the Western Australian labour movement sought to enhance the prospects to alter the colonial economic and social conditions through their own political representatives, rather than rely on liberals and labour sympathizers in parliament.⁴⁰ In Western Australia, industrial and electoral reform and the development of politicized labour outpaced the British labour movement. The influx of the eastern migrants frustrated with the failure of industrial militancy, brought a more organised and political approach to trade union agitation.

In 1893, the Progressive Political League, advocating mainly political reforms, promoted election candidates, but with little success in the 1894 election. By 1895, the P.P.L. and the coastal Trades Union Congress had almost disintegrated.⁴¹ The T.U.C.

39. Stannage, *op cit.*, p. 1.

40. Murphy, D. (ed.), *Labor in Politics. State Labor parties in Australia 1880-1920*, (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1975), p. 6.

41. Gibbney, H.J. 'Western Australia,' in *Ibid.*, p. 345.

was resurrected and the Political Labour Party was born in 1899. The revived trade union movement was dominated by the goldfields' unions. P.L.P. candidates gradually claimed more electoral success from increased union membership, payment of members and the 1904 Electoral and Redistribution Act. Six Labour members were elected in 1901 and the Party held office briefly in 1904-5 with a minority government.

However, the labour movement was weakened by union rivalries and their disagreement with the P.L.P. The breach between coastal and goldfields' unions was partly healed by the 1899 Trades and Labour Congress, but ambitions for labour legislation were dashed by the Daglish Labor Government.⁴² With the electoral reforms of the 1890's, Labor candidates had moved to a platform of collective industrial legislation, but from the beginnings of labour organisation and representation, the demands were for particular legislative changes in response to specific problems. This pragmatism extended to the role of parliamentary Labor and divided the labour idealists from those who were content to exchange support for concessions. The short-lived Daglish Government foundered in 1905 when Rason won a landslide election. So, Western Australia reverted to conservatism at a time when British Tories were ousted and the Liberal Party returned to office in 1906 in the biggest rout since 1832.⁴³

The issues which divided the Western Australian community in this era are still the focus of debate. Questions of federal-state relations, republicanism, industrial relations, political alignments, corruption, developmental economics and free trade were not resolved by 1905 and continue to provoke social and political divisions in the twentieth century. An evaluation of the position and style of the *Sunday Times* on these issues can determine its status in the community. Who did the paper oppose and support? Was the paper aligned with the views of all Western Australians or a sectional interest? Were the opinions of the *Sunday Times* held by contemporary politicians?

42. Merritt, J. 'George Foster Pearce and the Western Australian Labour Movement 1892-1901,' *University Studies in History*, Vol. 4, No. 3, (1965), p.49.

43. Feuchtwanger, *op. cit.*, p. 266.

The Fourth Estate

The gallery in which the reporters sit has become a fourth estate of the realm.
- Lord Macaulay.¹

Like its opposition predecessors, the *Sunday Times* was quick to declare its position, as an antagonist of the established order. Its criticism was founded on an aversion to monopoly of decision-making and industry by any elite. It believed that such an exclusive group, not accountable to popular control, could degenerate into complacent and corrupt mismanagement and abuse of authority:

It is very rightly maintained by all social reformers, as it is by all logical political economists, that no monopoly is justifiable on the grounds of its hoariness, and that interests acquired unjustly in the first instance can have no possible claim to being made perpetual, nor, indeed, to be allowed to be retained one day or one hour longer than the discovery of the falseness of the title.²

The *Sunday Times* believed its civic duty was to expose breaches of public responsibility, by individuals, institutions and newspapers, in order to demonstrate the ineligibility and incapacity of Western Australia's ruling class or those who had been entrusted with leadership.

By the mid-1890's, the Western Australian Constitution was one of the contentious issues of political debate. The *Sunday Times* maintained that it favoured the agricultural and pastoral interests. Thus, in 1897, the government could not be considered legitimate according to democratic principles, when it was the product of a system fostering inequitable political representation. Sir John Forrest, as Premier and leader of the Ministerialists, bore the brunt of the *Sunday Times'* attacks on the ruling elite until 1901. "Responsible government was a one-man government and it always would be so. He would not like to be amongst the Ministry where six men were directing affairs...His ambition was to direct the affairs of the colony in a proper

1. *Edinburgh Review*, 1828, quoted in Palmer, A. and V. *Quotations in History*, (Brookvale: Australia and New Zealand Book Co., 1977), p. 142.

2. *Sunday Times*, 4.12.1898, p. 2.

manner, so that it could be said that he fought against the popular clamour for the good of the colony."³ Despite responsible government in 1890, the nineteenth century colonial hierarchy remained unchanged throughout the 1890's. The same old "cluster of landed families"⁴ had constitutionally entrenched their authority. "We have had the Revolution, but we still have our colonial Bourbons....we have made them Ministers of the Crown...Wardens and Resident Magistrates."⁵

The *Sunday Times* alleged that the 1890's electoral changes had done little to redress this limited political participation. Vosper denounced the Electoral Reform Act of 1897, claiming that the residence qualifications for electoral enrolment disadvantaged the itinerant worker and prospector. Voters were required to reside twelve months in the colony and six months in a district before enrolment. The *Sunday Times* argued that this Act was designed to keep people off the electoral rolls,⁶ a correspondent to the *Murchison Advocate* labelled it the 'Electoral Trap Act'⁷ and another contrasted the complicated application forms to the ease of enrolment and simple procedures in the eastern colonies.⁸ Plural voting was also viewed as a means of keeping the landed element in office. The *Sunday Times* featured an article from the *Broad Arrow Standard* which contrasted a West Kimberley voter with thirteen votes in other constituencies as opposed to a North-East Coolgardie miner with only one vote.⁹ But *The West Australian* praised Sir John Forrest's record of development and social legislation, maintaining that his "radical" reforms had produced a more liberal franchise than in some eastern colonies.¹⁰

However, the most persistent criticism of the constitution throughout the period, was levelled at the distribution of seats. Under the headline "Our Rotten Constitution - How the Ministry Maintains Its Power - And How the People Are Disenfranchised", the

3. *Ibid.*, 12.6.1898, p. 2.

4. de Garis, B.K. 'Self-government and the emergence of the political party system 1891-1911,' Stannage, C. T. (ed.). *A New History of Western Australia*, (Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press, 1981), p. 336.

5. *Sunday Times*, 3.4.1898, p. 4.

6. *Ibid.*, 17.4.1898, p. 4.

7. *Murchison Advocate*, 12.3.1899, p. 3.

8. *Sunday Times*, 3.4.1898, p. 4.

9. *Ibid.*, 18.12.1898, p. 5.

10. *The West Australian*, 21.12.1898, p. 4.

Sunday Times compared the number of voters in electorates to illustrate the inequitable distribution of seats. *The West Australian* doubted the legitimacy of a redistribution based on population which would give the metropolitan and transient goldfields areas three-quarters of the representation, "...is this to be viewed with equanimity?"¹¹ The redistribution of seats and electoral enrolment were seen by Vosper as the keys to unlocking the doors of the Legislative Assembly to the participation of workers in government. Although the *Sunday Times* focussed on the Forrest Ministry and its supporters until 1901, it also charged the Western Australian public with apathy in not enrolling or voting. After the 1901 State election, Walker cited Fremantle where only 303 voted of an electorate of 1,353.¹²

With the departure of Sir John Forrest for the Federal scene, some 1897 redistribution of seats, a broader suffrage and greater turnout many former Ministerialists were defeated in 1901. Later, in 1902, Walter James' Redistribution of Seats Bill still did not placate the *Sunday Times'* editor, now Thomas Walker, who also published statistics to argue that pastoral (1,824 voters for 3 seats) and agricultural voters (16,551 voters for 12 seats) had twice the representation of the Metropolitan (37,526 voters for 13 seats) or goldfields' areas (43,931 voters for 15 seats).¹³ This Bill merged some



Spectator 14

11. *Ibid.*, 24.10.1898, p. 4.

12. *Sunday Times*, 28.4.1901, p. 5.

13. *Ibid.*, 12.10.1902, p. 5.

14. *Spectator*, 30.7.1903, p. 3.

constituencies and reduced the Legislative Assembly to forty-two but the paper predicted "the effect of making parliament easier to manage by the wire-pullers"¹⁵ and questioned the omission of Legislative Council reform. The bill was finally enacted in 1904.¹⁶

The *Sunday Times* then concentrated its attention on those who sought to fill the void left by the Forrest Government, and on the Legislative Council. The Upper House, variously described as the House of Hindrance or Fossils, was seen as the institutional remnant of 1890's Western Australia and an obstacle to constitutional amendment and industrial reform. "How do the Government, how do the Assembly, like being snubbed and lectured and bullied and dictated to and dragooned into submission and generally being used as a toe-rag (goldfields vernacular) or as a washpot (scriptural parlance) by a body that represents a mere one-sixth of the adult population of the State?"¹⁷ Before the 1904 election, Hayward was alarmed at the disinterest in the Legislative Council. "This attitude is surely to be regretted, for the very uselessness of the Council constitutes its danger, its conservatism intensifies the danger and the apathy of the public gives it its opportunity."¹⁸

After 1901, Western Australian government was plagued by a succession of short-lived ministries. With each non-conservative Premier, hopes were raised for sweeping reform, only to be dashed by the pragmatism and compromise of minority government. George Throssell, lacking the authority of Forrest and doubting his own capacity for leadership, resigned and George Leake was appointed Premier, but the *Sunday Times* had always been suspicious of Leake's capacity for reform, a "hard-shell Tory with democratic mask to disguise his conservative features."¹⁹ Leake's policy was welcomed as "strictly practical" by *The West Australian* which declared, "Those who expected a revolutionary programme from the incoming Ministry must be agreeably

15. *Sunday Times*, 13.4.1902, p. 1.

16. Gibbney, *op. cit.*, p. 356.

17. *Sunday Times*, 17.4.1901, p.4.

18. *Ibid.*, 16.4.1904, p. 10.

19. *Ibid.*, 25.9.1898, p. 4, 26.5.1901, p.4 and Reid, G.S. and Oliver, M.R. *The Premiers of Western Australia, 1890-1932*, (Nedlands: U.W.A.P., 1982), p. 18.

disappointed."²⁰ Walker, much more inclined to vilify personalities than Vosper, launched a tirade against the Opposition leader, Frederick Piesse, for being dishonestly involved in railway frauds and having allowed a minority to govern. He also attacked *The West Australian* for minimising Piesse's failings.

Leake's minority government only survived five months, until in November, 1901, he surrendered government to Piesse and the conservative Opposition.²¹ But Piesse could not muster support in his own party to form a Ministry and Alfred Morgans assumed the leadership and government before the December Ministerial elections. In the election campaign, the *Sunday Times* and *The West Australian* waged a propaganda war for the opposing parties. *The West Australian* urged voters to return the Morgans' Ministry as a 'need for repose', but the *Sunday Times* castigated "Mexican" Morgans for his support of British capitalists and underrating the contribution of workers to the state's prosperity, particularly on the goldfields. Morgans' Ministry was perceived to be dishonest, opposed to labor and arbitration and undignified in Parliament. Frederick Monger was accused of obscenities, John Higham of intoxication and 'Neuter' John Nanson, the sub-editor of *The West Australian*, had called Leake a "skunk".²²

However, the December Ministerial election did not resolve the parliamentary deadlock. The Morgans government lost two Ministerial seats including Perth, which the *Sunday Times* celebrated as "a triumph for democracy. Here dwell those who dabble in capital, who are conservative in interest and who have hitherto been considered the stay and comfort of monopolists."²³ Walker then alleged that John Hackett was attempting to engineer a Morgans-Leake coalition to promote the Ministerial ambitions of Harper and prevent a dissolution and general election which may have led to more Labor M.P.'s in the Assembly.²⁴ Leake assumed government

20. *The West Australian*, 27.5.1901, p.4.

21. Frederick Piesse was the Commissioner of Railways and Director of Public Works from 1890 to 1900, acting Premier in 1900, then leader of the Opposition from June to November, 1901. See *The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians*, Vol III, *op. cit.*, p. 2564.

22. *Sunday Times*, 10.11.1901, p. 4.

23. *Ibid.*, 8.12.1901, p. 4.

24. *Ibid.*, 29.12.1901, p. 5. Sir John Hackett was the co-proprietor (with Stephen Harper) of *The West Australian*. See *The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians*, Vol II, *op. cit.*, p.1303.

without a coalition, but included Hector Rason, a former conservative in his Cabinet. The new Ministry was reviled by Walker as "democratic traitors" whose ambition had exceeded their principles and whose policy upheld conservative interests. "On Mr Leake's promises, we gave him our whole-hearted support. On his performances we are absolutely compelled by the demands of honest journalism to now as strenuously oppose him"²⁵

With Leake's death in June, 1902, Walter Kingsmill, the Acting Premier, did not have Cabinet support for leadership and conceded to Walter James. However, from the outset, the *Sunday Times* could find little to recommend either the Opposition or the James Ministry, seen as a combination of opportunistic conservatives and pseudo-liberals. "The new Ministry is the strongest possible demonstration of our dearth of public men and what is sad to contemplate is that few if any better men can be found among the Opposition....Such a collection of conscienceless Ministers is moribund from birth."²⁶ Again, an incumbent Premier without electoral endorsement, was accused of ambition overriding integrity and Walker invoked Hamlet's prophesy. "Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind." ²⁷

The *Sunday Times* maintained that James was following in Leake's footsteps by not fulfilling promises of dissolution as he feared going to an election. When former Oppositionists Monger, Higham and Phillips sided with the James government, it was labelled hypocrisy fuelled by a desire to keep the present Ministry in office as long as possible. ²⁸ By 1904, Andree Hayward, Walker's successor as editor of the *Sunday Times*, was urging the electorate to vote against the 'traitors and robbers' of the James government who had played at reform and conspired to isolate the Labor party.²⁹ The James Ministry was returned to office in the June, 1904 elections, but without an absolute majority.

25. *Sunday Times*, 12.1.1902, p. 4.

26. *Ibid.*, 6.7.1902, p. 4.

27. *Ibid.*, 6.6.1902, p. 4.

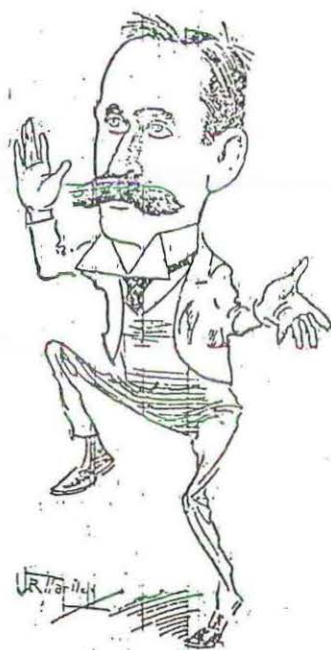
28. *Ibid.*, 27.7.1902, p.4.

29. *Ibid.*, 26.6.1904, p. 5.

The Labor party was now the largest party in the Legislative Assembly and Hayward warned them against any enticements to coalition and urged them to oust the James government as soon as possible.³⁰ The *Sunday Times'* first impression of the new Labor government registered disappointment with the "obsequious manner" of Daglish, the Premier and M.L.A. for Subiaco, in face of his responsibilities and the potential for reform. "Behind him was a party wherein the will and power of the people had taken embodiment...a great cause - the cause of neglected humanity as against usurpation and privilege; the cause which has, for its object, the elevation of the lowest depths of the social strata; a cause which had all history for its warrant." ³¹

Hayward threw down the gauntlet to the Labor party to fulfil its platform or resign immediately "for the cause of Democracy is too sacred to be trifled with." ³² But Daglish's mildness was interpreted as failure to do anything "to disturb the old order of things" ³³ and his public speeches revealed little inclination to reform.³⁴ Perhaps the climax of the paper's disillusionment was the arrest and imprisonment of the 'Sun' editor, Jack Drayton, for contempt of Parliament. The *Sunday Times* charged Daglish with a devious conspiracy to undermine freedom and democracy. It asked of the Ministers, "How long are these traitors to a great cause to be tolerated?" ³⁵

By 1905, the new editor, Jack Webb, who disliked Labor, complained that Daglish had "done nothing but mark time in a masterly minuet to music provided by



A MILK-AND-WATER MEMBER

The member for Subie am I;
Of Democracy sturdy I'm shy.
And its common report
That my rudest retort,
Never goes any further than "Fie."

I,m the chief civic dad of the town
On which the small suburbs look down
And as I,m afraid
Of the Cold Tea brigade,
On all kinds of fusel I frown.

My speeches are fearful - but few,
And my rhetoric rumbles askew
When Mulga sits back,
My points to attack
With comment both biting and blue. ³⁶

30. *Ibid.*, 3.7.1904, p.4.

31. *Ibid.*, 7.8.1904, p. 4.

32. *Ibid.*.

33. *Ibid.*, 28.8.1904, p. 4.

34. Gibbney, *op. cit.*, p. 358.

35. *Sunday Times*, 13.11.1904, p. 4.

36. *Ibid.*, 13.12.1903, p. 11.

Hackett, M.L.C." ³⁷ But the fortunes of the Labor party, as with other Ministries rested with a dependence on the cross-benches, the leadership and abilities of its personnel.³⁸ After its defeat on the Midland Railway purchase, the Labor government resigned to be succeeded by a conservative Rason minority government. The Labor party was decimated at the 1905 elections, receiving only thirty-five percent of the total vote.³⁹ Daglish had resigned from the caucus and leadership of the Labor party and again won Subiaco as an Independent Labor candidate. In 1910 he was Minister for Works in a Liberal government.⁴⁰

According to the *Sunday Times*, this era of unrepresentative and ineffectual leadership was manifested in the management of State and private enterprises, public finances and the workforce. Inefficiency, corruption and extravagance were highlighted as the consequences of the hegemony of vested interests whose monopolies facilitated inequitable business and labor practices. The gold discoveries of the mid-1890's raised questions about how government revenue should be raised and spent. The gold output permitted greater access to the London money market by the Forrest government to finance the expansion of the public works programme. From 1895 to 1901, the public debt rose from 3.9 million to 12.7 million and by 1904 9 million of the 15 million had been spent on public works.⁴¹ The *Sunday Times* was critical, not only of the size of the loans, but the distribution, believed to be extravagant and discriminatory, but *The West Australian* asserted, "...all of this borrowing, with quite insignificant exceptions, has been spent in developing the colony." ⁴² The *Sunday Times* urged the Forrest Ministry to curb its borrowing as it contended that, in the late 1890's, Western Australia was in recession and could not afford to continue the same fiscal policy as in the gold boom years of 1894-96, without leaving a burden for future taxpayers.⁴³

37. *Sunday Times*, 16.4.1905, p. 4. and Courtney, V. *All I May Tell*, (Sydney: Shakespeare Head Press, 1956), p. 7.

38. Murphy, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

39. Gibbney, *op. cit.*, p. 360.

40. Reid and Oliver, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

41. Appleyard, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

42. *The West Australian*, 5.10.1898, p. 4.

43. *Sunday Times*, 12.1.1901, p. 4.

A downturn in the Western Australian economy in 1898 reduced the access to London loans resulting in suspension of public works, retrenchments and a net loss of population.⁴⁴ The *Albany Advertiser* was asking "where had all the money gone?"⁴⁵ Later, Sir John Forrest denied excessive spending. "For some reason or other I am termed an extravagant person. This is opposed to the reputation I gained in my own State and to all my past record."⁴⁶ The former Premier asserted that he had left the Throssell Ministry with a legacy of one million pounds in the Treasury, but the *Sunday Times* disputed this figure and later claimed that a four million pound loan would be necessary if the State was to escape bankruptcy.⁴⁷ Throssell predicted a deficit if committed public works were to be completed.⁴⁸ Leake's Treasurer, Charles Moran, believed that his balance sheet was "the only honest one that had been given since 1896. It was not right that they should be saddled with the faults of previous Administrations."⁴⁹

Early 1890's Oppositionists had always supported the aims, but not the haste, of the Forrest Ministry's public works programme financed by overseas borrowing, but in the late 1890's, Leake had declared his opposition to the public works and loans policy.⁵⁰ Nevertheless the Leake Ministry was attacked for continuing the same developmental policies as previous conservative governments:

The pledge to continue the public works in hand, to borrow money to keep them going and to abstain from Civil Service retrenchment during the process, sounded like the rattle of the old coach going a little quicker, perhaps under a new driver, but rumbling along in exactly the same old reverberatory ruts.⁵¹

By 1903, James, "lost in the world of finance,"⁵² was avoiding the London market

44. Tauman, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

45. *Sunday Times*, 26.2.1899, p. 4.

46. *Ibid.*, 19.7.1903, p. 4.

47. *Ibid.*, 17.2.1901, p. 4.

48. *Ibid.*, 26.5.1901, p. 4.

49. *Ibid.*, 31.3.1901, p. 4.

50. de Garis, *op. cit.*, pp. 340-342.

51. *Sunday Times*, 16.6.1901, p. 4.

52. Hunt, L. 'A Political Biography of Walter Hartwell James, 1894-1904.' M.A. Thesis, University of Western Australia, (1974), p. 54.

and sought to raise loans locally and the *Sunday Times* was calling for an "era of economy" to counter the "reckless, riotous extravagance" ⁵³ of the past. Since 1894, James had inclined towards a cautious developmental policy, favouring farmers and public works only to established goldfields.⁵⁴ The Daglish Labor government suffered the same accusations of conformity and was deemed fraudulent in trying to mask its extravagance with "cooked figures and faked surplus." ⁵⁵

Since the 1880's, public works had been regarded as the prerequisite to Western Australia's development. The government would provide the facilities for land settlement and rural industries and thus attract and retain immigrants. Forrest was concerned that the gold rushes would be a short-lived phenomenon and aimed to provide an agricultural alternative. ⁵⁶ The railways, public works and water supply were the ostensible signs of Western Australian prosperity and these departments became the prime targets for 'exposure' by the *Sunday Times*. It saw the direction of public spending as incompetent and partisan, "frittering away public funds"⁵⁷ on such projects as the Fremantle Harbour Works, Coolgardie Water Scheme, Bunbury port facilities, Greenbushes Water Scheme and a Bunbury-Bridgetown railway. The paper did not accept that these public works were part of an infrastructure to cater for the increasing population, but were part of a grand design to centralise commerce and industry to thwart any eastern colonies' intrusion and to support the agricultural interests of the old coastal "groper" hierarchy.⁵⁸ Fremantle was to be developed at the expense of Albany, the Coolgardie Water Scheme was primarily to service agricultural interests and attract investment.

The *Sunday Times* suggested that some of those who contributed to taxation revenue and the State's wealth were disadvantaged by the State's developmental policy. It targeted the "preponderating influence" in the Legislative Council of representation and interests from the north, which only contributed 1/34 of customs revenue and 1/37 of

53. *Sunday Times*, 22.3.1903, p. 13.

54. Hunt, 1974, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

55. *Sunday Times*, 9.4.1905, p. 4.

56. de Garis, 1981, *op. cit.*, p. 343.

57. *Sunday Times*, 18.6.1899, p. 3.

58. Appleyard, *op. cit.*, p. 222 and *Sunday Times*, 11.2.1900, p. 3.

the gold output.⁵⁹ The *Sunday Times*, maintaining its goldfields' allegiance, believed that those residents added to the government coffers through customs duties on food and essentials. By 1900, 6,007,000 and 88% of the export income was through gold production.⁶⁰ The Forrest Ministry was attacked for extortionate railway charges, refusing to construct a Norseman-Esperance railway and Leake was blamed for the defeat of Robert Hastie's bill to abolish food duties.⁶¹ The *West Australian* justified and James supported the government's railway construction, "not just where immediate prospective traffic justifies construction...the paying or non-paying character of a line...of slight consideration in comparison with the service performed in inducing settlement."⁶² The *Sunday Times* asserted that government revenue-raising and allocation of public expenditure was inequitable and had contributed to the goldfields' separation for federation movement.⁶³

In this era, government departments mushroomed with the growth of population and the expansion of government enterprises. The *Sunday Times* claimed that the administration of public works and the civil service aggravated this supposed waste of money. It perceived inept and corrupt management of finances and appointments of unqualified, dishonest and lax officials in all government departments. Battye reported general public disquiet about the incompetence and disorder of the government departments, but Merab Tauman regarded criticisms of the civil service as "uninformed, irresponsible gossip."⁶⁴ The Department of Agriculture was headlined as a "Paradise of Parasites" employing "well-paid lack-a-daisical departmental snails" and a railway employee wrote that "few of the electrical department could produce certificates of apprenticeship."⁶⁵ Perhaps the most vitriolic condemnation was aimed at John Davies, the Railways Department General Manager, C.Y. O'Connor, the Engineer-in-Chief and

59. *Sunday Times*, 11.2.1900, p. 5.

60. Appleyard, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

61. *Sunday Times*, 23.2.1902, p. 4.

62. *The West Australian*, 14.5.1901, p. 4. and Hunt, 1974, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

63. *Sunday Times*, 14.5.1900, p. 5.

64. Battye, J.S. *Western Australia. A History from its Discovery to the Inauguration of the Commonwealth*, (Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press, 1978), p. 426. and Tauman, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

65. *Sunday Times*, 3.11.1901, p. 8. and 27.10.1901, p. 2.

William Traylen, chairman of the Metropolitan Water Supply Board. The heads of departments, rather than Ministers, were the focus of *Sunday Times* criticisms. When *The West Australian* protested that Ministers were responsible, the *Sunday Times* responded by blaming both "Ministers and Manikins,"⁶⁶ but while Ministers could not be expected to be qualified engineers, architects or financiers, the senior civil servants were supposed to be appointed on the basis of their qualifications and experience.

John Davies, a "tricky, dangerous and incompetent man" was subjected to a barrage of personal and professional censure of his, "wholesale wiping out of debts and the extraordinary concessions to favoured parties... part of a purely personal scheme to use the railways for the pride of his tyranny and as a lever for his power over both Government and people."⁶⁷ To *The West Australian*, he was a "hard-working, conscientious and experienced manager."⁶⁸ He was cited by the Royal Commission into the Administration of the Railways in 1901 and later suspended by Sir John Forrest. However, the *Sunday Times* labelled this Commission as an "Elusory Enquiry Elicits Elastic Evidence"⁶⁹ when it cleared Davies and the Minister, Piesse, of any deliberate complicity in the Perth Ice Company frauds. Leake was derided for reinstating Davies to the railways with a 1,000 stipend and also for appointing a chief clerk as the Conservator of Forests. The paper had hoped for an end to the "labyrinth of negligence and crooked speculation within the railway service", but had already decided that there were few sincere reformers in the Leake Ministry.⁷⁰

C.Y. O'Connor was "the New Zealand shire council engineer who bosses the bungles of the Coolgardie Water Supply and the mishaps in the harbor works."⁷¹ The Fremantle Harbour and the Coolgardie Water Scheme were the jewels in the developmental crown. When Vosper questioned the use of funds, expertise, favouritism and the slow progress of the pipeline project, he made few direct references to C.Y. O'Connor.⁷²

66. *Ibid.*, 1.9.1901, p. 4.

67. *Ibid.*, 28.4.1901, p. 4. and 18.8.1901, p. 4.

68. *The West Australian*, 6.10.1898, p.4.

69. *Sunday Times*, 3.4.1901, p. 5.

70. *Ibid.*, 20.1.1902, p. 4.

71. *Ibid.*, 16.6.1901, p. 4.

72. *Ibid.*, 26.6.1898, p. 4.

The momentum gathered pace by the end of 1900 when A.F. Smith, an ex-engineer on the Scheme, began a series of letters to the *Sunday Times* deploring the quality of its construction. His allegations of dangerous, substandard cement in the Mundaring Weir and inadequate pipe coating were featured in a *Sunday Times* editorial, "The Coming Destruction - Coolgardie Water Scheme."⁷³ But it was not until later, in 1901, when Walker's vituperative pen, inspired by more of Smith's allegations, accused O'Connor of nepotism in employing Hodgson and a clique of New Zealanders and Couston's hotly-debated caulking machine.⁷⁴ Support for this criticism came from the *Coolgardie Miner* which valued the proposal, but rejected the system for its construction.⁷⁵ Leake and George had also questioned the Scheme, the former declaring it would, "be remembered as a curse especially associated with two gentlemen", but *The West Australian* defended O'Connor's contribution to the Scheme and to railway development.⁷⁶ When O'Connor committed suicide, *The West Australian* held the *Sunday Times* responsible, as did Merab Tauman and many others since.⁷⁷ Walker claimed vindication when the Royal Commission into the Coolgardie Water Scheme found that, "it was the discovery of Mr O'Connor of the degree to which his implicit trust had been misplaced and the financial results...that finally unbalanced an already overstrained mind."⁷⁸

The Metropolitan Waterworks Board was investigated by a Legislative Council Select Committee which reported that William Traylen:

by his own evidence does not possess the necessary business ability for the management of a concern of this kind. We find, on inquiry, that his actions, in many instances, have not only been arbitrary, but oppressive, especially where the poorer classes of consumers are concerned.⁷⁹

Later the *Sunday Times* asked James why this "blundering dunderhead and unblushing nepotist" had still not been removed.⁸⁰ Newman, the Board Secretary was later

^{73.} *Ibid.*, 2.12.1900, p. 4.

^{74.} *Ibid.*, 6.10.1901, p. 5.

^{75.} *Coolgardie Miner*, 7.3.1898, p. 4.

^{76.} *The West Australian*, 6.10.1898, p. 4.

^{77.} Tauman, *op. cit.*, p. 227.

^{78.} *Sunday Times*, 25.7.1902, p. 1.

^{79.} *Ibid.*, 14.12.1902, p. 13.

^{80.} *Ibid.*, 23.8.1903, p. 4.

dismissed for embezzlement.⁸¹ The paper also turned on the Labor government for apparently endorsing past administrative practices. Hastie, the Minister of Mines was described as "an abjectly imitative character enjoying the most flagrant faults of his predecessor,"⁸² by his delay in acting upon the report of the Select Committee into the 'Empress of Coolgardie' mining lease scandal. The Forrest, Leake, James and Daglish governments were all held accountable for the upper echelons of the civil service who were perceived to be unable and unwilling to fulfil their functions, at the expense of taxpayers and other public employees.

Unjust and harsh conditions, for both state and private workers were seen as a corollary to industrial practices of an elitist monopoly. Both public and private enterprises were supposedly conducted by, or in the interests of, a select clique of capitalists who

"sweated" their employees. From the first edition, the *Sunday Times* published letters and editorialised on the evils of "sweating" in the railways, Hospital,

Government Printing Office, banks and even *The West Australian* criticised the conditions in the "home for fallen women."⁸⁴ The *Sunday Times* contended that the civil service hierarchy was a reflection of the inequitable Western Australian society, with the administration enjoying undeserved privileges while the lower ranks endured harsh working conditions. "When the Government assumes the responsibility of becoming an employer it should be influenced by other considerations than those which



"TYPHOID"

I, m Traylen, the pious old fox,
Once a leader of Wesleyan flocks
But the water I sell
Resembles in smell
A slovenly scavenger's socks.

When a member I followed Sir Jack,
Eating dirt as I crawled in his track,
Till I got my reward
As boss of the board
Which the SUNDAY TIMES dares to attack.

And as multitudes here pass away,
Through gulping my sewer-pipe clay,
For victims who die
From the sludge I supply
I daily and earnestly pray. ⁸³

81. *Ibid.*, 10.7.1904, p. 1.

82. *Ibid.*, 20.4.1904, p. 5.

83. *Sunday Times*, 12.4.1903, p. 9.

84. *The West Australian*, 14.11.1903, p. 5.

actuate the private capitalist....mercenary motives should find no place in a paternal Government."⁸⁵ In private enterprise, long hours, low wages, the 'truck' system, favouritism and arbitrary dismissals drew *Sunday Times*' demands for government regulation.

In private enterprise, 'sweated' conditions were also highlighted. The Perth clothing industry was frequently reported as "sweating" its employees, young girls working for low wages and on Sundays.⁸⁶ The *Sunday Times* protested against the system of "trucking" wherein employees' wages were reduced by deductions for company medical and housing facilities and purchases at a company store. This practice was particularly prevalent in isolated regional industries and the paper regarded it as more uncontrolled and exploitative monopoly. It named South-West timber companies, goldfields mining companies and Kimberley pastoralists as culprits. Despite a Truck Act in 1899, the paper continued to publish abuses of the Act via exemptions and still cited the South-west timber companies.⁸⁷ Throughout the period the *Sunday Times* maintained its attacks on both public and private employers. "The government is the largest employer in the State and its conditions of service should set an example to all other employers."⁸⁸

However, the political influence of employers and antipathy to government intervention was pre-eminent in this period, and strikes were the short-term solutions for industrial grievances until the Arbitration and Conciliation Act of 1901. When industrial legislation was enacted, it was interpreted by the *Sunday Times* as in the interests of companies, not workers. Although the eight-hour day had generally been accepted since 1891, the Early Closing Bill attempted to regulate workers' hours, but the *Sunday Times* insisted that it had failed due to exemptions to large companies which penalised workers and small traders, to whom Leake refused exemptions.⁸⁹ An eight-hour day

85. *Sunday Times*, 7.9.1902, p. 4.

86. *Sunday Times*, 6.7.1902, p. 3.

87. *Ibid.*, 13.9.1903, p. 4.

88. *Ibid.*, 2.5.1904, p. 10.

89. *Ibid.*, 11.6.1902, p. 4. and Vanden Driesen, I.H. 'The evolution of the trade union movement in Western Australia,' in Stannage, C.T. (ed.). *A New History of Western Australia*, (Nedlands: U.W.A.P., 1991), p.357.

for the railways was enacted in July, 1902, but a *Sunday Times* correspondent, a railway employee, asserted that some workers had not been included. In 1905, striking ironworkers were still demanding an eight-hour day. Alluvial miners were also presumed to suffer disadvantage by E. Wittenoom's 1898 Mining Act which restricted them to shafts no deeper than ten feet on leaseholds. *The West Australian* hoped that the Act would be regarded as proof that the "colony is sincere in its desire to safeguard the interests of capital" and upheld the lessee's right to claim the alluvial gold.⁹⁰ Both the goldfields' press and the *Sunday Times* sympathized with the alluvial miners, some of whom were imprisoned for violating the ten-foot regulation and a "riot where no one was hurt" on the goldfields threatened Sir John Forrest with an umbrella poke in the ribs.⁹¹ Until the Arbitration of 1901, strikes were frequent in the preceding decade. Timber and railways workers, lumpers, bootmakers, miners and even newsboys and beer drinkers withdrew their labour or patronage, protesting against wage reductions, the truck system, Italian labour, the *Daily News* and beer prices. Despite its dislike of the strike as a means of settling industrial disputes, the *Sunday Times* criticised the role of employers and the response of authorities who were accused of high-handed police action during both the Bootmakers' and Lumpers' strikes of 1898. The paper attempted to reinforce the image of conservative oppression against workers by reporting sabre-wielding police strike-breakers in Berlin, and Weaver, the head of



TEN-FOOT NED

"Ten-foot Ned" is the nickname I bear,
Since that ancient alluvial affair,
And I fear it will stick
Till the bucket I kick
And shin up the heavenly stair.

Tho' the West is the land of my birth,
I prefer Piccadilly to Perth,
Where I miss the delights
You can sample o' nights
In the wickedest city on earth.

All men have their hobbies and whims,
And I'm fonder of "hers" than of hymns,
My dart is a stall
In a gay music hall
And an eye-feast on ballet-girls' limbs. ⁹²

90. *The West Australian*, 4.10.1898, p. 4.

91. *Geraldton Express*, 1.4.1898, p. 6, *Sunday Times*, 27.3.1898, p. 5.

92. *Sunday Times*, 5.4.1903, p. 11.

the Colonial Boot Factory, yearned for a "German Kaiser's Workman's Protection Bill" which imposed severe penalties for striking and intimidation.⁹³ Employers were scorned for the use of "blackleg" labour and breaking wage schedules and agreements.⁹⁴ However, these strikes between 1897 and 1899 wounded the particular unions and the labor movement lobbied for compulsory arbitration.⁹⁵

The attention of the *Sunday Times* was also drawn to the role of workers and discussion of trade unionism and arbitration and conciliation. While supporting the principle of trade unionism, the *Sunday Times* derided the apparent self-aggrandisement of its leadership. Two Fremantle unionists "appear to be more capable of doing a hard day's work with the jaw than with the hands" and, "The average labor leader is an unthinking, garrulous individual and dearly loves to see his name in print."⁹⁶ In 1898, Vosper had fallen out with the coastal Trade Union Council which claimed he did not represent the labor cause, but the *Sunday Times* publicized the first goldfields' Trade Union Council Congress and its platform.⁹⁷ The paper encouraged the trade union movement to unify and deplored the internecine competition between the Perth and Goldfields' T.U.C., between the Amalgamated Workers' Association and the Amalgamated Miners' Association, a conservative splinter group and the secession of the goldfields' A.W.A from the coastal T.U.C.⁹⁸ Walker opposed the distinction between union and non-union workers as "this petty spirit of exclusive pride."⁹⁹

Conciliation and arbitration was to many employers and workers a more acceptable means of deciding industrial conflicts than strikes, lockouts and non-union labour. In a series of articles on the issue, the *Sunday Times* rejected the New Zealand voluntary system as unworkable and suggested that workers should endeavour to conciliate first before resorting to strikes which promoted settlement through external arbitration. But the establishment of a Conciliation Board and an Arbitration Court opened new

93. *Ibid.*, 4.10.1903, p. 1 and p. 4.

94. *Ibid.*, 8.5.1898, p. 4.

95. Gibbney, *op. cit.*, p.352.

96. *Sunday Times*, 17.5.1903, p. 4.

97. *Ibid.*, 9.10.1898, p. 5.

98. *Ibid.*, 25.11.1899, p.4. and Gibbney, *op. cit.*, p. 350.

99. *Sunday Times*, 4.9.1902, p. 4.

avenues for employer, employee and *Sunday Times* 'grievances. The paper chided the Forrest Ministry for not drafting regulations for procedures and the registration of societies.¹⁰⁰ It reported evasions of Commission awards and the Labor Senator, Hugh de Largie, argued that workers would not get an impartial hearing from the President of the Arbitration Commission, Mr Justice Moorhead.¹⁰¹ The Legislative Council was portrayed as a conservative obstacle to the potential growth of trade unionism when it erased the Arbitration and Conciliation Bill's clause allowing preferential claims to unionists over non-union workers and Trades Hall protested against the Factories Bill amendment which excluded male adults from the Wages Board system.

The registration of trade unions and the exclusion of government employees from the Act also stimulated disputes. Richard Sholl, head of Posts and Telegraphs, was personified, by the *Sunday Times*, as the arch-enemy of civil servants, not only in 'sweating' his employees and nepotism, but in refusing to allow his employees to form and register an organisation. Similar grievances contributed to the 1901 railway strike, for which the *Sunday Times* blamed the past practices of Commissioner Davies and the Minister, Piesse. It was also disappointed with Leake's reluctance to intervene. He asserted that civil servants were bound by the Constitution, but Walker denied any Constitutional relevance and claimed Leake should have settled the dispute himself, rather than call upon the Mayors of Perth and Fremantle.

The appointments to and interpretations handed down by the Arbitration and Conciliation Commission were also condemned as partisan and the James Government was deemed responsible for its poor administration.¹⁰² The *Sunday Times* was concerned about the judges' indifference to precedents set by New South Wales, New Zealand and each other, their prejudices and frequent changes of the Presidency which could lead to inconsistent judgements. To the paper, Parker "looks through his class jaundice every time he eyes a laborer"¹⁰³ and had allowed employers to evade awards by deciding that he did not have the jurisdiction to abolish freedom of contract, as it had

100. *Ibid.*, 27.1.1901, p. 4.

101. *Ibid.*, 9.8.1903, p. 10 and 26.10.1902, p.4.

102. *Ibid.*, 10.7.1904, p. 11.

103. *Ibid.*, 22.1.1905, p.5.

been in New South Wales and New Zealand. The *Sunday Times* declared that arbitration had brought low wages, freedom of contract and the "stiltification of the minimum wage"¹⁰⁴ and warned that disillusioned workers would revert to strikes, as had the Newcastle coal miners.

With the establishment of this Arbitration and Conciliation Commission, the *Sunday Times* was drawn, not only to those who were involved with its awards, but to those workers excluded and the increasing numbers of unemployed with neither trade union nor Commission protection. From 1896, the alluvial gold was declining and being replaced by shaft mining of deep leads.¹⁰⁵ Some diggers either returned to the eastern colonies, drifted to Perth or found work with goldfields' mining companies. Despite Sir John Forrest's protestations of a prosperous and booming economy in the late 1890's, the *Sunday Times* pointed to the increasing numbers of unemployed as by-

products of the recession. Walker observed that many of the unskilled unemployed were also eastern states' workers escaping from the effects of a severe drought.¹⁰⁷ Vosper held the Forrest Government responsible for the incidence and welfare of the unemployed and Hayward later repeated the same claims upon Walter James.¹⁰⁸ A *Sunday Times* correspondent complained of favouritism in the dismissal of Government Printing workers and four hundred Public Works employees. A suggestion



HODGE

I'm Harper, the Beverley Hodge,
A protest emphatic I lodge
Against the vile scum
Who westward have come
The gullible Groper to dodge.

From the rustic o'eridden by me
They attempted to loot & s d,
To blow upon bets
And the booze which begets
Contempt for the powers that be.

And though fusion with t'otherside blood
Extracted this State from the mud,
It's looked on with woe
By the man with the hoe
Who digs for the onion and spud. ¹⁰⁶

104. *Ibid.*

105. Batty, *op. cit.*, p.418.

106. *Sunday Times*, 9.11.1902, p. 4.

107. *Sunday Times*, 5.10.1902, p. 1.

108. *Ibid.*, 14.6.1903, p. 4.

by Sir John Forrest that the unemployed should become producers was ridiculed by the *Sunday Times* as unrealistic. In an editorial, Walker proposed that:

Hence the first step towards solving the unemployed question is the reform of Government as an employer of labor. It must cease to be the tyrannical speculator and become the friend and protector of the citizens...the Government has its duties to the toilers outside the actual State service and its first and foremost duty to these is the encouragement of local manufactures to meet our local requirements.¹⁰⁹

While admitting that the State could find work for the unemployed, James hesitated to promote employment through public works lest it attract the eastern states' unemployed. The *Sunday Times* charged that James was more concerned with the credit and standing of the State than the unemployed.¹¹⁰ In 1905, Webb branded the State Labor Bureau as ineffectual as most positions were not advertised, but instead appointments were made through "influence."¹¹¹

The federation of the Australian states was the focus of public attention in Western Australia from 1899 to 1901. The local political and industrial issues were portrayed on a national scale in the federation debate. The late 1890's produced a revitalised federation movement after the industrial and economic interruptions of the early 1890's. In the eastern colonies, divisions emerged over Empire relations, tariffs, immigration and an Australian Constitution. The federation controversy in Western Australia encapsulated the tensions generated by divisions over electoral and industrial reform; between coast and goldfields and between miners and agriculturalists. For many in Western Australia, like George Reid in New South Wales, prevarication was their response, but soon two distinct groups emerged as antagonists in the debate, the coastal conservatives versus the t'othersiders on the goldfields. Those who opposed, or wished to delay Western Australia's entry into a united Australia, did so for varying motivations.

109. *Ibid.*, 7.9.1902, p. 4.

110. *Ibid.*, 21.12.1903, p. 4.

111. *Ibid.*, 19.2.1905, p. 5.

Initially, the *Sunday Times* had disregarded federation as a "farce", perhaps a reflection of the Western Australian feeling that union was a distant prospect.¹¹² Vosper was convinced of the advantages of a national union but by 1900, he was opposing a federation without commitment to a trans-continental railway and the probability of federal tariffs. He predicted that workers would suffer under a national tariff. A protectionist policy, supposedly engineered by Victorian manufacturers, would encourage monopolies, drive industry to the eastern states and result in reduced wages and increased prices in Western Australia.¹¹³ A federal tariff on foreign goods, as well as the customs duties concession to Western Australia, would prove an intolerable burden to workers, particularly on the goldfields. In adopting this stance, the *Sunday Times* and Vosper were in opposition to the goldfields, the Federal League and the local Australian Natives' Association and after 1900, Sir John Forrest and *The West Australian*. This paper opposed free trade on the basis that tariffs would protect workers and manufacturers, albeit Victorian, but Western Australia should begin its own manufacturing industries. "A purely raw-producing country can never become a highly civilized country."¹¹⁴ The goldfields' press, particularly the *Kalgoorlie Miner*, railed against Vosper for changing his mind and thus betraying his constituents.¹¹⁵ Vosper responded by asserting that he had always approached the issue cautiously and he had been elected as an Independent, not committed to any prescribed platform. Sir John Forrest and *The West Australian* initially opposed federation, but later supported Western Australia's entry. The *Sunday Times* chided Forrest's "somersault" on federation and the Commonwealth Bills referendum and quoted the view of the Melbourne *Argus* that he had been deceiving the anti-Federalists.¹¹⁶ Walter James agreed that Forrest's delaying tactics had been designed to overcome opposition within his own ranks.¹¹⁷ However, Battye suggests that it was Chamberlain's statement

112. de Garis, *op. cit.*, p. 344.

113. *Sunday Times*, 1.7.1900, p. 4.

114. *The West Australian*, 11.2.1901, p. 4.

115. *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 30.7.1900, p.4.

116. *Sunday Times*, 13.5.1900, p. 4.

117. Hunt, L. 'Walter James and the campaign for federation,' *Studies in Western Australian History*, Vol II, (March, 1978), p. 43.

alluding to the goldfields' separation threat, which swayed Forrest.¹¹⁸ *The West Australian* conceded that the federationists arguments rested on a sentimental appeal to "One Flag, One People, One Destiny," but this was preferable to the selfish instincts of the National League.¹¹⁹ However the controversy became a local political dispute over representation when Sir John Forrest delayed in putting the Commonwealth Bill to a referendum, as had been the procedure in the eastern colonies. Although opposing the principle of federation, the *Sunday Times* decried this apparent fear of democracy by a conservative and unrepresentative Parliament.

After the electoral sanction of Federation, the *Sunday Times* declared that federal politicians, or "Job lot Senators"¹²⁰ were similar in their political stance and parochial outlook and that under federation, the states had been emasculated, losing self-government and their privileges. Walker also claimed that federation had raised false hopes and it was a "political sham"¹²¹ serving the interests of Melbourne manufacturers. In a comparison with Western Australian government, both apparently lacked leadership. He regarded George Reid as an amiable comedian without a programme or viable opposition. Edmund Barton was described as "The Tool of Monopolists - The Fatman's Premier" who was not sympathetic to workers and the paper reported a record of suppression, laziness and favouritism to lawyers. "You are as autocratic today as you were when you imposed the closure tyranny upon free speech and fair criticism in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly without either the warrant of law or the faintest shadow of justice."¹²² Later, Hayward remarked that, "the real difference between the pair [Barton and Reid]...is probably on a par with that dividing Tweedledum and Tweedledee."¹²³

Once the tariff issue had been decided, the *Sunday Times* believed that the 1903 election would be fought between "personalities and not principles"¹²⁴ In a review of

118. Battye, *op. cit.*, p.452.

119. *The West Australian*, 28.7.1900, p. 4.

120. *Sunday Times*, 24.3.1901, p.4.

121. *Ibid.*, 29.12.1901, p.4.

122. *Ibid.*, 10.2.1901, p. 2.

123. *Ibid.*, 28.12.1902, p. 4.

124. *Ibid.*, 31.5.1903, p. 4.

Western Australia's federal representatives, the *Sunday Times* branded Matheson more a representative of land than of his State; Hugh de Largie was "hysterical" and "discredited;"¹²⁵ and Elias Solomon was inconspicuous. The *Sunday Times* also criticised the first Governor-General, Lord Hopetoun, claiming he had surrounded himself with "sycophantic snobbery" and enjoyed a lavish lifestyle while many in the eastern states were unemployed. "It was an old device of the Romans to make the common people forget their miseries and poverty by providing them with glittering pageants and gladiatorial shows and exciting circuses."¹²⁶

The trans-continental railway and Federal tariffs, Vosper's grievances, were the core of the *Sunday Times* opposition to federalism between 1901 and 1905. The paper constantly harangued Forrest, Minister for Defence, for not advancing the railway cause in the interests of his portfolio, if not for Western Australia.¹²⁷ Forrest argued that if the Western Australian representatives stood united with him, he would be able to exert more pressure on the federal government.¹²⁸ But nine of the eleven Western Australians were free-traders opposed to the protectionist federal government. Similarly the paper castigated Leake for his inactivity on this issue, but it regarded South Australia and the eastern states' representatives as the real enemy, conspiring to construct an Adelaide-Darwin railway instead of the Western Australian line. Hayward believed that a definite commitment to the railway in 1901 would have been inconsequential; it still would not have been constructed.¹²⁹ federal tariffs were opposed for the same objections to the local customs duties, that protection was not in the interests of either workers or the development of industry, but the inevitability of some federal tariffs was accepted as a source of federal revenue.

Walker sustained Vosper's regret that Western Australia had joined the Commonwealth and quoted support from J.H. Carruthers, the ex-Treasurer of New South Wales, who felt that if a referendum on Federation was taken in 1902 it would be defeated.¹³⁰ The

125. *Ibid.*, 31.5.1903, p.4.

126. *Ibid.*, 29.12.1901, p.4.

127. *Ibid.*, 6.4.1902, p.5.

128. *Ibid.*, 28.12.1902, p. 4.

129. *Ibid.*, 7.6.1903, p.4.

130. *Ibid.*, 31.8.1902, p. 4.

Sunday Times claimed that a "Divide" cry for separation now permeated Tasmania, Queensland and Western Australia:

This State has sacrificed much for Federation, but if it means no more than making provision for the costly bickering and reprisals between the monopolist merchants of New South Wales and the monopolist manufacturers of Melbourne our only consolation in the misfortune of our sacrifice in the past will be a long-suffering national repentance that we ever pledged our faith to sky-rockets. ¹³¹

In 1904, as in Western Australia, federal Labor took office, but with a minority government. The failure of Deakin and Reid to form a coalition was blamed on a long-standing feud between Reid and Sir William Lyne. Nevertheless, the Watson Ministry was defeated on an amendment to the Conciliation and Arbitration Bill to give preference to unionists. The *Sunday Times* ascribed a fear of Labor as Deakin and Reid's motivation for opposing Watson and rejected their majority claim to government, recording that several minority ministries in both state and federal politics had governed, "the only genuine reason which has cemented the two opposition parties and inspired the incongruous coalition to action is the deep-rooted hostility to Labor parties."¹³² The paper regretted that Watson had taken office rather than go to the electorate for a clear mandate. "But the temptation was too great for him; he accepted office and became, like other men, fond of office for the mere sake of it."¹³³

However, the *Sunday Times* and the *Spectator* tended to disregard federal politics as largely irrelevant to Western Australia, denigrating the debate over the federal capital site and the Arbitration Act. Instead it concentrated on the call for 1901 promises to be enacted. federal payments for transferred state premises had not been met.¹³⁴ The paper still clamoured for the transcontinental railway to which Reid seemed favourable, but the eastern states seemed hostile, the *Age* reporting the line as "An Iniquitous Proposal." The *Sunday Times* persisted, "Federation doesn't mean anything to this State without the Transcontinental railway."¹³⁵ In view of its unremitting criticism of

131. *Ibid.*, 26.5.1901, p. 4.

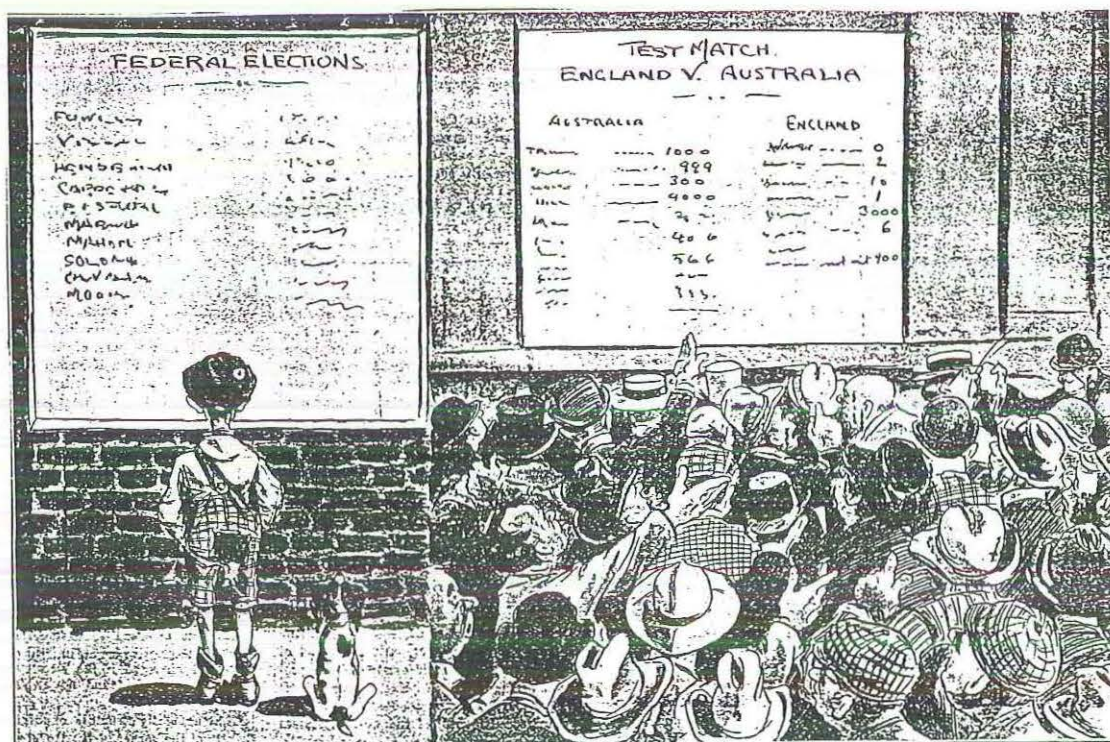
132. *Ibid.*, 22.5.1904, p. 4.

133. *Ibid.*, 16.10.1904, p. 4.

134. *Ibid.*, 8.1.1905, p.4.

135. *Ibid.*, 16.4.1905, p. 4.

Western Australia's role in federation, it is not surprising that, by 1906, the *Sunday Times* was campaigning for secession. It revived the cause in 1919 and from 1926, MacCallum Smith and the *Sunday Times* were prominent supporters of the Secession League.¹³⁶



The Relative Importance of Things. ¹³⁷

The essential purpose of the *Sunday Times* was to oppose the exclusive hegemony of the landed and commercial clique. The opposition of the *Sunday Times* was initially aimed at the Forrest Ministry which was perceived as the obstacles to reform in the late 1890's. However, succeeding Ministries were similarly castigated for conspiring against the labor movement and putting office before principle. The *Sunday Times* gave no quarter in its personal or political censure of those it believed were not fulfilling their

136. Watt, E.D. 'Secession in Western Australia,' *University Studies in History*, Vol. 3, (October, 1948), pp. 44-47.

137. *Spectator*, 17.12.1903, p.3.

promise of reform. Because of the lack of parliamentary support and finances, the Leake, James and Daglish governments were stranded by their impotence. As minority governments, if they proposed sweeping reforms, they were confronted by a conservative Legislative Council. If they adopted a more moderate stance, they were damned by the *Sunday Times* and perhaps the electorate. For the paper, this was especially the case with the Daglish Labor government of 1904-5 and its criticism was all the more bitter for the disillusionment of apparent betrayal of working class aspirations. The *Sunday Times* disregarded electoral or parliamentary circumstances. Governments, both state and federal were expected to uphold their commitments and risk going down with the sinking ship at an election, rather than rat on their principles or promises.

2.

The Cause of Democracy

"a fair field and no favour, in the struggle for existence...liberty, equality, fraternity - these are the inspiring motives of the *Sunday Times*."¹

The *Sunday Times* assumed the role of champion of those who were excluded from or disadvantaged by an apparently antagonistic and monopolistic Establishment in Western Australia. Any legislative innovations or popular movements towards enhancing the political participation and conditions of workers were welcomed. However, the *Sunday Times'* support was predominantly for the governed and only of government when it was demonstrably in harmony with the paper's view of its obligations to reform. Government was expected to be "the handmaid of social reform."² Although the primary emphasis of the *Sunday Times* was to oppose, it did support individuals and institutions and suggested some positive alternatives in the cause of its view of democracy.

Initially, the *Sunday Times* described its role as the metropolitan spokesman for the burgeoning goldfields. From 1890 to 1897, 106,862 immigrants, mostly from the eastern colonies poured into Western Australia looking for gold.³ These outsiders envisaged a quick transformation of their fortunes after the devastating eastern strikes and depression of 1890-94.⁴ Some succeeded and improved their economic status, some returned disappointed to the eastern colonies, but many of those who remained, regardless of prospecting success, became closely involved with the local movement for political and social reform. Thus the eastern goldfields press and the *Sunday Times* supplemented the regional agitation of the *Geraldton Express* whose first priority was electoral reform, particularly in the interests of "the great army of the disenfranchised."⁵

1. *Sunday Times*, 11.8.1901, p. 2.

2. *Ibid.*, 27.1.1901, p. 4.

3. Appleyard, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

4. Clark, C.M.H. *A Short History of Australia*, (2nd ed.), (South Melbourne: Macmillan, 1982), p. 152.

5. *Sunday Times*, 30.10.1898, p. 3.

The *Sunday Times* counted among its liberal press friends, the *Kalgoorlie Miner*, *Geraldton Express*, *Murchison Advocate* and *Broad Arrow Standard* and featured their articles to reinforce its own position.⁶ From its inception until 1905, the political lines were drawn according to these regional interests.⁷

The *Sunday Times* also believed that electoral reform was essential to the participation of the many immigrants in the political process and legislation to broaden the franchise and representation was valued as progressive. Manhood suffrage in 1893 had significantly extended the franchise and Walter James was encouraged by the paper in his campaign for female suffrage.⁸

Opportunities for broader representation could result from payment of members which had been accepted in principle in 1897.⁹ Without remuneration, the Political Labor Party struggled to find candidates. Oldham, the M.L.A. for North Perth was the first, and only, Labor representative in 1897.¹⁰ Vosper advocated payment of members in the interests of promoting workingmen as candidates. When James objected to members being paid too much, the editor disagreed "democracy should level up not down."¹¹ The payment of members, approved in 1900, afforded the P. L. P. its best chance for representation since its inception in 1899 and six were returned in the 1901 election.¹² But until the Constitution was purged of its inequitable electoral distribution, the *Sunday Times* could only plead with eligible voters to enrol. Vosper, R. Haynes, Wood, Hall and J. C. Brickhill, the ex-general manager of the paper, established an Electoral Association to campaign for enrolment and the paper called for a Liberal Reform Association to achieve political progress.¹³

Individual politicians were supported if the *Sunday Times* believed that they represented labour interests. Oppositionists in the late 1890's were encouraged to challenge the Forrest Ministry. Before 1901, the paper, with some reservations, hailed

6. *Ibid.*, 15.1.1899, p. 6.

7. de Garis, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

8. *Sunday Times*, 10.7.1898, p. 2.

9. Battye, *op. cit.*, p. 430.

10. de Garis, *op. cit.*, p. 344

11. *Sunday Times*, 18.6.1898, p. 4.

12. Gibbney, *op. cit.*, p. 349.

13. *Sunday Times*, 29.1.1899, p. 4.

Leake as a liberal, sympathetic to workers and praised for his leadership of the 1898 No-confidence motion.¹⁴ He had been the first Oppositionist to threaten the Forrest Ministry with eviction if the opportunity arose.¹⁵ The *Sunday Times* was disappointed with his retirement in 1899 and declared that there was only one real Oppositionist left, Illingworth.¹⁶ However, Vosper, not one to shirk publicity, ran a *Northam Advertiser* article suggesting that the Opposition should be led by Vosper, "undoubtedly the ablest man on either side of the House."¹⁷

When Leake returned and became Premier in 1901, the *Sunday Times* sympathized with his unenviable minority position in parliament, blaming the inequitable distribution of seats, which delivered two-thirds of the vote to Leake, but not two-thirds of the seats.¹⁸ Leake's proposals were highlighted as the most liberal reform programme ever in the State and his brief first Ministry was praised for its liberal inclination, with, "that necessary 'vim' combined with democratic tendencies, which are so essential to liberal legislation."¹⁹ The *Sunday Times* viewed the inherited obstacles as daunting to a potential reformist government:

He succeeds to power after a long regime of impudent corruption; he is surrounded by rivals who seek to trap him into the pitfalls of corrupted Government; he is confronted with the sins of commission and neglect of his unscrupulous predecessors; he is the guardian of a constitution that has been shamelessly violated and the administrator of laws and Governments illegally sanctioned...he stands the general of a party whose majority in the Assembly is by no means secure.²⁰

The paper claimed that the Leake Government was in fact from the goldfields, represented by Henry Gregory, Frederick Illingworth, Walter Kingsmill and Sommers, with George Leake and John Higham sensitive to goldfields grievances. To the *Sunday Times* parliament was now divided between goldfields and agriculture.²¹ Leake was

14. *Ibid.*, 8.7.1898, p. 4.

15. de Garis, B.K. and Stannage, C.T. 'From responsible government' to party politics in Western Australia,' *Australian Economic History Review*, Vol. 8, No. 1, (March, 1968), p.57.

16. *Sunday Times*, 7.1.1900, p. 8.

17. *Northam Advertiser*, 1.4.1900, p. 1.

18. *Ibid.*, 16.6.1901, p. 4.

19. *Ibid.*, 3.11.1901, p.4. and 26.5.1901, p. 4.

20. *Ibid.*, 23.6.1901, p. 4.

21. *Ibid.*, 9.6.1901, p. 4.

urged to take advantage of this situation to obtain a clear mandate at an election, either by redistribution or dissolution.

With Leake's apparent shift to conservatism in his second Ministry in 1902 and finally his death in June that year, the *Sunday Times* prevailed upon Walter James to adopt a 'progressive' stance. James had proposed and extended reformist industrial legislation in the 1890's.²² He also favoured nationalized industries in banking, life assurance and Colliery coal and later established a state hotel.²³ Previously, he had been described by the paper as hard-working and the "most useful member of the Leake Cabinet."²⁴ Initially, the *Sunday Times* sympathized with James' inability to have legislation enacted by the Legislative Council and called for agitation and public organisation to remove the Upper House, "democratic legislation inside the State is practically impossible while a handful of boodler and reactionaries, representing a small proportion of the electors, can exercise a power of veto so monstrous and pernicious....The Council must go."²⁵ But hope soon turned to disenchantment with the James' Ministry.

The *Sunday Times* looked to the Labor Party to fulfil its platform. From the entry of the first Labor Party representatives, in 1901, they were perceived by the paper as a force for change and were therefore consistently supported. It believed that the party would be revitalised with its new 1901 Constitution and platform in which the pledge would solve some inherent weaknesses in the selection of candidates and their effete parliamentary performance. The paper agreed that the Party's aim for redistribution of seats on the basis of population would return a stronger Labor presence in the Assembly.²⁶ The *Sunday Times* promoted its perception of Labor as the growing political force by praising its organisation and advertising its candidates, such as Holman, the ex-miner and Secretary of the A.W.A. However, it judged that the strength of the Labor vote relied on all workers, not merely unionists who were regarded as a "respectable...but not very cohesive minority."²⁷

22. de Garis, *op. cit.*, p. 343.

23. Hunt, 1974, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

24. *Sunday Times*, 29.12.1902, p. 5.

25. *Ibid.*, 17.1.1904, p. 4.

26. *Ibid.*, 18.8.1901, p. 4.

27. *Ibid.*, 13.3.1904, p. 4.

Until 1904, the *Sunday Times* and the Labor Party were content to support the Leake and James governments in preference to a conservative alternative and in return for legislative concessions such as workers' compensation and legalised trade unions.²⁸ 'Mulga' Bill Taylor broke this convention when he went into opposition against Leake and was condemned by the labor movement. Its deepening disillusionment of Leake's policy of moderation led the *Sunday Times* to laud Taylor as "independent, gritty and logical"²⁹ in defying the caucus. He was later reprimanded by the caucus and his district council.³⁰ The paper predicted that he would lead the Labor Party, but later lost faith in him as a Minister, who apparently became moderate in office.³² Labor support for the James Ministry disintegrated in 1903, when A.W.A. rivalry and accusations of corrupt collusion of Labor M.P.'s brought this alliance into disrepute.³³ The *Sunday Times*, with the labor movement, had lost faith in middle class liberals and pinned its reformist aspirations on the Labor Party. "With the commencement and steady growth of the Labor Party we have witnessed the power of principles at work in society, making towards universal emancipation and the abolition of conventional distinctions."³⁴



"MULGA"

The member for Mulga is here,
A man with a principle clear,
Whose sturdiness shames
The jackals of James
And stifles their snufflesome snooze.

A tough and tenacious old snag,
He flattens each flunkey and fag,
And begs to decline
To part with his spine
Or part on a Government gag.

But his triumph is sure - if it's slow,
For his merit full measure will go,
When the fields in their wrath
Shall blow off the froth
From Hastie, Reid, Johnson and Co. ³¹

28. Hyams, B.K. "Western Australian political parties: 1901-1916," *University Studies in History and Economics*, Vol. II, No. 3, (September, 1955), p. 51.

29. *Sunday Times*, 31.8.1902, p. 4.

30. Gibbney, *op. cit.*, p. 354.

31. *Sunday Times*, 4.3.1903, p. 13

32. *Sunday Times*, 25.10.1903, p. 4. and 1.1.1905, p. 3.

33. Gibbney, *op. cit.*, p. 356.

34. *Sunday Times*, 24.4.1904, p. 4.

When the Labor Party took office as a minority government, the *Sunday Times* urged it to resist any temptation to coalition. But Henry Daglish had to rely on ten ex-Forrest Independents to hold office with the consequent adherence to developmental public works and little likelihood of comprehensive legislative reform.³⁵ The *Sunday Times* had expected more than inertia from Daglish and the Labor Government and supported Wilson's attack on Daglish for apparently reneging on the Labor platform, in exemptions from land value taxation, non-alienation of Crown lands, the delay in the provisions for a referendum on the abolition of the Legislative Council, the stoppage of public works and the invitation for private tenders for the construction of a railway line. Only the Minister for Lands, John Drew was worthy of the *Sunday Times'* respect as an honest, sincere and "reliable democrat."³⁶ Its condemnation of the Daglish Ministry was endorsed by Hackett, "the bulk of the government are not merely incompetent, they do not believe in themselves."³⁷

The extent of the *Sunday Times'* disenchantment with the Labor Ministry can be gauged by its promotion of the return of Sir John Forrest to State politics. "Therefore it would be better to have roaring, rollicking Jarrah Jack as unofficial autocrat than Doubting Daglish, Twaddling Taylor and their confreres."³⁸ Forrest did not return, but Lady Forrest recalls that at times he did contemplate re-entering State politics.³⁹ The *Sunday Times* believed that Forrest could provide stability and, with a more equitable distribution of seats, a government accountable to wider interests. Although the electoral reforms were not completely satisfactory to the *Sunday Times'* ideals, by 1905 only the Legislative Council and plural voting remained as barriers to its view of a democratic parliament. It was the enduring conformity of public and financial administration which drew unflagging reproach from the *Sunday Times* throughout this period.

35. Hyams, *op. cit.*, p.51.

36. *Sunday Times*, 5.2.1905, p. 3. Drew was the owner of the *Geraldton Express*, a staunch ally of the *Sunday Times*, since its inception in 1897.

37. Gibbney, *op. cit.*, p. 360.

38. *Sunday Times*, 8.1.1905, p. 4.

39. Crowley, F.K. *Western Australia's Lady Forrest. 1844-1929*, (reprint), (Perth: Western Australian Museum, 1962), p. 28.

As an alternative to the established fiscal policy followed by succeeding Western Australian governments from 1897 to 1905, the *Sunday Times* believed that public taxation should be minimal and equitable and expenditure should be stringently allocated, according to its definition of taxpayers' needs. Its primary purpose was to support politicians who would implement these economic priorities. The *Sunday Times* approved of the use of "John Bull's money"⁴⁰ provided its use realised a profit at the end, was of value to the public, did not excessively burden current and future taxpayers and was not used to favour sectional interests. The paper condoned the Perth City Council's plan to spread the repayments of a 20,000 loan over thirty years to recoup the expenditure from both current and future taxpayers and supported Captain William Oats, M.L.A. who declared that work was the impetus for development, not capital.⁴¹ It upheld Albany's claims as a port which "might have been made the Liverpool of Australia at a twentieth part of the expense lavished upon the worthless places in which Ministers and their clique are pecuniarily interested."⁴²

The goldfields' residents, paying 10/11/9d per head in taxation and "on whose existence the continuous prosperity of the country must entirely depend,"⁴³ were seen as more deserving of public outlay.⁴⁴ Initially, the Coolgardie Water Scheme was praised provided that the cost could be justified and Lefroy's Goldfields' Bill was described as "an intelligent effort to remedy the mining problems"⁴⁵ with dual leases, after Wittenoom's detested ten-foot regulation.

The principle of state funding for public works was universally accepted in Australia and contributed to the contrast between steady investment and unstable political factions.⁴⁶ The importance of railway construction to Western Australian development was not disputed. "Without railways a large country like Australia would long remain

40. *Sunday Times*, 20.1.1898, p.4.

41. *Ibid.*, 13.1.1901, p. 4. and 23.10.1898, p. 4.

42. *Ibid.*, 16.1.1898, p. 1.

43. *Ibid.*, 23.1.1898, p.4.

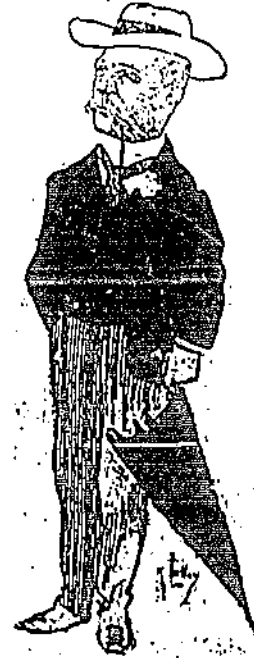
44. *Ibid.*, 9.1.1898, p.1.

45. *Ibid.*, 17.7.1898, p.4.

46. Butlin, N.G. *Investment in Australian Economic Development, 1861-1900*, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1964), p.292.

practically a desert or terra incognita."⁴⁷ The *Sunday Times* sympathized with those who complained that they were neglected. It supported Kirwan and the *Kalgoorlie Miner* in its call for an Esperance-Norseman railway to provide the goldfields with a port, although the former did concede to the *Northam Advertiser* which suggested that more borrowing was unwise. As the *Sunday Times'* interests and readership expanded, it also supported a Port Hedland railway for the Pilbara and the Jandakot farmers' demand for an Armadale-Fremantle line to open up new farming settlements and provide employment.⁴⁸ Walker published a letter by and J.T. Glowrey who debated the relative merits of State and private railways and advocated State-regulated private railways in the interests of accelerating land settlement. The editor rejected this suggestion, reiterating Vosper's stance that railways were part of the national wealth and as such should not be controlled by private enterprise, possible monopolies, but should be owned and controlled by the public.⁵⁰ Private railway experiments, which could not lure investment from more profitable ventures, had floundered in the eastern colonies and become the preserve of colonial governments.⁵¹ The nationalization of the railways in Western Australia was possibly inspired by a faith in the expansion of land settlement, more than a desire to prevent monopolies.

Nationalization was acceptable to Vosper's *Sunday Times* where a monopoly of service existed. It did not advocate the extinction of private enterprise. "Men work with a will



KIRWAN, M. P.

A political penman am I,
From Dublin's fair city I hie,
And I kneel at the shrine
Of the Esperance line,
Which will come - in the sweet bye and bye.

At the Gropers residing below
My venomous twaddle I throw,
And in leader and par
Belt Kaiser and Czar
From the sanctum of Shocking and Co.

But the luridest curse I command
Is jerked at the John Forrest band,
Whose spiteful decree
Keeps Burton and me
From selling our Esperance land. ⁴⁹

47. *Sunday Times*, 18.8.1901, p. 4.

48. *Ibid.*, 2.3.1902, p. 5.

49. *Ibid.*, 1.2.1903, p.13.

50. *Ibid.*, 24.3.1901, p. 7.

51. Butlin, *op. cit.*, p. 302.

when they work on their own account, because the fruit of their labours is their own."⁵² Legislation should be enacted to prevent monopolies, unfair trading practices and working conditions. However, Walker envisaged more comprehensive state ownership when reporting a New Zealand plan to nationalize coal mines, an echo of W. Campbell's call for State enterprises.⁵³ "The people possessed the railways, and why should the people not also possess the gasworks and the shipping, and break up those huge monopolies?"⁵⁴ The *Sunday Times* interpreted the role of government enterprises in terms of benefits to workers. Departmental work was preferable to the freedom of contract under private enterprise.

Access to land ownership was seen as essential to dispersing the exclusive control of the State's agricultural resources. Throssell, in 1898 regarded as liberal and progressive and the only government Minister esteemed by the *Sunday Times*, was praised for his Land Bill which the paper believed would contribute to the dissolution of land monopolies, with a deferred payment system to encourage settlement by small farmers "a healthy yeomanry... the necessary backbone to a healthy colony."⁵⁵ The *Sunday Times* agreed with Illingworth, James' Minister for Lands when he described W.A. land laws as liberal. Prospective settlers were offered 160 acres free if occupied and the Agricultural Bank lent half of the cost of improvements.⁵⁶ A *Sunday Times* correspondent congratulated the Government on being "sincere" in its efforts to relocate people onto the land with "liberal land laws, establishing agricultural banks and lending money on very easy terms and low rates of interest, building agricultural halls,... making roads and bridges... and even buying up large private estates for the purpose of reselling them to the small farmers."⁵⁷

The goldfields' influence on the *Sunday Times* contributed to its promotion of free trade to express the miners' antagonism to local duties, thereby raising the price of

52. *Sunday Times*, 9.1.1898, p.3.

53. *Ibid.*, 31.3.1901, p. 1.

54. Buckley, B. and Wheelwright, T. *No Paradise for Workers. Capitalism and the Common People in Australia. 1788-1914*. (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 182.

55. *Sunday Times*, 15.5.1898, p.4.

56. *Ibid.*, 16.2.1902, p. 1.

57. *Ibid.*, 17.8.1902, p. 8.

imported goods and food. Vosper instituted this policy on the basis of his interpretation of the colony's economic development. Apart from his concern for the cost of living on the goldfields, he observed that only under free trade had Western Australian agriculture flourished and that only by abandoning the protective customs duties would agricultural enterprise and energy be revitalised.⁵⁸ The W.A. Free Trade Association, publicized by the *Sunday Times*, was strongly influenced by the goldfields and established by Wilson, Zollner, Hume and Morgans to also promote state rights and other Western Australian interests in the transcontinental railway and defence.⁵⁹ Free trade was supposedly in the interests of all, whereas protection sustained incompetence and dominance of sectional interests.

The *Sunday Times* sought to curb the perceived abuses, extravagance and mismanagement of both public and private enterprise by establishing regulatory procedures. The paper agreed with Monger's notion that shareholders should have access to mines to thwart the deceptions by mining companies. In public works or institutions, government statutory authorities should supervise as watchdogs of the electorate. It proposed a Harbour Trust for Fremantle port, a Health Board to oversee the Hospital and an Inspector of Clothing to investigate government contracts.⁶⁰

The quest of the *Sunday Times* was to identify those whom it could trust as progressive reformers who would promote the interests of the working class. The paper approved of any extra-parliamentary association or organisation designed to enhance the individual workingman's conditions. Trade unionism was deemed the most effective means of expressing and agitating for workers' concerns and the *Sunday Times* quoted the French socialist Jean Jaures. "O, what wonderful social power workingmen would possess if they were members of trade unions."⁶¹ A *Sunday Times* correspondent celebrated the achievements of Australian unionism in legislative recognition of its principles, such as the eight hour day, minimum wages, day labor, early closing abolition of the truck system, Factories Act, old age pensions, labor parliamentary

58. *Ibid.*, 12.8.1900, p. 5.

59. *Ibid.*, 12.5.1899, p.4.

60. *Ibid.*, 17.11.1901, p. 3. and 16.2.1902, p. 1.

61. *Ibid.*, 27.5.1900, p. 1.

representation and arbitration and conciliation. The writer credited these reforms to independent, advanced gold miners and trade unionism.⁶² The *Sunday Times* detailed the platform of the first Trade Union Congress. Its proposals for electoral, industrial, taxation and mining reform (examples being redistribution of electorates, adult suffrage, payment of members, compulsory arbitration and the eight hour day were similar to those advocated by the paper. The A.W.A., centred on the goldfields dominated this Congress and its influence on the Labor party platform was a reflection of the politicization of the labor movement.⁶³ Manning Clark suggests that, after the failure of the 1890's strikes, the labor movement sought to replace industrial action with political influence.⁶⁴ However, Fitzpatrick believes that it was more a change in strategy and "Labor did not love industrial action less, because it now smiled also on political action." ⁶⁵

Vosper's fear of any tyranny of monopolistic leadership and aversion to strikes, led him to pronounce, in 1899, that the contemporary trade union was redundant. He proposed that trade unions should become limited liability companies in which directors would be accountable to shareholders, the workers. The trade unions would then have access to the Supreme Court to settle disputes with employers.⁶⁶ The paper still sanctioned the actions of timber, mining and railway strikers reacting to the failures of legislation and particularly if it interpreted their conduct as orderly, as of the 1901 railway strikers " a dignified, calm and honourable demeanour worthy of their great struggle."⁶⁷ During the 1899 bootmakers' strike, Vosper and James had approached the Commissioner of Police to advise a peaceful settlement.⁶⁸

The *Sunday Times* support for the cause of the unemployed who were not protected by trade unions, led it into debate about the most appropriate means of returning them to the workforce. It attempted to draw attention to a growing number of unemployed, not

62. *Ibid.*, 17.2.1901, p. 2.

63. Buckley and Wheelwright, *op. cit.*, p.200.

64. Clark, *op. cit.*, p.154.

65. Fitzpatrick, B. *A Short History of the Australian Labor Movement*, (South Melbourne: Macmillan, 1968), p.146.

66. *Sunday Times*, 2.4.1899, p.6.

67. *Ibid.*, 14.7.1901, p. 4.

68. *Ibid.*, 8.5.1899, p. 5.

just in Western Australia, but in New South Wales and in Victoria, where its politicians were accused of still acting in the interests of monopolists waiting until the "Butterless Masses of Melbourne"⁶⁹ were suffering great distress.⁷⁰ In 1899, Vosper proposed that the government, not charity, was responsible for the unemployed:

The community must in some way or other, directly or indirectly, be taxed for the maintenance of those who are idle, or are engaged in unproductive and unprofitable employment. The highest form of charity is that which enables men to help themselves. The charities of the world have, for the most part, failed, or worse, have perpetuated the evils they were intended to mitigate because they have had no higher aim than that of relieving the immediate physical necessities of the poor.⁷¹

He then outlined local government schemes in the United States which employed men on land cultivation. New Zealand, led by Prime Minister Seddon, was portrayed as a symbol of a government sympathetic to working men in providing for all unemployed at least eight shillings a day for an eight hour day's work.⁷² To the *Sunday Times*, the Western Australian remedy lay in clearing land for agriculture and orchards, government camps to provide food and shelter, contract work rates, free rail passes and an unemployment register. But low wages should be paid to discourage workers from staying too long.⁷³ As in the 1930's, government was to be a temporary shelter and employer for the by-products of economic cycles. Contemporary attitudes could not accommodate any further responsibility, either by the Western Australian government or the new democratic federation.

In 1898, the *Sunday Times* moved from initial disinterest to vehement support of federation, but by 1899, it had drifted to a conditional position and then to outright opposition. Its early view of Western Australia's inclusion in a federated Australia emphasized advantages of an end to parochialism and preferential railway rates, a democratic universal suffrage, Lower House control of finances and the opportunities

69. *Ibid.*, 7.4.1901, p. 3.

70. *Ibid.*, 10.12.1899, p. 1 and 11.3.1900, p. 1.

71. *Ibid.*, 12.2.1899, p. 5.

72. *Ibid.*, 17.2.1901, p. 2.

73. *Ibid.*, 9.4.1899, p. 5.

for national industries and legislation for pensions.⁷⁴ Any disadvantages were weighed as inferior to the fiscal, democratic and strategic benefits to Western Australia.

This approach coincided with that of the goldfields and the Oppositionists. The goldfields, believing that they were restricted by the Western Australian Constitution and by the Forrest Government's fiscal policy, saw an opportunity to be rid of the colonial customs duties and achieve a more liberal franchise. Walter James, the first Chairman of the Federal League, led the Oppositionists charge towards federation, demanding a referendum. The *Sunday Times* took up the rallying call of "The Bill to the People"⁷⁵ and urged the League to educate electors. In a letter to the *Sunday Times*, Walter James supported this role of the Federal League:

Federation has no greater - indeed no other - foe than ignorance. The Federal Constitution must commend itself to those who know it, and the duty is cast upon all of us, who love Australia to see that, so far as we can avoid it, no person shall fail to understand the provisions of a bill which has been truly characterised as a charter fit to conserve the liberties and worthy of the acceptance of a great and free people.⁷⁶

Vosper had supported federation on the premise that Western Australia's interests were protected, particularly in regard to defence and commerce.⁷⁷ He stressed the need for amendment to ensure the construction of a transcontinental railway and was now aligned with the conservatives Sir John Forrest, Throssell and Morgans. "The lion and the lamb now lie down together."⁷⁸

But those who opposed federation did not present a cohesive platform.⁷⁹ Vosper's response to the criticisms of the unconditionalists in the Federal League and on the goldfields was that he did not oppose federation, but its potential to isolate Western Australia and he had always advocated a cautious approach.⁸⁰ The *Sunday Times* supported the Eastern labor movement which had denounced the Federal Constitution as undemocratic, particularly in the election and powers of the Senate, the "conservative

74. *Ibid.*, 17.4.1898, p. 4.

75. *Ibid.*, 29.5.1898, p. 4.

76. *Ibid.*, 29.5.1898, p. 3.

77. *Ibid.*, 16.7.1899, p. 4.

78. *Ibid.*, 28.5.1899, p. 1.

79. Hillman, W. 'The Federal Referendum in Western Australia,' *Studies in Western Australian History*, No. 2, (March, 1978), p.56.

80. *Sunday Times*, 16.7.1899, p. 4.

watchdog."⁸¹ The *Geraldton Express* and the *Geraldton Advertiser* also allied with the *Sunday Times*, belittling federation as "a false unity which would adversely affect the farmer, manufacturer and wage-earner."⁸² Vosper disapproved of the 'Separation for Federation' movement, but sided with the goldfields demand for a referendum. Although he didn't accept that federation would redress the grievances of the goldfields, he warned the Legislative Council, Sir John Forrest and *The West Australian* that it should be taken seriously as the Imperial Parliament had set a precedent by proposing a division of Western Australia in 1890.

The dominant landed and commercial interests in Western Australia found an unexpected ally in Vosper, but their priority lay in a fear of interstate free trade which would expose local agriculture to eastern states competition.⁸³ Vosper supported their anti-federation stance, not to protect agricultural interests, but predicting that local customs duties and federal tariffs on imported goods would be a double burden for the wage-earners, especially on the goldfields. As Vosper's opposition to the proposed conditions for federation intensified, he suggested that Western Australia's interests would be better served by a form of Imperial Federation. An elective, advisory Imperial Senate would consist of Imperial delegates, not chosen on a population basis lest the United Kingdom dominate and the colonies become subservient.⁸⁴ This was not the English-dominated Imperial Parliament envisaged by the Imperial Federation League.⁸⁵ This League, an Anglo-Australian class protagonist, sought to reconcile Australian nationalism with an economic, social and political association within the Empire, whereas Vosper would not relinquish the autonomy of local government. The *Sunday Times'* cause was lost in the referendum, passed by the expected goldfields majority and also the metropolitan vote. National sentiment, Forrest, *The West Australian* and the aggrieved goldfields had won the day.

81. Buckley and Wheelwright, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

82. Hillman, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

83. de Garis, *op. cit.*, p. 345.

84. *Sunday Times*, 20.5.1900, p. 8.

85. Grimshaw, C. 'Australian nationalism and the imperial connection,' *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, Vol. 3, No. 2, (1958), p. 66.

The cause of democracy, propounded by the *Sunday Times* was to create a representative government and social egalitarianism, based on "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity." Originally, the paper concentrated on supporting the goldfields' miners and their electoral exclusion, but as the alluvial gold diminished, they needed to find alternative employment or a future on the land. Western Australian's future was to be secured by land settlement and public works and in this the *Sunday Times* agreed with the Forrest, Leake, James and Daglish governments. However, it also saw the future prosperity of Western Australians in political participation and improved social and industrial conditions and lent its journalistic weight to any who would campaign and legislate to these ends.

A Radical Newspaper?

A traditional Radical might be defined as "a would-be root and branch reformer of the Constitution - a politician who advocates measures which are considered 'extreme'; that is, which go far beyond the desires of the average political opinion of the day." ¹

If we agree with the *Edinburgh Review*, the traditions and nature of Western Australian radicalism at the turn of the century can be quantified by what was considered outside the norm of contemporary political convictions. If conservatism was the predominant influence of the era, then those beyond the main body of conservatism, who advocated alterations to the status quo were likely to be identified as radicals, but there were wide variations in their supposed extremism. The *Sunday Times* reinforced its opposition to the existing order with a partisan and literary journalism to confront accepted political and cultural conventions.

James Jupp contends that "colonial radicalism"² was unique to Australia and independent of any philosophical basis which inspired the English radical tradition. He credits this antipodean radicalism with the drive for franchise reforms which resulted in state economic and social legislation. However, Jupp has discarded the British heritage of most Australians; at the turn of the century English Radicals were also questioning the role of government. Should government intervene according to a party programme and lead social and economic changes, or continue to respond only to public pressure? In Western Australia, this question also had implications for the conduct of politicians and sectional interest groups. Should individualism and the protection of individuals be sacrificed in the interests of social legislation and collective action by trade unions and political parties?

Western Australians' radicalism was moulded by their British origins and by their colonial experiences. British institutions were the structural foundations of Australian government and the majority of Western Australians, whether outsiders or gropers,

1. *Edinburgh Review*, 1900, quoted in Emy, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

2. Jupp, J. *Australian Party Politics*, (2nd ed.), (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1968), p. 2.

came from a British political background which influenced their concepts of democracy, government and the behaviour of politicians.³ This British slant was reinforced by newspapers, such as the *Sunday Times* where the content was highly political and Britain and the Empire dominated overseas news. The paper featured articles on prominent British radicals such as Labouchere and Chamberlain and philosophical discussions of developments in both English and Western Australian radicalism. However, in Western Australia, the principles underlying such issues as national unity, free trade and social legislation were often submerged under pragmatic responses according to local and sectional interests. The opportunity to construct a new society in Western Australia in the late 1890's, was afforded by the rapid demographic changes and the vision of an egalitarian federation.

In the 1890's Britain's Conservative Party was inclined to preserve the established order by maintaining past traditions and institutions. Francois Bedarida described the English Establishment as a "group of traditionally ruling bodies entrenched in their citadels of their institutions and quasi-hereditary privileges."⁴ But conservatism did not involve an unequivocal rejection of changes to deal with public discontent. It was the conservatives' paternalistic duty to ensure that the lower orders were protected by those with the capacity for public office. The *Sunday Times*, in commenting on British conservatism, referred to Prince Albert's view that the "masses only feel and do not think."⁵

The British Liberal Party's liberalism was a belief in individualism as the guarantee of liberty:

In the first place, individualism referred to the Victorian respect for character, thrift and self-help as the criteria for defining individual progress; and secondly, individualism included a belief in limited governments, and a trust in an individual's responsibility and rationality. The best society was that which aimed at providing for its members the greatest measure of individual freedom compatible with their common good.⁶

3. Gollan, R. *Radical and Working Class Politics. A Study of Eastern Australia 1850-1910*, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1960), p. 111.

4. Bedarida, F. *A Social History of England 1851-1990*, (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 200.

5. *Sunday Times*, 19.1.1902, p. 4.

6. Emy, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

This philosophy was expressed in the late 1890's in the Party's support of Irish Home Rule, disestablishment, free trade and a revision of political representation to further enlarge its urban support base. The Party provided an umbrella for many different viewpoints on how to enhance the opportunities for individuals. Some were classified as radicals as their beliefs and proposals were regarded as extreme. This very wide range of liberal opinion racked the English Liberal Party with doubts, uncertainty and division from 1885 to 1903.

The British Radicals of the 1890's were still grounded in the liberal premises of self-help and the degree of government action in society was to be minimal. This was part of the dilemma of Radicals in the Liberal Party. If social reform was justified, how far should governments intervene without jeopardising the responsibility of individuals? If Liberal Party unity was at stake, how much should individual Radical politicians sacrifice their own particular causes for an official party programme?

In Western Australia, conservatism was embodied in a landed and commercial clique represented in parliament in the 1890's by Sir John Forrest and the Ministerialists. The Western Australian establishment cannot be directly equated with that of England, but it was considered conservative in its adherence to the existing social order, but not averse to changes if that order was not disturbed. The Forrest Ministry had enacted manhood suffrage and a redistribution of electorates in the 1893 Constitution Amendment Act and a further redistribution in 1896, which Stannage marks as the beginnings of the new immigrants' political influence.⁷ A Truck Act, industrial arbitration, early closing, female suffrage and a Workman's Wages Act had also been passed by 1901. These adjustments did not alter significantly the structure of Western Australian society, nor the nature and policies of the 1890's governments. The Legislative Council and plural voting remained as protection for conservative landed and commercial interests.

7. Stannage, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-7.

Consistent with Forrest's belief that his government could satisfy all sections of the community, he held that economic development and the related public works were paramount and electoral reform a secondary consideration:

There were some people on the goldfields who thought such measures as a Redistribution of Seats Bill were more important than the goldfields water scheme, but he knew that in several constituencies the electors wanted less members than they have at present.⁸

Forrest was treading the fine line of moderation between some of his ultra-conservative supporters and the demands of liberals and radicals. He boasted of his liberal reforms and Courtney recollects that Sir John Hackett, Forrest's compatriot, professed to being a "liberal of the traditional English type."⁹ But the *Sunday Times* spurned Forrest's reforms as sham legislation:

when the historiographer of the future comes to examine the statutes of Western Australia of the Forrest period, he will be at a loss to understand what manner of foc's we were to be satisfied with such political shadows....The Redistribution Act was a mockery, the Electoral Act a delusion.¹⁰

In the context of Western Australian society and politics, the Forrest Ministry was viewed as conservative by the *Sunday Times*.

The paper also objected to the links between religious groups and the state. For the *Sunday Times* any religious involvement in government and society outside the pulpit was denounced, in the spirit of Mills' "positive humanistic and high secular ideals."¹¹ It concentrated its attacks on the overt signs of ecclesiastical influence, but there was always a more subtle link between the Established Church and the ruling group. The *Sunday Times* also opposed any other religious sect which was involved with worldly issues.

This probably explains why Vosper, Hayward and Walker eschewed the political and social interference of parsons or priests and delighted in publicizing clerical scandals or misdemeanours. The *Sunday Times* took a particular dislike to a Reverend Rowe and a

8. *Sunday Times*, 2.4.1899, p. 5.

9. Courtney, *op. cit.*, p.10.

10. *Sunday Times*, 19.1.1898, p.2.

11. Emy, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

Reverend Wheatley's involvement in the National Political League.¹² The former had played a part in the spirited debate on Sunday journalism between Sabbatarians and the *Sunday Times*, which defended its own claims as a more rational moral guardian.

The Freemasons were also targeted by the paper, as a clandestine, sectarian society with links to the Forrest Government, satirising them as the, "Order of the Hereditary Muc-a-Mucs, Worshipful Grand Boozer, Hereditary Weeping Virgin, R.W. Bro Sir Jerry Builder, Grand Principal Toady and a Grand Principal Posturer."¹³ However, in response to the Roman Catholic Bishop Gibbney's complaints of Protestant Freemasonry, the *Sunday Times* charged that Catholicism also closed ranks in an exclusive club. All sects were subjected to indiscriminate criticism if they were seen as going beyond their religious jurisdiction and encouraging division in the community.

Between 1897 and 1905, liberalism in Western Australia was upheld by firstly the Oppositionists, and then the Leake and James governments. Some of their proposals in the 1890's were called radical by the conservative faction. In 1893, M.F. Canning's motion to abolish plural voting was ostracized as extreme, but by 1899, a similar motion by Leake came closer to success. Leake's motion for "free, secular and compulsory" education became the most serious challenge to the Forrest Ministry which narrowly avoided defeat over the issue and later passed its own Education Act. The *Sunday Times* commended Leake and the Oppositionists and noted that Sir John Gorst's attempt to deter secular education in England had been rejected by the Commons and contributed to the fall of the Salisbury Ministry.¹⁴ But the paper gave no indication that it appreciated the implicit links between a state-controlled education system and the Established Church.

Before 1901, James was also active in pressing the Ministerialists for reformist legislation. He was inclined to government ownership of monopolistic industries and also promoted the Conciliation and Arbitration Bill to encourage law and order in

12. Reverend Rowe was the chairman of the Methodist Conference. See Vanden Driesen, *op. cit.*, p. 365.

13. *Sunday Times*, 9.1.1898, p. 7.

14. *Ibid.*, 24.7.1898, p. 5.

private enterprise. He campaigned for female suffrage which was acceptable to the Forrest Ministry as a device for reducing the political impact of the male-dominated goldfields.¹⁵ By 1901, the demands for electoral revision had largely been satisfied. The James government did further redistribute seats and finally disposed of plural voting but it tried in vain to alter the voting qualifications for the Legislative Council.

Between 1901 and 1904, the Leake and James governments turned to economic development and industrial legislation. A Trade Union Regulation Act, a revised Arbitration Act and a Workers' Compensation Act were passed. Land settlement was still regarded as vital to Western Australia's expansion and public works continued, but not at the pace of the 1890's. However, a conviction that the role of government should be restrained, an orthodox approach to business efficiency and a reluctance to compel individuals by legislation would have precluded the Leake and James' governments from profound social and economic changes. Also, Leake and James led minority governments. Thus the vote of conservatives, Independents and the Labor Party swung between opposition and support during this "transition to party politics."¹⁶ To the *Sunday Times*, the Forrest, Leake and James governments had not deviated from conservatism and moderation and, despite their reforms, no substantial alterations to Western Australian society or government had occurred.

Vosper seemed to display some of the confusion of radicalism through the *Sunday Times* and his own political career. He struggled to balance the collectivist implications of party and faction alignments with the liberal tenets of individualism. Fiercely independent, he was elected for North-East Coolgardie in 1897 and later rejected overtures from the Labor Party, whose pledge and caucus obligations were anathema to his individualism. Shortly before his death, he nominated as a candidate for the Senate, which was more conducive to the election and influence of Independents. Conversely, he deplored the lack of cohesion of the pre-1901 Oppositionists, but at the same time questioned whether it was, "desirable to have a

15. de Garis, *op. cit.*, p. 346.

16. de Garis and Stannage, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

united party, when unity is to be procured by the sacrifice of individual volition, common sense and responsibility, it must lead in the end to corruption, subservency and stagnation."¹⁷

According to Vosper, individuals must adhere to personal principles, regardless of consequences. Radicals often championed their own causes with a vengeance, sacrificing their political careers and fortunes. In Queensland, he, together with 'Mulga' Bill Taylor and Julian Stuart, had been actively involved in the 1891 shearers' strike, their roles resulting in a term of imprisonment.¹⁸ In Western Australia, Vosper jeopardised the support of his constituents by opposing Federation, for which the *Geraldton Express* praised his courage and personal sacrifice.¹⁹ Determined to pursue independent opinions, unfettered by party or constituency considerations, Vosper martyred his political fortunes. "Vosper's views are too far ahead of the times, too submissive of crusted toryism, too obviously radical and sweeping not to bump right up against vested interests at all points."²⁰

In the Western Australian parliament, Oppositionists were supposed to fulfil their functions and oppose. Frustrated with those who crossed the floor to vote with governments, the *Sunday Times* cried, "Wanted, A Radical Organisation" to remodel the Constitution, encourage enrolment and pressure both the Government and Opposition.²¹ The paper despaired of the disparate Opposition and compared its plight with the British Liberal Party, also divided and in opposition at the time. This attitude would appear to contradict Vosper's own personal stance. Walker and Hayward were more certain of the need for political unity, advising the Leake, James and Daglish Ministries to reject coalitions which might dilute their government's policies.

The apparent inconsistency of the *Sunday Times* might best be illustrated by its views on federation. While Vosper supported the concept of Australian unity, he maintained that Western Australian interests were paramount. Perhaps the same motivation

17. *Sunday Times*, 16.7.1899, p. 7.

18. Julian Stuart edited the *Westralian Worker* in 1903. See Gibbney, *op. cit.*, p. 356.

19. *Geraldton Ezpress*, 23.6.1899, p. 2.

20. *Ibid.*, 27.4.1900, p. 7.

21. *Sunday Times*, 17.12.1899, p. 4.

was interchangeable with any state intervention . This was not the revolutionary socialist rhetoric of William Lane, but in Western Australia, legislation to regulate private enterprise and working conditions was regarded as radical by conservatives. The *Sunday Times* resisted any suggestions of government coercion when it interpreted socialism as a broad term for the "scientific organisation of labour under the principles of justice and equity which could only be achieved with voluntary co-operation by all parties."²⁵ Later, Hayward was to ascribe "equality of opportunity" to the foundations of socialism.²⁶ The paper had not relinquished its concerns for the autonomy of the individual.

Nationalization of all industries was not prescribed as the panacea for the inequities of Western Australian society, by liberals, trade unions, the Labor Party nor the *Sunday Times*. State-controlled industries, such as railways, were acceptable to provide the infrastructure for Forrest's developmental economics. The *Sunday Times* agreed with state enterprises where there was a monopoly of services or industry. Railways were seen as part of the national wealth which ought to be held for the common good.²⁷

The P.L.P. represented a radicalism distinct from the radical liberals, to whom its extra-parliamentary connections and commitment would have been unacceptable. The P.L.P. was instituted to secure improved working conditions and political representation of workers. The party's strategy, in the early 1900's, was to exact concessions in return for support, as it did with the Leake and James governments. The *Sunday Times* regarded the rise of trade unionism and the P.L.P. as at least a philosophical revolution:

At root, the labor movement is what Christianity was to Paganism what Luther was to the Papacy, what Wesley was to Anglicanism...an what Agnosticism is to all. It means a loosening of the bonds that keeps groups of mortals in conventional grooves and giving to all an opportunity for a change of status.²⁸

25. *Ibid.*, 10.2.1901, p. 5.

26. *Ibid.*, 23.10.1904, p. 4.

27. *Ibid.*, 24.3.1901, p. 7.

28. *Ibid.*, 20.8.1899, p. 2.

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25. *Ibid.*, 10.2.1901, p. 5.

26. *Ibid.*, 23.10.1904, p. 4.

27. *Ibid.*, 24.3.1901, p. 7.

28. *Ibid.*, 20.8.1899, p. 2.

In 1902, the *Sunday Times* was still looking for an organised democratic party and did not hold out for a majority Labor government as the Party tended to "commit political suicide."²⁹ Two years later the paper was advising a course of "waiting" and "training" for the Labor Party.³⁰ Their lack of political or administrative expertise was evident in the first Labor Ministry of 1904-5.³¹ What was evident to the *Sunday Times* was the moderation of its middle class leadership and its isolation from the labor movement. It mourned the death of William Morris:

a true socialist who lived the ethics of pure democracy. Most men of his belief now-a days wear top hats, go into Parliament, talk about the penury of the populace and wear geranium button-holes while dining with their influential friends. Morris was none of this.³²

The *Sunday Times* had lost faith in the capacity of liberals or the P.L.P. to act on behalf of the workers, but the paper seemed unsure at times of exactly how the goals of the labour movement were to be achieved or represented.

There was no such equivocation on its literary style of journalism which it believed was the appropriate medium for the working classes. The 1890's regional and nationalistic journals expressed their particular social and political outlooks in a verse and prose which exhibited both journalistic and national radicalism.³³ which added a cultural arm to their political dissent. The *Sunday Times* adopted this tactic and voiced much of its criticism in literature, usually simple ballads, prose and cartoons. Not only did this "literary journalism" ³⁴ of Australiana confront the Anglophilic preferences of those elites who considered themselves educated and cultured, but also provided a medium for ridicule of any pretensions or foibles of those who held public office.

This approach was not revolutionary, as Western Australian opposition newspapers had included local literary themes since 1830. The use of verse as a medium for critical working class comment on political issues and social attitudes was evident in the *Swan*

29. *Ibid.*, 30.11.1902, p. 4.

30. *Ibid.*, 10.7.1904, p. 4.

31. de Garis, *op. cit.*, p. 350.

32. *Sunday Times*, 17.9.1899, p. 2.

33. Smith, 1963-4, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

34. Grant, *op. cit.*, p. 272.

River Guardian, in the *Fremantle Herald's* 'Chips the Sandalwood Cutter' and the *Geraldton Express's* 'Under the Verandah.' Writing as 'Viator' in the *Geraldton Express*, Andree Hayward had attacked the 1890's Forrest Ministry and its supporters with a damning verse entitled "The Sneer of Septimus Burt":

'Tis the will of politicians
Prostituting high positions
Keeping up the old traditions
(Down ye dogs, on bended knee)³⁵

In the 1890's, opposition literary journalism intensified with the arrival of eastern colonies' journalists who identified with workers' grievances and the *Bullein* to express radical opinion. In the style of the *Bulletin*, they parodied, ridiculed and lampooned the contemporary public figures and rival editors and proprietors. The *Coolgardie Miner* defended the rights of alluvial diggers against the 'ten-foot' regulation:

The poor man fights, once more the purse,
The rich buys legislation. ³⁶

Following the tradition established by the regional newspapers, the *Sunday Times* indulged in literary journalism, especially under Walker and Hayward. Ellis had included some poetry, mostly by E.N. McCulloch, but much of the *Sunday Times* verse and prose at this time was concerned with descriptions of nature or humanity. Political comment appeared occasionally:

Deep, deep in Johnny's blundering head
The Water Project sunk,
"Oh, happy project," sage, he cried...
For when I've beggard half the fields,
'Tis time to drown their senses!"³⁷

Vosper's was more a philosophical crusade and featured longer articles, either Amphictryon's "Public Letters to Public Men" or lengthy debates on such issues as free trade, federation and trade unionism. As editor, he struggled to keep the *Sunday Times* afloat, employing few other journalists and writing most of the paper himself.³⁸ His

35. *Geraldton Express*, 6.9.1895, p. 6.

36. *Sunday Times*, 20.3.1898, p. 4.

37. *Ibid.*, 11.1.1898, p. 4.

38. *Ibid.*, 29.5.1898, p. 2.



The press gang
No. 2.

"Dryblower"

RED.
Roots
1904

concessions to literary journalism were mainly imported verse and stories from other newspapers.

Walker and Hayward were quick to enlist the poets who featured in the *Geraldton Express* and the goldfields papers, particularly from the *Sun*. Edwin Greenslade ('Dryblower') Murphy was the most regular and prolific of the literary contributors to the *Sunday Times*, with some contributions from Crosscut and Bluebush. Murphy, like Hayward, had worked for the *Geraldton Express*. In the *Sunday Times* he wrote snippets of local colour and poems in a "Verse and Worse" column on the editorial page. The content of Murphy's poetry was mainly focussed on satirising the issues and personalities that were featured in the criticism of journalistic articles and editorials:

The Tariff

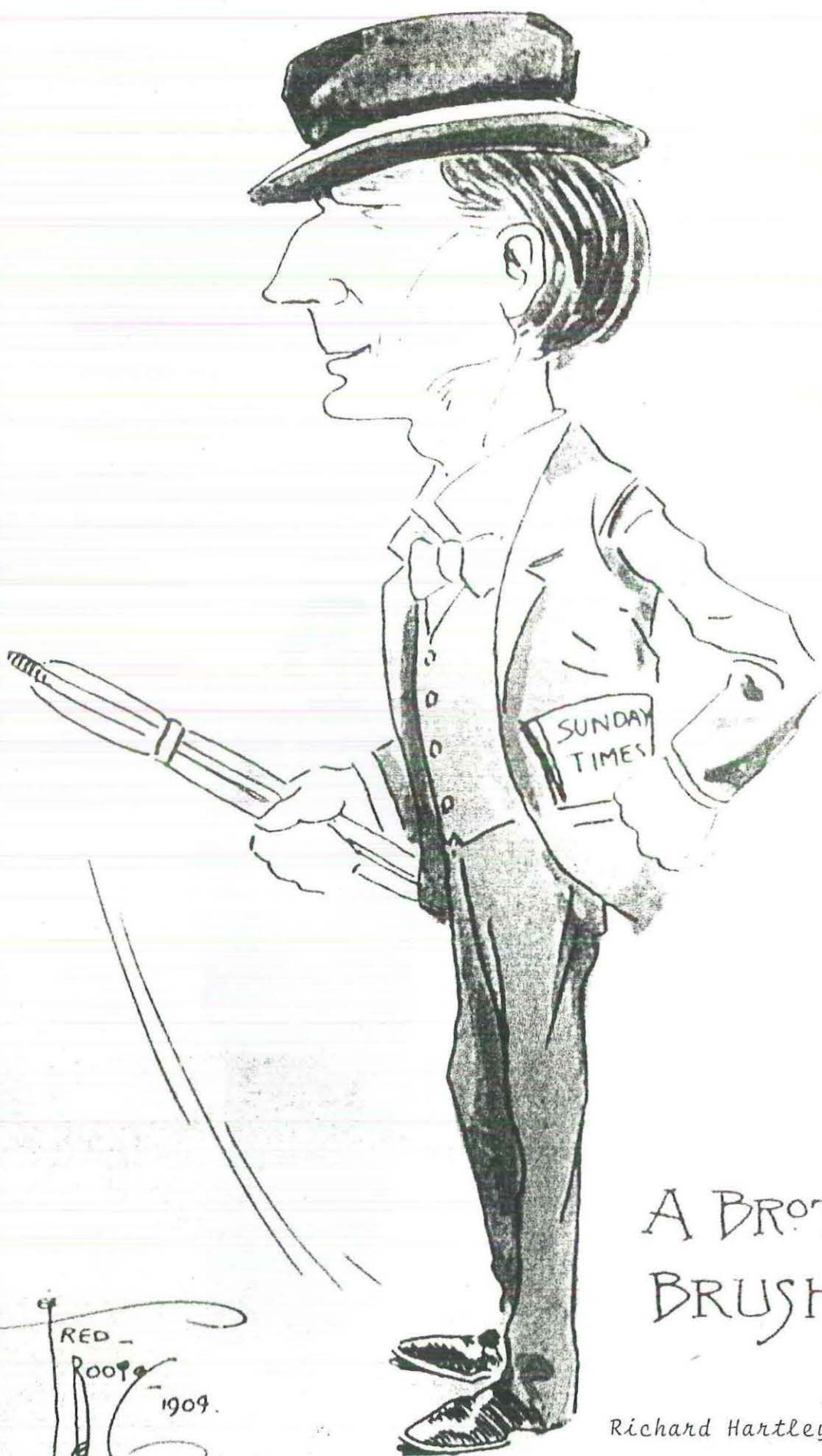
They are talking of the tariff in the village by the Swan
They're discussing it along the Golden Mile,
And from Derby down to Eucla you can hear the pro and con,
Its virtues and its imperfections vile,
It is argued long and often mid the crashing roar of stamps,
It permeates the gossip at the Weld.
The gaunt prospectors curse it in their lonely outback camps,
When the tired prads are hobbled out and belled.

Both rice and oatmeal upward go, there's duty too on cake,
Likewise a "tray-bit" on to kerosene,
While wallop goes a tanner on the fragrant weed we smoke,
And a prohibition on to margarine.
But while this Toby Tariff and its high protective rates,
The toilers into poverty will crush,
My lady's gandy finery comes in at open gates,
Yea! even to her artificial blush.³⁹

During Hayward's editorship, Murphy's verse was often accompanied by cartoons and caricatures, firstly by Fred Booty and then Richard Hartley. The paper also included serialised stories, but they were not the political and cultural radicalism of the poetry. The *Sunday Times* verse during this period was mostly a literary reinforcement to the paper's political stance.

The mere inclusion of literature in a newspaper was a deviation from the apparent conservatism of *The West Australian* which focused on strict news, notices and

39. *Ibid.*, 13.10.1901, p. 4.

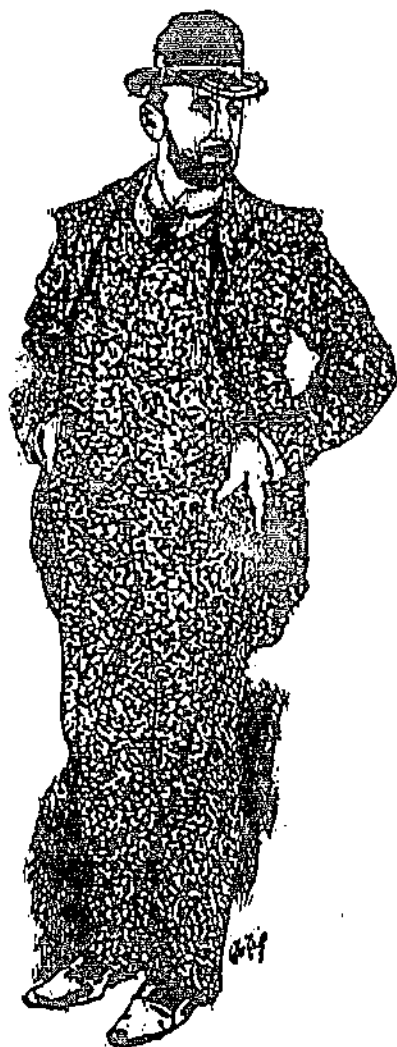


A BROTHER BRUSH. N°1

Richard Hartley

RED -
ROOPE
1909.

confined its comment to the editorial, To counter the attraction of the wave of literary journalism, it published the *Western Mail* a Saturday publication which featured literary contributions, especially at Christmas. With Forrest departed from Western Australia, both Walker and Hayward reserved their most aggressive vitriol for Sir John Hackett. To them, Hackett, a Legislative Councillor, Freemason and Anglophile, was the symbol of reactionary conservatism and a rival newspaper. The *Sunday Times* denied the impartiality of *The West Australian*, claiming that its moderation, omissions and editorial stance favoured the entrenched establishment. Windschuttle would contend that this was his "ideological consensus" model which neglected or suppressed divisions and dissent in order to prop up the existing order.



A LITERARY HACK-ETT

Behold in me personified,
The Power behind the Throne,
Without me Groper grabs are snide,
Their feasts a meatless bone,
The honest Press, through Nor'-West deeds,
Compares me with Legree,
But whatso'er those papers say
I'm ruler now in W.A.,
And always hope to be.

To sweep "reforms corrupt" away
I linger on the Press,
If you've the ready cash to pay
I'll find you swift redress,
Should you a plaint to me indite,
Against some public robbers,
It's ten to one they'll see your screed,
For all the Chiefs of Grab and Greed
Commingle with my "cobbers."

Within my own Masonic sphere,
Strange businesses I dare
Though every scheme I "compass" here
You can't proclaim as "square"
The man of merit I can spot
(Provided he's a brother),
But should "non-dodgers" seek my smile
If they can "make it worth my while,"
The claims of craft I smother.

The whirling weather-cock I played,
To catch the fay'ring breeze,
My pirouette was long delayed,
But still I turned with ease
On ball-and-sockets joints I trust,
My works are oiled and free
But though I spin in divers ways
The only wind I love to raise
I known as L.S.D. 40

It was the style of the goldfields' and *Sunday Times*' poets which represented an Australian nationalism. Conservative Western Australians regarded British literature as the epitome of cultural excellence and the local education system nurtured this influence. Victor Courtney remembers an education dominated by English history and lamented the neglect of Australia.⁴¹ The poetry of 'Dryblower', Crosscut' and 'Bluebush' was not in the mold of Tennyson or Keats. It was simple rhyming ballads that were designed to entertain the so-called uneducated classes and deride the pretensions and foibles of public figures. Andree Hayward had a healthy respect for the knowledge of the rural workers and miners and did not underestimate their capacity for philosophical debate. In Western Australia of the 1890's, Henry Lawson's bushman had become the goldfields' miners, to be eulogised for all the romance, nationalism and mateship of Russell Ward's "noble frontiersman."⁴² The egalitarianism of the mining community was revered by Arthur Reid, "In this heterogeneous society, there were no class distinctions. Side by side with the roughest make-shift, there existed a civilization which was satisfied with nothing but the best."⁴³

This was the radicalism of the literary journalism, that it confronted the conservative elements with a literature that proclaimed the pre-eminence of workers, simple jingles and local themes in what should constitute Western Australian values and lifestyle. By the beginning of 1905, Hayward was back at the *Geraldton Express* being sued for libel, and Jack Webb was the editor of the *Sunday Times*. Dryblower's 'Verse and Worse' had been demoted from the editorial page and the number of Hartley's cartoons reduced. The goldfields' literature had been utilised to bring an opposing style and comment to Perth, but had served its purpose by 1905.

The radicalism of the *Sunday Times* in this era was contained in its support for the participation of workers in the economic and political priorities. This was a concept which was outside the norms of the contemporary conservatism, liberalism and

41. Courtney, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

42. Ward, R. *The Australian Legend*, (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 253.

43. Reid, A. *op. cit.*, p. 35.

economic orthodoxy. The paper was notable for its confusion about radical strategies, which seemed to produce inconsistent editorial positions. Vosper's personal conflict between his inclination to be independent and his aspirations for the labour movement established the trend of the paper. Hayward and Walker did not deviate far from Vosper's support of individualism, but were more amenable to party politics, social legislation and a literary style for the *Sunday Times*. Their inclusion of satirical verse extended the radical image of the paper from a working class industrial and political agitation to a cultural nationalism.

Conclusion

Most newspapers lead public opinion, in the same way as a dog leads a coach, by looking around to see which way the coach is going.¹

In its opposition to the supposed malpractice and inequitable distribution of power and wealth in Western Australia at the turn of the century, and its support of reformist legislation, the *Sunday Times* claimed to identify with the labour movement. The paper initially saw its purpose being to bring the goldfields' message to Perth, but the transition of most alluvial diggers from independent, self-employed miners to employees brought an editorial and literary sympathy for all workers. The *Sunday Times* could also be viewed as a forum for the editors to propound their personal orientations. Vosper, Walker and Hayward, despite some journalistic and political deviations, generally sustained their attacks on the establishment. Their differences lay in the means by which the political and industrial participation of the working class could be achieved. The paper was also designed to appeal to middle class professionals who had to be converted to the ranks of labor sympathizers, if political and social reform was to occur within the existing parliamentary structure. Thus the role of the *Sunday Times* was not just to reflect the divisive nature of Western Australian society, but to educate the community on its vision for a harmonious society.

Arthur Reid contended that newspapers reflect public opinion, but the editors of the *Sunday Times* sometimes took their own course, regardless of which way the public "coach" was heading. Windschuttle might include this editorial lead as his manipulative model of the media. The paper's response was at variance to that of the public on some issues, such as Federation. Were the people duped or apathetic, as the *Sunday Times* alleged, or was the paper disregarded as the editorial "dogs" pursued their own personal causes?

Jenny Gregory has suggested that a "consensus myth" has been the prevailing view of Western Australian society. Instead, she offers an alternative, "image of a dynamic

1. Reid, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

society, based on class, whose history was marked by tension and conflict."² The *Sunday Times* asserted that Western Australian society could not be harmonious, if exclusive cliques could monopolize government or wealth. The paper's opposition to the existing authorities was to expose their apparent misrule, sustained by an illegitimate claim to government. It saw inefficiency and corruption of public departments and finances as detrimental to the workers, more particularly the goldfields' residents. Consequently, the *Sunday Times* was ready to champion any individuals or groups who would also challenge the conservative and landed and commercial hegemony centred in Perth.

The paper hailed the French Revolution as "that glorious death blow to class, caste and privilege."³ and its stated objectives of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity," symbolized its view of democracy. The *Sunday Times* seemed to equate 'liberty' with the liberal tradition of freedom of individual action. 'Equality' was interpreted as the equality of opportunity for these individuals and was gauged, firstly, from 1897 to 1901, by the demand that the votes of individuals should carry the same weight and that they should have equal access to representation. After 1901, the paper tended to interpret equality as social and economic egalitarianism which implied a new direction for the functions of government. The fraternity was the brotherhood of all workers and the trade unions and Labor Party could offer the collective organisation and political influence to change the direction of Western Australian society.

Ambitious ideals indeed! The *Sunday Times* though, seemed perplexed about how to achieve its vision of democracy embodied in "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity." The paper struggled to reconcile its middle class individualistic interpretation of democracy with the uniformity of equality and the collectivism of fraternity. In his journalism and political conduct, Vosper established the guidelines of this concern for the individual.

2. Gregory, J. (ed.). 'Western Australia Between the Wars,' *Studies in Western Australian History*, (June, 1990), pp. 12-13.

3. *Sunday Times*, 25.3.1900, p.8.

He published an article from Labouchere's *Truth* criticising "The Reign of Mediocrity:"

The ideas of liberty, fraternity and equality have been carried too far. The thought of this equality smothers all rising greatness in the bud, kills it with jealousy, and murders authority out of fear of obedience. The possibilities of leadership are crushed, as soon as its manifestations appear, by the malignant hatred of those who if they cannot be great themselves, are determined that at any rate no one else shall be.⁴

In 1899, both the British Liberal Party and the Western Australian liberals were searching for cohesion, but to Labouchere and Vosper, this unity came from leadership, not the conformity of ideals. Vosper, Walker and Hayward searched for the individuals who would sustain a viable Opposition, Government and labour movement. Divisions along party lines had long been established in Britain, but since the 1880's, the Liberal Party had searched for a formula to unite its Radicals, moderates and Whigs. In Western Australia, liberals and conservatives struggled to achieve unity without resorting to the imposed discipline of the Labor Party.

In the personal politics of the 1890's in Western Australia, Vosper demanded that individuals remain true to their principles. Between 1901 and 1905, in the shift towards party affiliations, Walker and Hayward were more inclined to accept a combination of allegiance to both personal and party objectives. Nevertheless, they were still influenced by the legacy of Vosper's individualism and interpreted the socialist doctrine as an idealistic society in which egalitarianism would promote opportunities for all. The *Sunday Times* like the labour movement, might have been inspired by the prospect of a social harmony created by nationalization and welfare. In practice, this would be impossible to achieve without middle class support which was unlikely to relinquish private enterprise and liberal canons of individual responsibility. The *Sunday Times* and the labour movement adapted to the contemporary situation and moderated their socialism to that of state industries to prevent monopolies, social legislation and support for a Political Labor Party.

4. *Ibid.*, 14.5.1899, p. 6.

How far did they believe government legislation should interfere with the rights and opportunities for individuals? The *Sunday Times* argued that the Forrest, Leake and Daglish governments had succumbed to moderation. Until 1905, Walker and Hayward demanded more social responsibility from Ministries, but this was more an editorial stance, as in 1905 Jack Webb was prepared to support the return of conservatism in the interests of stable party government. The Labor Party had alarmed the conservatives and liberals and disappointed the *Sunday Times* in its apparent failure to represent the working class. The *Sunday Times'* view of democracy was based on the premise that the true democrats were to be found within the labour movement. A contrasting perception was held by the Western Australian establishment, which believed that democracy meant protecting existing rights and privileges and a fear that decisions by a majority might endanger the interests of minorities.

Conservatives and working class radicals were also contrasted by their different interpretations of development. The Forrest Ministry looked at progress through the eyes of private enterprise. Production, exports and expansion of land settlement and industries were all conducive to improving the status and fortunes of the State. Governments should facilitate those developments with public works. The *Sunday Times*, some liberals like James, and the labour movement translated the well-being of the State as the welfare of people. Governments should intervene to ensure that all workers benefited from economic development and that social conditions were improved.

The nature of the *Sunday Times'* radicalism should also be judged in the context of what was considered extreme at the time. Radicalism is a relative description, usually applied from whatever is considered the middle ground. In the 1890's, Vosper and some of the liberals allied with Leake and James were considered the radical left, but by 1905, the liberals were associated with conservatism. Radicalism had moved beyond the 1890's liberals to the perception that the industrial and political representatives of the labour movement were the far left. Extreme viewpoints were not confined to those

opposing the status quo. An ultra-conservative viewpoint might be that of a correspondent to *The West Australian* in 1904, writing about the Labor Party:

a party which, while advocating its sweeping reforms, gives every promise of executing its designs by fair means or foul. Woe to those who live to experience a time when Labor shall be the only power in politics and no force shall be forthcoming to [French Revolution], it is existent now only in the imagination of a few, the majority of whom hope to gain by the diffusion of their noxious principles....It is far outside the pale of reason that those who make the country should be denied the right of administering its affairs...what a lamentable aspect of being controlled by Labor and the working and illiterate classes...abolish one man, one vote. ⁵

Walker had a different view of who made the country:

It was an axiom of the old school of political economy that intelligence and honour could only be found with leisure and wealth, and that the toiling masses of humanity were neither fit to think or act for themselves....Let us resolve that our material conditions shall be determined by laws and institutions based on the best concepts of justice." ⁶

In its concepts of democracy and progress, the *Sunday Times* clashed with the prevailing attitudes of the governments from 1897 to 1905. Conservatives, like Forrest, maintained that social harmony could be attained under their leadership. A radical *Sunday Times* presented an image of a society divided by inequities. Its literary and journalistic style added to its rejection of moderation. By adopting the goldfields' poets and cartoonists, and in its flamboyant and exaggerated journalism, it might have symbolized this very disparate nature of Western Australian society. According to their status and political views, readers would be polarized. Either they rejected the paper as outrageous and radical or would appreciate its support of workers and opposition to the landed and commercial ruling clique.

The *Sunday Times* could be described as a radical newspaper, as in the context of the era, it presented concepts of government and society that were regarded as extreme. However, it did not present a radical labour viewpoint such as, for example, doctrinaire socialism and republicanism. Radical firebrands like Vosper, Taylor and Stuart had left their violent agitation in the Queensland prisons. In Western Australia, they took the

5. *The West Australian*, 5.7.1904, p.4.

6. *Sunday Times*, 20.1.1901, p.4.

pragmatic course to social and industrial changes and worked within the existing parliamentary system. Vosper, Walker and Hayward balked at the idea that socialism and politics should be coercive and deny the scope for independent action.

The predilection for opposition can be considered the most visible feature of the *Sunday Times'* radicalism. It was implacable in its criticisms of public figures, taking little or no account of circumstances or of other points of view. Vosper's individualism was hallowed, yet others, like Oppositionists and trade unions, were expected to unify under common policies. Walker and Hayward dismissed Leake and James as charlatans, yet those Premiers were handicapped by minority government and a conservative Legislative Council. Perhaps Derry's description of Chamberlain is applicable to the *Sunday Times*. "He was Radicalism incarnate. He gave no quarter and asked for none." ⁷

The *Sunday Times* can be regarded as a reflection of people's opinion in their electoral and industrial demands. Its opposition to the Forrest, James and Daglish governments coincided with their electoral defeats. The increasing membership of the trade unions and the electoral success of the Labor Party was reflected in the paper's drive for working class participation. If the *Sunday Times* was a "Paper for the People," it was for the mass of people who were largely excluded from the considerations of governments from 1897 to 1905. Their indefatigable opposition to the leaders of governments, society and workers was that they did not consult or heed the voice of the "people." The paper was certain of the need to revise colonial concepts, but the means to this end seemed elude Vosper, Walker and Hayward. This quandary seemed to permeate a Western Australian society dislocated by rapid changes to government, wealth and immigrants. After 1901, a divided and uncertain electorate could not give governments a clear mandate. Conservative and liberal politicians were unsure of how to react to the Labor Party and demands for social legislation. The labour movement was perplexed by its middle class parliamentary representation of a working class constituency. The dilemma of the *Sunday Times* reflected the confusion of the era.

7. Derry, *op. cit.*, p. 319.

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