

FOR PRESS :

AMPOL TANKER - A.C.T.U. REPRESENTATIONS

The Prime Minister, Mr. Menzies, today received a deputation from the A.C.T.U. led by its President, Mr. A.E. Monk, on the question of manning the Ampol tanker, "P.J. Adams."

The deputation proposed that the Commonwealth Government should subsidise wages by at least £35,000 a year so that the operating company could use an Australian crew.

The Prime Minister rejected the proposal and, in doing so, drew the deputation's attention to Clause 21 of the Agreement between the Commonwealth and Ampol covering the registration of the ship. The Clause reads :-

- "21(1) The said vessel shall be registered as a British ship. The company may, but shall not be obliged to, register the vessel in Australia but should the vessel be registered outside Australia the port of registration shall be London in the United Kingdom.
- (2) On or before delivery of the vessel the Commonwealth shall deliver to the company all documents necessary to enable the vessel to be registered in the Registry selected by the company."

Mr. Menzies pointed out to the A.C.T.U. representatives that when the proposal to subsidise the building of the "P.J. Adams" was before Cabinet, Ampol made it a condition to the placing of an order for building the vessel in Australia that they should not be obliged to register the vessel in Australia.

The Government decided that it should, nevertheless, agree to subsidise the building of the tanker at Whyalla because of the substantial employment this would create in the ship-building and related industries.

Mr. Menzies further noted that Ampol's intention to operate the vessel on the British registry had, in fact, been known for a long time and had been the subject of questions in the House of Representatives in 1958.

The Prime Minister added that, having entered into an agreement with the company in the circumstances outlined, he could not agree that the Commonwealth should now consider a further and continuing subsidy towards the operation of the vessel.

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CANBERRA,

30th October, 1962.