

Tribune, 14 November 1939

LASCAR SEAMEN STAND UP FOR RIGHTS

"If we Australians were half as solid as these Indians, this country would be a different place."

This was the typical comment of young and old, men and women, as they saw the Indian seamen, now lying in Long Bay Gaol, wandering around the streets or penned up on the wharf at Pyrmont last week.

They had refused to take the ship to Britain and the war zone again. Even a promise of 100 per cent increase in wages didn't tempt them. A promise by the shipowners to take them to India they found too hard to believe.

They claim a lot of promises have been made and not kept. So nearly 100 left the ship. At Pyrmont, where most of the men were bottled up on the wharf, sympathetic passers-by, including children, brought them bread and eggs. Tea and milk were supplied by Labor organisations. The other men, numbering about 30, were locked out of the wharf and wandered about the streets, seeking information about one of their comrades who had been arrested on a warrant taken out by the serang.

COMMUNISTS HELP

A meal was obtained for them at a tiny cafe by Mr. Jack Simpson, manager of the *Tribune*, the cost of which two officials of the WWF, Messrs. Lonergan and Healy, agreed to meet. Accommodation for the night was arranged by the state executive of the Communist Party...

Eventually the whole of the men were arrested. They come before the court this morning.