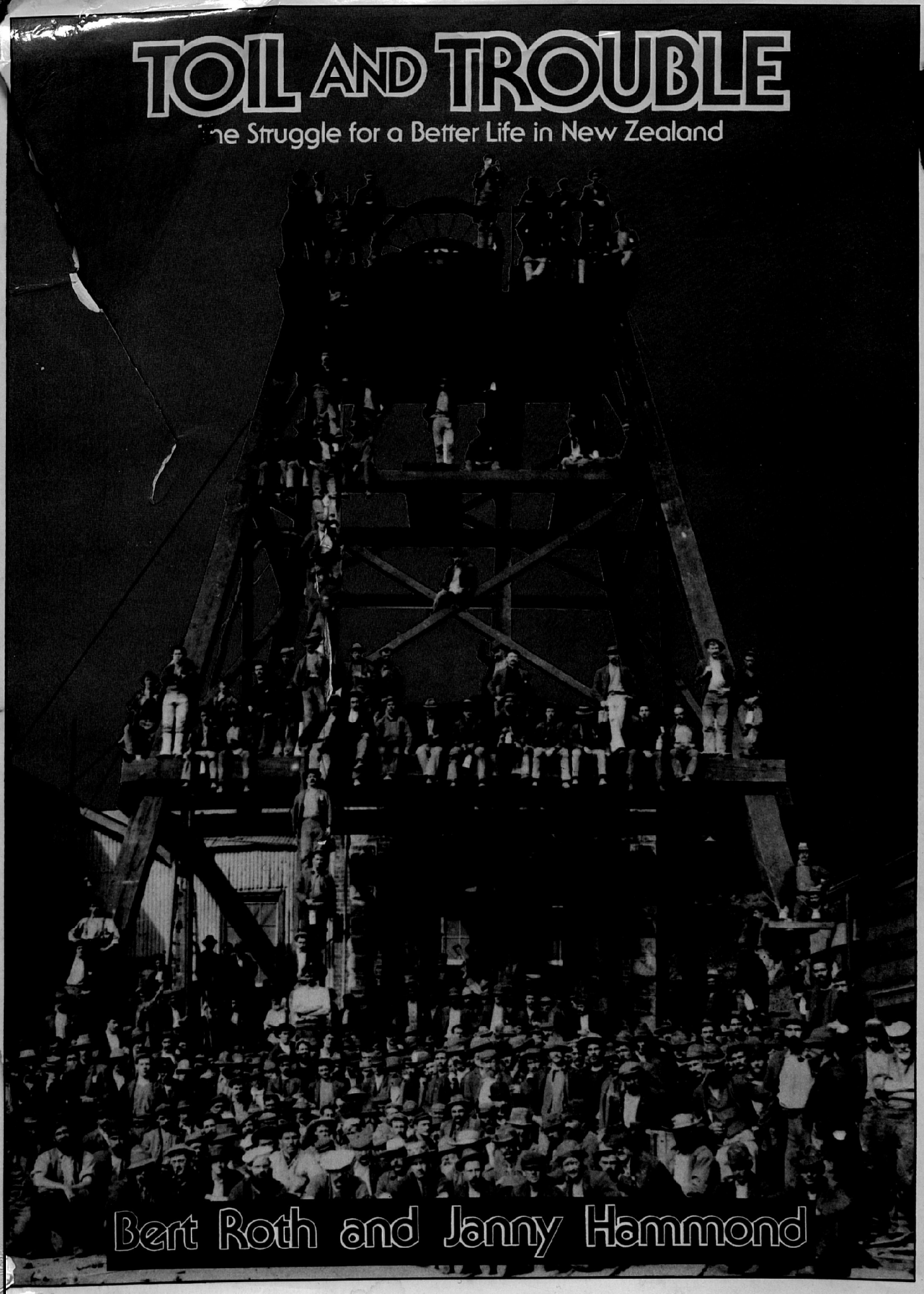
TOIL AND TROUBLE

The Struggle for a Better Life in New Zealand



Bert Roth and Janny Hammond

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METHUEN
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Foreword: Extract from 'Literature Will Be Scrutinised' by Bertolt Brecht from *Poems 1913-1956*, Eyre Methuen Ltd, London, 1976, 1979.

Cover: Waihi mine staff, *Auckland Weekly News* 14 Dec. 1900, courtesy of Beattie Collection, Auckland Institute and Museum Library.

Foreword

Whole literatures
Couched in the choicest expressions
Will be examined for signs
That revolutionaries too lived where there was oppression. . . .
The delicious music of words will only relate
That for many there was no food.

Bertolt Brecht

This book is the result of such a search, not so much of New Zealand's literature as of the pictorial materials of its past. Our aim has been to illustrate the efforts of New Zealanders to forge a better life for themselves from the time of the arrival of the first pakeha settlers at Britannia Beach in 1840 up to the recent struggles at Kinleith and Mangere airport. Many of these efforts have been collective and organised; they highlight New Zealanders' ability to stand up for their basic human rights.

Many of the early records have unfortunately been lost. We could find only one photo of the 1890 Maritime Strike, and one photo to illustrate the work of the early Arbitration Court. Clearly, photographers took little interest in industrial relations, but the indifference of the onlookers was matched by the lack of historical sense shown by the actors themselves.

Countless minute books, documents and other objects have been destroyed over the years. The union-owned Jubilee Shipping Company, for example, had two large flags: one survived in the Dunedin office of the Seamen's Union, but the other ended its days ignominiously as a bedspread in a union member's home. Nor should it be thought that such vandalism is confined to the distant past: within the last ten years the bronze bust of Samuel Parnell has disappeared from the meeting room of the Wellington Trades Hall, and so have the large framed photos of union conferences which used to hang on the landings.

In selecting illustrations for this book we have thus not suffered from a surfeit of sources. Despite these limitations we have sought to provide, as far as possible, fresh material. Some familiar illustrations, however, could not be overlooked because of their quality and historical importance. Nevertheless, we hope that the bulk of our pictorial material will be new even to specialist readers.

Our book is not a definitive history of the New Zealand labour movement; it is a picture book. Visual impact has been our first concern, although the pictures have been chosen to illustrate specific significant incidents. Many of these episodes are strikes and other occasions of conflict. This is not due to any striving for sensationalism: conflict between employers and employees is inherent in our economic system and manifests itself in different forms. Strikes are the most public and traumatic of these. To omit or play down the role of strikes would have meant distorting the essence of our industrial history.

The arrangement is chronological and the book can be read from cover to cover, though many readers will possibly prefer to dip into it at random or to refer to specific incidents.

Our thanks are due to many individuals and institutions who made illustrations available; especially to those who hold materials privately. Our final plea is to those readers who have custody of, or access to, labour archives to see that this material is preserved for future generations – preferably in a library where professional care is available.

Bert Roth
Janny Hammond

NEW ZEALAND COMPANY, EMIGRATION.

THE COURT OF DIRECTORS NEW ZEALAND COMPANY

Are prepared to assist in Emigrating to their Settlements in New Zealand,

AGRICULTURAL MECHANICS, FARM LABORERS,

AND

Domestic Servants

Of good character, who will assist themselves by defraying a portion of the cost of their passage.

The Directors will receive Applications accordingly, until

WEDNESDAY, the 9th AUGUST,

From persons of the above description, desirous of proceeding on these terms by the Ship

AJAX

Appointed to Sail from the London Docks on

Monday, the 4th September next.

Further Particulars and Forms of Application may be obtained at New Zealand House.

By Order of the Court.

Thomas Cudbert Harington.

New Zealand House, 9, Broad Street Buildings, London,
24th July, 1848.

A ECCLES Printer 101 Fenchurch Street London

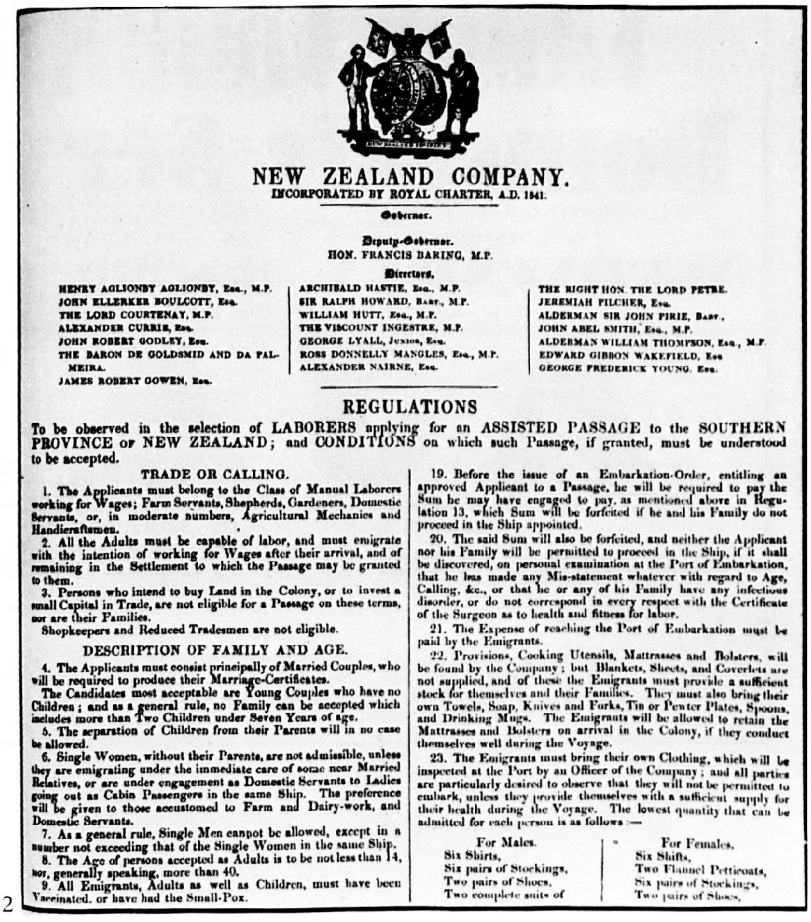
1

Escape to New Zealand

Industrial relations in New Zealand can be dated from the beginning of European settlement in the first half of last century. The Maori lived in a pre-industrial society, without employers or wage labour. It was the British immigrants who introduced what we know as the capitalist system, where the means of production – land, factories and machinery – are owned by a small group of people who employ most of the others and pay wages for their labour.

This system was transplanted quite deliberately by the sponsors of the New Zealand Company in Britain: land prices in the new settlements were kept high so that the "agricultural mechanics, farm labourers and domestic servants" whom the company shipped to New Zealand, were forced to work for the gentlemen capitalists.

The company offered assisted passages to New Zealand and it undertook to provide work and rations in its settlements. To many it offered an escape from an existence which had become almost unbearable, for Britain was then passing through one of the worst slumps in her history, the so-called "hungry forties". Most British workers lived on the verge of destitution for much of this time. It has been estimated that the average urban worker ate not much more than one pound of meat per week, while the life expectancy of a labourer was comparable to that of Asian countries in the present century. To escape from the "dark satanic mills", poverty and unemployment, British workers were prepared to suffer the dangers and discomforts of a long sea voyage to a wild and unknown country.



NEW ZEALAND COMPANY.
INCORPORATED BY ROYAL CHARTER, A.D. 1841.

Governor.

Deputy-Governor.
HON. FRANCIS BARING, M.P.

Directors.

HENRY AGLIONBY AGLIONBY, Esq., M.P.
JOHN ELLERKER BOULCOTT, Esq.
THE LORD COURTENAY, M.P.
ALEXANDER CURRIE, Esq.
JOHN ROBERT GODLEY, Esq.
THE BARON DE GOLDSMID AND DA PALMEIRA.
JAMES ROBERT GOWEN, Esq.
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WILLIAM HUTT, Esq., M.P.
THE VISCOUNT INGESTRE, M.P.
GEORGE LYALL, Junior, Esq.
ROSS DONNELLY MANGLES, Esq., M.P.
ALEXANDER NAIRNE, Esq.
THE RIGHT HON. THE LORD PETRE.
JEREMIAH PILCHER, Esq.
ALDERMAN SIR JOHN PIRIE, Bart.,
JOHN ABEL SMITH, Esq., M.P.
ALDERMAN WILLIAM THOMPSON, Esq., M.P.
EDWARD GIBBON WAKEFIELD, Esq
GEORGE FREDERICK YOUNG, Esq.

REGULATIONS

To be observed in the selection of LABORERS applying for an ASSISTED PASSAGE to the SOUTHERN PROVINCE of NEW ZEALAND; and CONDITIONS on which such Passage, if granted, must be understood to be accepted.

TRADE OR CALLING.

1. The Applicants must belong to the Class of Manual Laborers working for Wages; Farm Servants, Shepherds, Gardeners, Domestic Servants, or, in moderate numbers, Agricultural Mechanics and Handicraftsmen.

2. All the Adults must be capable of labor, and must emigrate with the intention of working for Wages after their arrival, and of remaining in the Settlement to which the Passage may be granted to them.

3. Persons who intend to buy Land in the Colony, or to invest a small Capital in Trade, are not eligible for a Passage on these terms, nor are their Families.

Shopkeepers and Reduced Tradesmen are not eligible.

DESCRIPTION OF FAMILY AND AGE.

4. The Applicants must consist principally of Married Couples, who will be required to produce their Marriage-Certificates.

The Candidates most acceptable are Young Couples who have no Children; and as a general rule, no Family can be accepted which includes more than Two Children under Seven Years of age.

5. The separation of Children from their Parents will in no case be allowed.

6. Single Women, without their Parents, are not admissible, unless they are emigrating under the immediate care of some near Married Relatives, or are under engagement as Domestic Servants to Ladies going out as Cabin Passengers in the same Ship. The preference will be given to those accustomed to Farm and Dairy-work, and Domestic Servants.

7. As a general rule, Single Men cannot be allowed, except in a number not exceeding that of the Single Women in the same Ship.

8. The Age of persons accepted as Adults is to be not less than 14, nor, generally speaking, more than 40.

9. All Emigrants, Adults as well as Children, must have been Vaccinated, or have had the Small-Pox.

19. Before the issue of an Embarkation-Order, entitling an approved Applicant to a Passage, he will be required to pay the Sum he may have engaged to pay, as mentioned above in Regulation 13, which Sum will be forfeited if he and his Family do not proceed in the Ship appointed.

20. The said Sum will also be forfeited, and neither the Applicant nor his Family will be permitted to proceed in the Ship, if it shall be discovered, on personal examination at the Port of Embarkation, that he has made any Mis-statement whatever with regard to Age, Calling, &c., or that he or any of his Family have any infectious disorder, or do not correspond in every respect with the Certificate of the Surgeon as to health and fitness for labor.

21. The Expense of reaching the Port of Embarkation must be paid by the Emigrants.

22. Provisions, Cooking Utensils, Mattrasses and Bolsters, will be found by the Company; but Blankets, Sheets, and Coverlets are not supplied, and of these the Emigrants must provide a sufficient stock for themselves and their Families. They must also bring their own Towels, Soap, Knives and Forks, Tin or Pewter Plates, Spoons, and Drinking Mugs. The Emigrants will be allowed to retain the Mattrasses and Bolsters on arrival in the Colony, if they conduct themselves well during the Voyage.

23. The Emigrants must bring their own Clothing, which will be inspected at the Port by an Officer of the Company; and all parties are particularly desired to observe that they will not be permitted to embark, unless they provide themselves with a sufficient supply for their health during the Voyage. The lowest quantity that can be admitted for each person is as follows:—

For Males.	For Females.
Six Shirts,	Six Shifts,
Six pairs of Stockings,	Two Flannel Petticoats,
Two pairs of Shoes,	Six pairs of Stockings,
Two complete suits of	Two pairs of Shoes,

1. "Free passages to New Zealand's isle are offered to the sons of toil." A New Zealand Company emigration poster of 1848. (Hocken Library, Dunedin)

2. The New Zealand Company's regulations for the selection of labourers. (National Archives, Wellington)

3. Memorandum of Agreement of the New Zealand Company with James Graham of Edinburgh, April 1841. (National Archives, Wellington)

Memorandum of Agreement,

made the 10th day of April One Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty-One, Between Captain ARTHUR WAKEFIELD, on behalf of the **New Zealand Company**, of the one part, and James Graham of Edinburgh of the other part.

1. It is agreed that the said James Graham shall proceed to New Zealand in the service of the said Company, and shall remain in such service for the term of two years from the date of sailing from England for the Colony.

2. The said James Graham shall receive the sum of twenty eight shillings per week, to be paid weekly by the said Company in the Colony: it is however agreed, that one half of the said sum of twenty eight shillings per week shall be allotted for the use of the wife and family of the said James Graham until the period of their embarkation for New Zealand, which is expected to take place in August next: such allowance to be paid weekly at the Company's Office in London.*

* Or remitted to the family as the case may be.

3. Upon the arrival of the Ship at New Zealand, the Company shall supply rations to the said James Graham for which the sum of one shilling per day shall be deducted by the Company from the aforesaid twenty eight shillings per week, without reference to the cost of provisions in the settlement.

4. It is agreed that the wages to be paid to the said James Graham shall increase, or decrease, in proportion to the current price of labour in the settlement, so long as the said James Graham shall remain in the Company's service. **Provided always**, that the rate per week shall in no case be less than the said sum of twenty eight shillings per week.

5. The Company shall have the power of making a deduction in case of misconduct or neglect of duty on the part of the said James Graham such deduction not to exceed five shillings per week: and also, in case the said James Graham shall absent himself from work without the permission of the Company's Agent, or other officer duly authorized by him, the Company shall have the power to deduct a sum in proportion to the time during which the said James Graham shall have so absented himself. **Provided always**, that all such deductions shall be settled by not less than three of the Company's Officers, (of whom the Company's Agent to be one) in the presence of the said James Graham

6. The Company shall further have the power of discharging the said James Graham from their service without notice, in case of drunkenness, disobedience of orders, or other bad conduct. **Provided always**, that such discharge shall not take place without the consent of at least three of the Company's Officers, of whom the Company's Agent shall be one.

In witness whereof the parties above-named have hereunto set their hands the day and year first above written.

Witness,

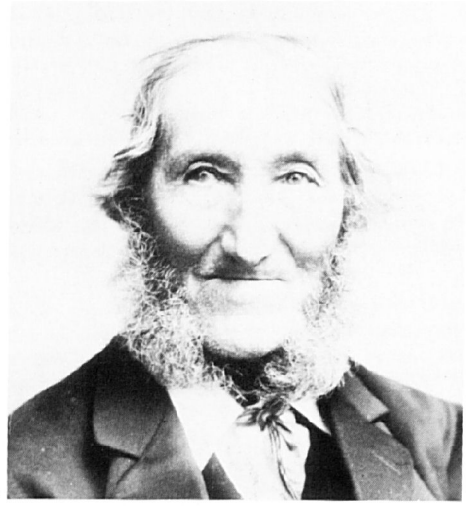
W. H. Bowling

James Graham

Arthur Wakefield

Parnell Makes a Stand

Samuel Duncan Parnell landed at Britannia Beach (now Petone) in February 1840, on one of the first ships to reach the new Wellington settlement, the *Duke of Roxburgh*. He was a carpenter by trade, London-born, and then 29 years old. Among his fellow-passengers was the merchant George Hunter, who asked Parnell to put up a store for him for a cargo of goods he expected. Parnell agreed on condition that the working hours would be no more than eight a day, starting at 8 o'clock.



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"There are 24 hours per day given us," said Parnell, "and eight of these should be for work, eight for sleep, and the remaining eight for recreation and in which for men to do what little things they want to do for themselves."

"That's all nonsense," exclaimed Hunter indignantly. "You must know very well that with us in London the bell rang at 6 o'clock, and if the men were not there to turn to they lost a quarter of a day."

"Very well," replied Parnell, "if you do not agree to that, I cannot help you. Good day." He turned to go, but was called back by Hunter who accepted his terms. After Parnell had gained his point, other tradesmen followed his example. They met incoming ships to tell new arrivals that they must insist on the shorter working day.

A bust of Parnell, now lost, presided for many years over the meetings of the Wellington Trades Council. His name, wrote a union secretary, should be recorded on the pages of every trade union rule and minute book, for he had done more for the workers of New Zealand than any act of parliament ever could do.

Wellington. April 6. 1890

A Short Narretive By

Samuel Duncan Parnell

In Connection with the Eight Hours A Labour In New Zealand

I Sailed from London in the Bark Duke of Roxburgh on the Sevententh of September 1839. I was one of the first Purchers of Land from the New Zealand Company and paid them 126 Pounds for Land and Two Cabin Papages for My Self and Wife, and Landed at Petone on the Seventh of February 1840. Mr G. Hunter being A Papenger. After after A few weeks he sent for Me to Erect A large Store as he Expected A Large Cargo of Goods and me Done to put them. I agreed to do what I could and began at one at Eight Oclock the next Morning as we should only work Eight hours A Day as De

2

1. Samuel Duncan Parnell (1810-1890), carpenter and founder of the eight-hour day.
(Henry Wright Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

2. Extracts from Parnell's "Short Narrative" which he wrote in 1890.
(Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

The Eight-Hour Day in Dunedin

When Dunedin was settled in 1848, the men were promised an eight-hour day by the Otago Association. The promise was not embodied in any firm contract, but it was repeated on board ship and, for the first few months, the eight-hour day was faithfully observed. A ship's bell was swung from a tree overlooking the site of the proposed township, and rung to mark the beginning and end of the working day.

Captain Cargill, the local agent of the New Zealand Company, tried to undermine this arrangement. "Many of the labourers," he told a public banquet in January 1849, "have come out here with an exaggerated belief that they are to have large wages and shorter hours of work, making them in reality mere drones." Wages, he insisted, had to be kept sufficiently low to allow the landowners to benefit by them, and he had a notice posted on 24 January informing the employees of the Otago Association that "according to the good old Scotch rule" 10 hours were to constitute a day's work.

The Dunedin settlers – there were some 500 in the township then, only 18 of them landowners – had come to Otago precisely to escape from this type of "old Scotch rule". A painter, Samuel Shaw, called a protest meeting where the men condemned the Otago Association for its breach of faith and resolved to work no longer than eight hours but to insist on the usual wages at pay time.

Cargill threatened to run "that Cockney spouter" Shaw out of the colony, but the agitation was successful. The principal private employers stuck to the eight-hour day, and in February 1849 there arrived an English businessman who announced that he would engage all available labour at increased wages and would observe the eight-hour rule. The Otago Association had no choice but to withdraw its notice.

1. Text of the Dunedin workingmen's petition to William Fox, agent for the New Zealand Company. (*Otago News*, 24 Jan. 1849, Hocken Library, Dunedin)

2. Captain William Cargill (1784-1860), first superintendent of Otago Province. (Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

WORKING MEN'S PETITION.—The following petition was presented to Wm. Fox, Esq., with 36 signatures of working men, and 39 signatures of tradesmen and others:

[COPY.]

TO MR. FOX, AGENT FOR THE NEW ZEALAND COMPANY.

SIR, We, the undersigned, workmen and labourers of Dunedin, at present employed at the New Zealand Company's works around Dunedin, seeing that you have arrived at this place, take it a fit opportunity to lay before you our grievances that in our present circumstances lies heavy upon us; that is, in being compelled to work 10 hours per day, a length of time in each day that entirely prevents us from doing any little to our own comfort; our houses at present being unfinished and likely to continue so, should we be compelled to work these hours. Our object in troubling you at present is to obtain the former hours of labour, that is 8 hours per day, which would enable us to bring ourselves and family to some tolerable state of endurance, not being at present able to bear with the heavy load of tasks that we are obliged for the support of our families to endure, such as the long hours, low rate of wages, at 3s. per day, and the heavy rent of our land on which our houses are built, which is £1 for a quarter of an acre. These things, coupled with the rate of provisions and clothing, make our situations altogether uncomfortable and intolerable. Trusting you will take our unpleasant circumstances into your favorable consideration, and allow us some relaxation from these our grievances, we, as in duty bound, will ever pray for your welfare and happiness. Signed.

We, the undersigned, tradesmen and mechanics of Dunedin, fully coinciding in the spirit of the aforesaid petition, and being well aware that the Company's labourers are not placed in that situation which they ought to be, and the adoption of the eight hour system will ultimately prove beneficial to the employers and the employed, humbly affix their signatures. Signed.

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First Strikes and First Unions

1

1. A sawyer's clearing in a forest of kauri; lithograph by J. J. Merrett.
(*Illustrations to "Adventure in New Zealand" by Edward Jerningham Wakefield,* 1845)

2. Report of the Nelson carpenters' meeting of 6 May 1842.
(*New Zealand Gazette and Wellington Spectator,* 28 May 1842)

3. Advertisement by the Benevolent Society of Carpenters and Joiners.
(*New Zealand Gazette and Wellington Spectator,* 25 May 1842)

NELSON.

A meeting of the Journeymen Carpenters of this settlement was held on the evening of Friday the 6th instant; Mr. King in the chair; at which a resolution was passed to the effect that no carpenter should work for less than 12s. per day. Mr. Isaac Hill and Mr. Brown explained their reasons for giving their support to the resolution. Mr. Richardson endeavoured to impress upon the meeting his view of the political economy of the question of wages, and of the propriety of attempting to combine to fix any rate of wages, but without much effect, for the resolution was unanimously adopted.

2

"The native sawyers," reported a missionary from the Bay of Islands in October 1821, "immediately struck work, and demanded payment for their labour in Money, as was the case in England, or else in Gun Powder."

This was the first recorded wage dispute in New Zealand. One of the earliest strikes by pakeha workers took place 20 years later, in New Plymouth, on 19 July 1841. The labourers employed by the New Zealand Company were working seven hours a day – 8am to 4pm, with an hour off for lunch – for 5s a day. They ceased work in protest against a rise in the cost of provisions, but were forced to return the next day at the same wage rate, with an extra hour added to their working day.

The New Plymouth walk-out was spontaneous, for there were as yet no trade unions in existence. The carpenters were the first to organise. They formed a Union Benefit Sick Society in Wellington in 1840, and soon afterwards a Working Men's Association. In 1842, a Benevolent Society of Carpenters and Joiners advertised in Wellington papers that it could supply gentlemen and builders with good workmen, as well as with plans, specifications and estimates.

Nelson journeymen carpenters met in May 1842 and resolved unanimously "that no carpenter should work for less than 12s per day". When riots broke out in Nelson a year later, in which the superintendent of public works was assaulted, the victim reported that he believed "a secret union does exist among them (i.e. among the local workmen) in the proportion of five to one, for resisting all rules which may not be agreeable to themselves".

HOUSE OF CALL of the Benevolent Society of Carpenters and Joiners, held at Mr. JENKINS's, the New Zealander, Wellington, where gentlemen and builders can be supplied with good workmen.

May 24, 1842.

3

The Chartist William Griffin

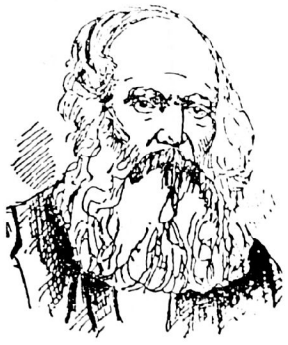
The most radical group in Britain in the 1840s were the Chartists, the supporters of the People's Charter, whose six points included demands for manhood suffrage, vote by ballot, and annual parliaments. Some Chartists emigrated to New Zealand where they continued their agitation for a better deal for the working classes. Among them was William Griffin, a painter by trade, who arrived in Auckland about 1845.

In 1851, Griffin led a campaign which established shorter working hours on Saturday afternoons. He also launched the first labour paper in New Zealand, the shortlived *Auckland Independent and Operatives' Journal*. Griffin next convened a meeting of "labouring men and operatives" to select candidates for the Provincial Council elections. One of the workingmen candidates was successful, and Griffin himself later gained a seat on the Auckland Provincial Council.

In 1857, Griffin launched a campaign for the introduction of the eight-hour day in Auckland, which had lagged behind other centres in this respect. On his initiative the Carpenters and Joiners Society called a public meeting to discuss working hours. "Now is the time," they announced, "for agitation and united action by employers and the operatives, to establish a new custom which will work beneficially for all."

The meeting decided to give employers three months' grace to complete existing contracts, and to introduce the eight-hour working day (8am to 5pm, with an hour off for lunch) on 1st September 1857. The names of employers who accepted the new hours were published in the press.

Griffin later went to the Thames goldfields to try his luck as a miner, and there he died in 1870, at the age of 59. Shortly before his death, he had the satisfaction of seeing the eight-hour day established at the Thames.



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THE AUCKLAND INDEPENDENT
AND OPERATIVES' JOURNAL.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4, 1851.

"The world is my country—truth, my study—and to do good, my religion."

THE CHARTER—HOUSEHOLD SUFFRAGE —AND NO-PROPERTY QUALIFICATION.

HAVING been placed by the voice and consent of the Operatives themselves upon the watch-tower, we deem it a part of our duty to be at our post keeping a sharp look-out, so as to be able to give safe and proper directions to our friends—we ought closely to watch the movements of our and their enemies, and sound loudly the word of alarm, when their voice and footsteps are heard in the wake, trampling down before them the fences of our natural, political, and civil rights and liberties. Since we last appeared, strong hints have been given that every effort ought to be made on the part of the property class to place men of property in the Council, which we interpret to a lamentation for the want of a property qualification for Members of such Council. We are not alone in opposing a property qualification; indeed, it never could be supported by any man, except on the ground of expediency. We have it on record before us, that the following distinguished legislators have voted against a property qualification, even for Members of Parliament—namely, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; the gallant member for Kinross, Admiral Adam; the

2

CHEAP BREAD.

THE Undersigned announces to the Public, that the price of the 2lbs. loaf of the Best BREAD is reduced to Fivepence halfpenny, and the Second quality to Fourpence halfpenny.

HUGH COOLAHAN.

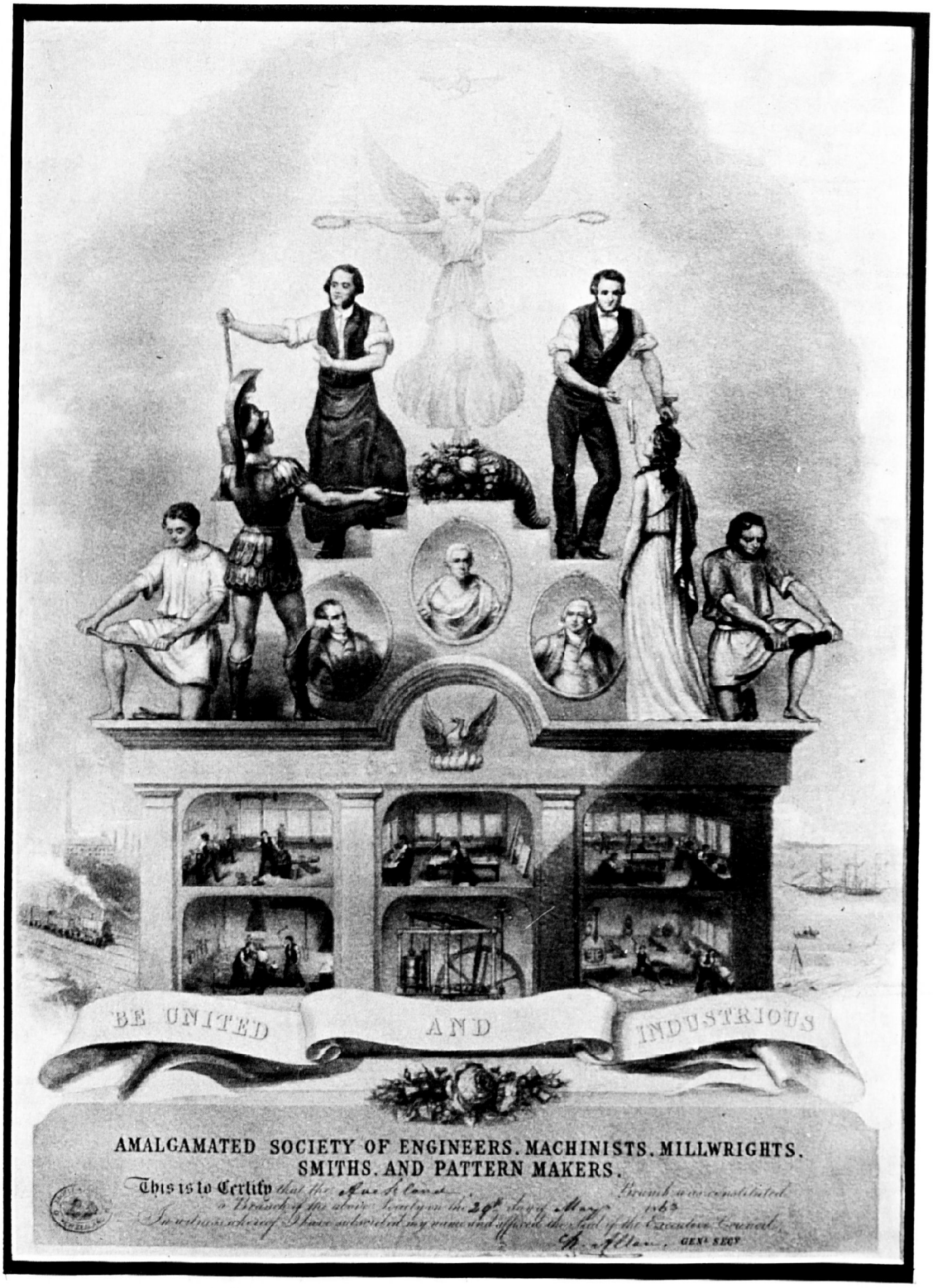
Shortland Street,
August 23rd, 1851.

3

1. William Griffin (1811-1870), the painter who introduced the eight-hour day in Auckland. (*New Zealand Herald*, 10 Nov. 1890)

2. Opening paragraphs of an editorial on the right to vote, almost certainly written by Griffin. (*The Auckland Independent and Operatives' Journal*, 4 Oct 1851)

3. A baker's advertisement from the same issue.


BE UNITED AND INDUSTRIOUS
AMALGAMATED SOCIETY OF ENGINEERS. MACHINISTS. MILLWRIGHTS.
SMITHS. AND PATTERN MAKERS.
This is to Certify that the Sun & Canal Branch was constituted
a Branch of the above Society on the 29th day of May 1863
In witness whereof I have subscribed my name and affixed the Seal of the Executive Council.
GEN. SEC'Y

1

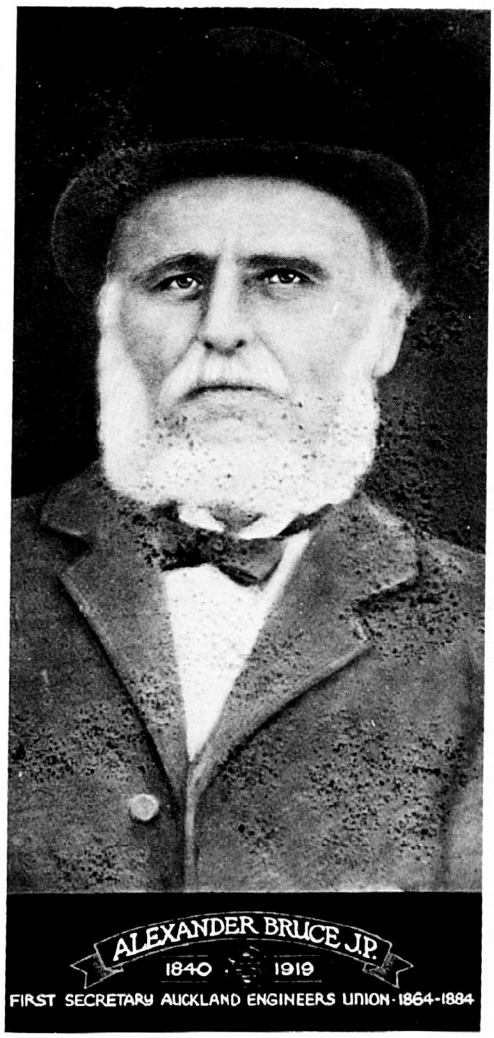
The Amalgamated Engineers

In March 1863, 17 men employed by the Auckland engineering firm of Vickery and Masefield signed a petition demanding "the privilege enjoyed by all other trades in Auckland, that of eight hours being the recognised time of labour". They pointed out that the impure atmosphere, in which the very nature of their calling compelled them to work, made it still more unreasonable that they should work longer hours than those who had the advantage of pure air.

That same year a young Aberdeen engineer, Alexander Bruce, decided to emigrate to Auckland. Being a member of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, one of the strongest British trade unions, he approached the general secretary in London and obtained a charter entitling him to form a branch of the society in Auckland. Bruce took employment with the firm of Vickery and Masefield, and succeeded in setting up a branch of the Amalgamated Society. It had only five members at first, who met in the Aurora Tavern in Victoria Street.

Membership of the branch grew slowly because only fit and competent tradesmen were admitted. Entrance fees and weekly subscriptions were high, but the society provided a wide range of benefits covering unemployment, sickness, old age and funeral costs. Other branches of the Amalgamated Society were formed later – in Dunedin in 1873, in Christchurch the following year, and in Wellington not until 1890.

Alexander Bruce remained secretary of the Auckland branch for its first 20 years. He later became mayor of Northcote and chairman of the Auckland Hospital Board.



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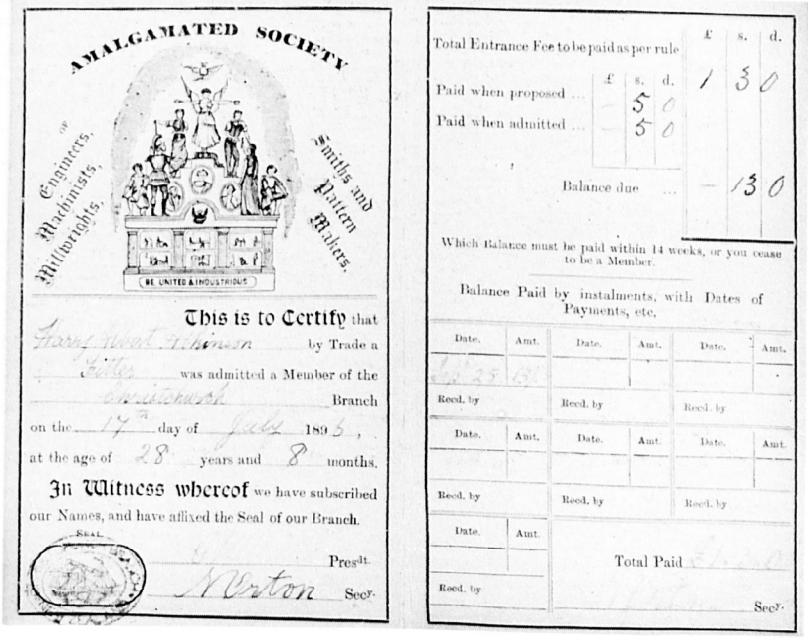
1. Charter of the Auckland branch of the ASE, dated 29 May 1863. (Auckland Engineers Union)

2. Alexander Bruce, founder and long-time secretary of the Auckland Engineers Union. (Auckland Engineers Union)

3. ASE membership card in the name of Harry Albert Atkinson, founder of the Christchurch Socialist Church and nephew of Prime Minister Sir Harry Albert Atkinson. (Roth Collection)



3

Karl Marx to the Rescue

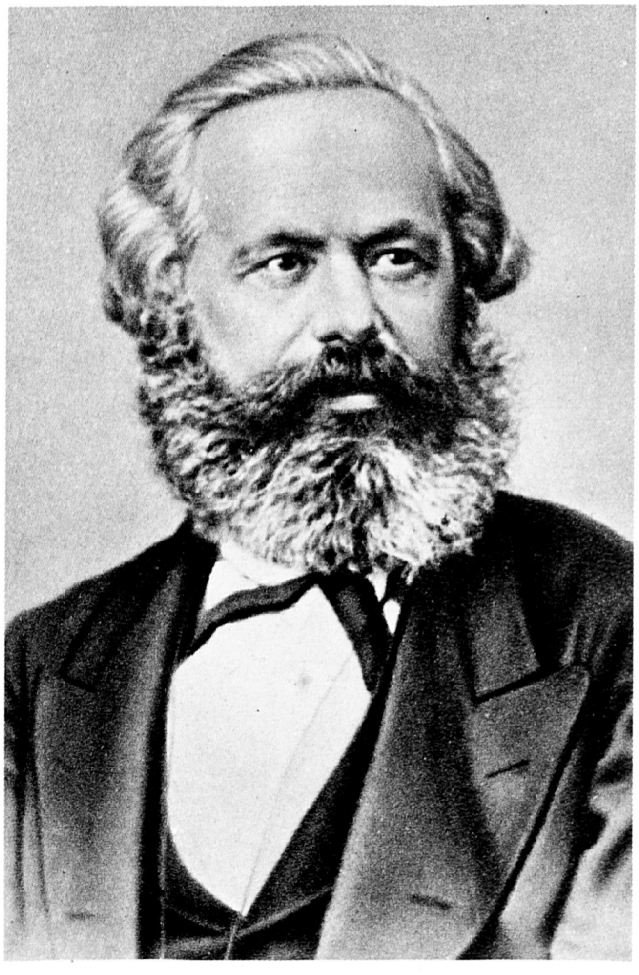
The late 1860s saw the onset of a severe economic depression. Three hundred and fifty unemployed Otago workers petitioned the Provincial Council in May 1870 with a request for "a fair day's wages for a fair day's work". In Christchurch the unemployed met in Cathedral Square in January 1871 to form a Working Men's Mutual Protection Society. Its main purpose was to warn prospective immigrants from Britain about the depressed labour market in New Zealand. With this object in mind, the society wrote to the International Working Men's Association in London – the First International led by Marx and Engels – and an exchange of letters ensued.

The text of the letters received from New Zealand is recorded in the minutes of the General Council of the International. Thus on 12 March 1872, Citizen Karl Marx read to the council a letter received from James McPherson in Christchurch: "The Canterbury Working Men's Mutual Protection Society, which I started a year ago, will become a branch of the International," reported McPherson. "I intend, after I have saved a few pounds, to preach a crusade in favour of every working man becoming a member of your Society. I will give open air lectures in all the towns in this island." And he added: "I can inform you that I am not a skilled workman, but a farm labourer, of which there are 1000 idle at present."

McPherson kept his promise. He promoted the ideas of the International in open air lectures and in letters to the press. He also published a pamphlet on the subject, but when prosperity temporarily revived, McPherson and his society ceased their activities.

1. Karl Marx (1818-1883), founder of the International Working Men's Association. This photo was taken in 1862.

2. Title page of McPherson's pamphlet urging New Zealand workers to join the International Working Men's Association. (Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)



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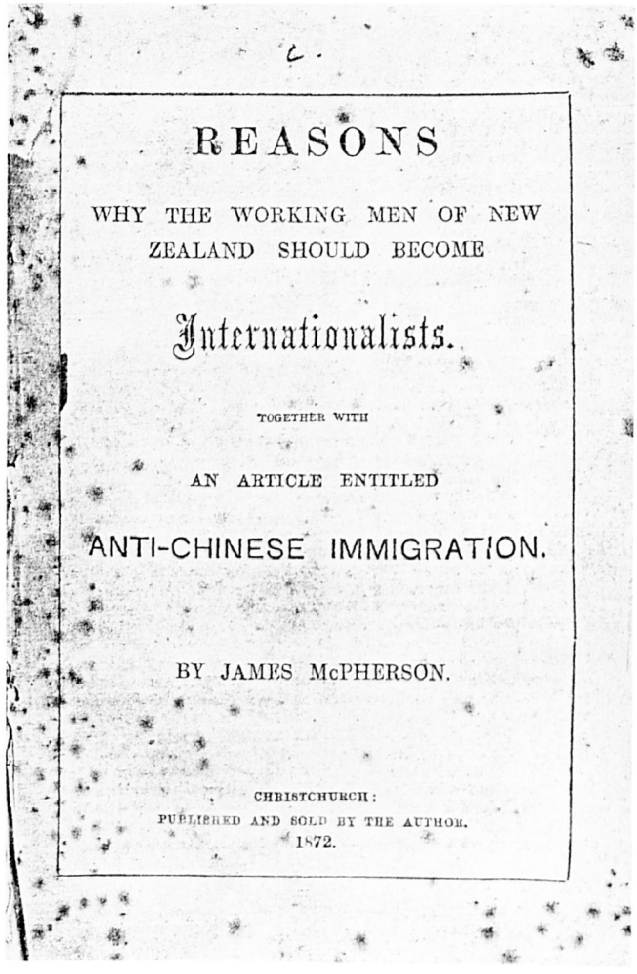


REASONS

WHY THE WORKING MEN OF NEW ZEALAND SHOULD BECOME

Internationalists.

TOGETHER WITH

AN ARTICLE ENTITLED

ANTI-CHINESE IMMIGRATION.

BY JAMES McPHERSON.

CHRISTCHURCH:
PUBLISHED AND SOLD BY THE AUTHOR.
1872.

2

Trades and Labour Councils

The carpenters and engineers pioneered unionism in Auckland. Other tradesmen followed their example, so that by 1876 the city had small unions of bakers, printers, shipwrights and tailors, as well as the local branches of two British unions, the Amalgamated Society of Engineers and the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners. The time was ripe for the formation of a joint body of local unions, a Trades and Labour Council.

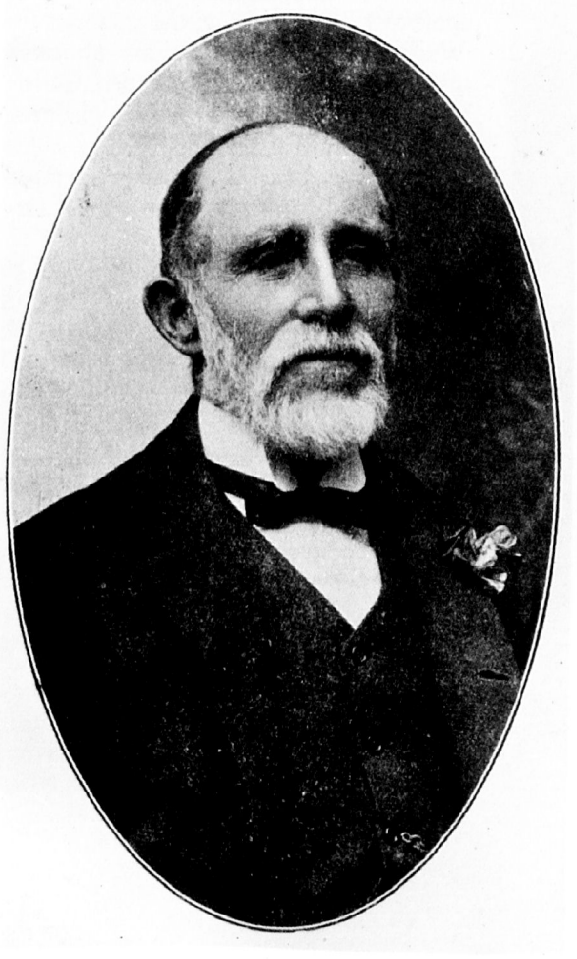
On the initiative of the printers, union delegates met in the Clanricarde Hotel in April 1876. At this and later meetings they adopted rules, elected officers and fixed capitation fees to the new council at sixpence, for a total initial membership of only 158 workers. One of the objects of the council was "to prevent any society or trade rushing rashly into disputes with employers".

The Auckland Council helped to organise new unions, such as the bootmakers and stonemasons. It sponsored a petition to Parliament, jointly with manufacturers and merchants, to ask for the protection of local industries. It also called a meeting to form a Working Men's Club in Auckland.

In 1881, another such council was formed in Dunedin, on the initiative of C.J. Thorn of the Carpenters Union. This council, in April 1882, called a meeting attended by more than 1500 people to press for a legal eight-hour day. M.W. Green, the MP for Dunedin East, introduced such a bill but it was defeated in Parliament. Other MPs took up the cause but despite repeated attempts over the next two decades, no Eight-Hours Bill was able to get a majority of votes.

1. Charles J. Thorn (1847-1935), carpenter and founder of the Otago Trades and Labour Council.
(Souvenir Catalogue, Industrial Exhibition and Art Union, 1912)

2. Thomas Tudehope (1841?-1914), carpenter and founder of the Auckland Trades and Labour Council.
(*The History of Capital and Labour*, 1888. Roth Collection)



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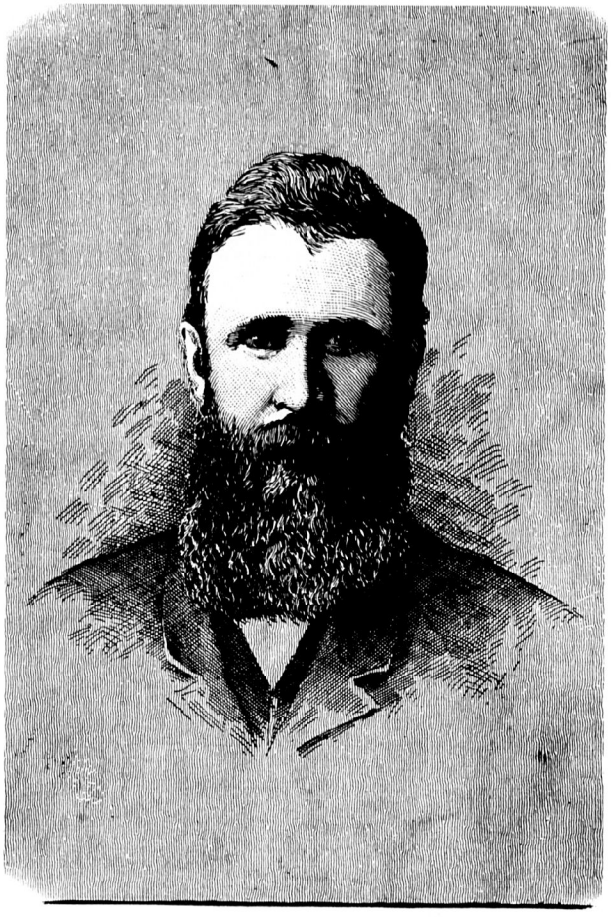
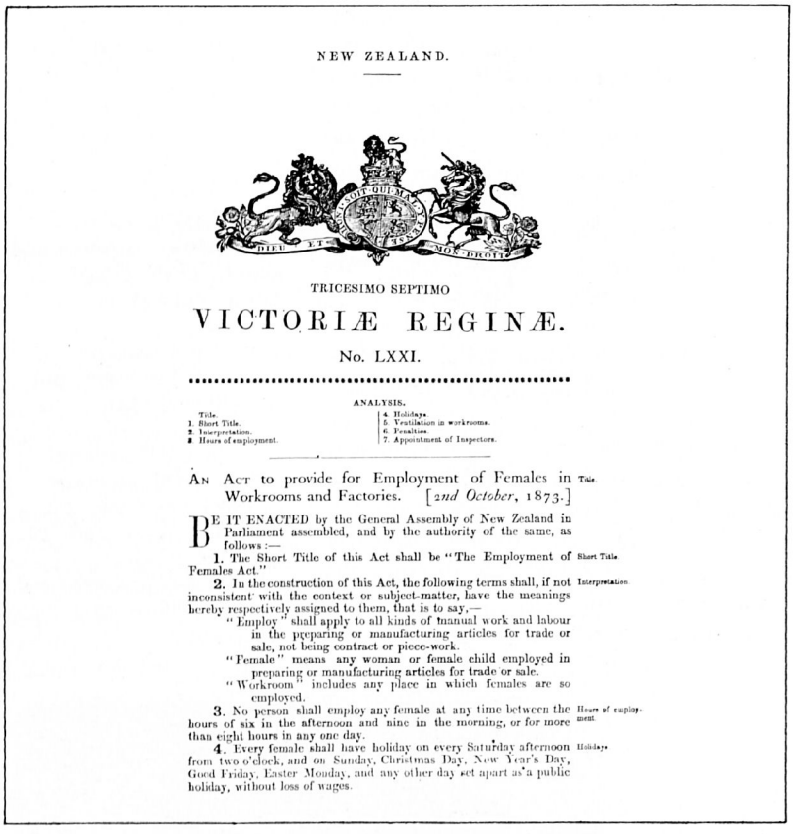


Thomas Tudehope.

2

Protecting Women Workers



NEW ZEALAND.

TRICESIMO SEPTIMO

VICTORIÆ REGINÆ.

No. LXXI.

ANALYSIS.

Title.
1. Short Title.
2. Interpretation.
3. Hours of employment.
4. Holidays.
5. Ventilation in workrooms.
6. Penalties.
7. Appointment of Inspectors.

AN ACT to provide for Employment of Females in Workrooms and Factories. [*2nd October*, 1873.] Title.

BE IT ENACTED by the General Assembly of New Zealand in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1. The Short Title of this Act shall be "The Employment of Females Act." Short Title.

2. In the construction of this Act, the following terms shall, if not inconsistent with the context or subject-matter, have the meanings hereby respectively assigned to them, that is to say,— Interpretation.

"Employ" shall apply to all kinds of manual work and labour in the preparing or manufacturing articles for trade or sale, not being contract or piece-work.

"Female" means any woman or female child employed in preparing or manufacturing articles for trade or sale.

"Workroom" includes any place in which females are so employed.

3. No person shall employ any female at any time between the hours of six in the afternoon and nine in the morning, or for more than eight hours in any one day. Hours of employment.

4. Every female shall have holiday on every Saturday afternoon from two o'clock, and on Sunday, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, and any other day set apart as a public holiday, without loss of wages. Holidays.

1

2

1. The Employment of Females Act of 1873. (Roth Collection)

2. Women machinists in Hannah's boot factory in Cuba St, Wellington pose for a photo in 1881. (J. Hutchison, *The Wellington Bootmakers' Union, 1885-1917*, 1917)

In our early colonial days, British law regulated the relations between employers and employed. This law was often harshly applied. There were also attempts to pass so-called Masters and Servants Acts in New Zealand. One such bill, introduced in the Auckland Provincial Council in 1856 but not proceeded with, provided for instant dismissal and imprisonment of up to four weeks for any "servant" (i.e. any worker) guilty of "any misconduct, either pecuniary or otherwise, wilful disobedience, or habitual neglect, being absent when wanted (or) sleeping from home at night without leave".

The first protective labour legislation passed by the New Zealand Parliament was the Employment of Females Act of 1873. It restricted women's hours of work in factories to an eight-hour day between 9am and 6pm, and became known as "Bradshaw's Act" after its sponsor J. B. Bradshaw, the member for Waikaia. In 1875, Bradshaw obtained an amendment to the act prohibiting the employment in factories of children under 10 years of age, but the law made no provision for adequate inspection and many employers ignored or circumvented it.

It was left to local police constables to check on the enforcement of the act, in addition to their many other duties. A Royal Commission in 1878 was told how employers evaded the act by asking girls to take work home, or by posting sentries while working beyond the legal hours. In 1881, the *New Zealand Times* reported from Auckland: "The result of the police inspection of factories was that not a single employer of female labour had complied with the provisions of the Employment of Females Act."

The First National Strike

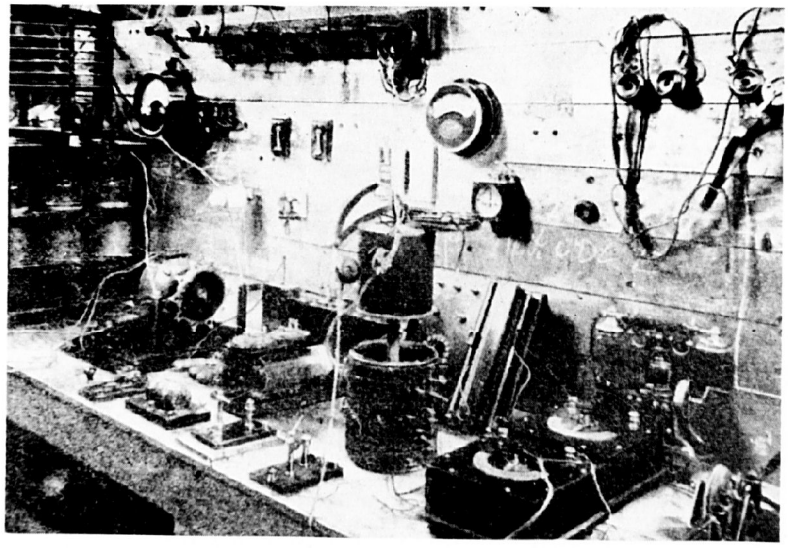
Lack of speedy communication hampered union activity at a national level. Perhaps the only exception was with the operators employed by the Electric Telegraph Department. They had no union, but they had a grievance, and they took advantage of their ability to communicate quickly with each other to call New Zealand's first national strike.

In late 1879 the department cut the operators' already meagre salaries by abolishing overtime allowances, and it also extended their working day from six and a half to eight hours. The men petitioned Parliament and when this failed they struck work on 3 January 1880 – 93 men in all: 23 in Blenheim, 12 in Dunedin, all 6 in Invercargill, 9 in Napier, and smaller numbers in other centres.

The departmental heads took the strike as a personal affront. They threatened instant dismissal, while promising special payments and promotion to those who remained at work. They succeeded in breaking the strike, and by 8 January all operators were back at work.

The department now exacted its revenge: the men were forced to sign an apology for their insubordination, and when promotions were announced in February, all the strikers were pointedly ignored. They lost pay, of course, for the days they were on strike, but in addition the department fined each man according to the time he had been off work. Several operators resigned rather than return under these degrading conditions. Others however, the alleged leaders, were refused re-employment even after they had signed the apology. They were given no testimonials, and the New Zealand Government even sent their names to all Australian telegraph departments, which effectively prevented them from getting employment there.

1



2

No. 331.—Petition of A. J. Renner.

The petitioner states that he was employed by the New Zealand Government for seven years as telegraph operator; that he, in conjunction with ninety-two other operators, struck work, in consequence of which his services were dispensed with; that he went to the Australian Colonies and sought employment in Queensland and New South Wales as a telegraphist, but was refused employment in consequence of information given to the other colonies by the New Zealand Government. He prays the House to grant him relief.

I am directed to report that the Committee are of opinion that the petitioner has no claim for compensation, as the loss he has sustained has been brought about by his own act; but, as he has expressed regret for his conduct, the Committee think he should be reappointed on the conditions offered by the department, when any vacancy occurs.

16th September, 1881.

3

1. The operating room of the Wellington telegraph office.
(*The New Zealand Post and Telegraph Officers' Advocate*, 16 Dec. 1903)

2. Operating room equipment at the Wellington office.
(*Katipo*, 20 April 1911)

3. Report of the Parliamentary Petitions Committee on Renner's petition for relief.
(*Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, I-1, 1881*)

W. G. Garrard, Labour Agitator

William George Garrard

AUCKLAND'S CHIEF 'DOG FANCIER.'

1

1. William George Garrard (1826?-1906) (*New Zealand Observer*, 14 July 1894)

The year 1880 saw a new peak in unemployment and poverty. Open air meetings of the unemployed took place almost daily throughout New Zealand: at the Octagon in Dunedin, in Christchurch's Cathedral Square, on the reclaimed land behind Government Buildings in Wellington, and at the foot of Queen Street in Auckland. Leaders rose from the rank-and-file through their ability to speak and hold a crowd's attention. The most notorious of these "agitators" was William George Garrard in Auckland, an ex-sailor who had served in the Crimean War and later with the 4th Waikato Regiment in New Zealand.

The hostile press called Garrard a "wretched buffoon", and ridiculed his uneducated speech and grammar, and his frequent use of "certain adjectives not permissible in polite society". Garrard certainly had a most unusual turn of phrase, telling the appreciative crowd: "They've made a door-mat of us, wiping the dirty soles of their shoes on the clean white sheets as our wives 'as washed for us", or asking: "What are the government officials doing in Wellington? Why, sitting in armchairs, on carpeted floors, doing nothing but opening their mouths for the flying fish to jump down, and chase away the froth of the champagne."

Garrard could be serious too. He had risked his life at the point of the bayonet, he said, and all to protect the property and person of the capitalists. And what had he got for it? Nothing but starvation. The workingmen, he stressed, would never be strong until they formed an association.

The "irrepressible" Garrard continued his career as a street orator until the mid-eighties, when he was appointed Auckland's city dog catcher.

The First National Labour Congress

The Trades and Labour Congress, which met in Dunedin from 8 to 13 January 1885, was the first national assembly of the New Zealand labour movement. It was convened by the Otago Trades and Labour Council and attended by delegates from 29 organisations, mostly in the South Island, who represented about 2500 members.

C.J. Thorn, on behalf of the host council, opened and chaired the congress. "We, as the working bees of the Colony," he told delegates, "will agree that it is highly desirable that we should be united. ... We have grumbled because others have forestalled us in the march of life ... we must begin to set our house in order." And he referred his audience to the old motto: "Agitate and Organise".

The congress discussed and passed resolutions on the organisation and protection of women workers, technical education, reduced shopping hours, tariff protection for local industries, plural voting, the seamen's franchise, the settlement of industrial disputes by arbitration, and other topics. It endorsed the *Watchman*, a weekly labour journal published by H.W. Farnall, the secretary of the Auckland Trades Council.

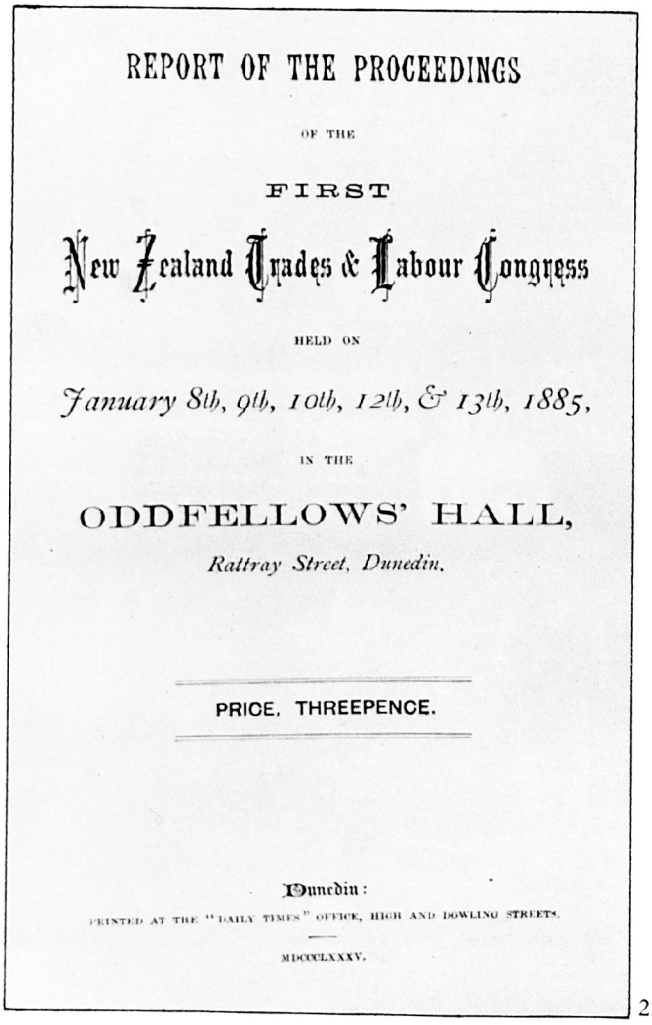
The congress also adopted a constitution for a permanent organisation which was to hold annual meetings in future. The next such congress met in Auckland in January 1886, but it was poorly attended and the movement then lapsed.

Harry W. Farnall.

Secretary Auckland Trades and Labour Council.
New Zealand.

1

1. Harry W. Farnall (1839-1891), secretary of the Auckland Trades and Labour Council.
(*The History of Capital and Labour*, 1888. Roth Collection)



REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

FIRST

New Zealand Trades & Labour Congress

HELD ON

January 8th, 9th, 10th, 12th, & 13th, 1885,

IN THE

ODDFELLOWS' HALL,

Rattray Street, Dunedin.

PRICE, THREEPENCE.

Dunedin:

PRINTED AT THE "DAILY TIMES" OFFICE, HIGH AND BOWLING STREETS.

MDCCCLXXXV.

2. Title page of the printed report of the first Trades and Labour Congress.
(Auckland Institute and Museum Library)

The Railwaymen Organise

In 1881, Dunedin railwaymen formed the Otago Engine-Drivers' and Firemen's Association, to protect their rights and to provide sickness and death benefits. They had many grievances, in particular the long periods they were required to work without break, ranging up to 30 hours in one spell. They petitioned Parliament, which took evidence in August 1882 from J.P. Maxwell, the General Manager of Railways, and recommended that a fair and impartial enquiry be held.

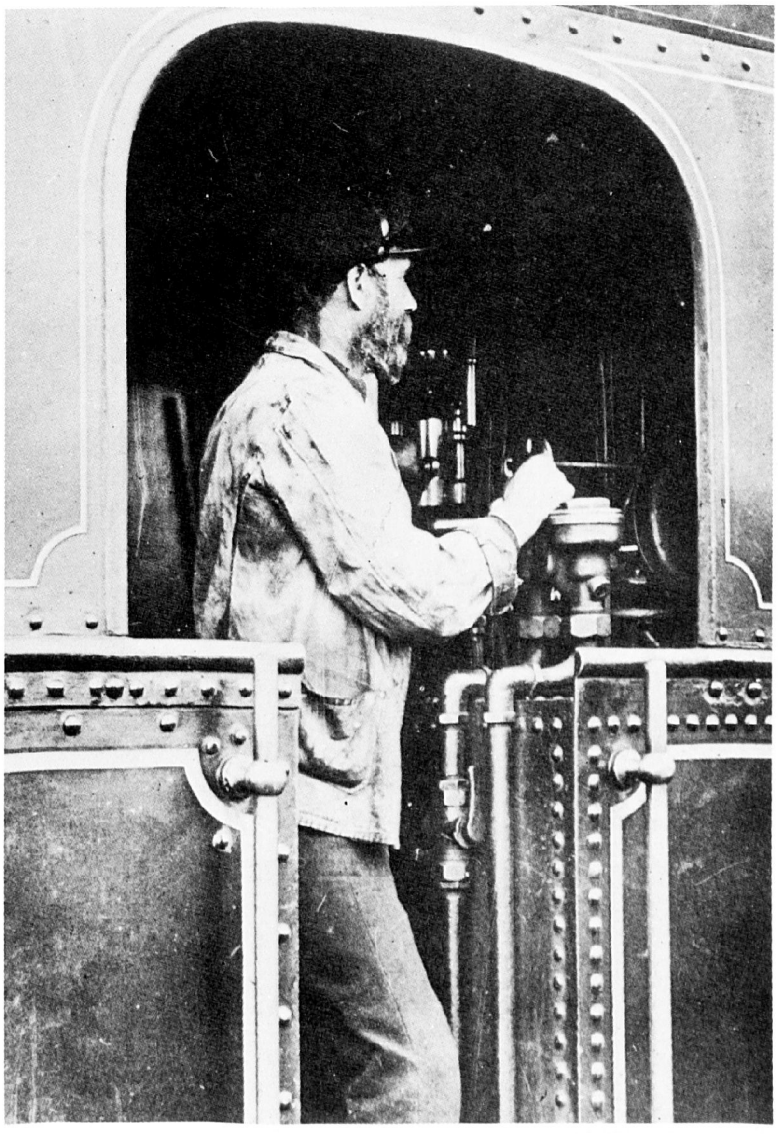
The general manager was not happy with the recommendation. He was convinced that the men's discontent had been instigated by what he called "evil influences exercised by irresponsible persons outside the department". One such evil influence was the association's president, the poet and MP Thomas Bracken.

Maxwell brusquely rejected a request the men sent him over Bracken's signature and then dismissed four leading members of the union from the railway service. They were not reinstated until they had signed an abject apology, and even then only at a reduced rate of pay. The apology read: "I sincerely regret that I, who having formerly held a similar position knew the difficulty under

1. A G-class locomotive with its crew. (New Zealand Railways publicity photograph)

which officers of the department labour, should have counselled and assisted in proceedings which were subversive to the discipline of the department and I promise, on my word of honour, never again to act in such a way, if you will overlook my folly and reappoint me to the same position in the government service." The engine-drivers' union buckled under this harsh attack and faded into the background. No enquiry took place, impartial or otherwise, and railway unionism languished until the formation of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants in 1886.

2



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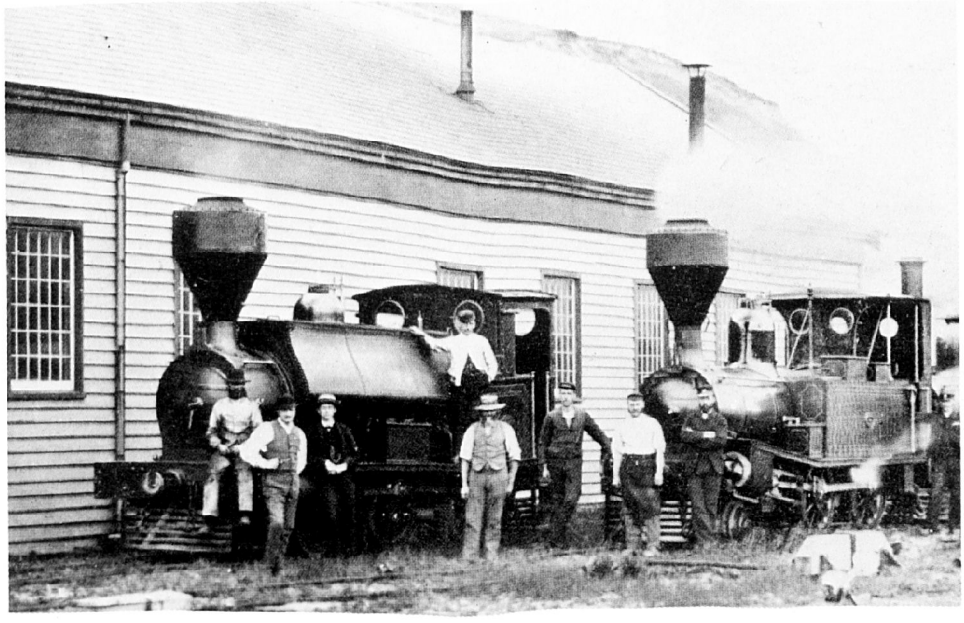

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2. Thomas Bracken (1843–1898), journalist, poet and politician. (T. Bracken, *Lays of the Land of the Maori and Moa*, 1884)

3. "I want to be a fireman and with the firemen stand, I'll stick to the ASRS when the throttle's in my hand." (Godber Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

4. The locomotive crew pose at the Nelson depot. (*Nelson Provincial Museum*)

Unionism for Maori Shearers

Australia was ahead of New Zealand in union organisation. As a precaution against the recruitment of strike-breakers, some Australian unions sent organisers across the Tasman to form branches in this country. Thus in 1880, two delegates from the Seamen's Union of Victoria toured New Zealand ports and established a Seamen's Union affiliated to Melbourne.

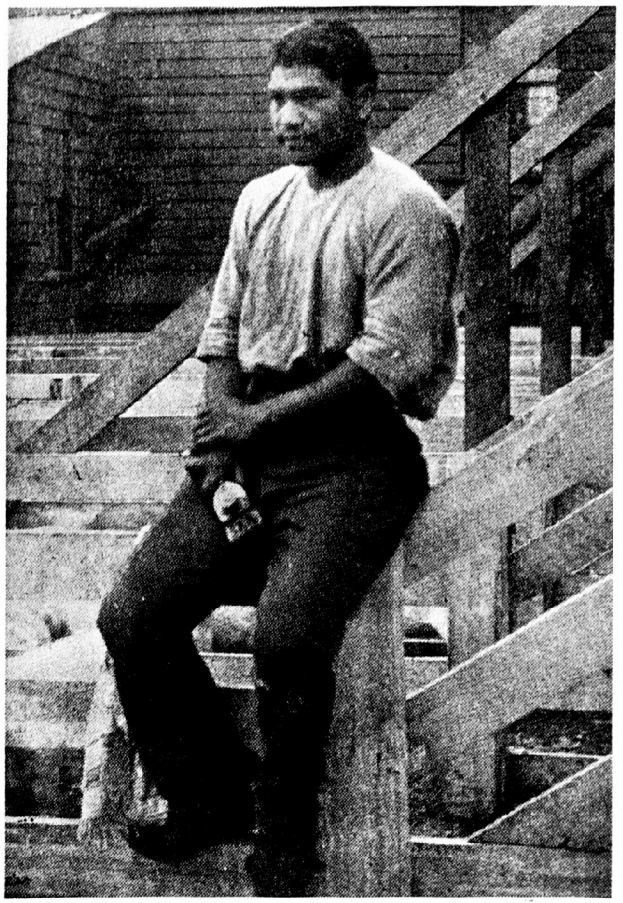
In 1886 the newly formed Amalgamated Shearers Union of Australasia sent three organisers to New Zealand to enrol members and set up branches. They found that the rules of the union required modification to suit New Zealand conditions. Accordingly, new rules were drawn up at a conference in Oamaru, which became the local head office of the union. Membership then stood at a very high 2300.

The union barred Chinese and other "coloured aliens" from membership, but it specifically excluded Aborigines and Maoris from its colour bar. In the North Island, particularly around the East Coast and in Hawkes Bay, many Maoris were employed as shearers and the union made special efforts to gain their support. "We had the rules translated and printed in Maori," reported its secretary, W.G. Spence. "We enrolled a considerable number of that race and found them staunch Unionists."

A copy of these rules, printed at the *Daily Telegraph* office in Napier in 1887, has been preserved in Australia. It is the earliest documentary evidence which connects Maoris with trade unions. The Shearers Union – now the New Zealand Workers Union – has maintained this link to the present day.

1. Raihana, champion shearer of Hawkes Bay. (*Weekly Press*, 29 Nov. 1899)

2. Title page of the Maori version of the rules of the Amalgamated Shearers Union of Australasia. (National Library of Australia, Canberra)



1

KO NGA TIKANGA

TE WHAKAKOTAHITANGA

TE UNIANA O NGA KAIKATIKATI

O

AHUTERERIA

ME

NGA TIKANGA MO TE MAHI

O

TENEI WAHANGA O NUI TIRENI

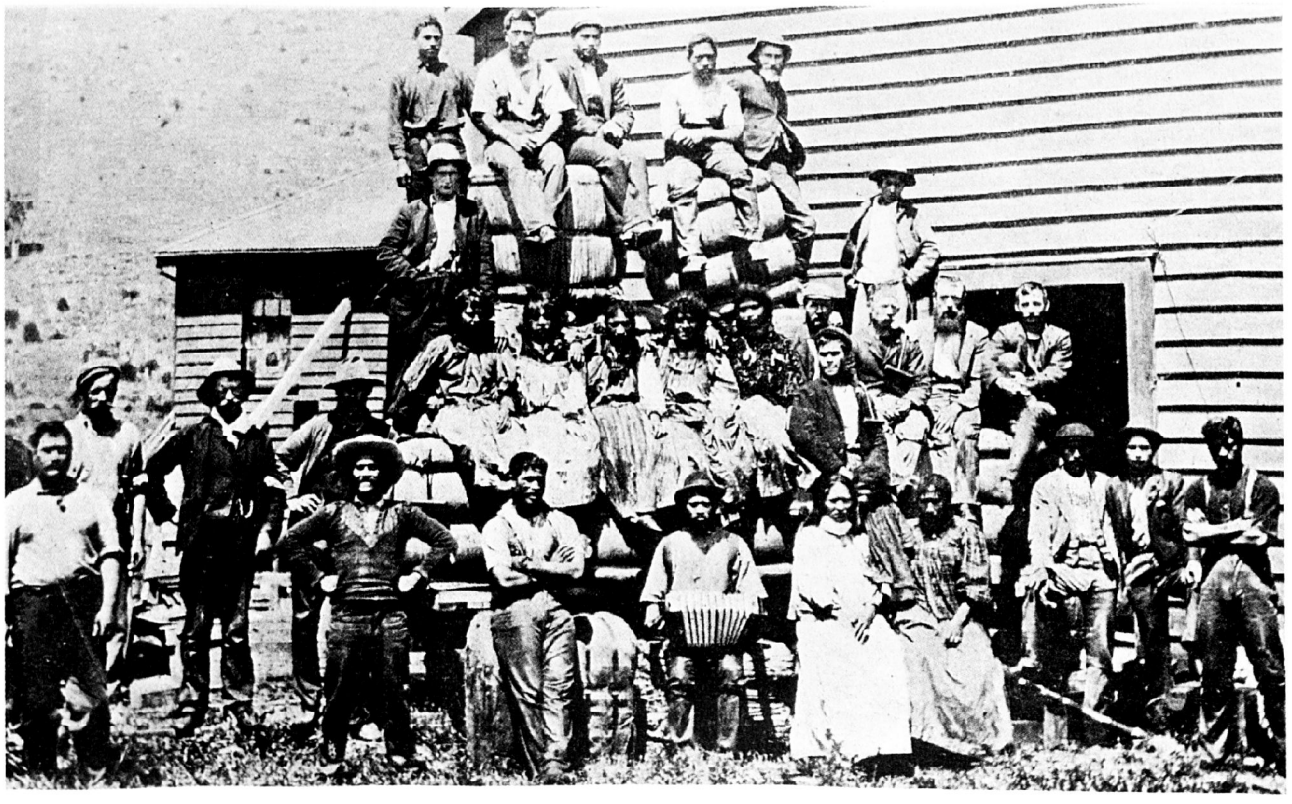
IWHAKATURIA HUNE, 1886.

NEPIA:
I PEREHITIA KI TE TARI NUPEPA O TE TERETARAWHI.
—
1887.

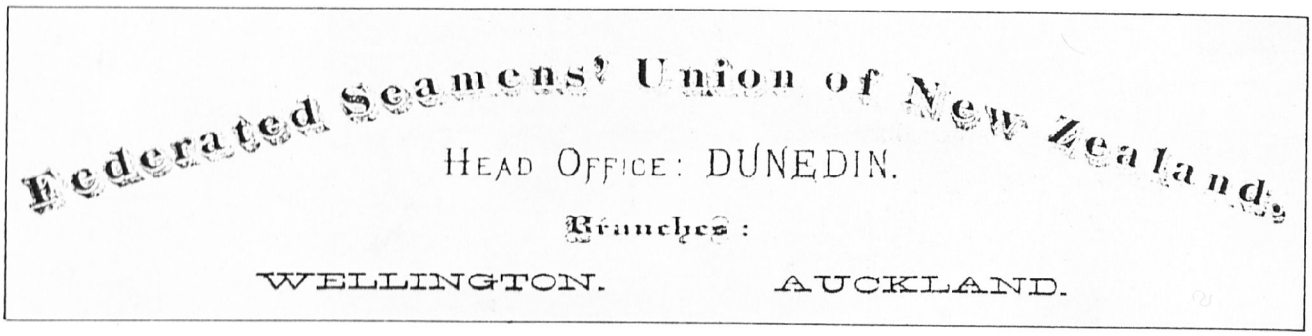
2

3. Shearing in the Bay of Islands, c. 1900. (Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

4. Shearing is completed in Hawkes Bay and the workers pose for the photographer atop the wool bales. (*Weekly Press*, 29 Nov. 1899)



The Union Runs a Shipping Line



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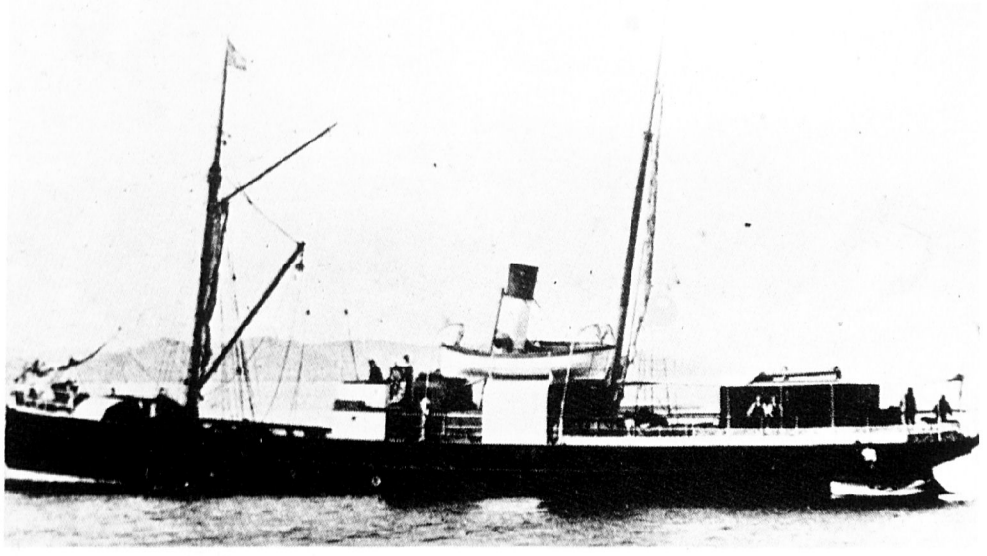

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In 1887 the Federated Seamen's Union elected a new general secretary: Captain John A. Millar, the son of a major-general in the Indian Army. The new leader immediately struck trouble when the Northern Steam Ship Company announced a reduction in wages from £7 to £6 a month, and in overtime pay. Seamen who refused to accept these conditions were sacked and replaced by non-unionists.

The company rejected a union offer to submit the dispute to arbitration. An approach to government also failed. Millar then put forward the idea of running a union-owned shipping line in competition with the Northern. It would be cheaper, he argued, to charter and run steamers and thus provide employment for union members, than to pay out strike pay to men out of work.

The union struck a levy of 2s 6d per month on all members in New Zealand and Australia and chartered three ships, the *Stormbird*, the *Bellinger* and the *Planet*. The name chosen for the new line was The Jubilee Shipping Company, because 1887 was the jubilee of Queen Victoria's accession to the throne.

The Jubilee Company reduced fares and freight charges, and for the next year its steamers ran coastal services from Auckland in competition with the Northern Company. Both sides ran at a heavy loss until at last the Northern offered to negotiate. In November 1888, the Jubilee Company ceased operations and withdrew its ships. In return the Northern Company agreed to employ only union members in future at union rates of pay. "Employers and capital had better look out," commented a Wellington paper in some alarm. "If the strikers are left masters of the position, whose turn will come next?"

1. Seamen's Union letterhead of 1888. (National Archives, Wellington)

2. The steamer *Bellinger* which the Seamen's Union chartered 1887–88. (C. V. Bollinger, *Against the Wind*, 1968)

3. Rules of the Federated Seamen's Union, 1887. (Roth Collection)

4. Seamen's Union membership book in the name of James Wylie. (Roth Collection)

5. The flag of the Jubilee Steamship Company. (Dunedin Seamen's Union)

RULES

OF THE

FEDERATED

Seamen's Union

OF

NEW ZEALAND.

Port Chalmers:

"CROWN" PRINTING AND STEREO. CO., GEORGE ST.

1897.

3

THE

Federated Seamen's Union

OF

NEW ZEALAND.

RULES AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Member James Wylie

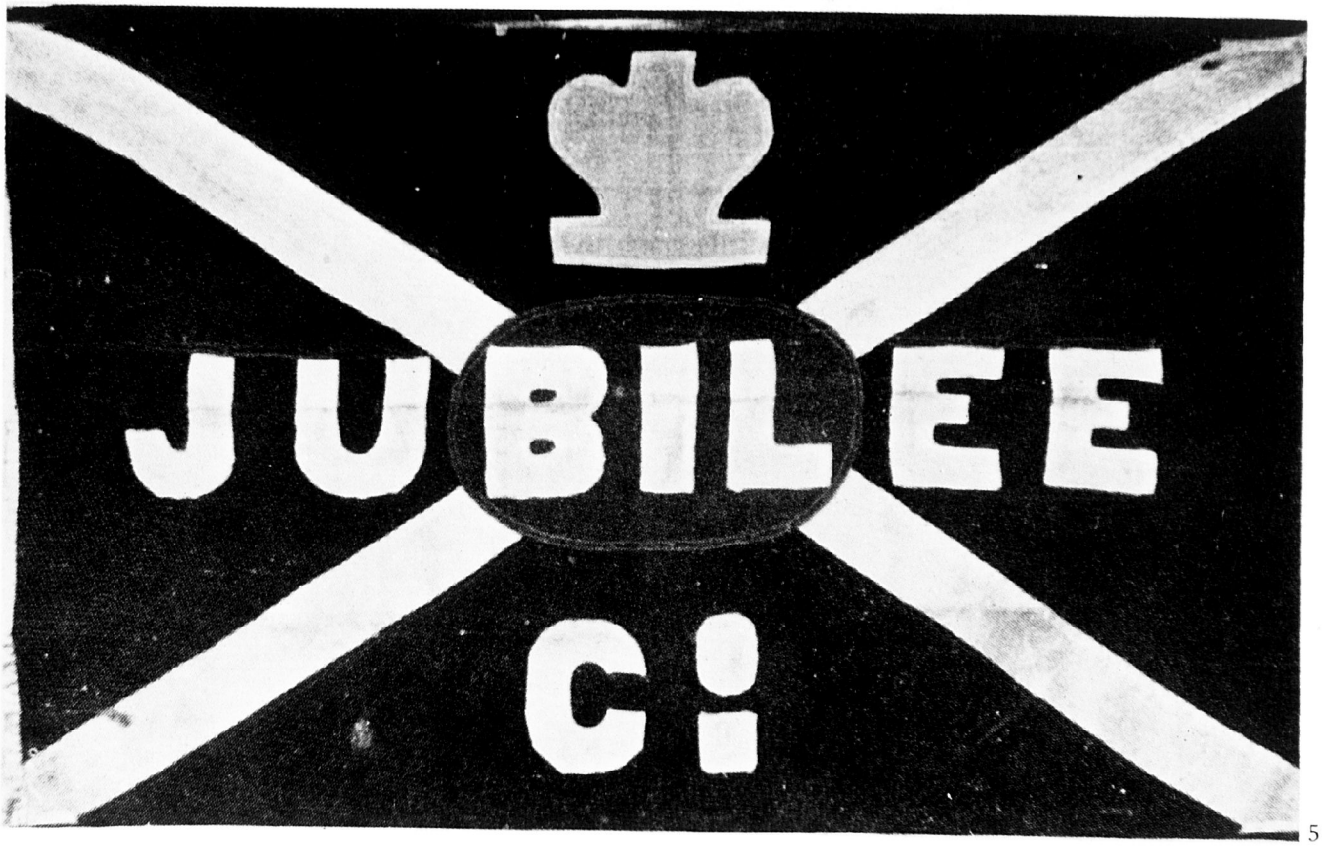
No. 150

Date of Enrolment 1st May 1884

Transferred from

DUNEDIN:
FERGUSSON AND MITCHELL, Printers, Princes street.
1888.

4



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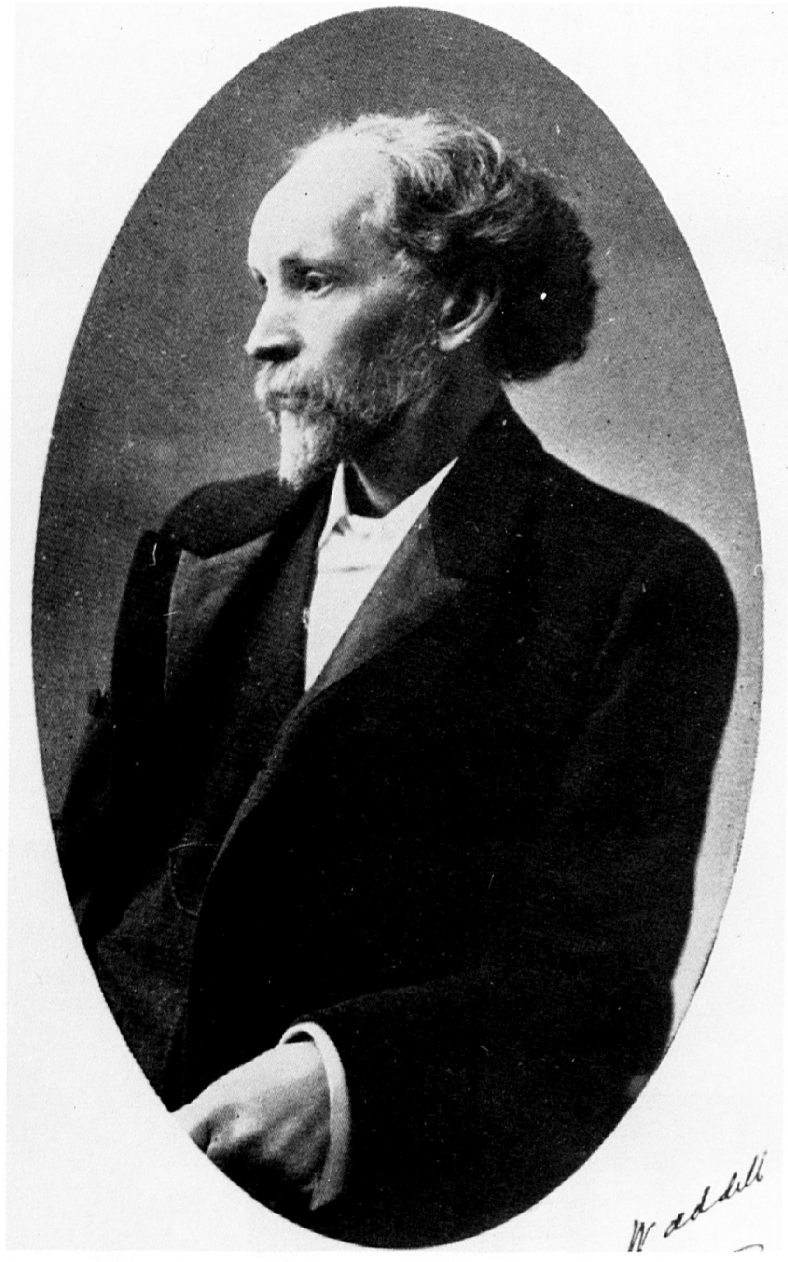
The Plight of the Sewing Girls



1. Rev. Rutherford Waddell (1849-1932), Presbyterian minister and social reformer.
(R. Waddell, *The Voyage of Life*, 1907)

In the severe depression of the 1880s a new evil made its appearance, the so-called "sweating" system. Women were taking sewing home at low rates of pay, which forced them to work very long hours to earn a livelihood.

Public feeling was aroused. In September 1888 the Reverend Rutherford Waddell preached a sermon on "The Sin of Cheapness" in St Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Dunedin. The *Otago Daily Times* followed this up with an investigation by its reporter Silas Spragg, which appeared the following January.

In one suburban house, which he visited in the evening, Spragg found several girls busy sewing. "While they talked they hardly ever let the work out of their hands, retaining it as from habit while they moved about the room. These toilers were young, and should have been strong girls, but work that was almost incessant was telling upon them. The listless, dazed appearance that comes from drudging at monotonous work when one's faculties are jaded was unmistakably present." Spragg also noted, perhaps to his relief, "that during the investigation nothing in the nature of what is known as class feeling has been discovered".

The next step was a meeting in the Choral Hall on 11 July 1889, which decided to form a Tailoresses Union, with Waddell as president and Millar, of the Seamen's Union, as secretary. A tailoress, Harriet Morrison, was elected vice-president and soon succeeded Millar as secretary. This was the first trade union for women workers. Tailoresses' unions were soon formed in the other main centres, and unions of other women workers – waitresses, boot machinists, and domestic servants – followed.

2. The large workroom in Hallenstein's clothing factory in Dunedin in 1888.
(Hallenstein Bros., Dunedin)

3. Leaflet advertising the Dunedin Tailoresses Union's Grand Re-Union and Pic-Nic at Purakanui in 1890.
(Hocken Library, Dunedin)

4. Harriet R. Morrison (1862-1925), long-time secretary of the Tailoresses Union in Dunedin.
(*New Zealand Graphic*, 4 June 1892, Auckland Public Library)

TAILORESSES' UNION OF NEW ZEALAND.

GRAND

RE-UNION : and : PIC-NIC

To be held at the Charming Watering-place

PURAKANUI.

12 Miles Rail from Dunedin.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1890

Train Starts 1.30 sharp from Dunedin Railway Station, and will stop for Passengers at Ravensbourne and at Upper Port Chalmers Station.

Programme of Sports:

1. **PRESSERS' RACE** (handicap) **200yds.** 1st prize, 3yds Mosgiel Tweed, gift of the Company; 2nd, 5 Pairs Sox, Mosgiel Yarn, gift of the Company; 3rd, Special Prize.
2. **GIRLS' RACE, 120yds.** (members only).—1st prize, Travelling Bag, value £1 10s, gift of H.I.L.; 2nd, the Jewel Rug Tufting Machine; 3rd, Handsome Album.
3. **GIRLS' SKIP ROPE COMPETITION** (open).—1st prize, Goods, value £1 1s, gift of Brown, Ewing & Co., 2nd, Book, "Episodes of History," gift of Braithwaite's Book Arcade; 3rd, Handsome Opera-Glass Case.
4. **BOYS' RACE,** under 15, **120 yds.** 1st prize, Books, value 10s 6d, gift of Simon Bros.; 2nd, Book by Mrs. Parr, with Illustrations by Harrison Weir, gift of Braithwaite's Book Arcade; 3rd, Bat and Ball.
5. **GIRLS' WALKING MATCH** (members only), **400yds.**—1st prize, Dress Piece, value £1 1s, gift of Carter & Co.; 2nd, 7lb Tin of Coffee, gift of John Barron; 3rd, Lady's Sash, gift of Mrs. Lefi.
6. **MARRIED LADIES' RACE** (married under three years), **100yds.**—1st prize, Kitchen Chair, value £1 7s 6d, gift of Rosellar & Chisholm; 2nd, special; 3rd, special.
7. **LADIES' TUG OF WAR** (factories against shops).—£1 1s, divided amongst winning members.
8. **PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATES' RACE, 100yds.**—1st, 2nd, 3rd, special prizes.
9. **TAILORESSES' MANDICAP, 100yds.**—1st prize, Writing Case, value £1 1s 6d, gift of Wise, Cullen & Co.; 2nd, Hare, value 15s, gift of S. G. Smith; 3rd, Handsome Album.
10. **PRESSERS' OBSTACLE RACE, 200yds.** 1st prize, 3yds Mosgiel Tweed, gift of Company; 2nd, 3yds Mosgiel Tweed, gift of Company; 3rd, special prize.
11. **SINGLE LADIES' RACE** (all comers) **over 16, 120 yds.**—1st prize, Goods, value 10s 6d, gift of A. & T. Inglis; 2nd, Scrap Book; 3rd, Handsome Opera Glass Case.
12. **LADIES' SKIP ROPE COMPETITION** (members only).—1st prize, Goods, value £1 1s, gift of Brown, Ewing & Co.; 2nd, Tin of Biscuits, gift of E. Ablett; 3rd, Handsome Work-Case.
13. **MARRIED LADIES' RACE** (open for those who have not competed before), **100yds.** 1st prize, Box Tea, value £1 1s, gift of Nelson, Monk & Co.; 2nd and 3rd, special.
14. **YOUTHS' OPEN RACE** (under 20), **200yds.**—1st prize, Goods, value 10s 6d, gift of A. & T. Inglis; Book, "Sly Boots" and other farmyard chronicles, gift of Braithwaite's Book Arcade; 3rd, Photo Stand.
15. **LADIES' WALKING RACE** (members only), **400yds.**—1st prize, Hat, value £1 1, gift of Duthie Bros.; 2nd, Cake, gift of E. Ablett; 3rd, Ladies' Work-Case.
16. **LADIES OF COMMITTEE RACE, 120yds.** 1st prize, Box of Tea, value £1 1s, gift of Wardell Bros.; 2nd, Pair Photo Stands; 3rd, Ink Stand.
17. **LADIES' TUG OF WAR.**—£1 1s divided amongst winning members.
18. **BOYS' WALKING MATCH, Half Mile.** 1st prize, Goods, value 10s 6d, gift of A. & T. Inglis; 2nd, Large Picture Books, gift of Braithwaite's Book Arcade; 3rd, Bat and Ball.
19. **GIRLS' RACE** (under 16), **120yds.**—1st prize, Goods value 10s 6d, gift of A. & T. Inglis; 2nd, Large Picture Books, gift of Braithwaite's Book Arcade; Handsome Brooch.

And also a great number of other Races &c., far too numerous to mention, for which a large number of very valuable PRIZES have been obtained.

The Dunedin Engineers' Band will be in Attendance all the Day.

Provisions on the Grounds at Town Prices by Mr. Ablett, also Fruits, &c.

HOT WATER PROVIDED ON THE GROUNDS.

TICKETS (including Railway Fare and Admission to Grounds and Sports): **Adults, 2/; Apprentices, 1/6**

CHILDREN UNDER 12, HALF-PRICE.

Tickets to be obtained from Members, and at the Office, Barron's Buildings, Rattray St.

NO TICKETS TO BE HAD AT RAILWAY STATION.

If the day should prove Rainy the Picnic will be Postponed until the next Public Holiday, and the Tickets will do for the same.

H. R. MORRISON, Secretary.

PROGRAMMES, 1d. each.

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4

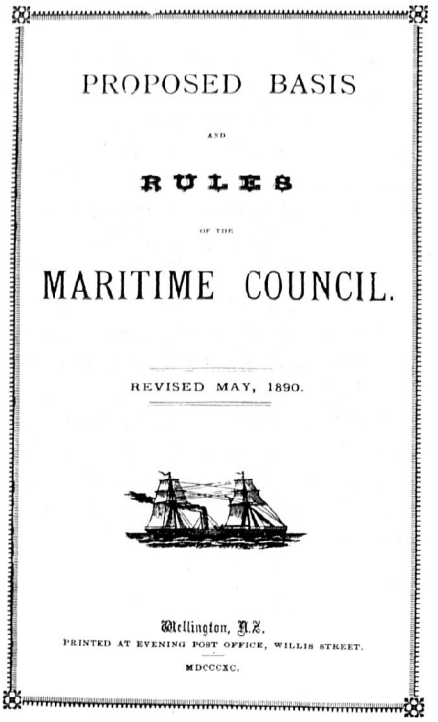
The Maritime Council

The seamen had stood alone in their conflict with the Northern Steam Ship Company; in future conflicts Millar wanted allies who could be relied on. At his initiative representatives from the wharf labourers' and West Coast miners' unions met in Dunedin in October 1889 and formed the Maritime Labour Council of New Zealand. Its object: by an "aggregation of power" to "enforce the carrying out of legitimate and necessary reforms where a single union might find the task beyond its individual strength".

With Millar as secretary the council quickly became a power in the land. The Federated Wharf Carters', Expressmen's and Storemen's Association joined, as did the Mercantile Marine Officers Association and then, in mid-1890, the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants. The council now boasted a membership of 16,000 workers. It was, claimed Millar, as well organised a body of unionists as existed anywhere in the world.

The council discussed with employers and government the disputes and grievances of its affiliated unions, but because of its strength other unions too asked for help. In May 1890 the council helped settle a dispute at the Petone Woollen Mill. In June it gained the reinstatement of two union officials dismissed at the Shag Point mine by enforcing a "complete boycott" of two Dunedin firms in which the owners of the mine had an interest.

In July the council became involved in a dispute between the Christchurch printers' union and the firm of Whitcombe and Tombs over the question of equal pay for women compositors. A total boycott of the firm was called, but this dispute was still unsettled when the council was caught up in the Maritime Strike which ended with its collapse.



PROPOSED BASIS

AND

RULES

OF THE

MARITIME COUNCIL.

REVISED MAY, 1890.

Wellington, N.Z.

PRINTED AT EVENING POST OFFICE, WILLIS STREET.

MDCCCXC.

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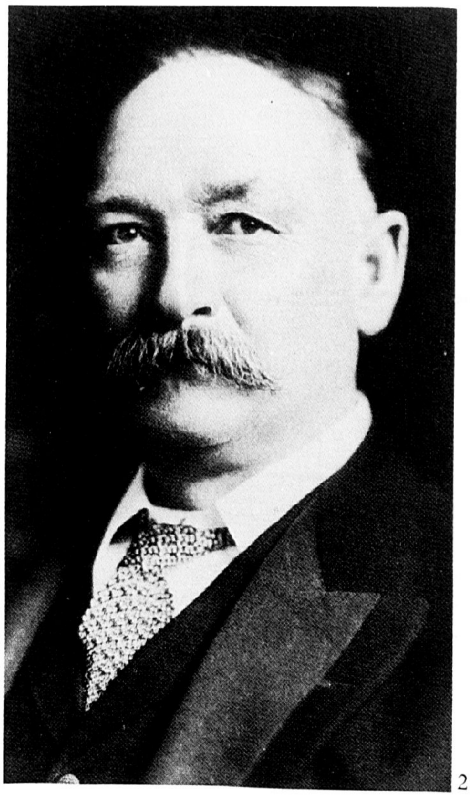

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1. Proposed basis and rules of the Maritime Council, revised May 1890. (Hocken Library, Dunedin)

2. Captain John A. Millar (1855-1915), secretary of the Seamen's Union and of the Maritime Council. (Earle Andrew Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

The Sweating Commission

1

The "sweating" revelations in Dunedin led to the appointment of a Royal Commission "to inquire into certain relations between the employers of certain kinds of labour and the persons employed therein". It became known as the Sweating Commission. Among the nine commissioners were the Reverend Rutherford Waddell and D.P. Fisher of the Wellington Wharf Labourers' Union, who was president of the Maritime Council.

The commission took evidence throughout New Zealand early in 1890. To induce witnesses to come forward, the commission offered to hold private hearings in the evenings. Some witnesses moreover were identified by letters only in the printed report, but even this did not prevent some of them from being victimised and losing their jobs.

The commission reported that sweating, as known overseas, did not exist in New Zealand, though a minority, including Waddell and Fisher, dissented from this view. The commission revealed many abuses, such as long and irregular hours of work, poor sanitary conditions, and a prevalence of child labour. It pointed out that "in whatever branch of industry a union has been formed the condition of the operatives has improved, wages do not sink below a living minimum, and the hours of work are not excessive".

1. "The Sweating Crusade". St George (with the face of Harriet Morrison) slays the sweating monster. (*New Zealand Observer*, 25 June 1892)

The Unionist Upsurge

1. United Labour Directory listing Auckland trade unions. (*The Tribune*, 18 Oct. 1890)

2. Title page of William Belcher's member's book in the New Zealand Federated Wharf Labourers' Union. (Roth Collection)

3. Early member's card of the Wellington Typographical Society. (Wellington Typographical Union, Diamond Jubilee Souvenir, 1922)

4. The first letter to members from the newly formed PSA, 5 August 1890. (Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

5. The first national conference of the ASRS, Christchurch, March 1890. (*ASRS Golden Jubilee, 1886-1936*, 1936)

New Zealand had about 3000 members of trade unions in 1888, 20,000 by the end of 1889, 40,000 by mid-1890 and, according to Captain Millar (although this is undoubtedly exaggerated) 63,000 in October 1890. This unprecedented upsurge was due to a number of factors: the deepening economic depression, the impact of the successful London dockers' strike of 1889, the revelations of the Sweating Commission, and the influx of radical publications, such as the *Fabian Essays* and Edward Bellamy's utopian novel *Looking Backward*. In the words of one observer, a "wave of socialistic feeling" swept over the country.

Until 1889 unionism had been confined to male manual workers. Apart from miners and shearers, unionists were found only in the larger cities. Now however unionism spread to the countryside and to smaller towns. It gained the support of women workers and it influenced white-collar and professional workers, particularly in the government service. Post office and public service associations were formed in 1890. With hardly a day passing without a new union being formed, the joke circulated that only the gravediggers had not organised themselves because there were enough openings in their trade already.

Unionism was seen as a step towards "the emancipation of labour". Nobody had very clear ideas of how to achieve this aim; hopefully, by organising trade unions and associations, Labour would become so overwhelmingly strong that the rich would give up all thought of resistance and would of their own free will join in building the new society. Millar spoke of the great, grand commonwealth where all would be employed and paid by the state.

United Labour Directory.

[Corrections and additions to be sent in not later than Tuesday evening.]

BOOTMAKERS' UNION.
FORESTERS' HALL, 8 p.m., First Monday in Month.
Committee meet in Newton Baths.
W. L. HARDING, Secretary.

TAILORS' UNION
Secretary, W. CONNOLLY, Wellington St.
Fortnightly, Y.M.C.A. Rooms.

GUM STOREMENS' UNION.
MEETS TEMPERANCE HALL, Albert St., every Fourth week.
President, ROBT. WHITE.
Secretary, ROBT. PEACE, Symon St.

AMALGAMATED SOCIETY OF RAILWAY SERVANTS.
Meets every alternate Saturday at Britomart Hotel.
E. ELLISON, Secretary, Upper Queen St.

MASTERS' AND ENGINEERS' ASSOCIATION.
Meets at the Working Men's Club every alternate Thursday.
F. J. PRYOR, Secretary, Napier-street.

TANNERS' & CURRIERS' UNION.
Meet Rutland St. Assembly Rooms every alternate Saturday.
S. H. LEES, Secretary, Cox's Creek.

GAS WORKERS' UNION.
Meets at Foresters' Hall once a fortnight.
H. G. GRAY, Secretary, Oxford St.

HOTEL AND RESTAURANT EMPLOYEES' UNION.
Meets Robson's Rooms every alternate Monday.
H. C. D. SERGEANT, Secretary, C/o. E. Waters, Queen St.

SEAMEN'S UNION.
Meets Rutland St. Assembly Rooms every Wednesday evening.
Secretary,

WHARF LABOURERS' UNION
Meet at Cook St. Hall.
Ed. RANDALL Secretary, Marine Chambers

AMALGAMATED SOCIETY OF CARPENTERS' AND JOINERS.
Meets Robson's Rooms on every alternate Tuesday at 7.30.
SAMUEL HYSON, President. Wm. B. SMITH, Secretary, Sheridan St.

N.Z. FEDERATED BAKERS' AND PASTRY COOKS' ASSOCIATION.
Meetings every alternate Saturday, opposite Queen's Head Hotel, Upper Queen St.
G. WRIGHT, Secretary, Karangahape Rd.

FEDERATED BUTCHERS' UNION
Meet Rutland St. Assembly Rooms, 2n. 4th Monday of each Month.
F. R. BUST Secretary, Surrey St. Richmond Rd., Ponsonby.

TRADES' & LABOUR COUNCIL OF AUCKLAND.
Meets Rutland St. Assembly Rooms, every Thursday at 7.30.
F. R. BUST Secretary, Surrey St. Richmond Rd., Ponsonby.

THE

N.Z. FEDERATED

Wharf Labourers' Union.

RULES AND CONTRIBUTIONS.

Member Wm Belcher

No. 113

Date of Enrolment

Transferred from

DUNEDIN:
TABLET PRINTING COMPANY (JOLLY, CONNOR), OCTAGON.

1890.

2

FOUNDED 1853 INCORPORATED 1872

Wellington Typographical Society.

MEMBER'S CARD.

3

Public Service Association of New Zealand.

WELLINGTON, 5TH AUGUST, 1890.

DEAR SIR,—

The following resolution was carried at the first regular meeting, on 4th August, of the Provisional Committee elected at the preliminary meeting in the Exchange Hall, Wellington, on 31st July:—

Resolved:—"That a Circular be prepared embodying some of the principal outlines of the Association and proposed future action; and that the same be printed, and distributed throughout the Colony along with the report of the preliminary general meeting."

It was further decided that as the full lines of the proposed Association would be laid down and circulated in the draft Articles of Association for expressions of opinion from the Service throughout the Colony, the Circular need only embrace some of the more salient points, such as would be sufficient to enable the Service to become acquainted with the proposed general scheme and objects; and that the Circular and Reports accompanying should be marked, "Forwarded to officers throughout the Colony by direction of the Provisional Committee."

The Circular and Reports are accordingly forwarded herewith.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

The Provisional Committee trusts that officers in the various centres will meet together at as early a date as possible and consider the proposals annexed, and that they will then communicate with the Provisional Committee.

Everyone receiving a copy of this Circular, and of the Reports, &c., of the preliminary meeting, is *specially and earnestly requested* by the Provisional Committee to make it as widely known as possible amongst members of the Public Service within his immediate or local knowledge. It may not be possible to send advices to every member, but it is hoped that all who do receive advices will exert themselves to circulate them, and will recognise the urgency and importance of so doing.

On behalf of the Provisional Committee.

A. W. DILLON BELL.
F. W. FLANAGAN.
F. WALDEGRAVE.

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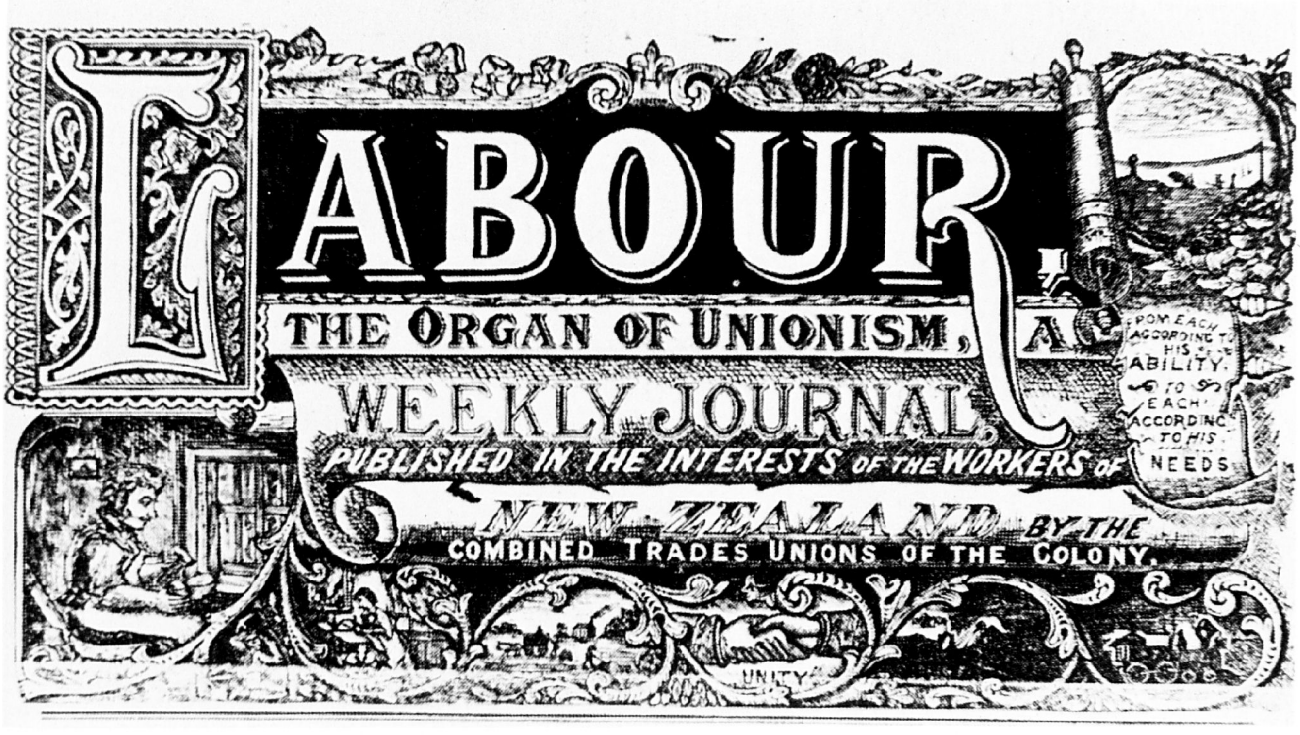
5

A Paper for Labour



1. Masthead of the dummy issue of *Labour* which Dunedin unionists planned to publish in 1890. (Roth Collection)

As their numbers and influence grew, unionists felt the need for a journal which would put forward their point of view. The railwaymen had started the *New Zealand Railway Review* in 1889, but a general labour journal was lacking since the collapse of the *Watchman* three years earlier. In September 1890, a new daily paper was launched in Dunedin with union support: the *Globe*, which was owned by a cooperative comprising supporters and employees. In Auckland, Arthur Desmond published the short-lived but very radical weekly *Tribune*.

Evidence of an earlier attempt to found a union paper has come to light in the Dunedin office of the Seamen's Union in the form of a four-page dummy issue of a journal called *Labour*. The elaborate masthead shows that *Labour* was to be a weekly journal "published in the interests of the workers of combined trade unions of the colony". The dummy issue carried an editorial which put the case for a separate Labour paper:

"The majority of the newspapers of New Zealand advocate, directly or indirectly, the cause of Capital. The whole of them are owned by capitalists, great or small. ... If Unionism is to remain a living power after the first heat of its establishment has cooled, it must have a colonial organ, through which the *whole* party can be reached, counselled, advised, and guided, by the ablest of its leaders in all parts of the colony. We are not going to be content with comparatively paltry victories as to pay and hours of work. We hope to march on to far grander conquests in the future, and without a journal which every member of the party will read, the task of marshalling the great army of workers and ensuring harmonious action would be almost impossible."

NEW ZEALAND'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER.

THE

TRIBUNE.

The Orator's voice is a mighty power, as it rolls from shore to shore;
And the fearless pen has more sway o'er Men than murderous cannon's roar.
Let a word be flung from the Tribune's tongue, or a drop from the fearless pen,
And the chains accurst asunder burst that fetter the minds of Men.

GUARANTEED CIRCULATION OVER 4,000.] EDITED BY —?

VOL. I. NO. 1.] SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18, 1890. [Price 2d. Post Free 2½d.

THE PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE.

When in the days of ancient Rome an iron-hearted aristocracy of wealth and power conspired to enslave, murder, and crush the common people, it often occurred that a man of genius and commanding ability uprose to defend the disorganised plebeians.

Such a man the plebeians listened to gladly. They cheered him on and elected him—as their champion—to the only public office in their gift. They made him Tribune. In this capacity he could neither make laws nor alter them; but by raising his hand and speaking a word he could paralyze the whole executive machine, and prevent oppressive edicts from being put in force. Often and again the people's vindicator was deserted in his sorest need by the very men whose battle he fought. Then bitter indeed was his fate, for, hated by the Rich, and abandoned by the Poor, he usually fell a victim to hired bullies in the employ of a malignant oligarchy. His blood dyed the steps of the forum, and his dead body floated down the Tiber.

Our readers should remember that this paper is placed in an exactly similar position to that held by its old world human namesake. It stands *in the gap*—it faces the music of war—the Capitalist's cannonade will concentrate upon it; and if not loyally supported when the battle joins, behold, it must share the fate of its ancient prototype—it must die.

"SHOOT THEM DOWN."

It is such brutal barbarians as Treasurer McMillan, of New South Wales, that foment revolutions. Proposing to "shoot the strikers down like dogs, sir," is very dangerous talk. No doubt he and his class would like an opportunity to do so, which shows their brutal vindictiveness. This McMillan has a brother in this city, we believe, whose thought trends in a similar direction. He is chief of the "Auckland 'Masters' Association."

"FIRE LOW."

Col. Price, of Victoria, who told his hired soldiers to "Fire low" when they did fire at the strikers, is a son of the gaoler John Price, formerly convict-driver of Norfolk Island, and who was killed by the prisoner Melville. The father was a cold-blooded brute, and the son takes after him. It is such venerced savages that are always hired by oligarchys to "preserve law and order," which means, in plain language, to murder the people if they dare to resist being plundered. "The origin of all."

"WANTED."

Not systems fit and wise—not faith with rigid eyes—not wealth with golden pile—not power with gracious smile—not e'en the potent pen.—*Wanted men.*

Not words of winning note—not thoughts from life remote—not fond religious airs—not sweetly languid prayers—not softly scented creeds.—*Wanted deeds.*

They that can dare and do—not longing for the new—not prating of the old—good life and actions bold—these the occasion needs.—*Men and deeds.*

RAILWAY MISMANAGEMENT.

The Railway revenue for the last half year is £20,000 short of the estimate. What splendid business men these three Commissioners are, to be sure. They run the public highways, and inland carrying trade, purely in the interests of a Steamship Syndicate, and the loss made in the operation has to be made good by the asinine taxpayers. This comes of having shareholders of Shipping Companies at the head of public departments.

THE EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION.

The unselfishness so nobly displayed by the self-styled capitalists of Auckland deserves our unbounded congratulations. In a truly touching manner they are paying freight rates that mean approaching insolvency, in order to gratify a hero-hearted love of monopoly, a noble-minded hatred of reform. We sympathise from the bottom of our souls with these "merchants and importers" who, at the dictates of a Loan Company, are sacrificed as a burnt offering on the altars of Mammon. Bitter is their fate, surely, but it will be bitterer far when foreclosure follows. Many of these so-called merchants are merely figure-heads. Behind them and behind the Union Company is the gigantic power of "the Bank." They are bound hand and foot in financial bonds. They hate labour combinations instinctively; but when they seriously take in hand to "crush unionism," they have entered upon a mighty contract—a contract that even the Blood and Iron Chancellor failed ignominiously to accomplish.

BRIGHAM THE BRAVE.

John Dillon says, "Whenever I look at Mr. Balfour I am reminded of what an old Irishwoman said of an ugly woman who was well dressed, 'Glory be to God that so much can be done with clothes.'" What would the great Home Ruler say if he saw Inspector Brigham strutting behind the barricades in all his gilded glory.

The Inspector was evidently made for great and heroic deeds—let us, therefore, offer him to Dublin Castle. He would be clearly in his element leading on the crowbar and battering ram brigades, smashing down the huts of the half-starved victims of grinding laws. He's just the man for Balfour. That's the place where glory waits him.

THE "FREE LABOURER."

"The Gods from above the mad labour behold,
And pity mankind that will perish for gold."—Dryden.

The above term has been revived in New South Wales, but its disreputable source is not generally known. When its origin is thoroughly understood the word blackleg will, in comparison, be a term of endearment. In early colonial days Australia was another Siberia where the Great British Empire transported political suspects and its worst criminals. Convicts were deported for "their country's good," and crammed into ships that were veritable floating infernos. Many nominal offenders were amongst them; but half were men of the worst criminal class,—the human refuse of City slums, the worn out material of the Philistines' mills. They had been reared in darkness and crime, and as society made war on them they retaliated by making crime a profession. Society had made them slaves from birth, it had deprived them of education and freedom; consequently they fought society openly and covertly with every weapon they could command. But their savage struggle was futile. Individually they were as helpless as the wild mustang of the Prairie, when the whirling lariat encircles his neck. Every wild plunge only tightens the noose. By thousands convicts were "shipped away to Botany Bay," under the command of iron-hearted military martinets, whose highest joy was to torture and flog their prisoners.

In Australia these convicts were chained together in gangs, and treated more like brutes than men. Many of them were ornamented with a cannon ball, riveted by a short chain round their ankle, and when walking they carried the cannon ball in their hands. They wore a peculiar dress—were branded all over with broad arrows, and employed making public roads, and erecting public buildings. When one had been sufficiently tamed by starvation, hard-work, and the cat-of-nine-tails, he was hired-out as a "free labourer" to the primitive Australian squatter at a fixed market scale. He received a species of ticket of leave, and was graciously allowed to *work for himself* on terms dictated by his gaolers. His fate was agonizing in the chain gang, and sorrowful as a "free labourer." His freedom consisted in not wearing actual iron chains when toiling to earn wealth for his master. He was officially known as a "free labourer," but if he dared to offend his boss, he could be unmercifully flogged into abjectness by order of the local J.P. Often he died under the lash—in fact, the word "free labourer" was then, as now, a huge mockery and a heartless fraud. The unfortunate convict had no other choice than to grind out his days in silence. The lessee of a "free labourer" had power to transfer him from master to master as mutual convenience required. In fact the "free labourer" had as much say in his own destiny as a working bullock would have now. If such "free labourer" became unruly or intractable, he was again put in the chain gang, or the hulks, to be slowly murdered by discipline and toil. The term "free labourer" has a suggestive ring about it of the hulks—the lash and the chain gang. As now used it is intended to be the *honourable* designation of a class of men that the social surroundings of Poverty and Toil have reduced to a similar state of "freedom." Society crushes men into brutes—destroys their moral principle and robs them of the products of their labour. Monopoly grinds suffering humanity into powder—hunger acts as effectively in taming the slave as the cat of nine tails, and vice (encouraged by the State) is more of a drag on men than the cannon ball and the chain.

The story of Botany Bay should be studied by those who glory in the hollow mocking convict slang "free labour." Its history is a horrible tale of organised crime and murder, under the ægis of the law. In one sense all that has passed away as a terrible dream of the night, but its spirit is with us still, and under other designations in various disguises the convict still toils in the chain gang, and clanks his iron fetters.

Some of the wealthiest men in New South Wales were at one time "wearers of the chain," and it was one of these interesting specimens of plutocracy that revived the term "free labourer."

Free labourer indeed! Free! Poor things.

A deep-laid plot is being worked by a huge timber mill monopoly to break up the Mill Hands and Bushmen's Union. This union ought to beware of possible traitors, and should work along quietly.

2. Front page of the first issue of *Tribune* published in Auckland during the Maritime Strike. (Auckland Public Library)

The Maritime Strike of 1890

The New Zealand Maritime Council linked up with a similar body in Australia. This loyalty to Australian affiliations led to its involvement in the Maritime Strike of 1890, and its ultimate destruction.

There is strong evidence that the Maritime Strike was a quarrel deliberately picked by Australian employers and deliberately extended to New Zealand. Millar, anxious to avoid a local strike, urged the Union Steam Ship Company to give up its trans-Tasman trade for the duration of the dispute, but the company refused. When its Sydney agent used non-union labour for loading, New Zealand crews spontaneously walked off their ships without waiting for instructions from Dunedin. The Union Steam Ship Company, commented Sir Robert Stout, "with its eyes open practically invited a strike".

On 26 August the New Zealand Maritime Council called a general seamen's strike, which was soon joined by the council's other affiliations, with the significant exception of the railwaymen. "So overpowering was the class bias and sentiment," noted an employer, "that old, tried and faithful servants turned against their masters as unreasonably as did the Sepoy privates on their officers in India in 1857."

Despite this initial enthusiasm, the weakness of New Zealand unions soon became apparent. Most of them were less than a year old. They lacked experience as much as funds to sustain a lengthy conflict. The loyalty of their members was still untested and it did not stand up to the strain.

The employers soon gained the upper hand. The miners' strike had little effect because summer was approaching which made adequate coal supplies no longer vitally important. With the harvest two months off, farm labourers and farmers' sons were available to work the ports in place of striking watersiders. Bank clerks offered, or were told to offer, their services; school teachers and members of athletic clubs lent a hand, often with hilarious results, but despite their difficulties in handling unfamiliar gear, they were able to keep the ports open.

Having seized the initiative, the employers were in no mood to accept any terms short of total surrender. "The unions are becoming so oppressive in their actions," read a message from a leading freezing company, "we think the present an opportune time to knock down the whole system for we shall never have a better chance."

In the port of Napier the employers formed a Free Association of Employers and Workmen of Hawke's Bay. The working members worked the port, while the subscribing members provided the officials. At Lyttelton a similar body, called the Lumpers and Wharf Labourers Association, was set up by the local merchants. Of its committee of nine members, five including the chairman were employers. Only members of these associations were able to get work on the wharves.

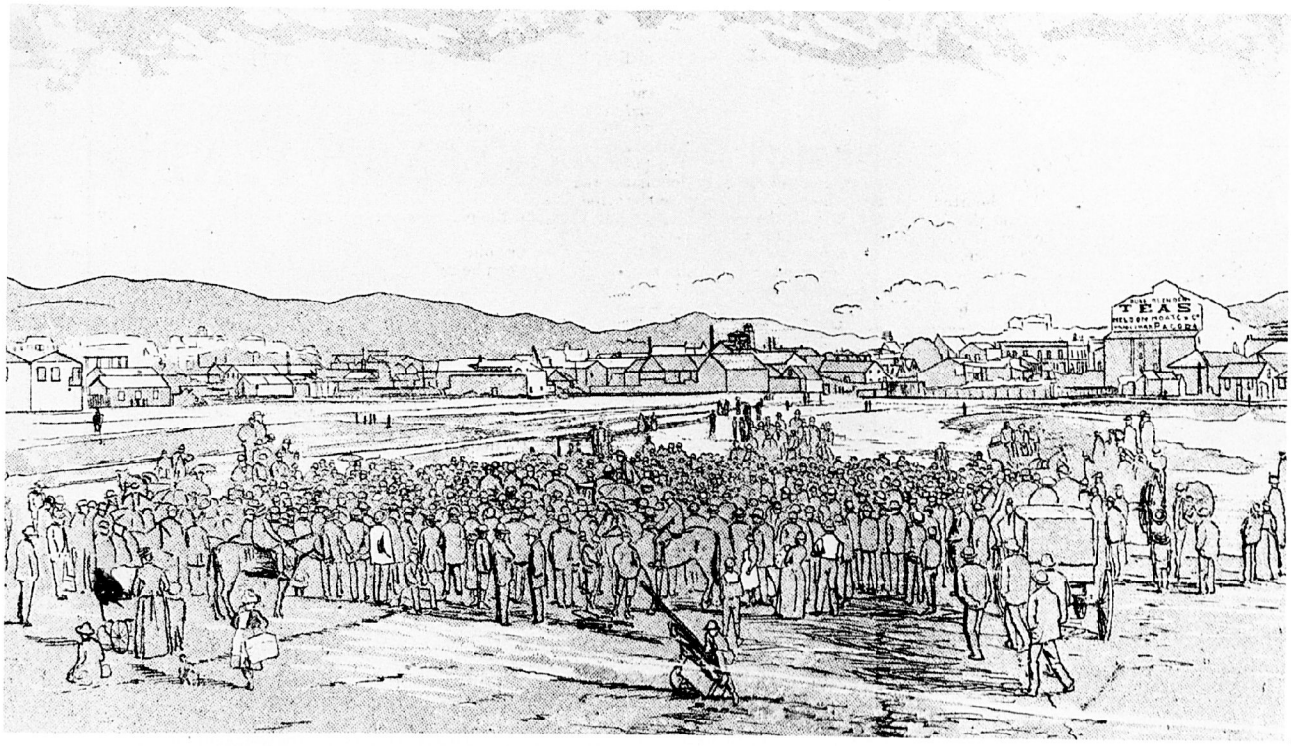
1

1. "Necessary Evils": a procession of strike-breakers drawn by the artist James Nairn. (J. M. Nairn, *Strike Notes*, 1890)

2. Mass meeting of unionists in Wellington on 13 September 1890. (*New Zealand Graphic*, 4 Oct. 1890, Auckland Public Library)

3. Scabs have trouble with a winch. (J. S. Allan, *Comical Sketches of the Strike*, 1890)

4. Shipping clerks "volunteer" as strike-breakers. Steam Ship Manager to Clerical Staff. "I am obliged to ask you to turn out and load the Tongariro." (*New Zealand Graphic*, 4 Oct. 1890, Auckland Public Library)



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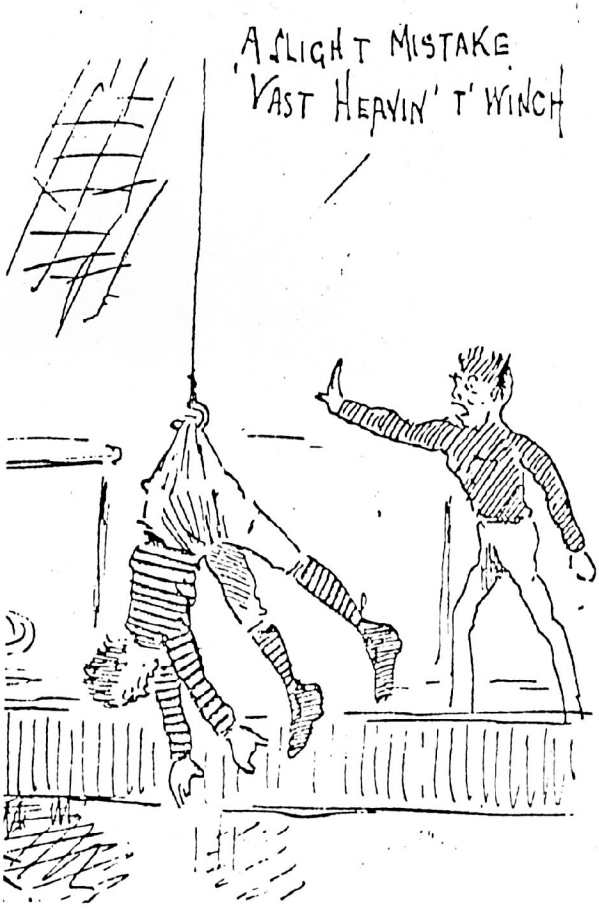

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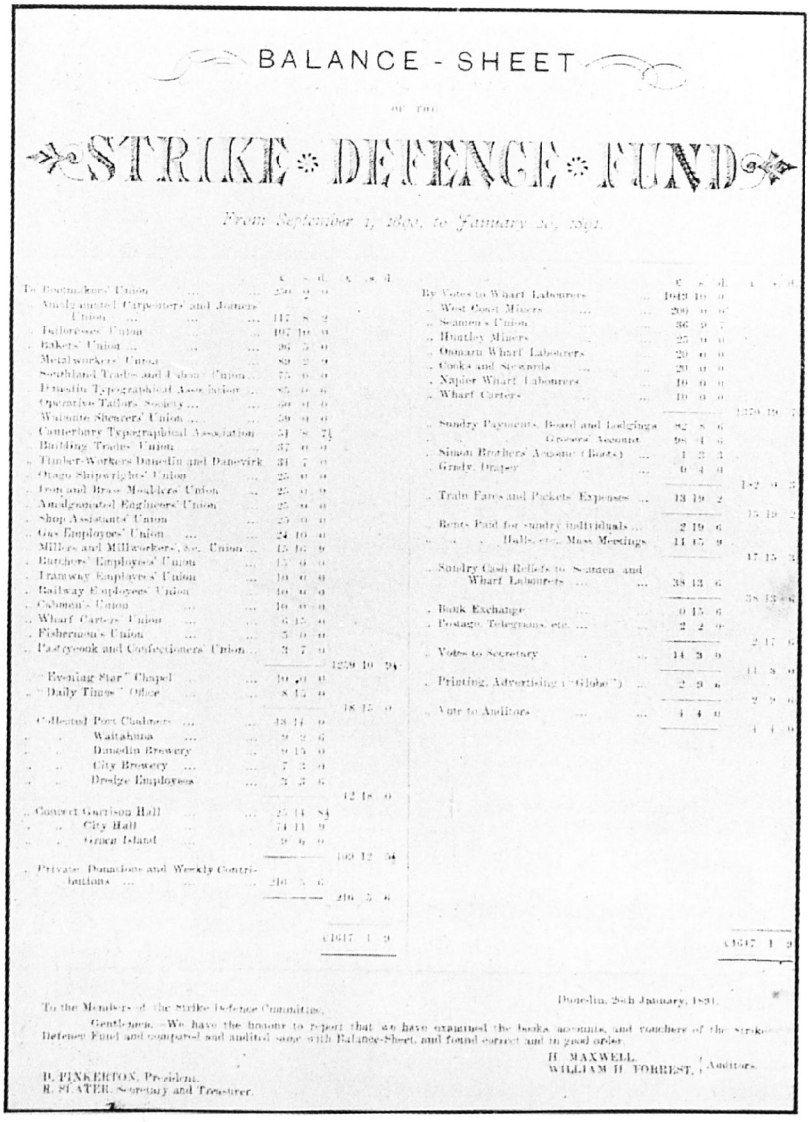
Steam Ship Manager to Clerical Staff.
I am obliged to ask you to turn out
and load the Tongariro



BALANCE - SHEET

OF THE

STRIKE ✧ DEFENCE ✧ FUND

From September 1, 1890, to January 26, 1891.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
To Bootmakers' Union	200	0	0			
" Amalgamated Carpenters and Joiners' Union	117	8	2			
" Tailoresses' Union	107	10	0			
" Bakers' Union	36	5	0			
" Metalworkers' Union	89	2	7			
" Southland Trades and Labour Union	75	0	0			
" Dunedin Typographical Association	65	0	0			
" Operative Tailors' Society	50	0	0			
" Waitaki Shearers' Union	50	0	0			
" Canterbury Typographical Association	34	8	7½			
" Building Trades' Union	37	0	0			
" Timber-Workers Dunedin and Dunedin	31	7	0			
" Otago Shipwrights' Union	25	0	0			
" Iron and Brass Moulders' Union	25	0	0			
" Amalgamated Engineers' Union	25	0	0			
" Shop Assistants' Union	23	0	0			
" Gas Employees' Union	24	10	0			
" Millers and Millworkers, &c., Union	15	16	9			
" Butchers' Employees' Union	15	0	0			
" Tramway Employees' Union	10	0	0			
" Railway Employees' Union	10	0	0			
" Cabmen's Union	10	0	0			
" Wharf Carters' Union	6	15	0			
" Fishermen's Union	5	0	0			
" Pastrycook and Confectioners' Union	2	7	0			
				1259	10	9½
" "Evening Star" Chapel	10	10	0			
" "Daily Times" Office	8	15	0			
				18	15	0
" Collected Port Chalmers	18	14	0			
" " Waitahuna	9	2	6			
" " Dunedin Brewery	9	15	0			
" " City Brewery	7	5	0			
" " Dredge Employees	3	3	6			
				12	18	0
" Concert Garrison Hall	25	14	8½			
" " City Hall	74	11	9			
" " Ocean Island	9	6	0			
				109	12	5½
" Private Donations and Weekly Contributions	210	5	6			
				210	5	6
				£1617	1	9

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
By Votes to Wharf Labourers	1043	10	0			
" West Coast Miners	200	0	0			
" Seamen's Union	36	9	7			
" Huntley Miners	25	0	0			
" Oamaru Wharf Labourers	20	0	0			
" Cooks and Stewards	20	0	0			
" Napier Wharf Labourers	10	0	0			
" Wharf Carters	10	0	0			
				1370	19	7
" Sundry Payments, Board and Lodgings	82	8	6			
" " Grocers' Account	98	4	6			
" Simon Brothers' Account (Boots)	1	2	3			
" Grady, Drayer	0	4	0			
				182	0	3
" Train Fares and Packets Expenses	13	19	2			
				13	19	2
" Rents Paid for sundry individuals	2	19	6			
" " " Halls, etc., Mass Meetings	14	15	9			
				17	15	3
" Sundry Cash Reliefs to Seamen and Wharf Labourers	38	13	6			
				38	13	6
" Bank Exchange	0	15	6			
" Postage, Telegrams, etc.	2	2	0			
				2	17	6
" Votes to Secretary	14	3	9			
				14	3	9
" Printing, Advertising ("Globe")	2	9	6			
				2	9	6
" Vote to Auditors	4	4	0			
				4	4	0
				£1617	1	9

Dunedin, 26th January, 1891.

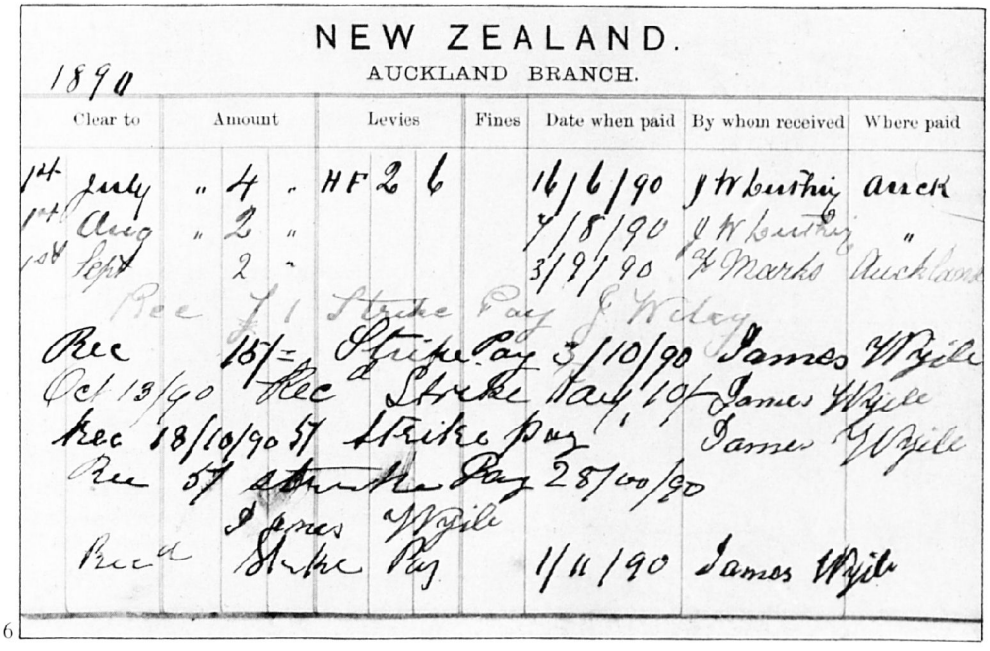
To the Members of the Strike Defence Committee.

Gentlemen,—We have the honour to report that we have examined the books, accounts, and vouchers of the Strike-Defence Fund and compared and audited same with Balance-Sheet, and found correct and in good order.

H. MAXWELL,
WILLIAM H. FORREST, } Auditors.

D. PINKERTON, President.
R. SLATER, Secretary and Treasurer.

5



NEW ZEALAND.

AUCKLAND BRANCH.

1890

Clear to	Amount	Levies	Fines	Date when paid	By whom received	Where paid
14th July	" 4 -	HF 2 6		16/6/90	J W Curtis	Auck
1st Aug	" 2 "			7/8/90	J W Curtis	"
1st Sept	2 -			3/9/90	J Marks	Auckland
Rec £1 Strike Pay J Wylie						
Rec	15/= Strike Pay			3/10/90	James Wylie	
Oct 13/90	Rec Strike Pay 10/-				James Wylie	
Rec 18/10/90	5/- Strike Pay				James Wylie	
Rec 5/- Strike Pay				28/10/90		
	James Wylie					
Rec'd	Strike Pay			1/11/90	James Wylie	

6

5. Balance sheet of the Dunedin strike defence fund.
(Souvenir Catalogue, Industrial Exhibition and Art Union, 1912)

6. A page from James Wylie's Seamen's Union membership book, showing his receipt of weekly strike pay.
(Roth Collection)

7

Opposition MPs persuaded the government to call a conference in an attempt to settle the dispute, but the Employers' Associations refused to attend. The only employer present was a representative of the Union Steam Ship Company who withdrew after some inconclusive discussions.

On 8 October the Maritime Council instructed the wharf carters to resume work, and two days later the coal strike in the Auckland area collapsed. This left only seamen, watersiders and South Island miners to continue the struggle, but their places had long since been taken by non-union men. On 10 November the Maritime Council officially ended the dispute. The council itself ceased to exist soon afterwards and so did all the unions involved, with the sole exception of the Seamen's Union.

The first major national confrontation between Capital and Labour ended in total defeat of the unions. The only ray of hope was revenge at the ballot box, in the general elections due to take place in December.

7. Unionists demonstrate in Greymouth on 24 September 1890. In the centre foreground the Brunner miners' band. (P. J. O'Farrell, *The Workers in Grey District Politics, 1856-1913*, 1955)

The Coming of Labour Day

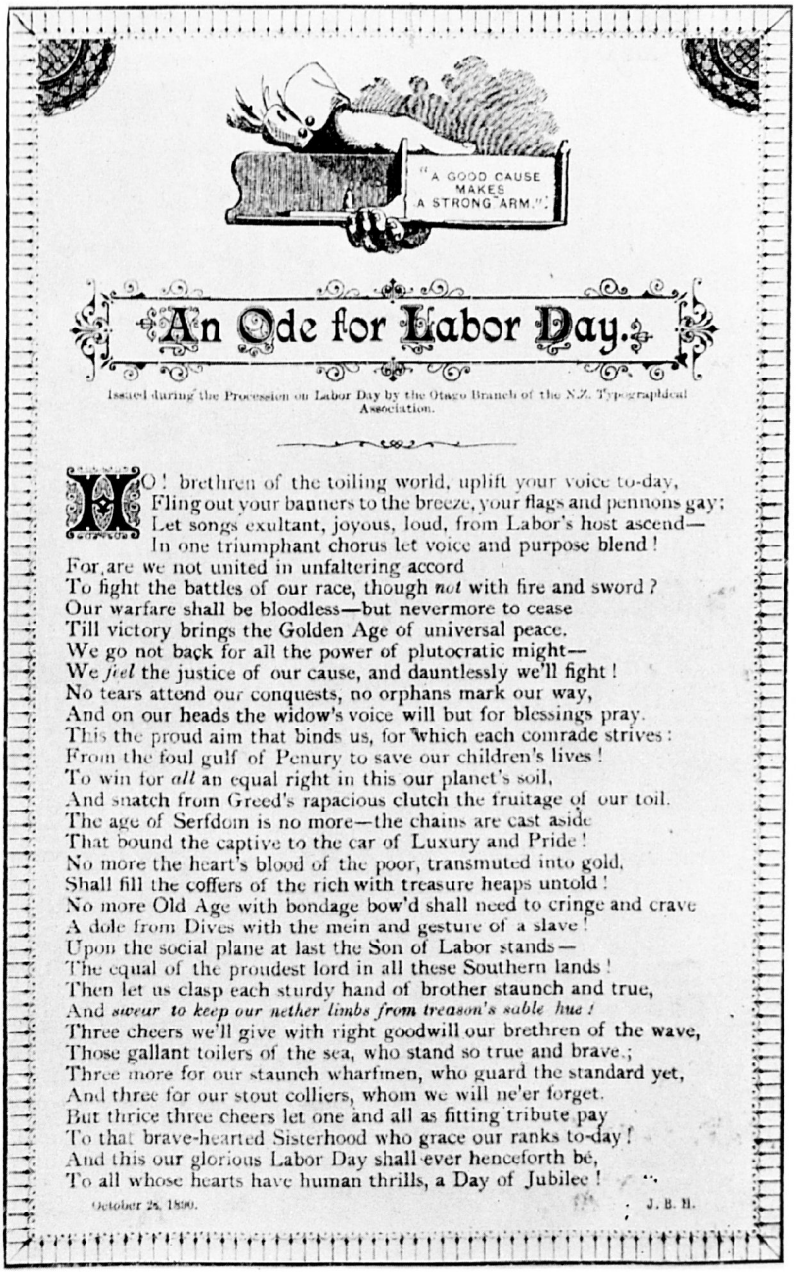
The Maritime Council asked Trades Councils to observe a public holiday each year on 28 October, the day the council had been founded, and to demonstrate in favour of the eight-hour day. The first such celebration of "Labour Day" took place in 1890, in the dying stages of the Maritime Strike. It was a last show of defiance by unionists whose cause was facing inevitable defeat.

Three thousand workers, with their banners flying, marched in the eight-hours procession in Dunedin, 2000 in Christchurch, 1500 in Wellington, and smaller numbers in Auckland, Napier and Palmerston North. In Dunedin the railwaymen were there, defying their employer's ban, the butchers came on horseback, while the printers had a small printing press on the back of a lorry, where they printed and distributed to onlookers "An Ode for Labor Day".

In Wellington 80-year-old Parnell, the founder of the eight-hour day, was the hero of the hour. Seated on a brake drawn by four horses he led the procession to Newtown Park where he was presented with an illuminated address. He told the crowd that the chord struck at Petone 50 years earlier was now vibrating around the world.

Eight Hours Committees were formed to organise future processions. The government agreed to close its offices on Labour Demonstration Day, and in 1899 Parliament passed the Labour Day Act, which established the second Wednesday in October as a general holiday for everybody.

1. "An Ode for Labor Day", written by J. B. Hunter. This leaflet was printed and distributed during the 1890 Labour Day procession in Dunedin. (Souvenir Catalogue, Industrial Exhibition and Art Union, 1912)



An Ode for Labor Day.

Issued during the Procession on Labor Day by the Otago Branch of the N.Z. Typographical Association.

HO! brethren of the toiling world, uplift your voice to-day,
Fling out your banners to the breeze, your flags and pennons gay;
Let songs exultant, joyous, loud, from Labor's host ascend—
In one triumphant chorus let voice and purpose blend!
For are we not united in unfaltering accord
To fight the battles of our race, though *not* with fire and sword?
Our warfare shall be bloodless—but nevermore to cease
Till victory brings the Golden Age of universal peace.
We go not back for all the power of plutocratic might—
We *feel* the justice of our cause, and dauntlessly we'll fight!
No tears attend our conquests, no orphans mark our way,
And on our heads the widow's voice will but for blessings pray.
This the proud aim that binds us, for which each comrade strives:
From the foul gulf of Penury to save our children's lives!
To win for *all* an equal right in this our planet's soil,
And snatch from Greed's rapacious clutch the fruitage of our toil.
The age of Serfdom is no more—the chains are cast aside
That bound the captive to the car of Luxury and Pride!
No more the heart's blood of the poor, transmuted into gold,
Shall fill the coffers of the rich with treasure heaps untold!
No more Old Age with bondage bow'd shall need to cringe and crave
A dole from Dives with the mein and gesture of a slave!
Upon the social plane at last the Son of Labor stands—
The equal of the proudest lord in all these Southern lands!
Then let us clasp each sturdy hand of brother staunch and true,
And *swear to keep our nether limbs from treason's sable hue!*
Three cheers we'll give with right goodwill our brethren of the wave,
Those gallant toilers of the sea, who stand so true and brave.;
Three more for our staunch wharfmen, who guard the standard yet,
And three for our stout colliers, whom we will ne'er forget.
But thrice three cheers let one and all as fitting tribute pay
To that brave-hearted Sisterhood who grace our ranks to-day!
And this our glorious Labor Day shall ever henceforth be,
To all whose hearts have human thrills, a Day of Jubilee!

October 28, 1890. J. B. H.

1

No. of application: 2096.
Date: 24th August, 1897.

TRADE MARK.

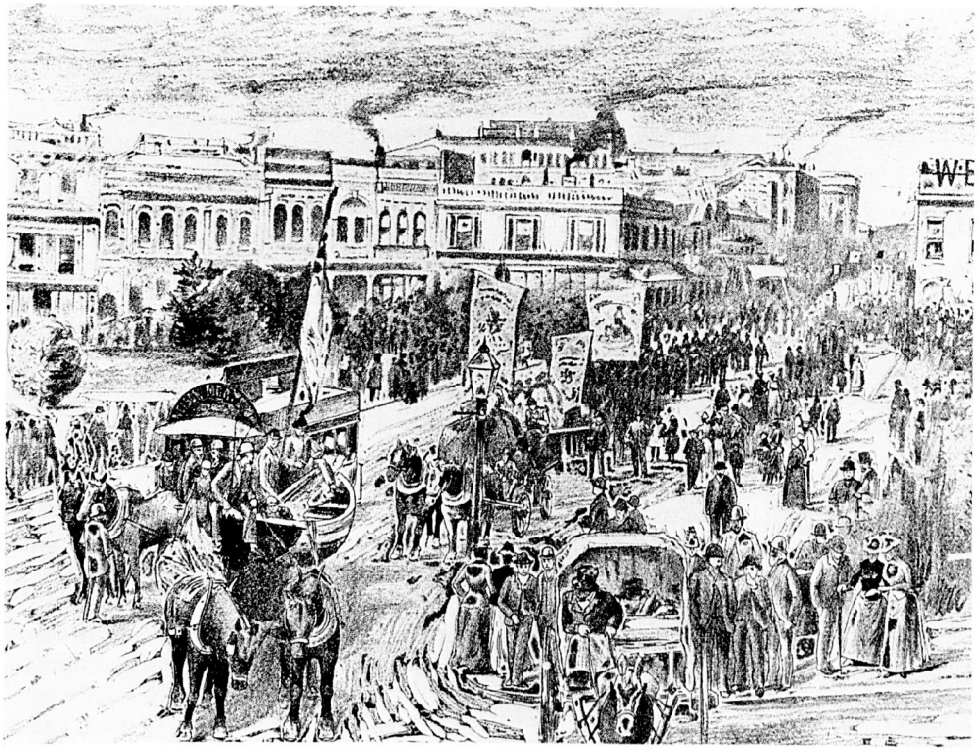
The essential particulars of this trade mark are the device and the words "Eight Hours"; and any right to the exclusive use of the added matter is disclaimed.

NAME.

JAMES CONNOR, trading as "Covent Garden Company," of Moray Place, Dunedin, New Zealand, Baker.

No. of class: 42.
Description of goods: Bread. (By consent.)

2

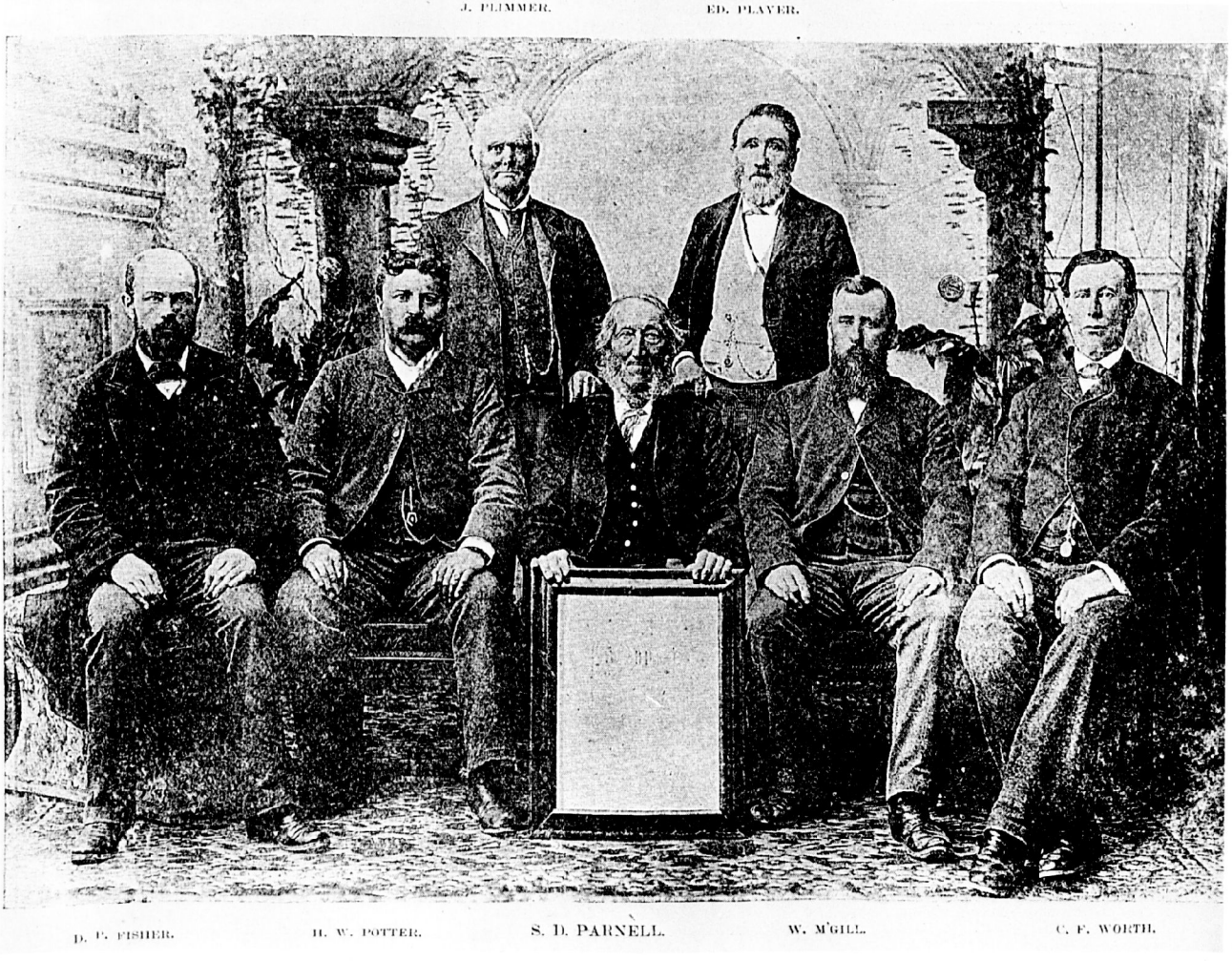


3

2. Trademark registered by the Dunedin baker James Connor in 1898. (*New Zealand Gazette*, 7 July 1898)

3. The Labour Day procession passes through Dunedin's Octagon. (*New Zealand Graphic*, 29 Nov. 1890, Auckland Public Library)

4. The Wellington Eight Hour Committee in 1890: in the centre 80-year-old S. D. Parnell. (*New Zealand Graphic*, 6 Dec. 1890, Auckland Public Library)



4

Workingmen into Parliament

The first workingman to enter the New Zealand Parliament was Samuel P. Andrews, a plasterer, who represented Christchurch City from 1879 to 1881. Another worker MP was the engineer Henry Levestam who won the Nelson seat in 1881. Neither regarded himself as a labour representative, despite his working class origins.

The general election of 1890, following so soon on the defeat of the Maritime Strike, was bitterly contested. "Remember Labour Day and Vote Straight", was the slogan of the Otago Trades and Labour Council. "Labour leaders," commented a newspaper, "have succeeded in making the working classes in the towns and their neighbourhoods believe that the election should be fought as a class issue." Yet while Australia in 1890 saw the birth of an independent Labour Party, New Zealand unionists were content to support Liberal and Radical candidates, including, however, a number of genuine workingmen.

The most keenly fought contest was at Port Chalmers where John Millar challenged the sitting member James Mills, the head of the Union Steam Ship Company. He had the solid support of seamen and watersiders, but his opponent could count on Dunedin friends who held business qualifications to vote in the Port electorate. Mills retained his seat with a clear majority.

The Liberals won the elections with union support. Of about 38 candidates endorsed by various Labour bodies, 20 were successful, all but 5 of them in the South Island where the Radical ticket swept Christchurch, Timaru, Dunedin and Invercargill. Five of the new members were manual workers: two bootmakers, a brass finisher, a carpenter and a tailor. In a by-election in Christchurch in October 1891, they were joined by a printer.

1. "Remember Labour Day and Vote Straight!" The Otago Trades and Labour Council's first election manifesto, 1890. (Souvenir Catalogue, Industrial Exhibition and Art Union, 1912)

2. Samuel P. Andrews (1836-1916), a Christchurch plasterer who became the first workingman elected to the New Zealand Parliament. (*Cyclopedia of New Zealand, Vol 3,* 1903)

3. "For it's 'ruin to the country' and it's 'wickedness and crime', But it's 'sacred rights o'labour' just about election time." (Hocken Library, Dunedin)

TO

ALL ELECTORS!

Especially to Working Men and Tradesmen and others whose prosperity depends upon the Welfare of the Working Classes.

On behalf of the Otago Trades and Labour Council I would urge upon you the absolute necessity of opposing by every legitimate means, the return of all candidates To-morrow, who are likely to support a Conservative Ministry or any form of

CLASS TYRANNY.

Every Elector who, after being warned of the consequences, votes for a Conservative Candidate, no matter what pressure may be brought to bear on him is a

TRAITOR TO HIS COUNTRY

and to his own interests. Do not be led away by specious arguments or plausible promises. The only safety an elector can have is to

VOTE STRAIGHT FOR THE TICKET.

I would again remind you that the candidates chosen to represent the Labour Party are the following—and all who oppose them must be enemies open or disguised to the welfare of the Working Man :—

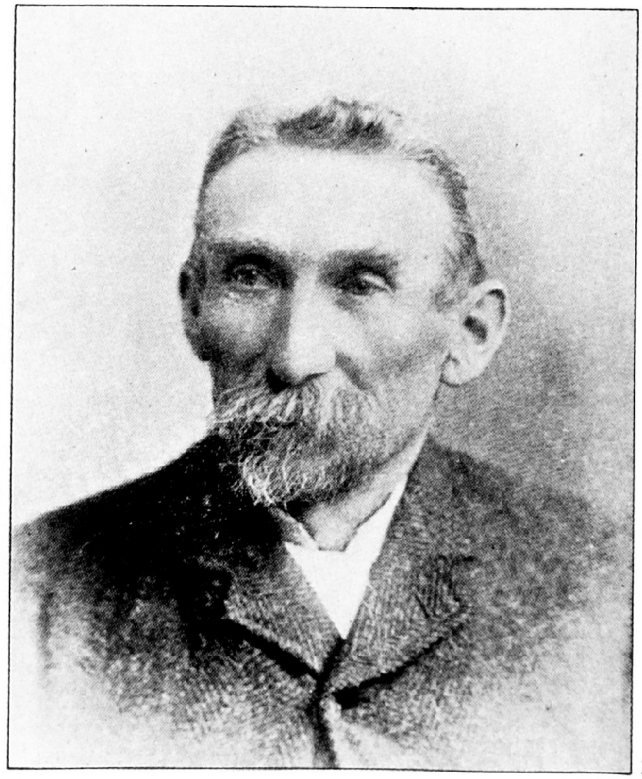
PORT CHALMERS:
J. A. MILLAR.
PENINSULA:
W. EARNSHAW.
DUNEDIN SUBURBS:
W. DAWSON.
DUNEDIN CITY:
FISH, HENRY SMITH, JUN.
HUTCHISON, WILLIAM.
PINKERTON, DAVID

REMEMBER LABOUR DAY and VOTE STRAIGHT!

R. SLATER,
Secretary Otago Trades and Labour Council.

Dunedin, Dec. 4, 1890.

1



2

THE GIANT OF THE PERIOD

THE WORKINGMAN — AN OBJECT OF ASTONISHMENT FOR THE WORLD, AND A OBJECT OF INTEREST FOR POLITICIANS.

The Knights of Labor

The Noble and Holy Order of the Knights of Labor, a society similar to masonic lodges, was founded in the USA in 1869. The Knights maintained an elaborate ritual, which included secret oaths and passwords and exotically named office-holders such as Master Workman, Venerable Sage, or Outside Esquire. Their main purpose, however, was straightforward: to organise and educate the "industrial masses" to "resist the alarming development and aggressiveness of the power of great capitalists and corporations".

H.W. Farnall formed the first local assembly of the Knights in Auckland in June 1889. In a very short time the Order spread to more than 40 localities, mostly in the North Island, and reached a membership of about 5000 including, it was claimed, 14 MPs.

The Knights campaigned for votes for women, old age pensions, Legislative Council appointments for a fixed term instead of for life, cooperative contracts on public works, full state control of the railways, compulsory closing of shops on one half-day each week, the settlement of industrial disputes by arbitration and conciliation, and equal pay for women workers. Their programme was essentially one of middle-class radicalism. Many of the reforms they advocated were implemented by the Liberal Government. The order then lost its reason for existence. Its decline was as sudden as its rise: by 1898 the Knights had virtually ceased to function as an organised body.

The Knights' contribution to the social ferment of the Liberal era was significant. They were, said one writer, the first national political body to exist in New Zealand, and they taught the Progressive Party how to organise.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Printed passwords and cyphers issued by the Knights of Labor.
(J. Harris. *The Bitter Fight*, 1970)

6. Title page of the printed report of the 1895 District Assembly.
(Hocken Library, Dunedin)

1

CYPHER.

X	E	D	F	∀
W	I	H	K	Z
N	B	Λ	⅄	⊥
M	⊃	A	T	Y
P	L	∃		
O	C	V		

The usual characters for numbers--1, 2, 3, etc

2

KEY TO CYPHER.

A	G	M	S	W
B	H	N	T	X
C	I	O	U	Y
D	J	P	V	Z
E	K	Q		
F	L	R		

After becoming familiar with the cypher DESTROY THIS EXPLANATION.

TH

3

PASSWORD.

(Form 16.) Wm Farnall

No one except the Organizer or the Master Workman for whom this Envelope is intended has the right to open it.

Knights of Labor

4

TRAVELING PASSWORD.

GOOD UNTIL DECEMBER 31, 1892.

Guard the 6 K Ops

EAXVM KIP AVMPV

This card is only furnished to the M. W. of Local Assemblies and the Organizers. The M. W. of each Local will communicate the Password to the W. F. and P. M. W. The Password must not be given to any other member of a Local until granted a Traveling Card. Organizers must communicate the Password to the M. W., W. F. and P. M. W. of all new Locals organized by them.

5

THIS CARD MUST BE KEPT BY THE M. W.

PASSWORD

FOR A

LOCAL ASSEMBLY ATTACHED TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

Good until June 30, 1892.

TO BE GIVEN AT THE OUTER VEIL

Asst XFFBFK

TO BE GIVEN AT THE INNER VEIL

The Lady KIP HPPM⊥

When a Local is transferred to a State, District or National Trade Assembly this Password is not to be no longer used.

6

KNIGHTS OF LABOR.

PROCEEDINGS

—: OF THE :—

TENTH REGULAR SESSION

—: OF :—

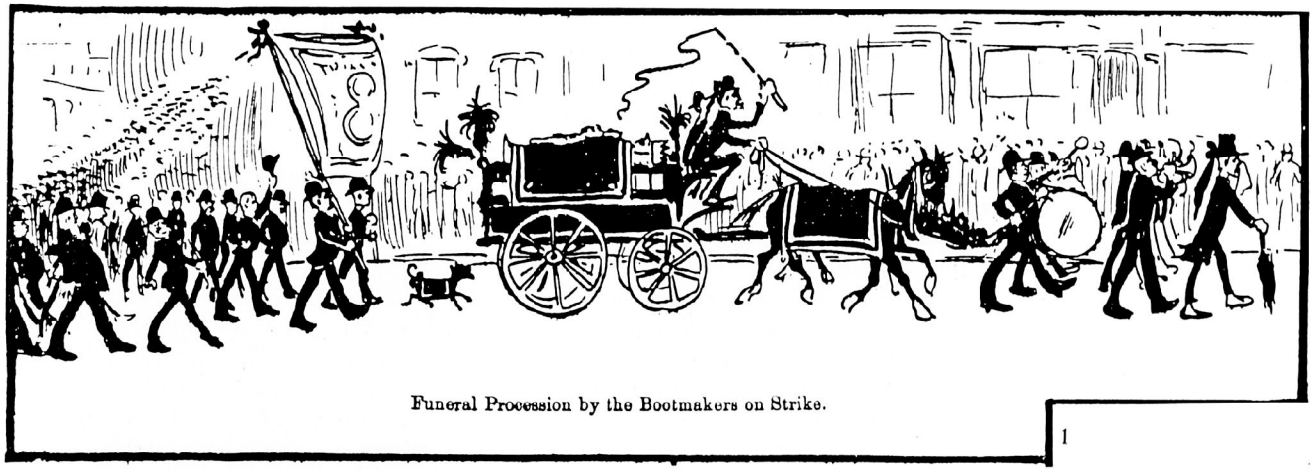
District Assembly, No. 257

Held at Eltham on January 22nd and 23rd, 1895.

PALMERSTON NORTH:
Printed by Wm. Hart, at his Caxton Printing Works, Main Street.

1895.

The Auckland Bootmakers' Strike



Funeral Procession by the Bootmakers on Strike.

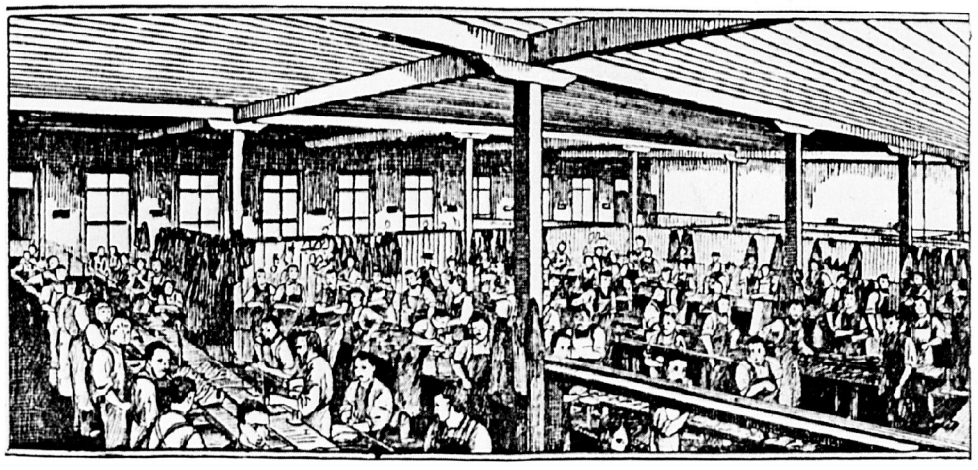
1

The bootmakers' unions did not take part in the Maritime Strike, but they contributed generously to the strike funds. After the strike, in January 1891, they negotiated a new national agreement with their employers. This "Federal Statement" was signed by the New Zealand Federated Bootmakers Union and by the employers in Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin, but not by the Auckland employers.

Auckland wages had always been lower than elsewhere and Auckland employers wanted to retain this advantage. The result was the Auckland bootmakers' strike, one of the longest in New Zealand industrial history, which lasted from March to September 1891 and involved 200 men and 55 women machinists.

Thanks to the use of "free" labour, the employers were able to keep their factories working. In April they scored a major success when the union's president defected and returned to work at the Northern Boot and Shoe Company. The union responded with a spectacular counter-blast by holding a mock funeral for its departed leader, with a large crowd marching through town behind a hearse containing a two-faced body.

Early in August the union was still in good heart and voted overwhelmingly to continue the strike, but on 17 September it was forced to order a return to work on the employers' terms. The southern employers now stepped in and cancelled the Federal Statement they had signed earlier. They arbitrarily substituted a new log which worsened conditions and cut the agreed wages by 12½ per cent. Weakened by the financial support it had given the Auckland men, the Federated Union was forced to submit and accept the cut.



2

1. The Auckland bootmakers' mock funeral procession during the strike. The departed president lies on top of the hearse, wearing a crown because his name was King. (*New Zealand Observer*, 16 May 1891)

2. The benching room of Sargood, Son and Ewen's boot factory in Dunedin. (*Making New Zealand*, 1940, Alexander Turnbull Library)

Labour in Parliament

The six workingmen in Parliament never formed a separate party, though the press often referred to them as the Labour Party. "Half-a-dozen quiet, attentive, business-like, well-mannered mechanics took their seats in the House of Representatives," wrote Pember Reeves, the new Minister of Education. "The Labour members did not increase in numbers. Nor did they supply the Progressives with a policy. But the organised support which they and their unions gave the Radical leaders made all the difference."

One of the six, the Blenheim carpenter Lindsay Buick, boasted that he and his colleagues had "never left the field of practical politics in search of misty ideals, only obtainable on the day of the millennium". Their objects, he wrote, had been "clear and practical and, as results have proved, perfectly within reach of speedy accomplishment".

In 1892 Prime Minister Ballance appointed four workingmen to the Legislative Council: two printers, a storeman and a boilermaker. They were chosen in consultation with the Trades Councils in the four main centres; like the Labour members in the Lower House, they represented the moderate section of union opinion.

Captain Millar joined the Labour group in 1893, when he captured the Chalmers seat, but under Seddon who succeeded Ballance as Prime Minister, the Labour members lost what little influence they had possessed. They were completely absorbed in the government party or, if they showed any independence, forced out of Parliament.

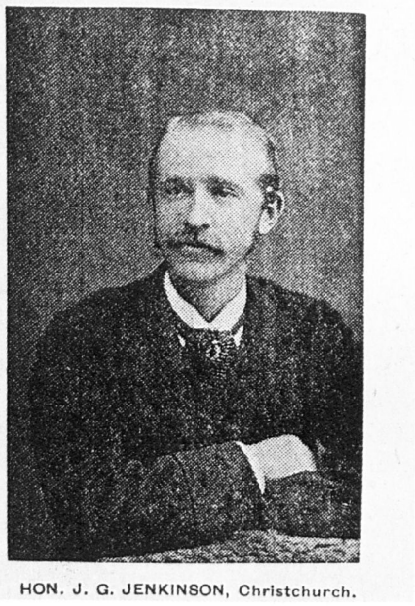
HON. W. BOLT, Dunedin. 1

HON. W. JENNINGS, Auckland. 2

The four workingmen appointed to the Legislative Council in 1892. (*New Zealand Observer*, 6 May 1893, Auckland Public Library)

1. William M. Bolt (1836-1907), a Dunedin storeman and radical pamphleteer.

2. William T. Jennings (1854-1923), an Auckland printer.



HON. J. G. JENKINSON, Christchurch.

3

HON. J. RIGG, Wellington.

4

3. John Jenkinson (1858-1937), a boilermaker in the Addington railway workshops.

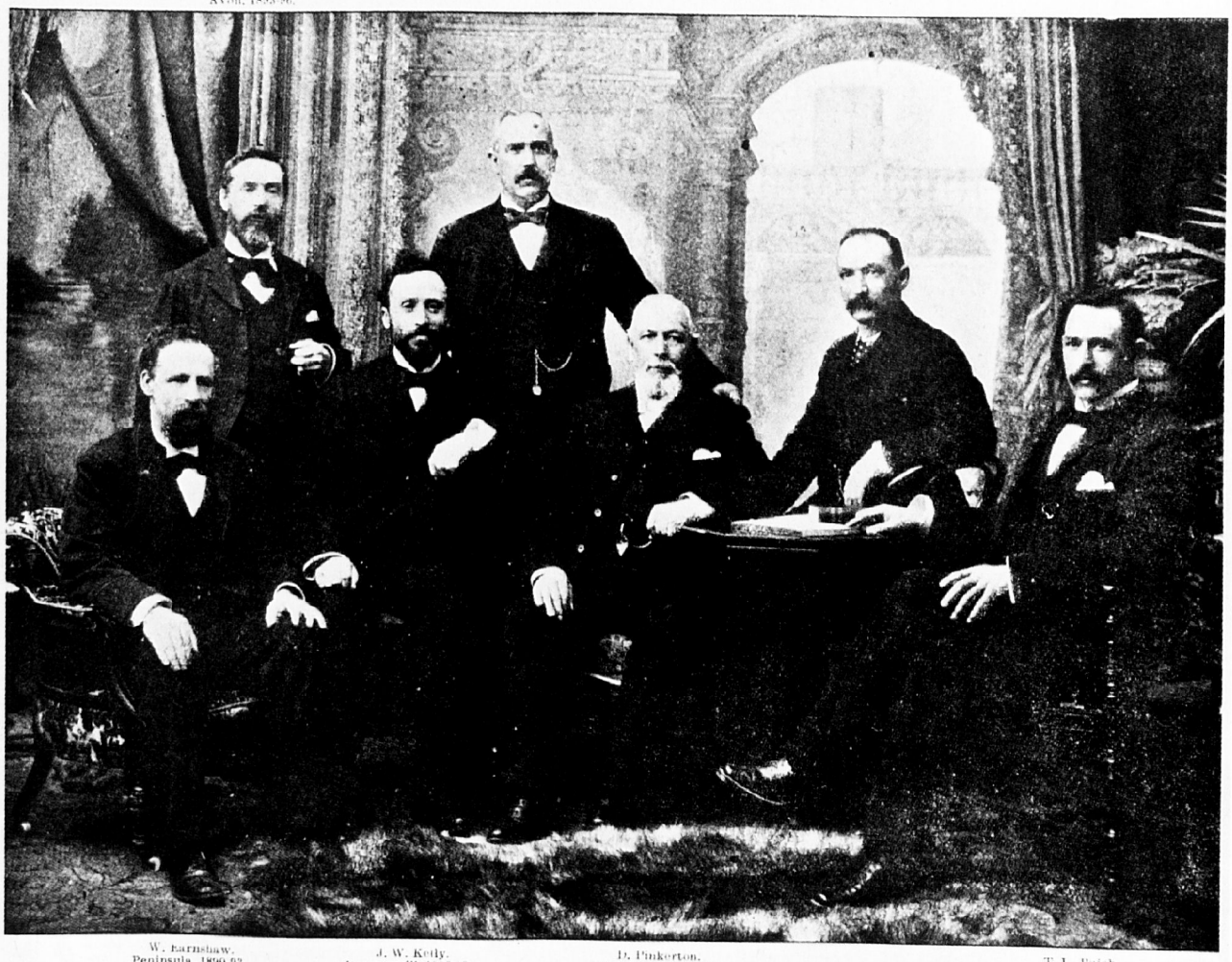
4. John Rigg (1858-1943), a Wellington printer and founder of the Wellington Trades and Labour Council.

5. The Labour MPs in 1896.
(*Review of Reviews of Australasia*, 20 Aug. 1896)

W. W. Tanner.
Heathcote, 1890-93.
Avon, 1893-96.

A. Morrison.
Clutha, 1893-96.

A. Millar.
Chalmers, 1893-96.



W. Earnshaw.
Peninsula, 1890-93.
Dunedin City, 1893-96.

J. W. Kelly.
Invercargill, 1890-93.
" 1893-96.

D. Pinkerton.
Dunedin City, 1890-93.
" 1893-96.

T. L. Buick.
Wairau, 1890-93.
" 1893-96.

Kinsey & Co., Photo., Wellington, N.Z.]

THE LATEST PHOTOGRAPH OF THE NEW ZEALAND LABOUR PARTY.

5

The World's Social Laboratory

The Liberal Government promoted a wide range of advanced social and labour legislation. It was a means of repaying the unions for their support in the elections, but it also served the long-range aim of stabilising the social order and preventing the recurrence of "excesses" like the Maritime Strike. It was, scoffed a conservative politician, "as though we vaccinated the people by liberal measures to prevent them from having the small-pox of socialism when adults". Each year of the early 1890s saw some measure of protective labour legislation, affecting factories, shops and shop assistants, workmen's wages, industrial conciliation and arbitration, and wages attachment.

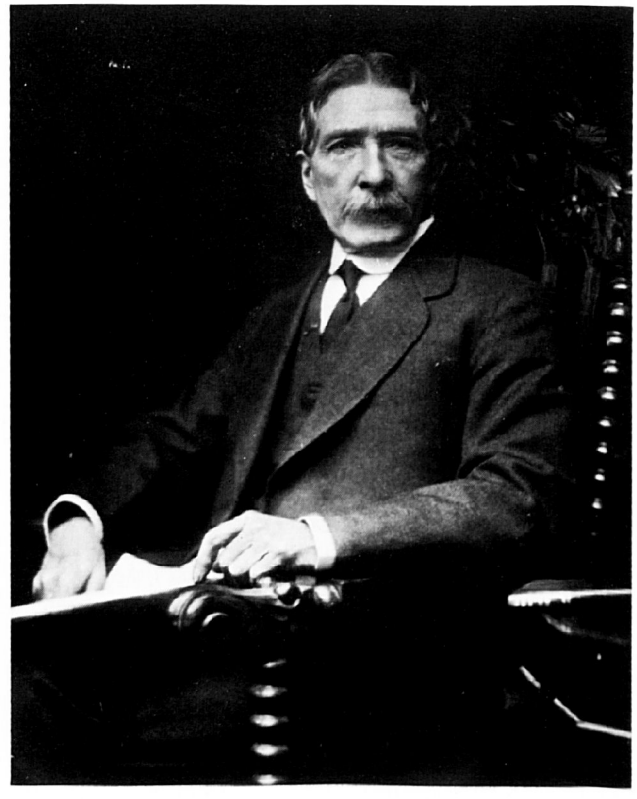
William Pember Reeves, a radical Christchurch MP, was responsible for this legislative programme. Under his control was a Bureau of Industries, charged with finding work for the unemployed. In 1892, this bureau became the Department of Labour and Reeves became Minister of Labour. The departmental head was Edward Tregear, a surveyor who shared his minister's radical views. As his assistants Tregear chose James Mackay, previously an organiser for the Knights of Labor, and John Lomas, the miners' leader during the Maritime Strike.

Employers and their spokesmen disliked the new department as much as its personnel. When they attacked the Labour Department as "a new detective bureau", Tregear had a ready answer: "I do not see there is anything wrong in being called a detective," he replied, "because the duty of a detective is to bring criminals to justice."

1. William Pember Reeves (1857-1932), New Zealand's first Minister of Labour and pioneer of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. (*New Zealand Railways Magazine*, 2 July 1934)

2. Edward Tregear (1846-1931), the radical head of the Labour Dept from 1891 until his retirement in 1911. (New Zealand Public Service Association)

1



2

Taming the Railway Union

A Journal devoted to the Interests of New Zealand Railwaymen.

REGISTERED NEWSPAPER. PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

1

The Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants ignored the Maritime Council's strike call in 1890. Some of its members, however, became involved when the Railway Commissioners, who were then in charge of the government railways, instructed railwaymen to do the work of striking watersiders at Westport and Lyttelton. When the men refused, 74 of them, including four executive members of the ASRS, were dismissed from the railway service.

After the defeat of the strike, the commissioners were determined to punish the society. They declined to receive any communications from the ASRS, refused leave to delegates to attend its conferences, and required new employees to sign a statement that they would not join the union. The dismissed men were reinstated "as vacancies occurred", but they were not given back their previous positions and they lost their seniority. They too were not allowed to join the society.

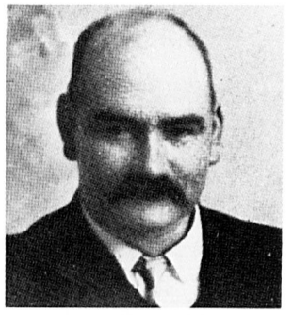
Under this pressure the ASRS caved in. In 1894 it accepted the commissioners' terms for official recognition: it agreed to restrict membership of the society to railway employees and to break off relations with outside unions and Trades Councils. It also deleted all references to strikes from its rules, and agreed to confine its objects exclusively to the consideration of railway matters. In 1895 the department gave official recognition to a second railway union, the Railway Officers Institute, which represented the clerical and administrative staff.

2

1. Masthead of the *New Zealand Railway Review* which began publication in June 1889. (Roth Collection)

2. Badge designed for members of the ASRS. (*New Zealand Railway Review*, Aug. 1903)

The Seamen in Defeat



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1. William Belcher (1860?-1926), general secretary of the Seamen's Union.
(C. V. Bollinger, *Against the Wind*, 1968)

2. The crew of the SS *Takapuna*.
(*New Zealand Graphic*, 23 May 1896, Auckland Public Library)

"History records," wrote William Belcher, who replaced Millar as general secretary of the Seamen's Union, "that the strikers were beaten. But that phrase inadequately describes the rout. We were licked – and licked, and it must be added that we were also kicked and kicked very hard. There was no bargaining about terms. It was simply a case of go back but on their [the employers'] conditions. And the terms can be called nothing but brutal."

The Union Steam Ship Company, which dominated New Zealand merchant shipping, refused to have any dealings with the union and denied union officials access to its ships. In 1893 it cut seamen's wages from £7 to £6 per month. The company also sponsored a Mutual Benefit Society, with compulsory membership for all crews. This society provided certain cash benefits, but its prime purpose was to take the place of an independent union controlled by its members. It was completely under the thumb of the company and became known as the "Deaf and Dumb Society".

Under these conditions membership of the union fell from around 1800 at the time of the strike to a mere 500 in 1895. It took years of struggle, including investigations by a Royal Commission, before membership of the Benefit Society became optional, whereupon it quickly collapsed. "With that millstone off their necks the men began to take heart," wrote Belcher. The Auckland branch was reformed in 1897, and in that year union and employers sat down for the first time to negotiate a new agreement.

Photos by Pugler. CREW S.S. 'TAKAPUNA.'

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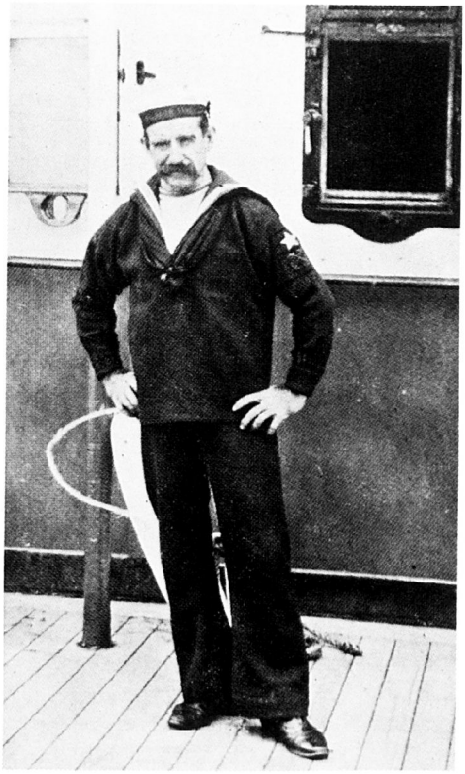

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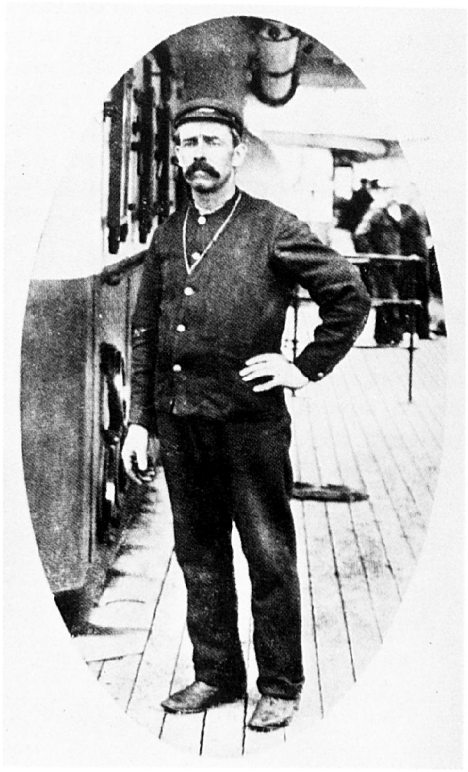

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Captain Manning, of the inter-island ferry service, chose these illustrations of typical New Zealand seamen for his book on life aboard a merchant steamer. (W. Manning, *Below and Above the Water-Line*, 1909)

3. The Quartermaster

4. The Boatswain

5. The Fireman

6. Steering "full and by"

A Woman Organiser

Women were seldom visible in the early union movement. Even all-female unions like the tailoresses usually had male presidents. One remarkable exception was Mrs Aileen Garmson, the secretary in 1894 of the Christchurch branch of the New Zealand Workers Union and Master Workman of the Christchurch Knights of Labor.

In Australia that year the shearers were involved in a bitter dispute with their employers. Searching for strike-breakers, the Australian pastoralists placed advertisements in Christchurch newspapers offering shearers free passages across the Tasman. Mrs Garmson replied with letters to the press but several steamers left Lyttelton with their complements of shearers bound for Australia.

Mrs Garmson then decided that more was required than letter writing. Late in August 1894 she took passage to Sydney on the steamer *Hautoro*, which had a further draft of New Zealand shearers on board. Mrs Garmson spoke to the men to remind them of union solidarity. By "persuasion and sarcasm" she induced 75 of them to leave the ship in Wellington. Further exhortations wore down the rest; when the ship reached Sydney, 31 men went over to the union, leaving, she claimed, only 34 ready to go shearing.

The union was winning, reported Mrs Garmson on her return to Christchurch, and there was no need to send further delegates from New Zealand. Her optimism, however, was not based on fact for the Australian shearers' strike collapsed soon afterwards.

1. Sheep shearing by machinery, which rapidly replaced hand shearing. (*New Zealand Graphic*, 14 Jan. 1893)

2. Cartoonist P. Izett makes fun of Mrs Garmson's efforts. (*New Zealand Graphic*, 27 Oct. 1894, Auckland Public Library)

1

RECENT EVENTS.

A Court to Settle Labour Disputes

The peaceful settlement of labour disputes by conciliation and arbitration was much discussed in 1889-90. The unions were generally opposed to it. "We are better with the powers we have for enforcing our claims," a union official told the Sweating Commission. After the defeat of the Maritime Strike, however, the unions were, in Reeves's words, "in a chastened and pacific frame of mind. They were disposed to think unusually well of arbitration."

Indeed, it was now the union leaders who asked for arbitration and the employers who spurned them. Bills promoted by Reeves were emasculated in the Legislative Council, which was still dominated by the conservatives. Only in 1894, after the government had won a general election with an increased majority, did the Legislative Council pass the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act unaltered.

This Act, which was destined to dominate industrial relations in New Zealand for the next 80 years, came into force on New Year's Day of 1895. It established an Arbitration Court of three members presided over by a Judge of the Supreme Court, and Conciliation Boards in each of six industrial districts into which New Zealand was divided. Workers gained access to the machinery of the law by forming and registering unions under the act and then citing their employers in a dispute. If no agreement could be reached in conciliation, the dispute was referred to the Arbitration Court for an award which was binding on both sides.

The new law also protected union members against victimisation. Unionism revived quickly from the low point it had reached in 1895 of about 75 unions with a mere 8000 members.

1. Arbour Day 1894: Reeves plants labour legislation, John McKenzie his "Lands for Settlement" Bill.
(*New Zealand Graphic*, 11 Aug. 1894)

2. Reeves ushers his bill into the Legislative Council.
(*New Zealand Observer*, 24 Sept. 1892)

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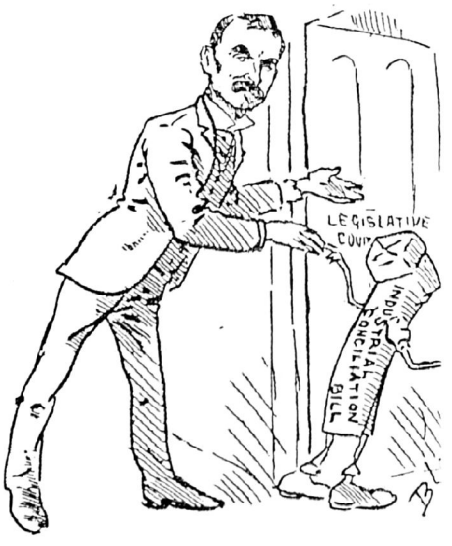


Hon. Mr Reeves assists his bantling into the Council. 2

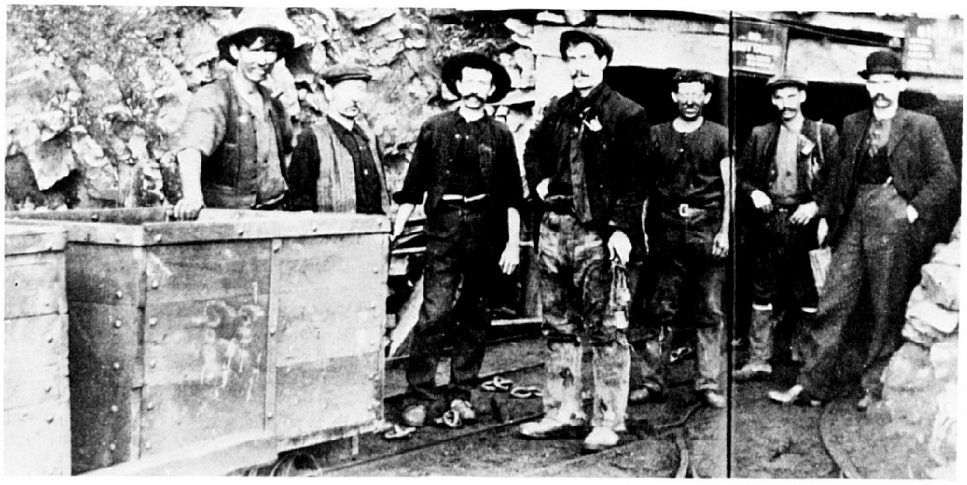
The Denniston Miners' Union

In Denniston, on the West Coast, a miners' union was formed in 1884. Its president John Lomas became one of the leaders of the Maritime Council, but after the 1890 strike the union collapsed. New men who took the place of the strikers during the dispute were forced to sign an undertaking not to join any union. Elsewhere too on the West Coast, pressure by the employers effectively destroyed unionism among the miners.

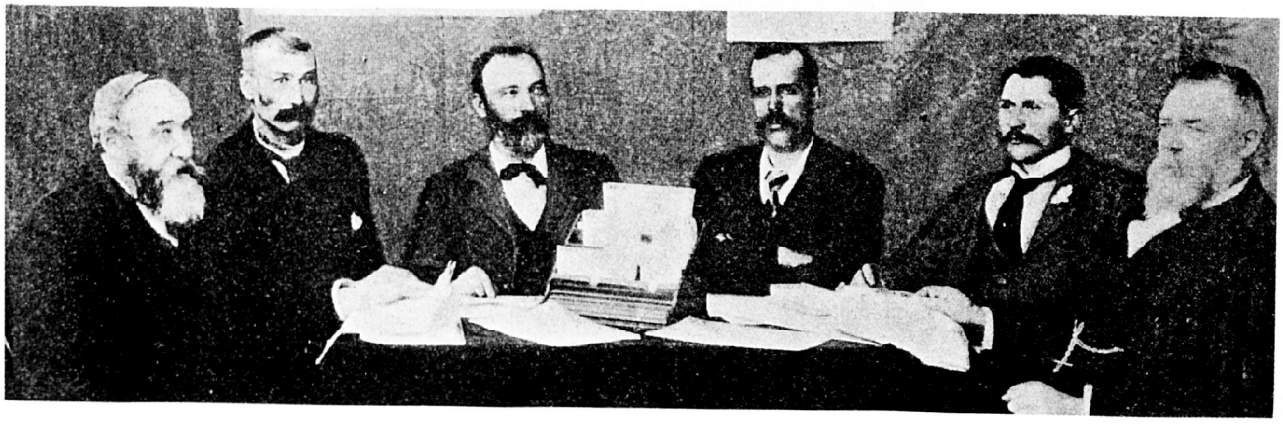
With the union out of the way, the Westport Coal Company cut the hewing rate at Denniston from 2s 10d to 2s 3d per hour; at Reefton the Consolidated Company reduced wages from 10s to 8s 4d per shift.

A first attempt to revive the Denniston union in 1893 was crushed and the leaders sacked. In 1895 the men tried again. They had to meet in secret on the plateau above the settlement, with lookouts posted and admission by password only. They registered a union under the new Arbitration Act, but when the company heard of it, it sacked 16 of the supposed leaders. Now however, there was legislation to protect union members against victimisation, and the company hastily reinstated the dismissed men.

The local Conciliation Board failed to settle the dispute, and the Arbitration Court came to take evidence in Denniston and Westport in September 1896. This was the court's first case, and it aroused considerable interest. The award raised the hewing rate to 2s 4d per hour and gave local men (who were all union members) preference of employment over outsiders. Encouraged by this award new unions sprang up at other mining centres, such as Mokihinui, Brunnerton, Granity and Reefton.



1. A group of West Coast miners at the mine entrance. (Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)



2. Representatives of the Westport Coal Company (left) and the Denniston Coal Miners Union (right) who appeared before the Arbitration Court at Westport on 14 September 1896. This was the first case conducted by the Arbitration Court. (*Otago Witness*, 22 Jan. 1902, Hocken Library, Dunedin)

Strains in the Lib-Lab Alliance

The four main cities had triple electorates where, under an agreement with the Liberal politicians, one of the three candidates on the government ticket was selected by the labour unions. Arthur Rosser was the endorsed Labour candidate for City of Auckland in 1896, sharing the ticket with the Minister of Justice and an ex-mayor of the city.

"Each candidate," recalled Rosser, "was expected to finance his own campaign, up to a maximum of £200, and I had not got 200 pence. My supporters were all workingmen, who had less than I had . . . As a journeyman carpenter with a family of five young children, I could not afford to leave my work, so I carried on, working in day-time and speaking at night . . . St James Hall, then the largest hall in the city was engaged for the opening address, and that was the only expense for hall hire in the campaign . . . an open-air campaign was arranged and this feature was a new one to Auckland electors, which 'took on' in all the poorer and crowded parts of the city."

Rosser came fourth in the poll, missing out by some 1300 votes. Elsewhere too Labour failed to gain ground. There were complaints at the annual Trades and Labour Conferences that the government was stifling the growth of a strong Labour group in Parliament. The government was also accused of being no longer interested in progressive labour legislation.

These complaints became more widespread after Reeves left for London in 1896 and Prime Minister Seddon took over the Labour portfolio himself. In 1898, the Trades and Labour Conference carried a motion in favour of forming an independent Labour Party by 15 votes to 4, but nothing was done to implement it.

1. Arthur Rosser (1864-1954), a carpenter and prominent Auckland union secretary.
(*Forward*, 4 July 1896)

2. Election platform of the New Zealand Progressive Liberal and Labour Party in 1896.
(*New Zealand Liberal and Labour Associations' Directory*, 1897)

3. "An Ominous Growl": Ashley Hunter shows Premier Seddon trying to bribe the Labour Party with "More Labour Legislation". The dog is well aware of the government's "Unfulfilled Promises".
(*New Zealand Graphic*, 30 April 1898)

1

PLATFORM OF THE NEW ZEALAND PROGRESSIVE LIBERAL AND LABOUR PARTY.

1. Extension of the Powers of Local Governing Bodies, and the adoption of a Ratepayers' and Householders Roll on the One-Man-One-Vote Principle.
2. Referendum.
3. Eight hours to constitute a legal working day, and the establishment of a minimum wage.
4. Old Age Pensions.
5. Nationalisation of the Land and Minerals.
6. The Establishment of a State Bank with a Monopoly of Note Issue.
7. Immediate Reform of the Upper House.
8. Elective Ministry.
9. The Removal of Civil and Political Disabilities from Women.

We, the undersigned, hereby certify that we have examined the correspondence which has been received from all parts of New Zealand by the Progressive Liberal Association (Christchurch), dealing with the formation of a Political Platform which should be recognised throughout the Colony for the 1896 General Election, and find that the foregoing Planks have received the greatest number of votes, and which we have placed in order according to the number of votes recorded in favour of each.

(Signed) **THOS. WOODS,**
Secretary, Canterbury Federated Liberal and Labour Political Council.

CHARLES TAYLOR,
Secretary, Canterbury Trades and Labour Council.

AUGUST 30TH, 1896.

2

AN OMINOUS GROWL.

"Woa, doggie! good doggie, then! down, now, down!"

(At the Trades and Labour Conference in Wellington there was considerable discussion over the number of "unfulfilled Government promises," and a very lively debate took place as to the desirability of forming an "Independent Labour Party" in Parliament.)

Ben Tillett in New Zealand

New Zealand's advanced social legislation attracted the attention of politicians and scholars in many countries. They came to investigate and report on the "country without strikes", the "world's social laboratory", the "birthplace of the twentieth century". Among these visitors were some of the major figures in British labour history: Ben Tillett, Sidney and Beatrice Webb, Tom Mann, Ramsay Macdonald and Keir Hardie.

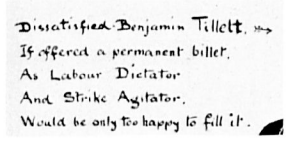
Tillett, a leader of the London dockers' strike of 1889, spoke at public meetings in New Zealand in 1897 and helped to organise trade unions. His uncompromising opposition to any form of Liberal-Labour alliance provided fresh inspiration to the small and struggling groups of socialists which were being formed at that time.

In Christchurch Tillett spoke under the auspices of the Socialist Church. State ownership, he told his audience, "is not a change of the capitalistic system; it is merely a change of employer . . . It is not Socialism; and you people in New Zealand who talk about the Socialism of your legislation, have, as a matter of fact, not got Socialism; and how you ever came to believe that you had, I do not know. You have yet to make your Socialism – that is the position you are in."

The Trades and Labour Conference proposed to keep Tillett in New Zealand as national organiser, but the unions were unable to raise the necessary salary and he left for Australia.

1, 2. A hostile cartoonist supplies the traditional clichés: Tillett wants to be Labour Dictator; he is after the workers' money. (*New Zealand Graphic*, 7 Aug. 1897)

3. Benjamin Tillett (1860-1943), leader of the London dockers' strike of 1889 and Alderman of the London County Council. (*Illustrated London News*, 26 March 1892)



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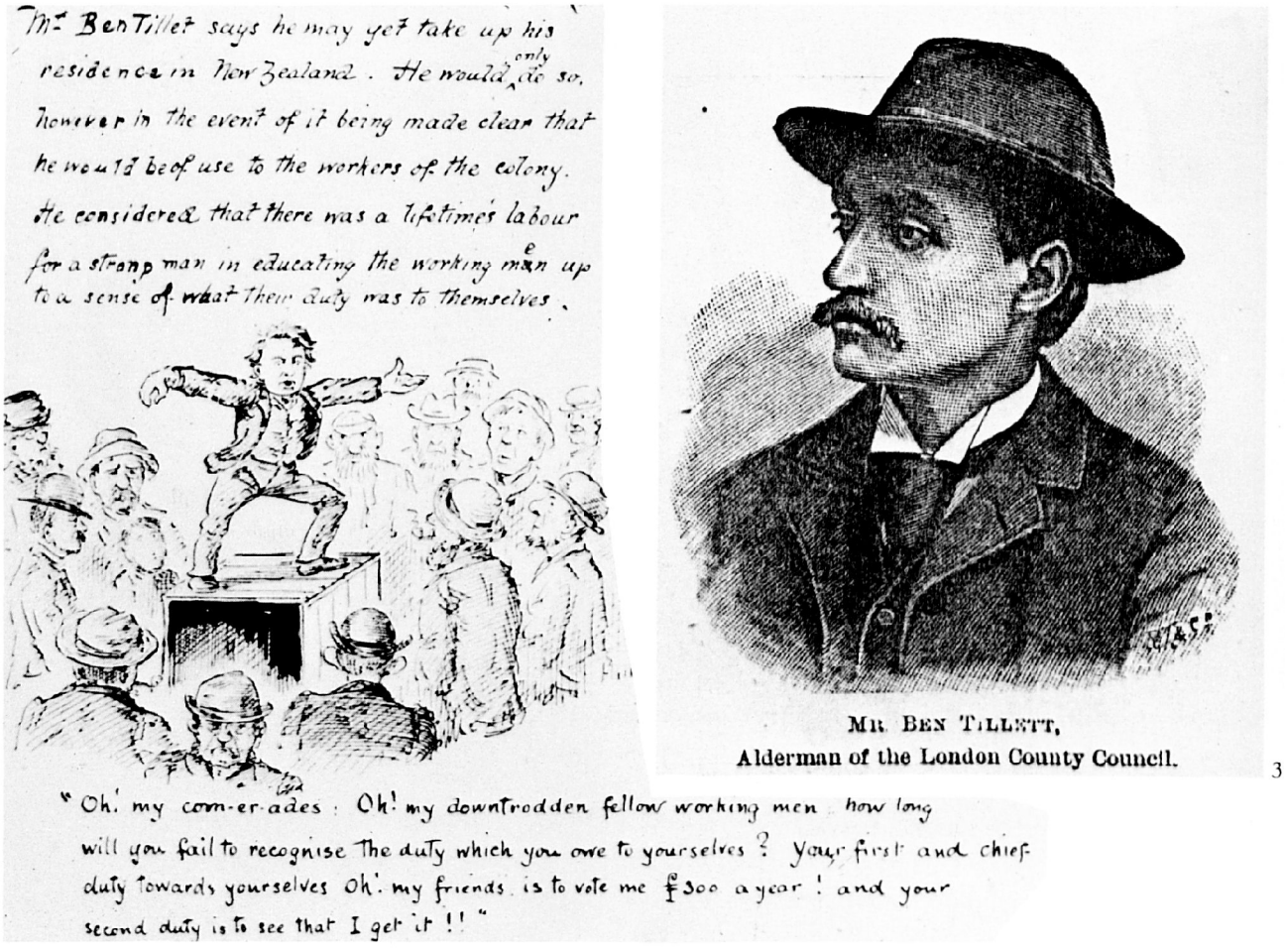

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MR. BEN TILLETT,
Alderman of the London County Council.

3

The Socialist Party

"The leaders of unionism," wrote John McGregor, MLC, in 1899, "are, with probably few exceptions, influenced by the materialistic socialism of Karl Marx. They regard Marx's 'Capital' as their Bible. They accept as beyond question Marx's teaching as to class warfare."

McGregor exaggerated grossly. Marx's works and ideas did not then have a wide circulation in New Zealand and the number of his avowed followers was tiny. In 1900 however, the number of New Zealand socialists more than doubled when some 200 British immigrants, the so-called "Clarion Settlers", arrived in Wellington with plans to establish a socialist community in this country. When their land purchasing scheme fell through, they joined forces with the small existing socialist propaganda groups to form a new political organisation, the Socialist Party of New Zealand.

This party, founded in Wellington in July 1901, was the first independent workers' party in New Zealand. It gained a powerful voice with the arrival early in 1902 of the British union leader Tom Mann.

Mann had helped Tillett lead the London dockers' strike of 1889. The Socialist Party appointed him national organiser; he toured New Zealand speaking to crowded meetings and forming branches of the party, but the movement was still too young to be able to afford a full-time official. Late in 1902 Mann left for Australia to become organiser of the Victorian Socialist Party.

1

1. Tom Mann (1856-1941), the British labour leader who visited New Zealand in 1902 and 1908. This photo is inscribed "Yours for the Revolution". (Roth Collection)

2. The Socialist Party's first leaflet, issued in 1901. (Roth Collection)

LEAFLET NO. 1.

THE NEW ZEALAND SOCIALIST PARTY.

WELLINGTON BRANCH.

"Given a country and a people, find how the people may make the best of the country and of themselves."—R. BLATCHFORD, in "Merrie England."

The present is a time of social unrest and dissatisfaction with the economic basis of society, and especially with the industrial conditions existing between the capitalists and the workers.

We believe that most of the evils which at present affect the economic well-being of society are caused more or less directly by the system of private ownership of land and the other instruments of production which enables the owning class to exploit the great mass of the people for their own private gain. As examples of this in the Colony we have the Coal, Flour, Timber, and Trading Associations and monopolies—otherwise trusts—having the same objects as the gigantic Trusts in the United States.

Efforts are constantly being made to remedy or patch up the failures of our present system and keep it going, with but very indifferent results. Much of the so-called socialistic legislation of the Colony is of this character.

We believe that the final stage of the system is working itself out in the industrial warfare which is everywhere so much in evidence, and that the time is fully ripe for definite steps to be taken for the introduction of better methods.

The New Zealand Socialist Party has for its object: The organisation of New Zealand as a Co-Operative Commonwealth, in which the land and all the instruments of production, distribution, and exchange shall be owned and managed by the people collectively, so that the people shall become, through state established and controlled industries, their own direct employers and producers for the supply of all goods and services, and thus eliminate all intermediate interests. This does not mean the confiscation and sharing out of any present existing wealth, but the retaining to those who may contribute to the production of all future wealth, the whole of the results of their labour, instead of allowing the larger portion of it to be absorbed, as now, in rent, interest, and profits, by those who do nothing essential in its production.

As steps in this direction we demand that the State shall establish such industries as are needful to supply direct to the public all the prime necessaries of life such as Food, Clothing, Housing, &c. The establishment of such industries would guarantee to all willing to work a reasonable and certain opportunity of earning a decent living.

We demand that all values created by the people shall become the property of the people by the abolition of, or absorption by the State of rent and interest, by land and financial legislation.

We declare for the Public Ownership of all Public Conveniences such as Lighting, Water, and Means of Transport, &c.

Finally, we are convinced that the only alternatives before the people at this stage of industrial development lie between private monopoly for the benefit of the few at the expense of the many, or public control for the benefit of all.

The age of competition and its supposed benefits is rapidly passing.

Capitalists are uniting and co-operating for their own advantage.

We call upon all classes of the people to unite in establishing the Co-Operative Commonwealth, and appeal to all having their own and their fellows' best interests at heart to join our organisation and assist in furthering our principles, and the putting of our proposals into practical effect.

Further particulars of the Party, and Pamphlets, etc., on Socialist Questions may be obtained on application to

THE SECRETARY,
Box 5, G.P.O., Wellington.

Wright & Carman, 87 Featherston Street, Wellington.

2

Arbitration Disappoints

In its early years the Arbitration Court almost invariably granted wage increases and improved conditions. After the turn of the century however, the court's awards barely kept pace with the rising cost of living.

The Thames Miners Union, by far the largest union in the country with 1744 members, took a case to the court in 1901, seeking an award for the gold mines of the Hauraki Peninsula. The court's decision, which made few changes, was seen as a victory for the mine-owners. The Waihi Gold Mining Company, moreover, dismissed all the union witnesses who gave evidence in the case. The court expressed its sympathy for the sacked men but found that there had been no technical breach of the law. No wonder that the union condemned the award as "unjust, unfair and unsatisfactory"; its president demanded the replacement of the judge.

Unfavourable awards, the denial of preference of employment to union members, delays in the work of the court, and the failure of proper factory inspection to see that awards were enforced, were the main causes of union complaints. "The Arbitration and Conciliation Act is the biggest curse that Labour had ever put on it," an irate painters' delegate told the Wellington Trades Council in 1902.

Slowly at first, unionists were becoming disenchanted with the arbitration system, and with the Liberal Government which all too often turned a deaf ear to requests from its Labour supporters.

1, 2. Truckers at work in the Talisman mine, Karangahake in 1897. (Beattie Collection, Auckland Institute and Museum Library)

3. The Waihi mine staff. (*Auckland Weekly News*, 14 Dec. 1900, Beattie Collection, Auckland Institute and Museum Library)

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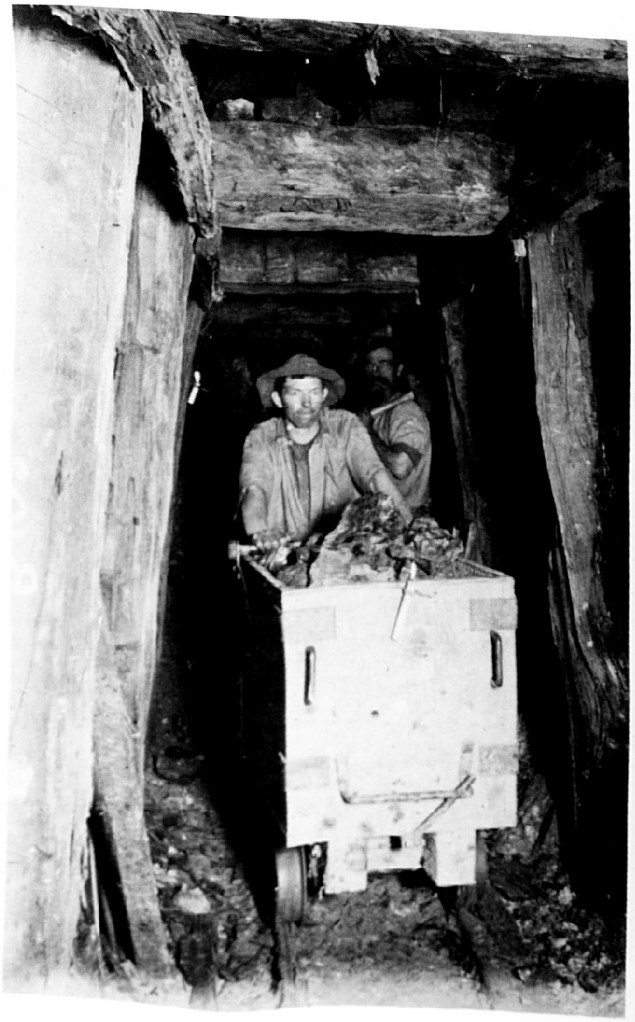

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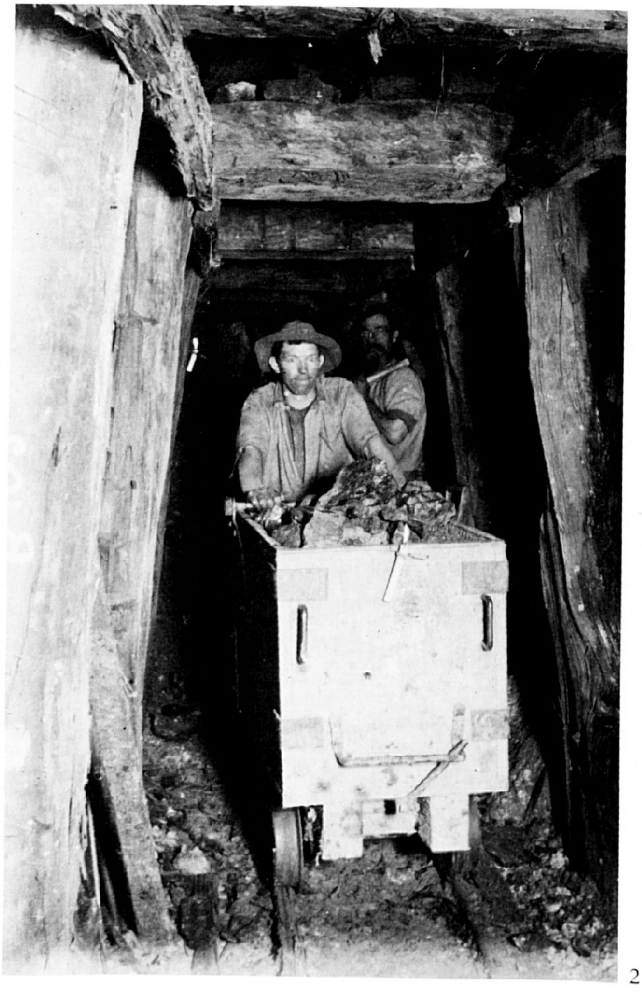

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The Independent Political Labour League

Growing dissatisfaction with the Liberal administration should have caused a rush of members to the Socialist Party, but that party isolated itself by promoting ultrarevolutionary policies. Union leaders wanted to proceed cautiously; they wanted to remain part of the government majority, but as equal partners with the Liberals, with their own independent party.

The annual Trades and Labour Conference which met in Christchurch in April 1904, approved by 16 votes to 3 a resolution put forward by J.T. Paul, the president of the Otago Trades Council: "That Conference is of opinion that an Independent Labour Party should be formed immediately."

Action followed words. In September union delegates met in Wellington to draw up a provisional constitution and platform for an Independent Political Labour League. The new party, they announced, "does not seek the advantage of a class or section of the community, but the general good".

Me-tooism was no more successful in gaining worker support than the Socialist Party's calls for immediate revolution. The Labour League put up candidates in the 1905 elections, but all were defeated and only one was able to save his deposit. Even after Seddon's death in 1906, the league made little headway. Its leading ranks were thinned by promotions to the Legislative Council and by the offer of government jobs. After another defeat in the 1908 elections the league ceased to function.

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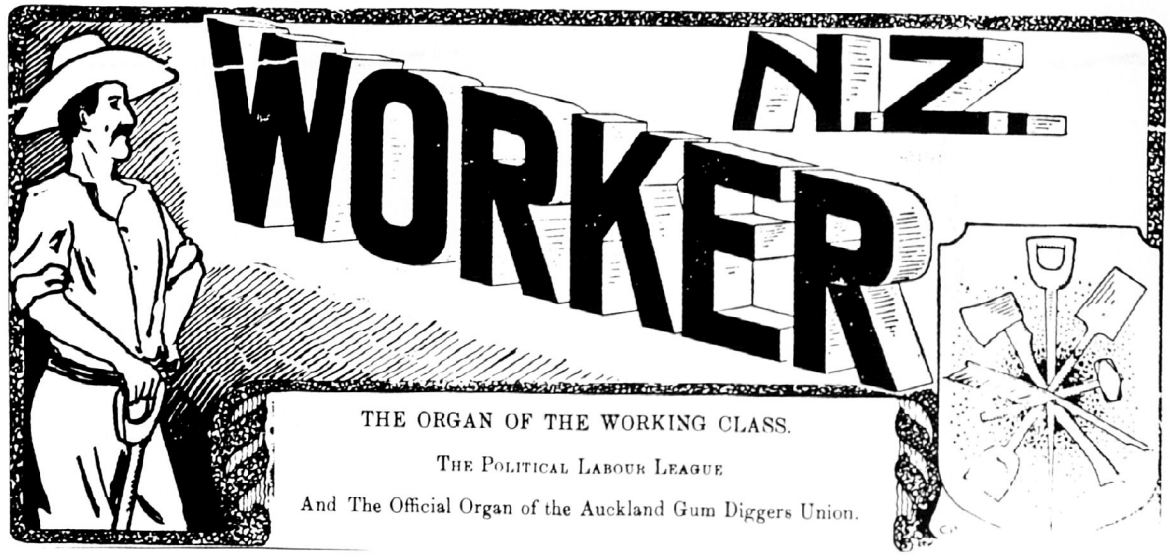

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1. Masthead of the *NZ Worker*, published in Auckland 1905 to 1910. (Roth Collection)

2. John T. Paul (1874-1964), printer, journalist and president of the Otago Trades and Labour Council. (Souvenir Catalogue, Industrial Exhibition and Art Union, 1912)

3. Manifesto issued by the Christchurch Branch of the Independent Political Labour League, c. 1907. (Roth Collection)

INDEPENDENT POLITICAL LABOUR LEAGUE
OF NEW ZEALAND (CHRISTCHURCH BRANCH)

A MANIFESTO

FELLOW WORKERS—

The members of the Christchurch branch of the Independent Political Labour League earnestly invite you to join our organisation. We are convinced that the time is ripe for a forward movement of the wage-earners, and we urge you to help us in our endeavours to achieve the objects of the League which are:—

1. To gain for the people the fullest political powers, and to promote the collective ownership and control by the people of their land and other means of livelihood.
2. To create a strong and reliable Labour Party in Parliament; a party that will be absolutely independent of any personal allegiance to any political leader other than one chosen from among themselves.
3. To secure a proper representation of labour on municipal and other local bodies.

We submit it is not creditable to us that New Zealand should be the only country in Australasia that has not its organised Labour Party in Parliament.

Too long, we hold, have we been content to beg from the Liberal Party as a favour what we have the power to help ourselves to as a right.

We ask you to remember that it was the organised workers and their friends that returned John Balance to office, and that laid the foundation of the power of the present Liberal Party.

Let us now do for ourselves what we have already done for others. For a number of years the Liberal Party justified the confidence placed in them by the workers, but by degrees they fell away from the high ideals which then characterized them. To-day the overwhelming number of the party might, in all truth, be classed as followers of Mr. Massey.

We point to what has been done recently in Great Britian against enormous odds to show what can be done by organisation. The Independent Labour Party in the House of Commons consists of 29 members. It has already forced the hands of the Government in regard to a Trades Disputes Bill and is regarded as an able and Independent Party.

We again remind you that the Independent Political Labour League is founded by the Trades Councils of the colony, and that it already includes in its ranks the most influential and representative Labourites in New Zealand.

Come then and join us, and, standing shoulder to shoulder, as good loyal comrades on the day of battle, success must eventually crown our united efforts.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP.

I, the undersigned, make application for membership in the Christchurch Electoral Branch of the Independent Political Labour League of New Zealand, and, if admitted, will pledge myself to loyally adhere to the principles, constitution, and platform of the League, and record my vote for the selected Labour Candidate of the League at every election.

Name in full .....

Address in full .....

Occupation .....

[Cut off this Application Form, fill it in, enclose subscription, and address to the Secretary, I.P.L.L., Trades Hall, Christchurch. Annual Subscription 2/-.]

Meets every alternate Thursday in the Trades Hall, Gloucester Street

87550

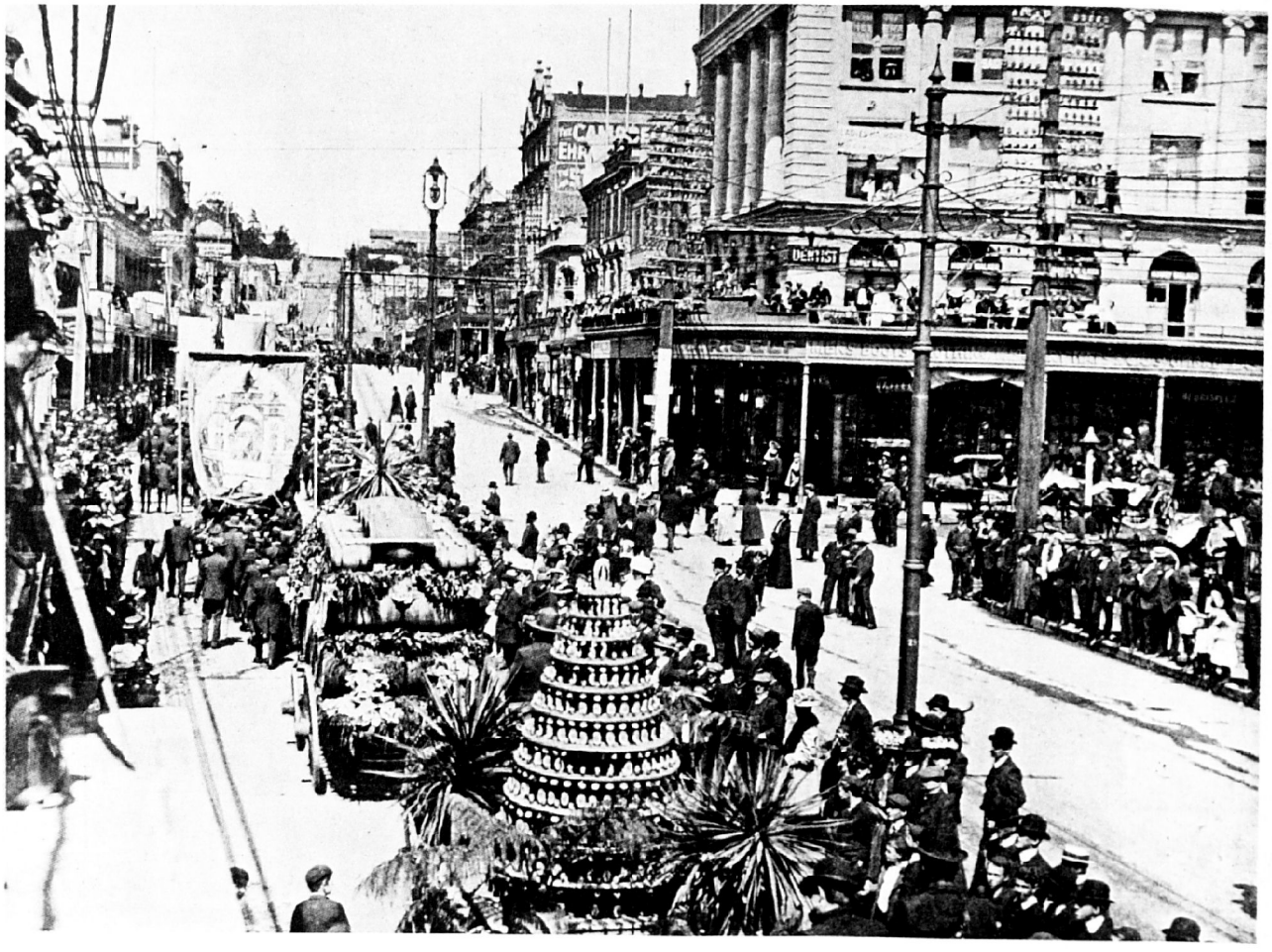
Labour Day Processions

"The New Zealander, like the average Britisher, takes infinite pleasure in a procession," reported the *Auckland Weekly News* in October 1900. "Consequently many thousands of people lined the principal streets of Wellington to witness the demonstration made by those interested in the eight-hour movement. The display was by far the largest and best of the kind ever seen in this city."

Labour Day parades, usually followed by sports meetings, children's picnics and political speeches in the afternoon, were held in all the main centres. The unions marched behind their colourful banners, bearing such mottoes as "Defence not Defiance", "Labour is the Source of Wealth", or (these were the butchers) "We Live to Kill and Kill to Live". There were brass bands and decorated floats, where the printers might produce and distribute leaflets, or the hairdressers enact scenes from a barber's shop, with the victim being lathered from head to foot.

Before long however, union involvement declined, while firms seized the opportunity to enter floats to advertise their wares. "New Zealand Labour Day," complained the *Industrial Unionist* in 1913, "is the bosses' labour day. Each year we have seen the unions set up 'Labour Day Committees' months before, to waste much time organising for what is virtually a street display of goods; a cheap advertising method for employers. 'Labour Day' in New Zealand has been more like an acknowledgement of subjection than an assertion of dignity."

During the First World War the processions ceased. Attempts to revive them after the war failed.



1. The Labour Day procession passes through Auckland's Queen St on 14 October 1908. (*Auckland Weekly News*, 22 Oct. 1908)

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2, 3. Gisborne's Labour Day procession in October 1908.
(*Auckland Weekly News*, 22 Oct. 1908)

4. "Peace and Plenty" proclaims the float of the Gisborne Bakers' Union. (Auckland University Library)

On the Auction Block

"The wharves of the city of Wellington," wrote the *New Zealand Times* in 1902, "are focus points for all sorts and conditions of labouring men in search of employment. Morning after morning there is a long procession of labourers treading heel upon heel in search of work. But, with rare exceptions, though many are called, few are chosen. There are recognised gangs of workers who, by reason of their competency, and favour with the overseers, are usually given preference; but it sometimes happens, especially in the mid-winter season, that married men stand idly by about the wharves for weeks at a time without being called upon to do a hand's turn."

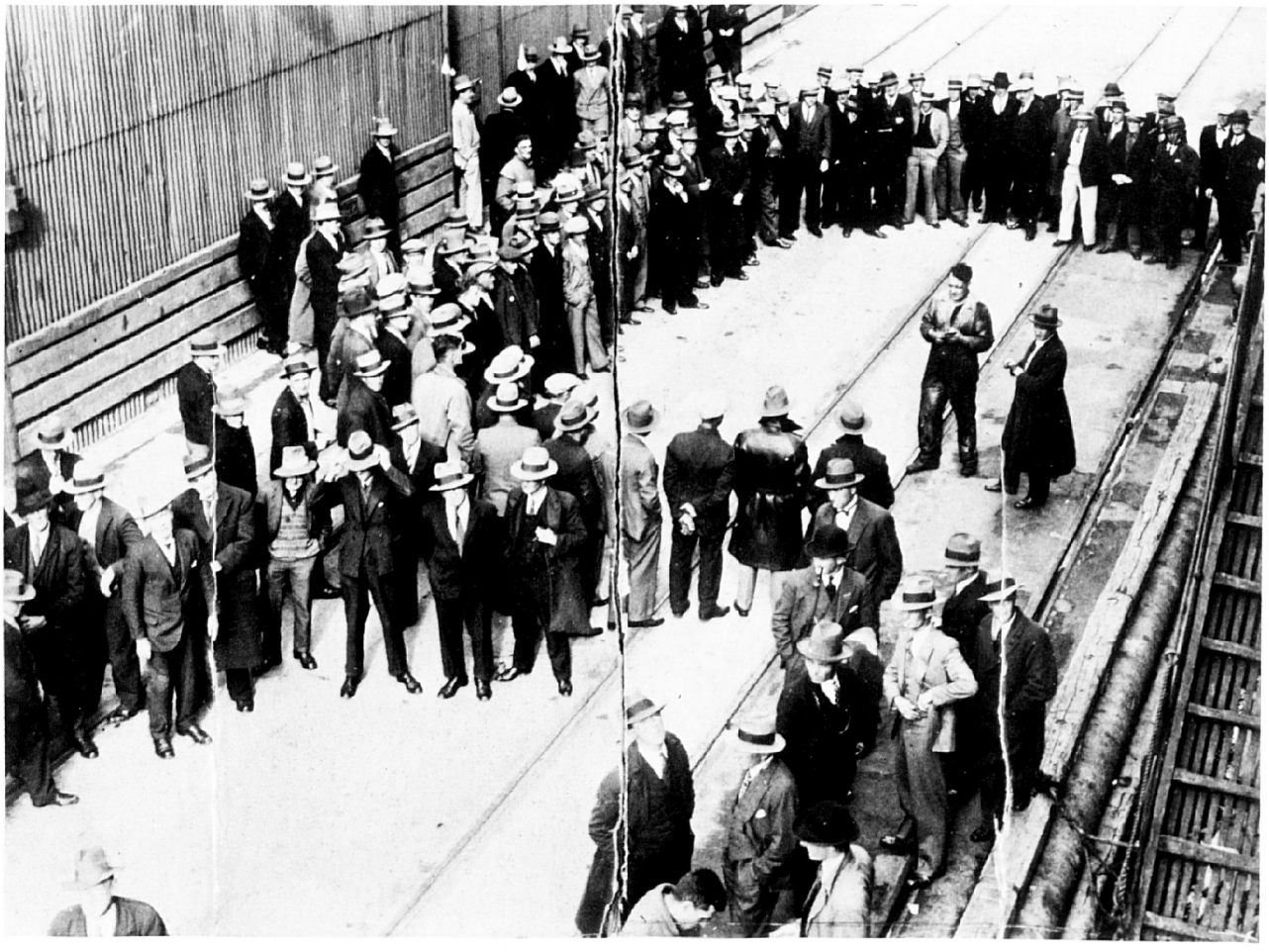
Every day the foreman (the "pannikin boss") picked his men. His friends, the "ringers" or "royals", got jobs. Those he disliked missed out; they were forced to do "stringer drill", i.e. sit idly on the wharf stringers waiting for work. They might have antagonised the foreman in an argument, failed to "shout" him a drink in the pub, or even refused to bribe him. The system lent itself to a host of abuses, and abused it was.

Active unionists were sure to face discrimination when work was handed out. It took courage to revive the wharf labourers' unions which had collapsed in 1890, but after the turn of the century new waterside unions were formed in most ports. The "auction block" however, was not abolished until 1936, when a bureau system ensured a fair distribution of available work.

1. A foreman selects workers at a port, probably Auckland. (Roth Collection)

2. A stevedore engages wharf labour at Lyttelton. (*Canterbury Times*, 25 Sept. 1907)

3. Coal carters discharge a West Coast collier at the Queen's Wharf, Wellington. (*Canterbury Times*, 9 March 1904)



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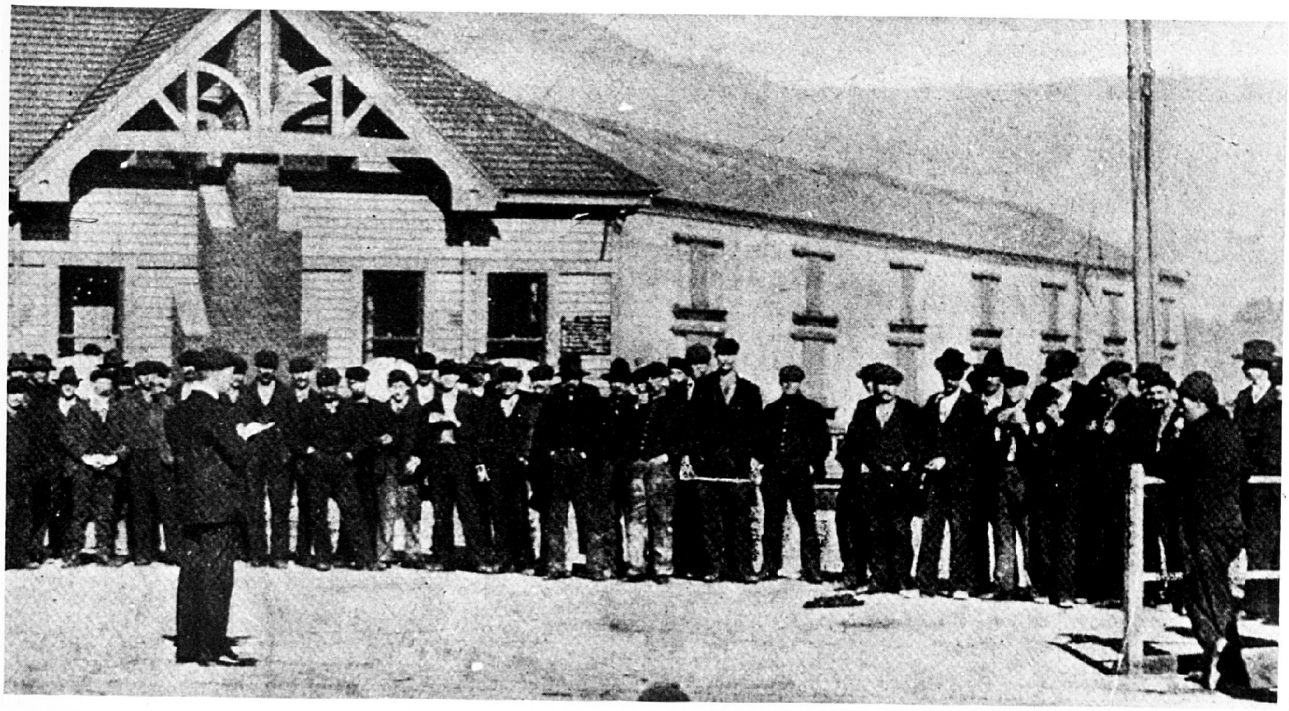

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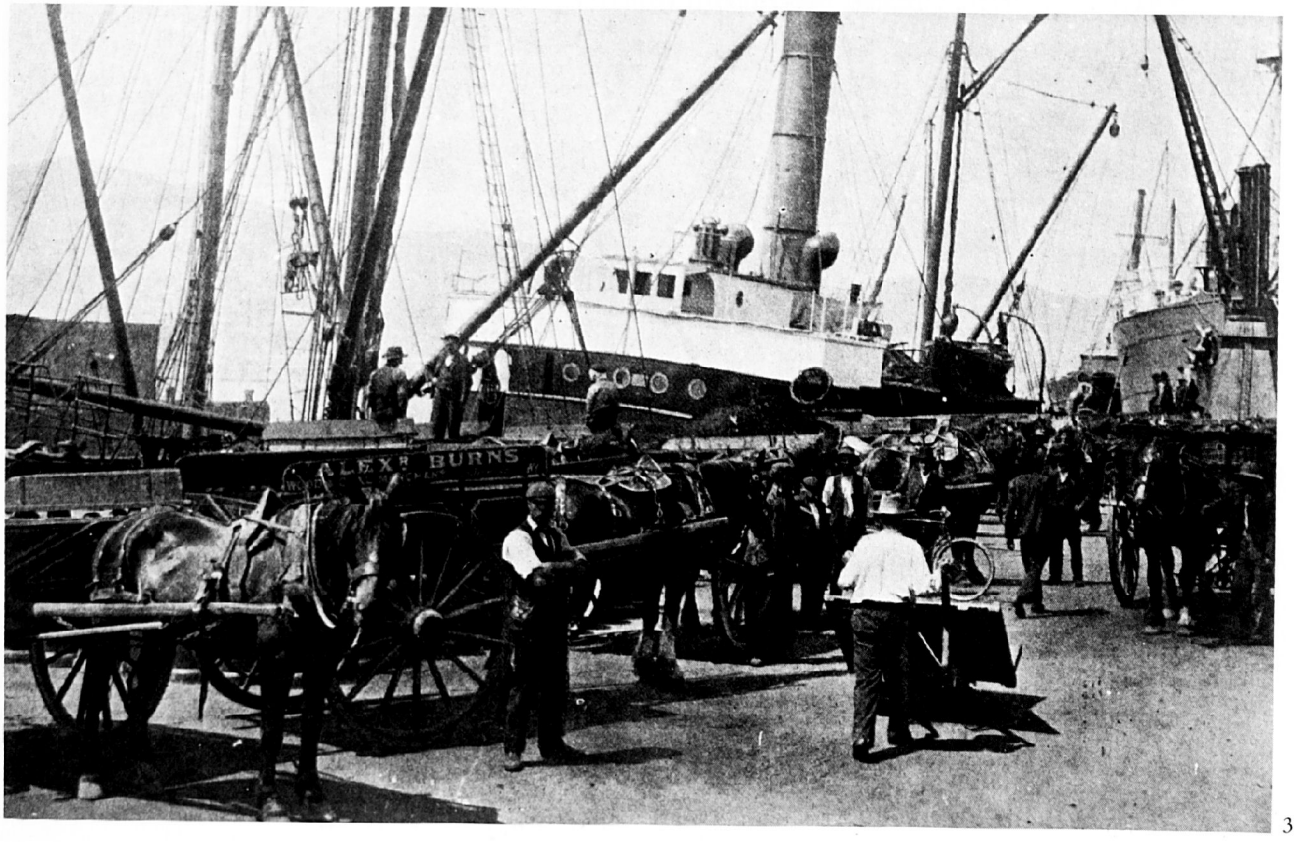

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The First Illegal Strike

1 THE END OF THE TRAMWAY STRIKE.—EVERYTHING IS RUNNING SMOOTHLY NOW.

1. "The End of the Tramway Strike – Everything is Running Smoothly Now", claimed the caption. The interfering socialist is left sitting in the street.
(*New Zealand Observer*, 24 Nov. 1906)

Would a Baptist lay preacher write obscenities on the window of a tram depot? Auckland tramwaymen had no doubt about the answer. They were sure that Tom Beaston had been dismissed because he was an active unionist and the union's delegate on the Auckland Trades Council.

The men were ready to walk out in sympathy, but under the restraining influence of their secretary, Arthur Rosser, they first asked the company to reconsider the dismissal. When no satisfactory reply was received, they decided that motormen would not teach learners until the dispute was settled. Mr Hansen, the manager, then gave instructions to discharge any man who complied with this resolution. After 14 men had been dismissed, the remaining motormen ceased work in the late afternoon of 14 November 1906.

A hostile crowd sang *Rule Britannia* and smashed the company's plate glass windows, while Rosser conferred with the manager. The company agreed to reinstate all the dismissed motormen and to allow Beaston to resign on full pay to the end of the month. Later that evening the men resumed work.

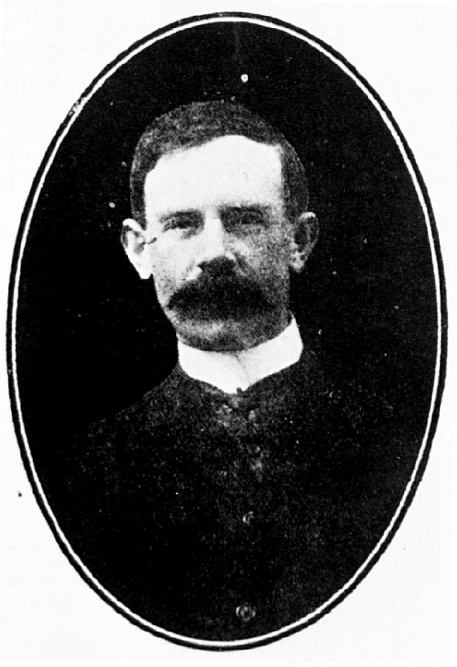
Seemingly this was a trifling incident: 66 men ceased work spontaneously for not even half a day, rendering another 80 men idle. This however was New Zealand's first strike in defiance of the arbitration law. Other workers drew the lessons from this success and other strikes followed in quick succession. New Zealand ceased to be "the country without strikes".

The Slaughtermen's Dispute

In February 1907, barely three months after the Auckland tram strike, slaughtermen at the Petone and Ngahauranga freezing works walked out when their employers refused to raise wages from 20s to 25s per 100 sheep killed. The men were careful not to involve their union in the dispute: a union meeting the night before the walkout was closed by the chairman before the strike proposal was put to the vote, so that the resolution would not appear in the minutes. The union secretary, Bert Cooper, arranged to be out of Wellington when the strike started; he affected great surprise when tracked down by journalists.

After a week on strike, the men accepted an employers' offer to raise the rate to 23s. Meanwhile other slaughtermen throughout New Zealand joined the strike, some in works where no union existed. Altogether 517 men took part and all gained the 23s rate. Over 21,000 working days were lost.

Government spokesmen blamed Australian agitators ("birds of passage", they called them) for instigating the dispute. One of the chief causes of the strike however, was delays in the arbitration system, which meant that the court would not have delivered an award until long after the killing season was over. The strikes were illegal, and the men were prosecuted and fined £5 each – a considerable sum in those days – though as late as 1912 a quarter of the fines were still uncollected.



1. Albert H. Cooper (1874-1958), bootmaker and union secretary. (J. Hutchison, *The Wellington Bootmakers' Union, 1885-1917*, 1917)

2. Striking slaughtermen pose for the photographer outside the Supreme Court buildings in Christchurch. (*Canterbury Times*, 13 March 1907)

Hickey at Blackball

In January 1908 three new men took work at the Blackball mine, northwest of Greymouth: Pat Hickey, Paddy Webb and George Hunter. Though only in their twenties, they were already well-known agitators. They formed a branch of the Socialist Party in Blackball, and at the first union meeting they attended, they raised the question of "crib" (meal-time) underground: 15 minutes only, compared with the 30 minutes customary elsewhere. The union voted to take half an hour for lunch in future.

1

The mine manager responded by sacking the newcomers together with four local men – the entire committee of the new socialist branch. That same night a union meeting decided to call a strike until the men were reinstated. All 120 men at Blackball ceased work on 27 February.

Unlike earlier strikes, this was a deliberate challenge to the arbitration system by a registered union. The Arbitration Court came to Greymouth and fined the union £75, but the strike continued. "An interesting incident," related Hickey, "occurred during the hearing of this case. Our solicitor referred to the crib-time allowance of 15 minutes as being altogether too short; His Honour remarked with a frown that he thought 15 minutes ample time. He then glanced at the clock, noticed that the time was 12.30 and stated that the Court stood adjourned for lunch till 2pm."

After three months the company gave in. It reinstated the dismissed men and increased crib-time to 30 minutes. This victory had an electrifying effect on unions throughout the country. Delegates from the miners' unions met to form a federation, with Bob Semple from Runanga as president and Hickey as secretary.

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1. Patrick H. Hickey (1882-1930), "Where Mr Hickey is found," wrote the *Grey River Argus* in 1910, "either a storm is raging or the gallant Pat is trying to stir one up." (Maritime Strike 1913 Souvenir, 1938)

2. Robert Semple (1873-1955), an Australian, who helped to found the State Miners Union at Runanga. (Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

3. Patrick C. Webb (1884-1950), an Australian miner, who arrived in New Zealand about 1905. (Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

4. "His Imperial Highness Labour": The Premier, Sir Joseph Ward, makes his obeisance. At the far left is J. A. Millar, the Minister of Labour.
Chorus of Ministers: "May it please Your Highness, we implore you not to strike. Bear Patiently with the Arbitration Act a little longer, and, if it does not please Your Mightiness, we will amend it still further so that it will please you." (*New Zealand Observer*, 14 March 1908)

5. Hickey appeals for strike funds in Auckland. (*New Zealand Observer*, 18 April 1908)

6. The Blackball branch of the Socialist Party, c. 1911. Watty Rogers, seated on the right, was secretary of the Miners Union during the 1908 strike. His daughter Rose married Pat Hickey. (P. J. O'Farrell, *The Workers in Grey District Politics, 1856-1913*, 1955)

HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS LABOUR.

Chorus of Ministers: May it please Your Highness, we implore you not to strike. Bear patiently with the Arbitration Act a little longer, and, if it does not please Your Highness, we will amend it still further so that it will please you.

4

THE EQUALITY OF RIGHTS.

Stranger: How can there be equality of rights in this country when the employer who breaks the Arbitration law is sent to gaol, while the workman can defy the law without punishment?

New Zealander: Well, you see, the rights belong to the trades unionists. They equalise them amongst themselves. The employer has no rights except the right to gaol.

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The Second Auckland Tram Strike

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In 1908 the Auckland tramwaymen went on strike for the second time. Their secretary, Arthur Rosser, had warned that the tyrannical attitude of the general manager, J.J. Walklate, was causing great dissatisfaction. Six men had been dismissed in as many months; when Walklate discharged yet another conductor without explanation, a union meeting decided to call a strike unless the man was reinstated or a reason given for his dismissal. The company did not deign to reply, and on 21 May 222 men went on strike.

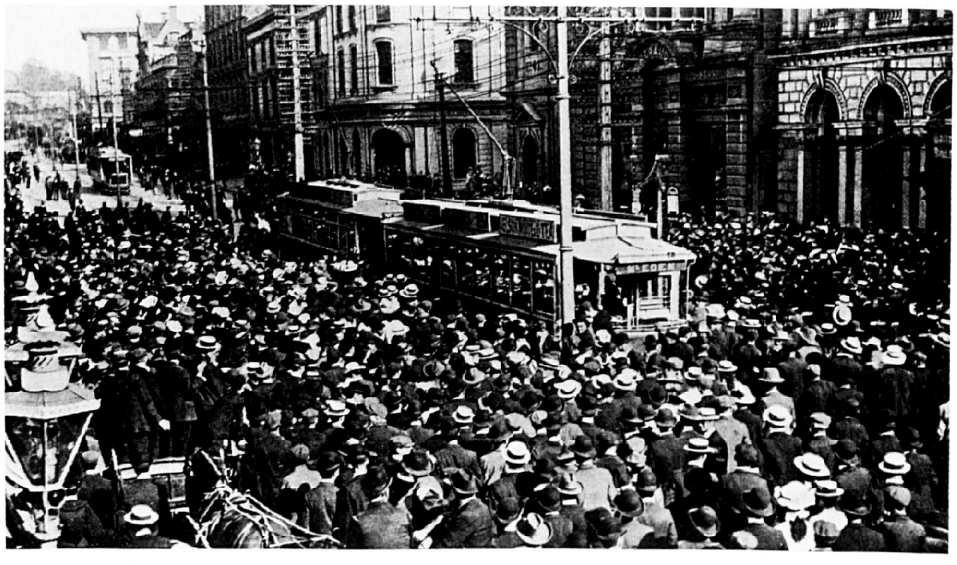
"We had all branches under control," Rosser reported afterwards, "The power house, overhead men, barn-hands, and motormen and conductors. Cables had been sent and answered from Sydney and Melbourne, as well as Brisbane, and Walklate would not have had the slightest chance of getting blackleg labour to run his cars. I had promises of over £1000 without any appeal being made; and the Company was losing over £700 per day by the laying up of the cars. Had the manager endeavoured to run the cars in defiance, the overhead wires could have all been down speedily."

After four days the men returned to work, on condition that a Special Board of Conciliators under an independent chairman would investigate the dispute. The board's finding vindicated the union on every point; the dismissed conductor was reinstated and an objectionable traffic manager was removed from direct contact with the men.

1. A red flag in the window at the intersection of Queen and Customs Streets was the pre-arranged signal for the tram strike. As each car arrived, the motormen and conductors stepped off. (*Auckland Weekly News*, 28 May 1908)

2. Crowds cheer the strikers outside the New Zealand Herald building in Queen St. (*Auckland Weekly News*, 28 May 1908)

3. Victory for the union and for Rosser, who is shown looking out of the window of the company's office, while manager Walklate sits in the street. (*New Zealand Observer*, 1 Aug. 1908)



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VICTORY.—THE FINAL TEST OF THE TRAM STRIKE.

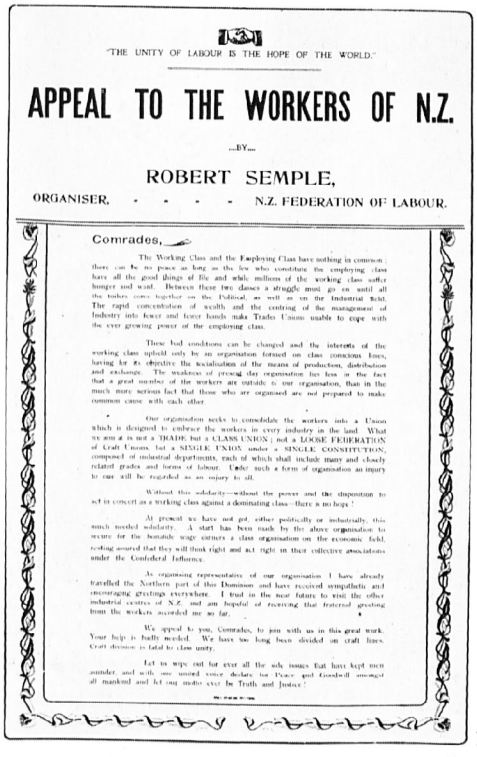
The Board: This is our decision, gentlemen. I am glad you all look so well pleased. It certainly is very exhausting work, but when you're striking call me early, call me early, Rosser dear.

Two-Gun Men from the West Coast

The 1908 Blackball miners' strike marked the beginning of a revolt against the arbitration system which was to culminate in the waterfront strike of 1913. The spearhead of this movement was the Miners Federation which soon changed its name to New Zealand Federation of Labour. Also in 1908, the Socialist Party which had been in the doldrums for a number of years, took on a new lease of life. At its first national conference that year, which Tom Mann attended from Australia, it claimed a membership of 3000.

"Big Bill" Haywood, an American miners' leader of that period, used to startle his audiences by announcing that he was "a two-gun man from the West". He then reached into his pockets and produced two membership cards, one from the Socialist Party, the other his union card. New Zealand too now had its two-gun men, dedicated to the class struggle and the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist system. Their objectives were spelled out in the preamble of the Federation of Labour:

"The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace as long as hunger and want are found among millions of working-people, and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life. Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organise as a class, take possession of the earth and the machinery of production, and abolish the wage-system."



"THE UNITY OF LABOUR IS THE HOPE OF THE WORLD."

APPEAL TO THE WORKERS OF N.Z.

...BY...

ROBERT SEMPLE,

ORGANISER, - - - - N.Z. FEDERATION OF LABOUR.

Comrades,

The Working Class and the Employing Class have nothing in common: there can be no peace as long as the few who constitute the employing class have all the good things of life and while millions of the working class suffer hunger and want. Between these two classes a struggle must go on until all the toilers come together on the Political, as well as on the Industrial field. The rapid concentration of wealth and the centring of the management of Industry into fewer and fewer hands make Trades Unions unable to cope with the ever growing power of the employing class.

These bad conditions can be changed and the interests of the working class upheld only by an organisation formed on class conscious lines, having for its objective the socialisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange. The weakness of present day organisation lies less in the fact that a great number of the workers are outside it, our organisation, than in the much more serious fact that those who are organised are not prepared to make common cause with each other.

Our organisation seeks to consolidate the workers into a Union which is designed to embrace the workers in every industry in the land. What we aim at is not a TRADE, but a CLASS UNION; not a LOOSE FEDERATION of Craft Unions, but a SINGLE UNION under a SINGLE CONSTITUTION, composed of industrial departments, each of which shall include many and closely related grades and forms of labour. Under such a form of organisation an injury to one will be regarded as an injury to all.

Without this solidarity—without the power and the disposition to act in concert as a working class against a dominating class—there is no hope!

At present we have not got, either politically or industrially, this much needed solidarity. A start has been made by the above organisation to secure for the bonafide wage earners a class organisation on the economic field, resting assured that they will think right and act right in their collective associations under the Confederal Influence.

As organising representative of our organisation I have already travelled the Northern part of this Dominion and have received sympathetic and encouraging greetings everywhere. I trust in the near future to visit the other industrial centres of N.Z. and am hopeful of receiving that fraternal greeting from the workers accorded me so far.

We appeal to you, Comrades, to join with us in this great work. Your help is badly needed. We have too long been divided on craft lines. Craft division is fatal to class unity.

Let us wipe out for ever all the sick issues that have kept men asunder, and with one united voice declare for Peace and Goodwill amongst all mankind and let our motto ever be Truth and Justice!

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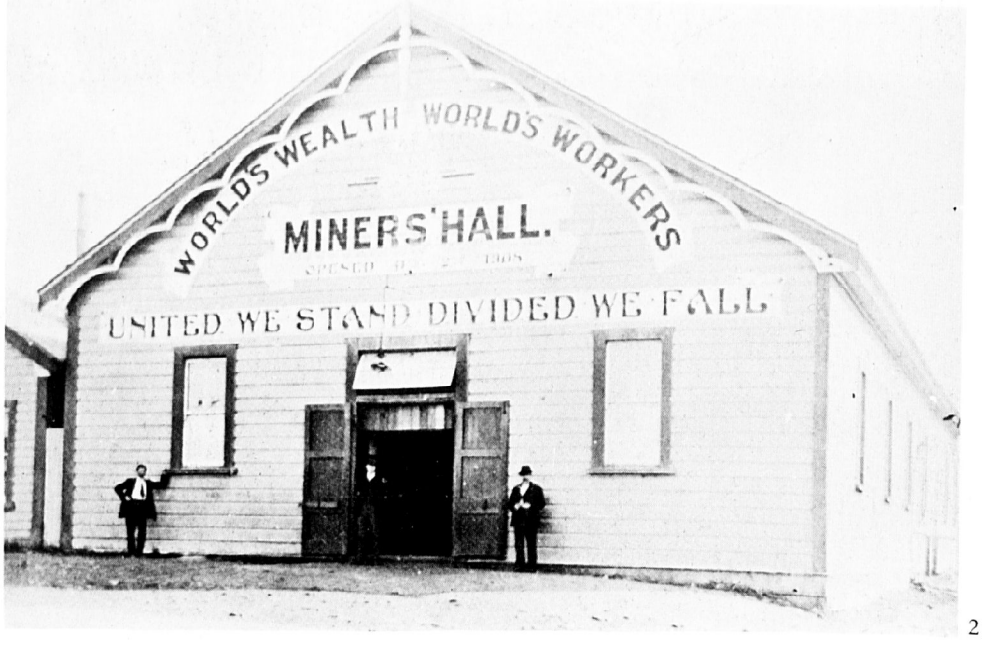

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1. The poster with which Semple toured New Zealand in 1910-11 to win support for the FOL. (Roth Collection)

2. The Runanga Miners' Hall, which Semple opened in December 1908. The building no longer survives. (Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

The Pneumoconiosis Deadlock

The Miners Federation's "baptism of fire", as Hickey called it, came in January 1909. A new Workers Compensation Act extended employers' liability to occupational diseases, such as pneumoconiosis, or miners' consumption, as from 1 January 1909. The Reefton mining companies then insisted, as a condition of re-employment after the Christmas holidays, that all employees undergo a medical examination to show that they had not contracted any of the diseases listed in the Act. The insurance companies, including the state-owned Government Insurance Department, stood behind the employers.

The miners refused to take the tests. On 4 January, when they were due to reopen, all Reefton mines stood idle. Eight hundred and fifty-nine men were out at Reefton, 100 at Kiripaka, 250 at Hikurangi. When the Waihi Miners Union resolved to call a sympathy strike unless all miners were taken back without prior medical examination, the government gave in. It instructed the Insurance Department to issue policies without medical tests; the department in turn increased the rates charged to employers.

Work resumed promptly, except at Huntly where four men had offered themselves for examination contrary to union policy. The union refused to return to work unless these "blacklegs" were downgraded, but it finally accepted a compromise proposed by the company.

The victory in the pneumoconiosis dispute, wrote Hickey, "proved a splendid advertisement for the Federation and from then on it made itself felt as an industrial force in New Zealand".

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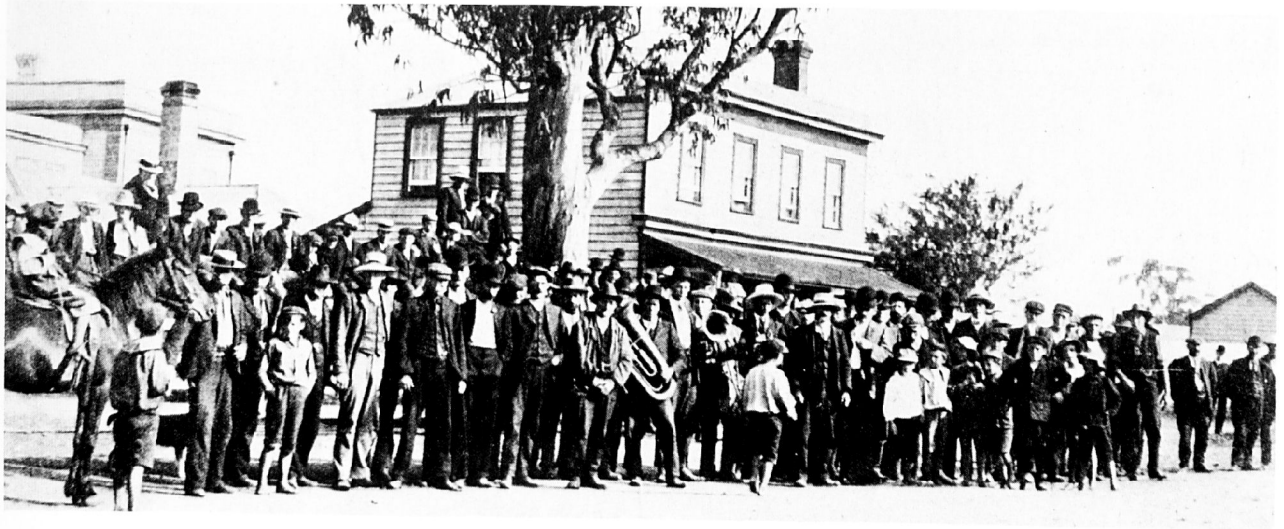
1. Miners' wives in their Sunday best demonstrate in the main street of Huntly. Their banner reads "Death or Glory" and "Down with Blacklegs". (*Auckland Weekly News*, 28 Jan. 1909)



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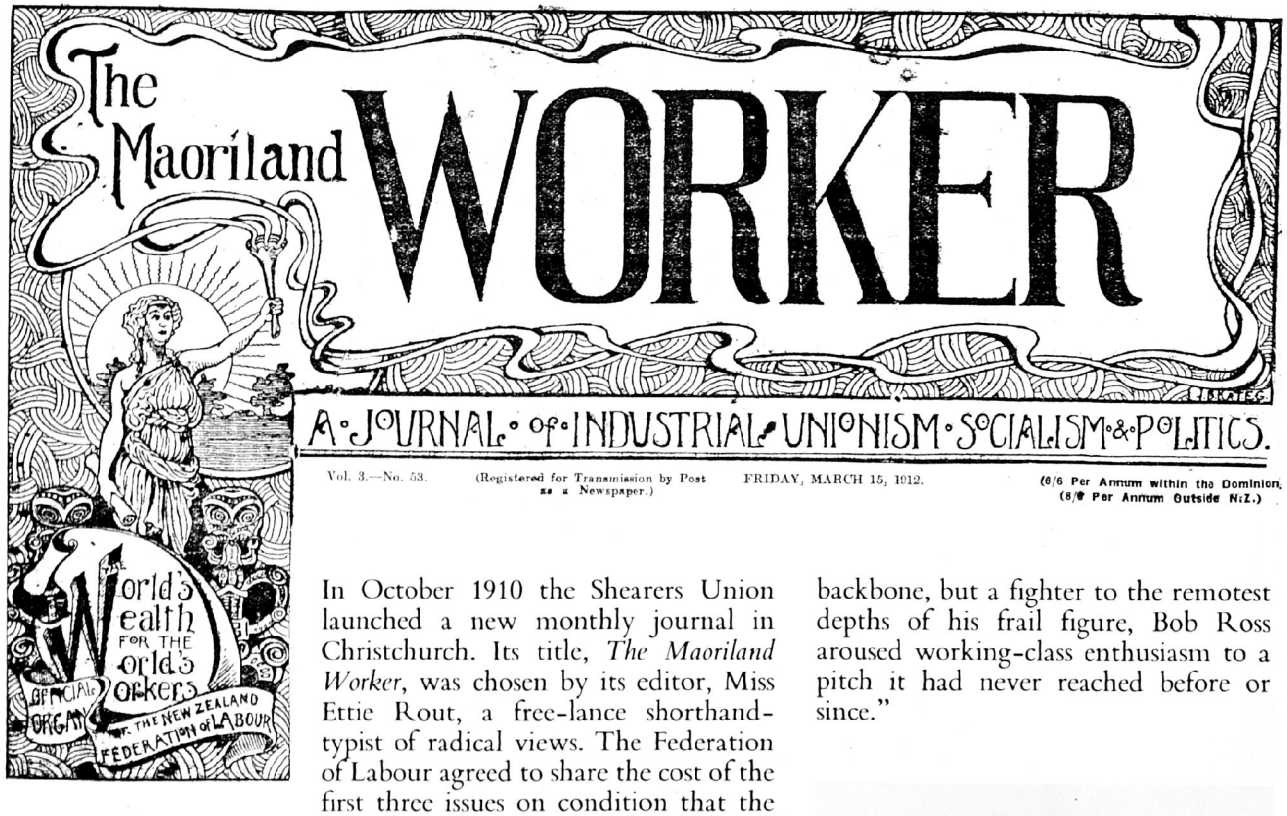
2. The men look on: striking miners from the Taupiri Coal Company's mine at Huntly. (*Auckland Weekly News*, 28 Jan. 1909)

The *Maoriland Worker*



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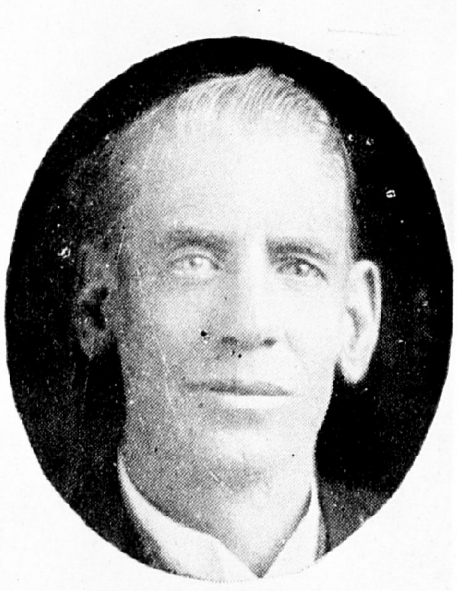
1. Masthead of *The Maoriland Worker* in 1912: "The World's Wealth for the World's Workers." (Roth Collection)

2. Robert S. Ross (1875-1931), the Australian socialist who edited *The Maoriland Worker* during its most brilliant period, 1911-13. (P. H. Hickey. *"Red" Fed Memoirs*, 1925)

In October 1910 the Shearers Union launched a new monthly journal in Christchurch. Its title, *The Maoriland Worker*, was chosen by its editor, Miss Ettie Rout, a free-lance shorthand-typist of radical views. The Federation of Labour agreed to share the cost of the first three issues on condition that the shearers took a ballot on the question of their affiliation to the Federation.

The ballot was carried, but the paper was a flop. After three issues, the shearers' funds were exhausted. At a joint conference of Federation and shearers' delegates in Christchurch, the shearers were forced to hand over their paper to full Federation control. The Federation transferred the *Maoriland Worker* to Wellington and appointed a new editor, the experienced Australian socialist journalist Bob Ross. From 5 May 1911, Karl Marx's birthday, the paper was published weekly, with a red cover.

Under Ross's guidance circulation expanded rapidly, from the mere 600 copies under shearer control to a peak of 10,000 copies early in 1913. "Throughout New Zealand," wrote Hickey, "enthusiastic workers pushed its sales. The editor built up a band of never-failing voluntary correspondents all over the country. A strong advocate of industrial unionism, an internationalist of penetrating vision, a pacifist to the backbone, but a fighter to the remotest depths of his frail figure, Bob Ross aroused working-class enthusiasm to a pitch it had never reached before or since."



R. S. ROSS
Editor "Maoriland Worker"

2

The Rise of the Red Feds

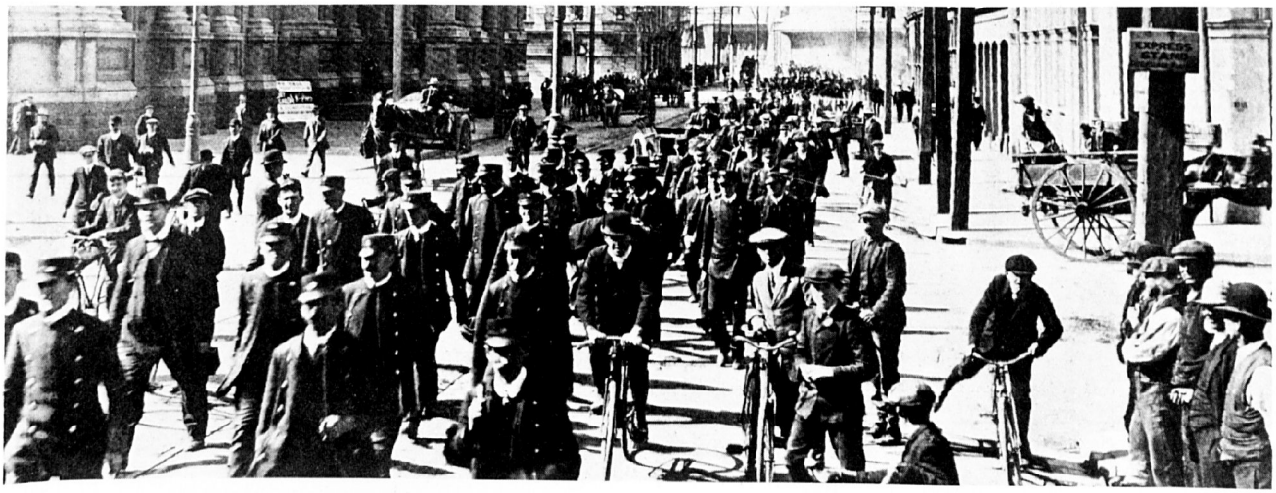
The Federation of Labour had a simple prescription for success in the class struggle: cancel your union's registration under the Arbitration Act and thus regain the right to strike without danger of prosecution. Then meet your employers in direct negotiations outside conciliation boards or arbitration court, and press your claims vigorously, with promises of support from other unions in case of direct action. This formula worked. In 1911-12 the Federation negotiated substantial wage settlements on behalf of watersiders and Auckland tramwaymen. (The antidote was discovered in 1912: the registration of breakaway, so-called "arbitration unions" by a disgruntled minority.)

When Wellington tramwaymen, who were not affiliated to the Federation, threatened to strike in January 1912, Hickey on his own initiative issued a circular promising full support by the Federation. This circular was printed on red paper, and its strong language provoked an hysterical outburst by the *Evening Post*: "A victory for the 'Reds' in the present quarrel," wrote the *Post*, "would be a public disaster, possibly on a national scale. The 'Reds' are out for fight, and fight they must get — no surrender."

The tramwaymen did go on strike and won their demand for the removal of an obnoxious inspector. The Federation of Labour became known after this incident as the Red Federation. Its leaders and members were simply Red Feds.

1. Tramwaymen who have abandoned their cars march past the Wellington Town Hall.
(*The Weekly Graphic*, 7 Feb. 1912)

2. Outside the Wellington Trades Hall where the strike decision was taken.
(*The Weekly Graphic*, 7 Feb. 1912)



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The Auckland Labourers' Dispute

The Miners Federation changed its name to Federation of Labour because it wanted to extend its influence to other than mining unions. Among its early recruits, in 1911, was the Auckland General Labourers Union, whose president was a recent arrival from Scotland, Peter Fraser.

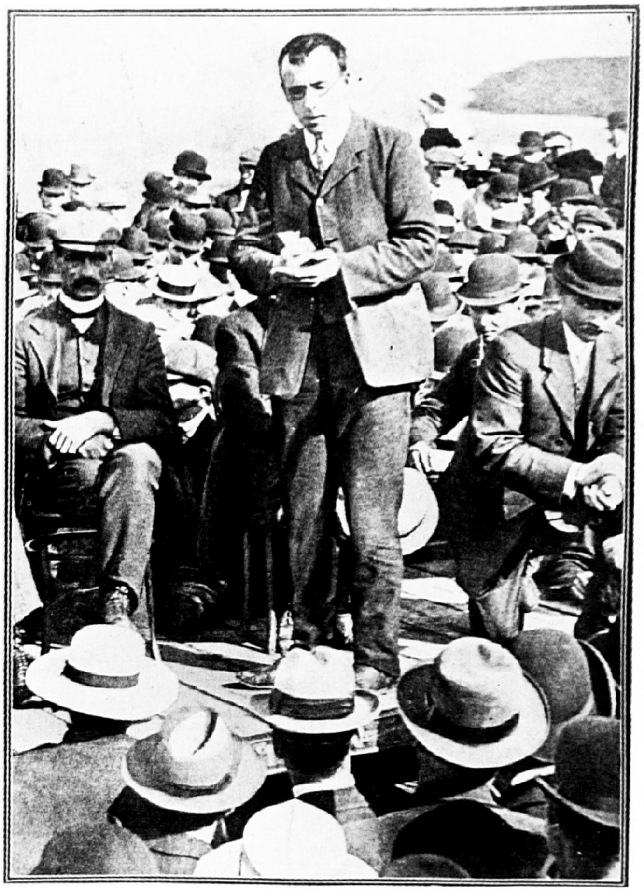
In October 1911 this union conducted its first strike in protest against the letting of sub-contracts by the Auckland Drainage Board. The union pulled out all labourers engaged on public works, some 600 men in all. Tramwaymen and watersiders, who were also affiliated to the Red Federation, expressed their support, and there was talk of a general strike in Auckland. After four days the Drainage Board conceded the demand.

Soon afterwards, in December, the union put forward new wage claims. The employers, mostly local bodies, dragged out the negotiations for several months while, behind the union's back, they persuaded a section of the labourers to break away and form a new organisation, the Auckland and Suburban Local Bodies Labourers Union. This union registered under the Arbitration Act and came to an agreement with the employers, who then refused to have any further dealings with the old union.

There was an emotional scene when Fraser and other union leaders burst into a closed meeting in the City Council Chambers and had to be shown to the doors by the police. Neither threats nor attempted counter-moves were of any avail. The General Labourers Union was badly outmanoeuvred, and the Red Federation suffered its first defeat. In August 1912 a general meeting of the union asked Fraser to resign.

1. Peter Fraser speaks at the Grey Statue in Queen St on 30 October 1911. (*Auckland Weekly News*, 2 Nov. 1911)

2. Bob Semple speaks at the same meeting. Seated beside him is Joe Savage, the secretary of the Auckland Socialist Party. (*The Weekly Graphic*, 1 Nov. 1911)



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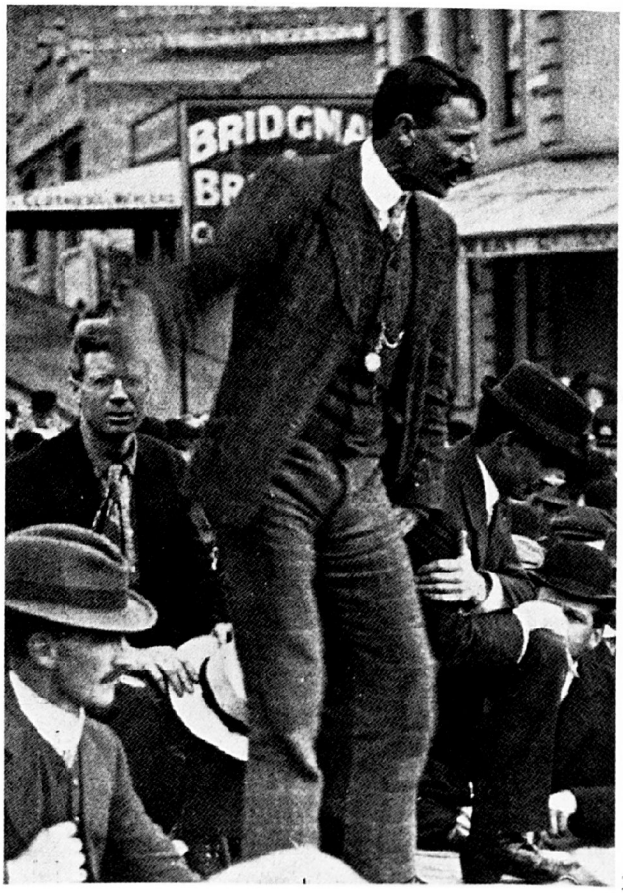

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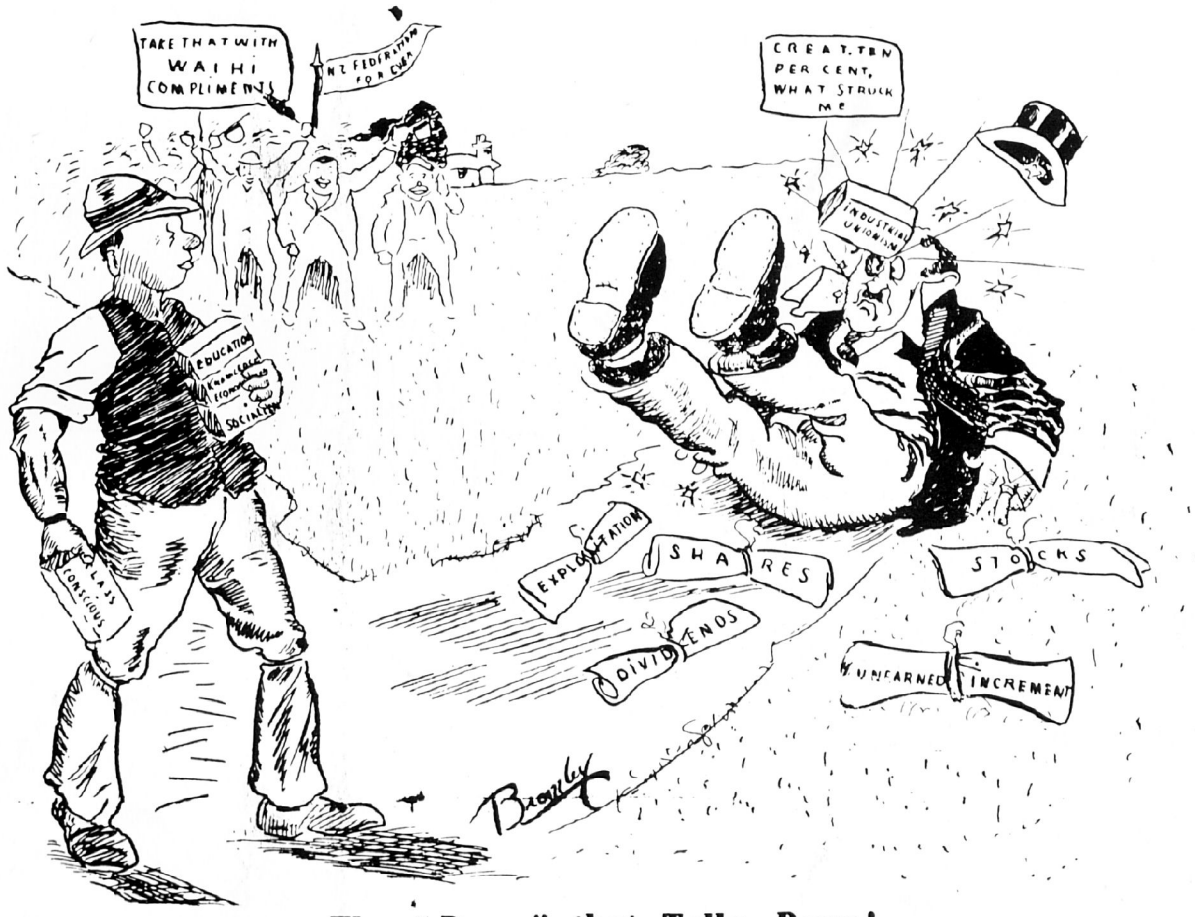
3. Part of the large crowd which listened to Fraser and Semple.
(*The Weekly Graphic*, 1 Nov. 1911)

4. "Industrial Unionism" knocks down the boss; a cartoon by Bromley.
(*The Social-Democrat*, 14 July 1911)



The "Dope" that Tells, Boys!

The Little Professor

In mid-1911 an American socialist, W. T. Mills, arrived in Auckland to conduct a lecture tour of New Zealand. The "little professor" (he was less than 5 feet tall) was an outstanding orator and his tour was highly successful. At the end of it, he published a set of proposals addressed to "The Useful People of New Zealand", which aimed to unite all factions of labour, political and industrial, in one single organisation.

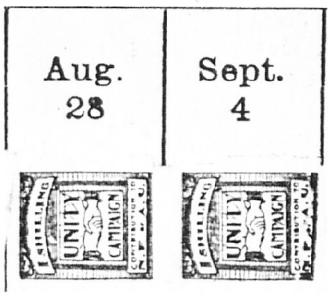
Until then the labour movement had been confined almost entirely to manual workers, but Mills made particular efforts to gain the support of professional people, students, working farmers, church and women's groups, and even employers. Thanks to his tireless activity a conference in April 1912 formed a United Labour Party, with J. T. Paul as president and Mills as national organiser. The new party's colours were pale blue and white.

Socialists and Red Feds welcomed Mills at first. They became suspicious, and soon hostile, when his speeches ignored the class struggle and socialist ideals and stressed instead the need for land and taxation reforms. Mills's campaign succeeded in uniting the moderate wing of Labour, and in attracting new sectors of the community to the movement. At the same time, he widened the split between moderates and militants, between reformers and revolutionaries.

1. Contribution stamps in support of the Unity Campaign. (Roth Collection)

2. Cover of a pamphlet of 1912 with the cartwheel organisation chart which Mills introduced from the United States. Invented by a Catholic priest, it was known as "Father Hegarty's Wheel of Prayer". (Roth Collection)

3. The "Professor" with his young son; a souvenir of his British visit in 1910. (Roth Collection)



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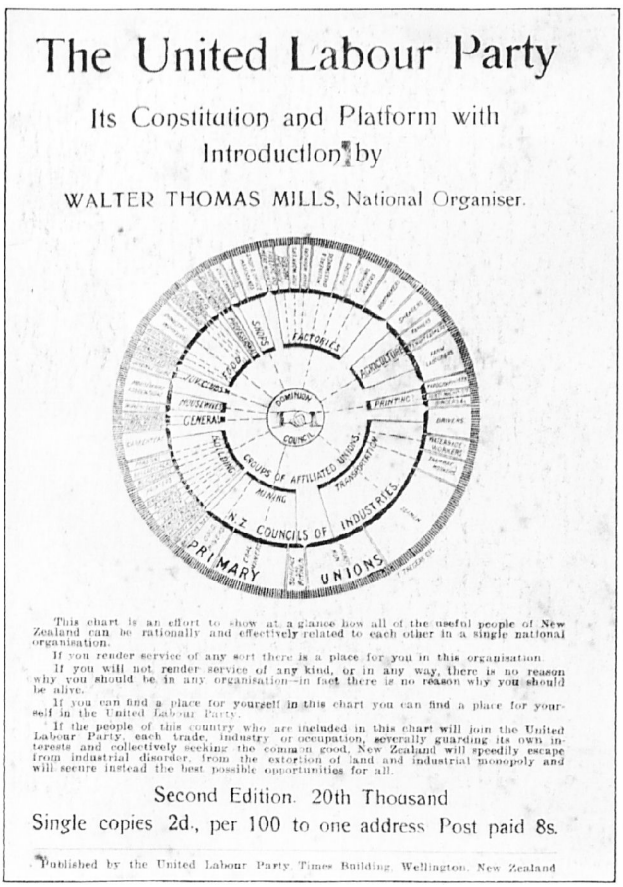
The United Labour Party

Its Constitution and Platform with Introduction by

WALTER THOMAS MILLS, National Organiser.

This chart is an effort to show at a glance how all of the useful people of New Zealand can be rationally and effectively related to each other in a single national organisation.

If you render service of any sort there is a place for you in this organisation.

If you will not render service of any kind, or in any way, there is no reason why you should be in any organisation—in fact there is no reason why you should be alive.

If you can find a place for yourself in this chart you can find a place for yourself in the United Labour Party.

If the people of this country who are included in this chart will join the United Labour Party, each trade, industry or occupation, severally guarding its own interests and collectively seeking the common good, New Zealand will speedily escape from industrial disorder, from the extortion of land and industrial monopoly and will secure instead the best possible opportunities for all.

Second Edition. 20th Thousand

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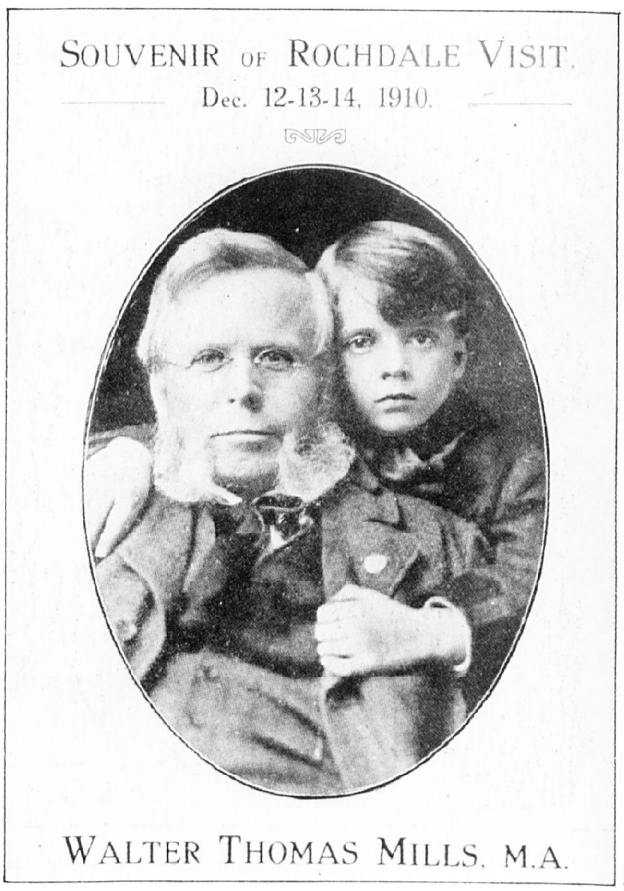
SOUVENIR OF ROCHDALE VISIT.

Dec. 12-13-14, 1910.

WALTER THOMAS MILLS, M.A.

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The Waihi Gold Miners' Strike

The formation of a breakaway union by some 30 engine-drivers in April 1912 was the immediate cause of the Waihi gold miners' strike, the most bitter industrial struggle in New Zealand history and the only dispute in which a striker was killed. The Waihi Trade Union of Workers, with 1000 members in a total population of 6500, decided to cease work until the engine-drivers disbanded their organisation and rejoined the miners' union. On 13 May Waihi came to a standstill.

Independently of Waihi, another dispute arose over the use of machinery at Reefton, which closed the gold mines there. The Red Federation, whose annual conference met that May, was asked either to extend the conflict or to order a return to work. It chose a middle course: to confine the disputes to Waihi and Reefton, and to raise funds in New Zealand and Australia for the support of the miners and their families.

These tactics ("fighting the capitalists with money," one delegate called it) might have been successful while a Liberal government was in power which depended on union votes. The turning point came in July, when the Liberals were defeated in an historic no-confidence debate and Mr Massey became the new Reform Party (Tory) Prime Minister.

The new government lost little time intervening on the side of the employers. Police reinforcements were sent to Waihi, more than 60 unionists were prosecuted and gaoled, and a new blackleg miners' union was registered. Early in October the mines reopened, with the "arbitrationists" being driven to work under strong police guard past jeering strikers and their wives.

1. "Ready for the Grip": Combined Labour closes in on the employer. (*New Zealand Observer*, 20 April 1912)

READY FOR THE GRIP.
The Employer: I'm doomed when this great fist closes.

1

2. Mrs Leach, a Waihi striker's wife, speaks at the Grey Statue in Auckland. (*Auckland Weekly News*, 26 Sept. 1912)

3. Led by a band the striking miners march through Waihi. (Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

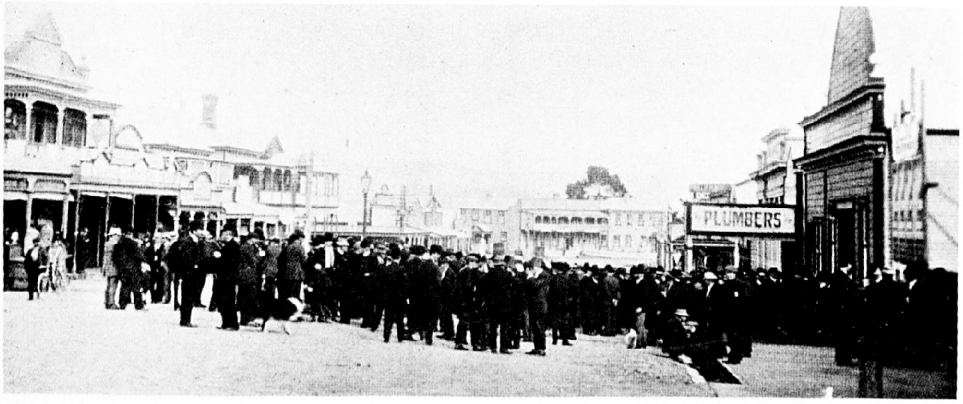
4. Street theatre in Waihi: "Capital" sits in the driver's seat, while "Labour" pulls the cart. (*The Weekly Graphic*, 29 May 1912)

5. William Edward Parry (1878-1952), the president of the Waihi Miners Union and leader of the strike. (*The Weekly Graphic*, 22 May 1912)

A belated attempt by the Red Federation to extend the dispute by calling a one-day protest strike throughout New Zealand proved a dismal failure. Within Waihi, as the arbitrationist union grew in numbers, the balance of power shifted away from the strikers. The climax came on 12 November when the blacklegs stormed the Miners' Hall, and one of its defenders, Fred Evans, was killed by a policeman's baton. The victors drew up lists of strikers who were told to leave Waihi under threats of violence. Hundreds of families — men, women and children — left town after the "Black Week", mostly for Auckland where a union meeting on 30 November officially called off the strike.

The Red Federation suffered a serious blow, but it was able to turn the defeat to its advantage. Past hostility to the Federation among many moderate unionists gave way to indignation at the suffering of the expelled Waihi strikers and at the massive government help to the mining companies. There was a ready response when the Federation, in November 1912, issued a call for a union conference to discuss combined action against the Massey government and changes to the Arbitration Act.

Evans's grave in Auckland became a symbol of labour struggle and unity, and the scene of commemoration meetings on the anniversary of his death, which have been revived in recent years.



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6. A Waihi street scene; strikers waiting for a mass meeting.
(*The Weekly Graphic*, 22 May 1912)

7. The broken column above Evans's grave in Waikaraka Cemetery, Auckland. "He Died for His Class."

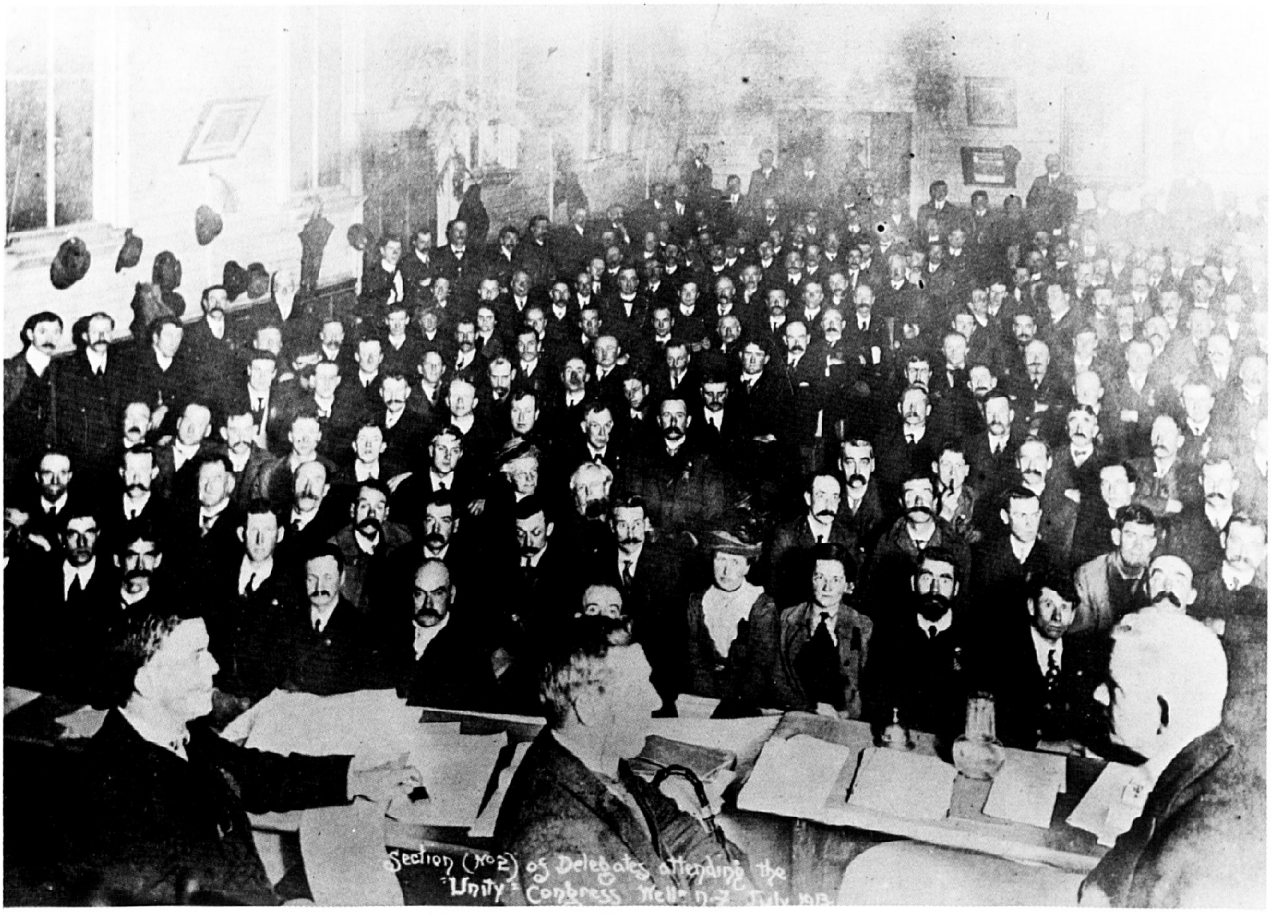
8. Frederick G. Evans, the young engine-driver who was killed by a policeman on 12 November 1912, while defending the Waihi Miners Hall.
(Roth Collection)

The Unity Conferences

The union conference convened by the Federation of Labour met in Wellington in January 1913. Despite the very bitter controversy which had divided the movement in recent years, discussions at the conference were constructive and to the point. On the third day delegates approved a Basis of Unity for the formation of two new central organisations, one industrial, the other political. A small committee was charged with convening another more representative congress in July, and with conducting a publicity campaign in the intervening six months.

The second Unity Congress, which sat in Wellington for nine days, was the largest labour assembly yet held in New Zealand, with almost 400 delegates representing more than 60,000 workers. This time the opponents of unity were also present and there was some acrimonious debate. Some delegates and organisations walked out before the end of the congress, but the great majority were able to agree on the constitution of two new organisations: a United Federation of Labour (with Tom Young of the Seamen's Union as president, Hickey as secretary, and Semple as organiser) and a Social Democratic Party (with Edward Tregear, recently retired head of the Labour Department, as president, Fraser as secretary, and Mills as organiser).

Soon after their return home, delegates learned that the new party had gained its first MP: Paddy Webb, the president of the old Red Federation, had won the Grey seat in a by-election.



1. A section of delegates to the Unity Congress of July 1913, seen inside St Paul's School Room in Sydney St. The chairman, John Rigg, sits on the right of the platform. (Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

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Social Democratic Party

AND

United Federation of Labour

DON'T FAIL TO HEAR

WALTER THOMAS MILLS

NATIONAL ORGANISER

WHO WILL SPEAK AS FOLLOWS:

THURSDAY, Mid-day. 12.15

September 11th.

RATTRAY STREET WHARF.

FRIDAY, Mid-day. 12.15

September 12th.

MARKET RESERVE (Princes Street South).

2. Leaflet advertising a post-congress meeting by Mills in Dunedin. (Roth Collection)

3. Group photo of the Unity Conference of January 1913. Seated in the centre of the third row is the chairman, John Rigg, flanked on his left by Hickey and Fraser, and on his right by Semple and Webb. (*Auckland Weekly News*, 30 Jan. 1913)

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The 1913 Waterfront Strike

1. A watersider addresses a strike meeting at the Triangle in Dunedin. (*Otago Witness*, 12 Nov. 1913)

2. Unionists march through Auckland on the first anniversary of Evans's death in Waihi. (*Auckland Weekly News*, 20 Nov. 1913)

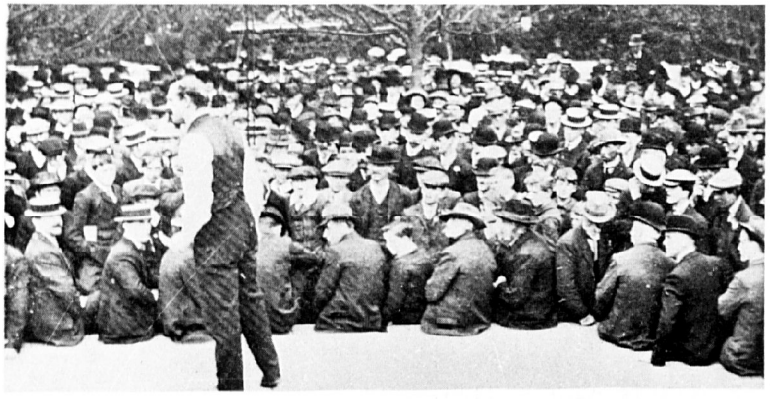
3. New Zealand Farmers Union badge commemorating the special constabulary. (Auckland Institute and Museum)

4. Poster advertising a meeting in Westport to "hear the invincible strikers". (G. R. Hunter, Papatoetoe)

The United Federation of Labour was only just finding its feet when it became involved in a life-or-death conflict. The national waterfront strike of 1913 had its origin in two local disputes which occurred almost simultaneously in October: at Huntly the miners called a strike when the company dismissed two union executive members, while in Wellington the watersiders went on strike when the Union Steam Ship Company refused to pay travelling time to shipwrights. The strikes spread to other ports and mines, forcing the Federation to lead a struggle for which it was not prepared and which it had not desired.

The employers and the government soon realised that here was an opportunity to crush the Red Feds and to force the rebel unions back into the shackles of the arbitration law. Their weapons were the registration of arbitration unions, the enrolment of farmer volunteers as special constables and to replace the strikers, and the use of police and armed forces to protect the strike-breakers.

Hundreds of mounted farmers armed with wooden batons ("Massey's Cossacks", the strikers called them) rode into town to reopen the ports. Their arrival was the signal for vicious clashes with the strikers, and often also for the involvement of new unions who walked out in protest. In Auckland the entry of the "specials" caused a general strike – the first in New Zealand history – which held for more than a week. In Wellington the "specials" became involved in almost daily street fighting which Sir Joseph Ward, the Leader of the Opposition, likened to Mexican civil war.



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CENTRAL STRIKE COMMITTEE SPECIAL

MONSTER
MASS MEETING
VICTORIA SQUARE
CALLED FOR
SUNDAY - AFTERNOON
(CADZOW'S THEATRE 8.15 in evening if weather unfavorable).

STRIKERS

And those in Sympathy will March from Watersiders' Shelter Shed at 2.30 p.m. Federal Band will lead the procession.

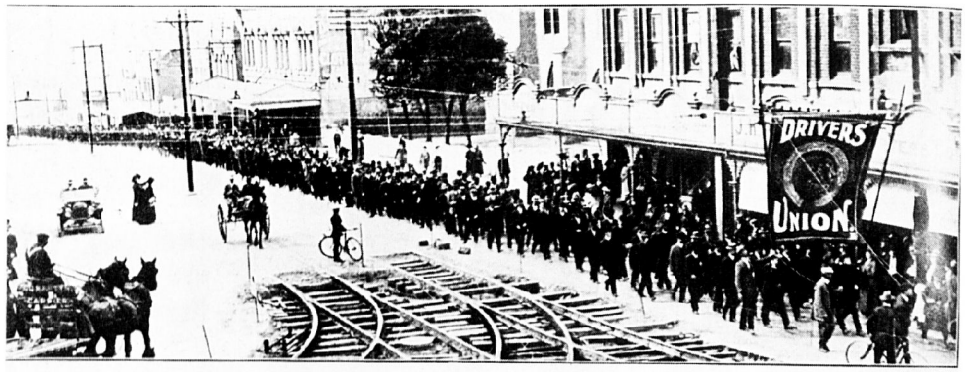
J. DUNN, CHAIRMAN CENTRAL COMMITTEE, WILL PRESIDE.

SPEAKERS: J. Cummings (Seddonville), D. Alexander (Ngakawau). J. Newman, F. Grant, J. Morris (Millerton), L. Diamond, J. Mullis (Denniston), W, Cressy, P. Gailey, H. Gillon (Westport), and E. Hunter.

COME AND HEAR THE INVINCIBLE STRIKERS tell in brief chapters the thrilling story of Organised Labor and the National Conflict

BANJO, District Organiser.

GEORGE AITKEN, PRINTER WESTPORT.



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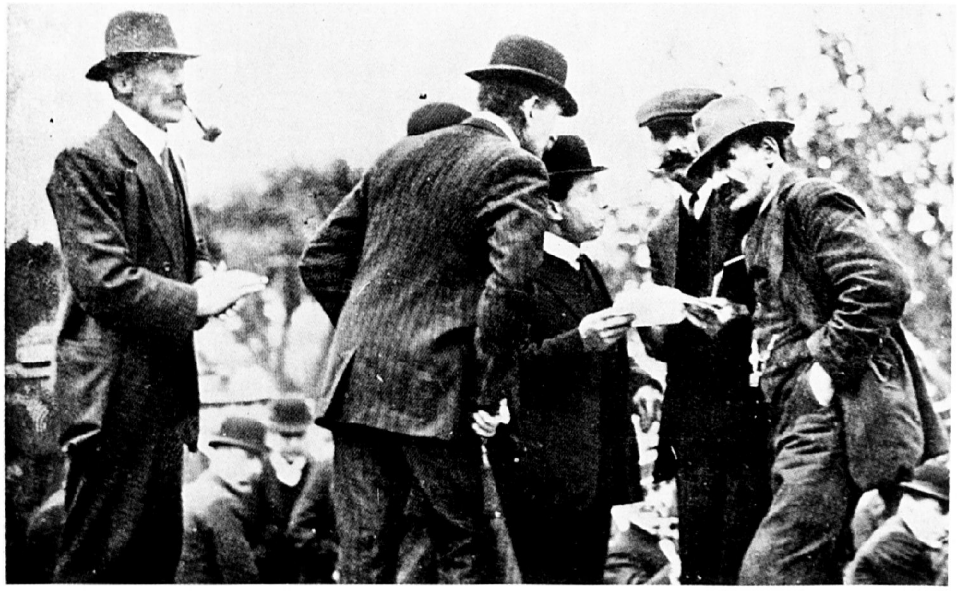

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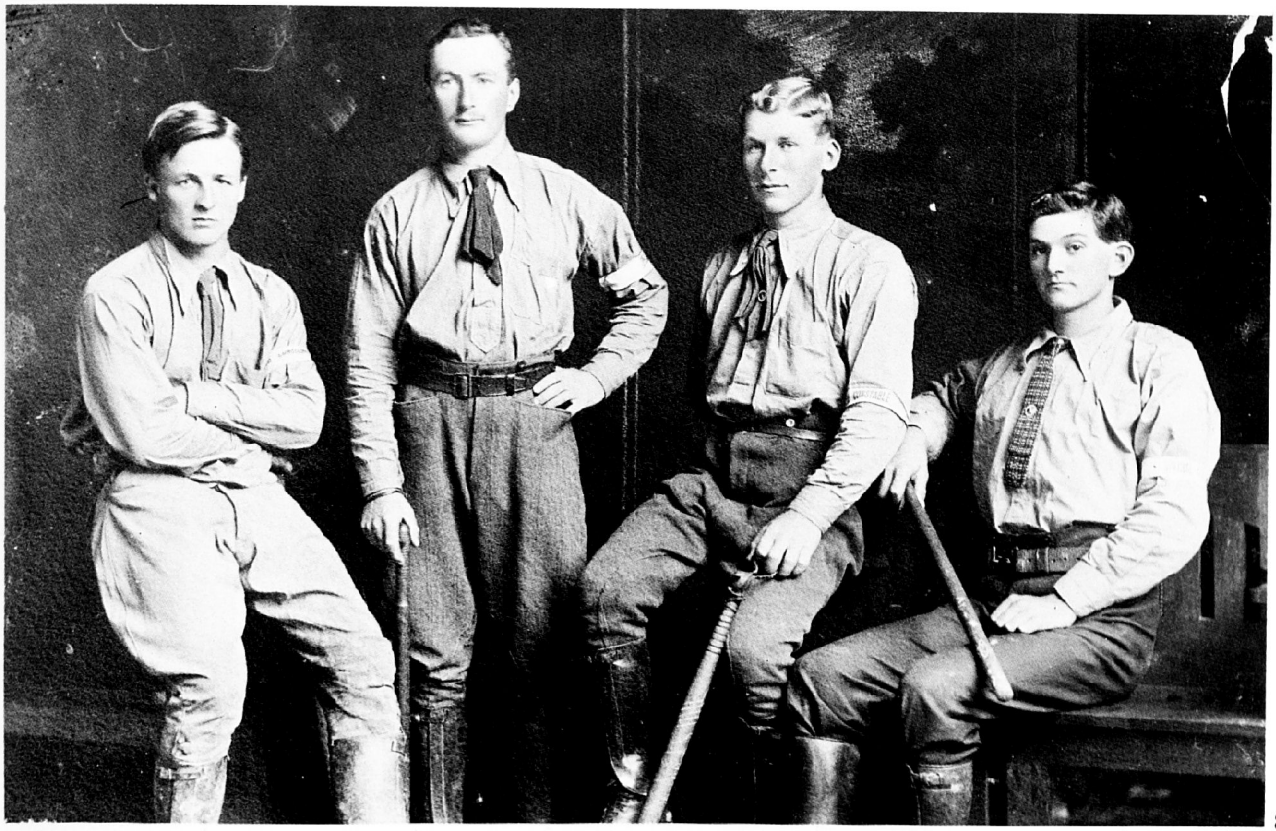
5. The Drivers Union banner in the Evans memorial march in Auckland.
(*Auckland Weekly News*, 20 Nov. 1913)

6. Dunedin union leaders on the platform of a strike meeting.
(*Otago Witness*, 12 Nov. 1913)

7. Mounted police ride into Thorndon Quay, Wellington.
(S. C. Smith Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

8. Wellington special constables pose with their batons.
(Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

9. The specials' sleeping quarters in the Mount Cook Barracks, Wellington.
(Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)



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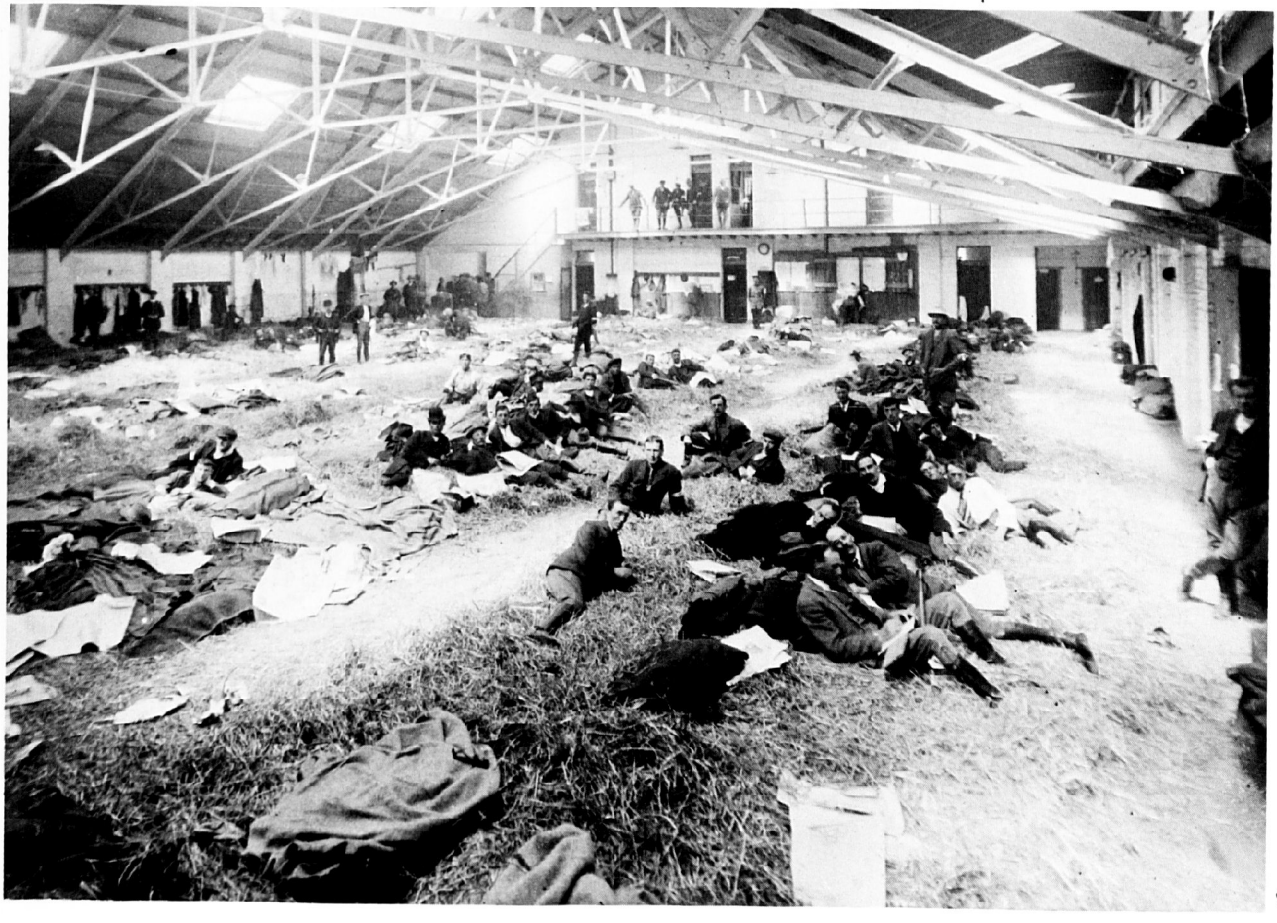

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Altogether some 16,000 workers (mostly watersiders, miners and seamen) took part in the conflict, or about a quarter of the total union membership. Australian watersiders and seamen boycotted New Zealand ships and gave financial help, but as the struggle dragged on, economic hardship and government pressure wore down resistance.

A general strike called by the United Federation for 10 November failed, and on the following day the government had several strike leaders arrested, among them Harry Holland, Fraser and Semple. A new Labour Disputes Investigation Act (it remained in force until 1974) stripped unregistered unions of the immunity from penalties for striking which they had hitherto enjoyed, while the Supreme Court ruled that registered unions could not legally use their funds in support of a strike.

By mid-December the strike was collapsing, the Federation's funds were nearing exhaustion, and watersiders at smaller ports had returned to work. When the seamen negotiated separate terms with the shipowners, the Federation was forced to call off the struggle and to order a resumption of work on 21 December. Most watersiders however found that their places had been taken by new men.

"The odds against us were too great," wrote the *Maoriland Worker* in summing up the two months' conflict, "the requisite tactics too little understood, the method of organisation too incomplete to meet the forces of the employers, the farmer scabs, and the armed and legal power of the State." The United Federation of Labour was able to survive, but without the backbone of watersiders, miners and seamen it ceased to be an effective fighting organisation.

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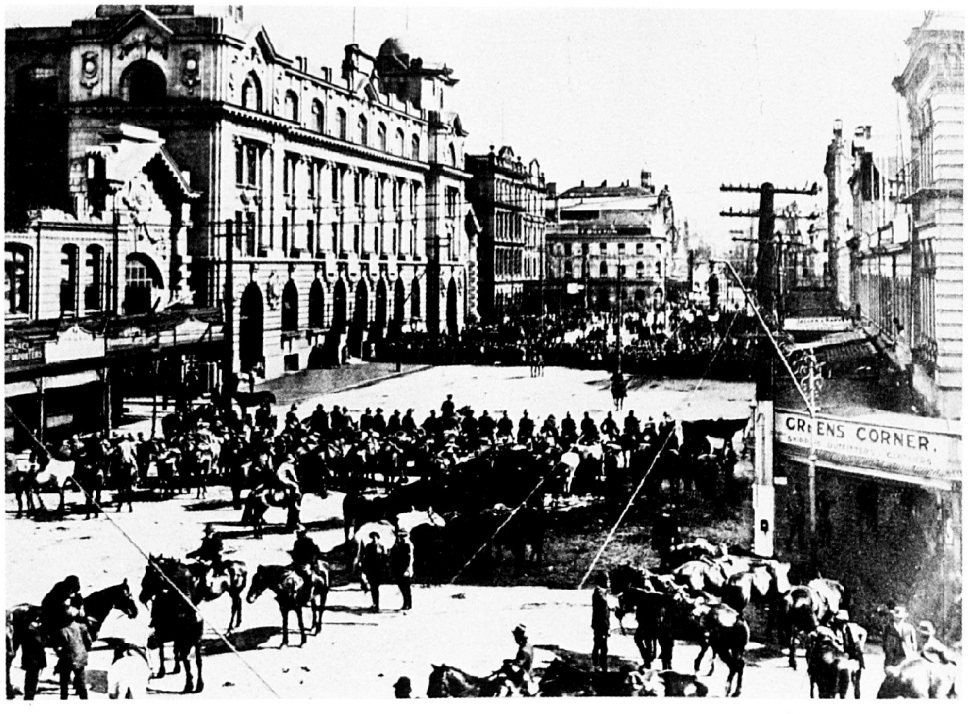

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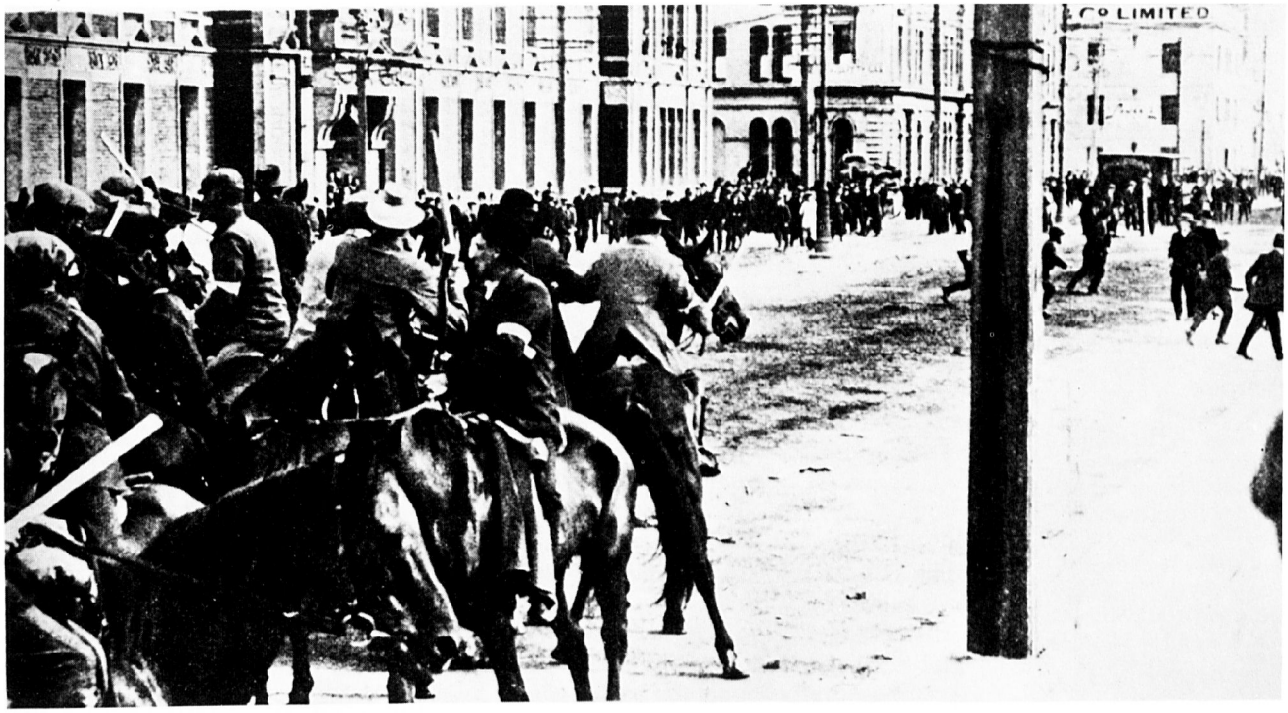
10. Short baton captured by a seaman during the strike. It has been silver-mounted and used as a gavel at union meetings. (New Zealand Seamen's Union, Wellington)

11. "High Noon" in Auckland: mounted specials confront strikers outside the Central Post Office in Lower Queen St. (*Auckland Weekly News*, 13 Nov. 1913)

12. "Massey's Cossacks" charge strikers in Featherston St, Wellington. Twenty people were injured. (*Auckland Weekly News*, 13 Nov. 1913)



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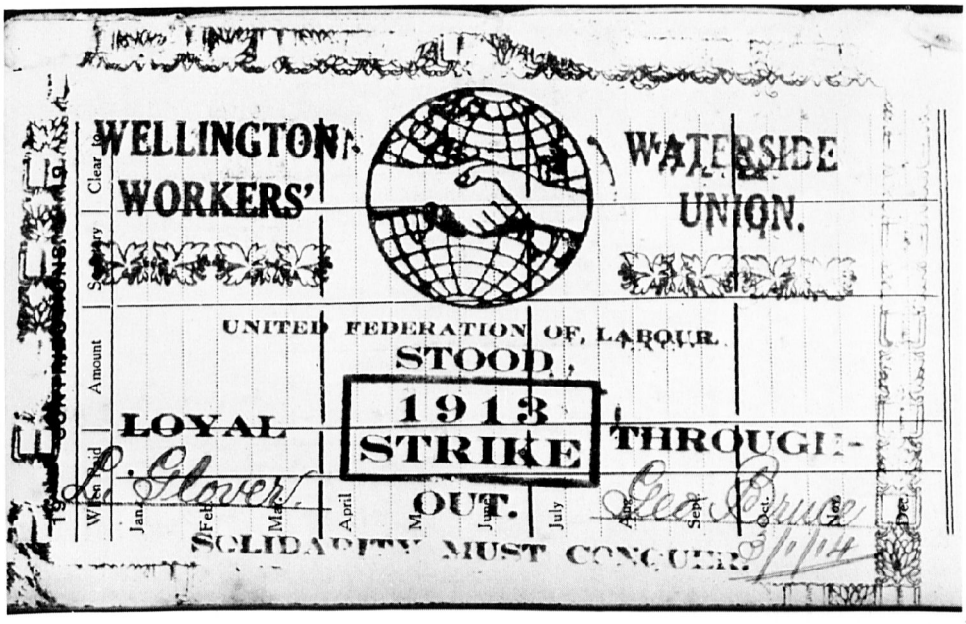

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13. Wellington Waterside Workers' Union loyalty stamp, from the membership book of Lew Glover. "Solidarity Must Conquer."
(Roth Collection)

14. Copper medal issued to Auckland mounted specials after the strike.
(Auckland Institute and Museum)

15, 16. Front and back of the copper medal issued to Auckland foot specials.
(Auckland Institute and Museum)

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16

Birth of the Labour Party

1. Manifesto on price increases, issued in October 1914. (Roth Collection)

2. Manifesto on conscription, adopted by a special Labour Conference in January 1916. (G. R. Hunter, Papatoetoe)

3. Cover of the monthly *Auckland Labour News*, published by the Auckland Labour Representation Committee between 1915 and 1927. The original design by the British socialist artist Walter Crane was drawn for May Day 1895. (Roth Collection)

In 1911 the annual watersiders' conference resolved that "should England or any other country declare war on any nation, we, as workers, unite with workers of other countries in declaring peace". Yet when war did come, in August 1914, there was little open dissent. Sectional interests gave way, temporarily at least, to national concerns. The number of strikes in the first years of the war was minimal.

The labour movement however, was divided in its attitude to the war, with the *Maoriland Worker* and most of the Red Fed activists opposed to it. "It was not a thing to be proud of," said Semple, "that the trade unionists of the world had flocked to murder one another."

Militants and moderates found common ground in opposing profiteering and the steep increases in the cost of living, but what really brought them together was the government's decision, in 1916, to introduce compulsory military service overseas without a prior referendum. Even supporters of the war were ready to sign appeals against conscription, and especially against the conscripting of lives without at the same time conscripting wealth.

Out of this new-found unity a new political party was born, the New Zealand Labour Party, founded in July 1916 by representatives of the Social Democratic Party, the United Federation of Labour, and the Labour Representation Committees, which existed in several centres.

Manifesto by the Otago Labour Council.

Price of Wheat, Flour and Other Commodities.

State Control and State Banking.

The following manifesto, which deals with the present price of flour and other matters arising from the war, has been issued by the executive of the Otago Labour Council:—

"For some time past the question of the inflated price of the necessaries of life (particularly the price of wheat and flour) has been agitating the public mind throughout the dominion. Ever since the outbreak of war the newspapers have daily contained reference to the matter, either in the form of reports of meetings, resolutions, or letters to the editor. In many cases even the editors have devoted leading articles; but, in spite of all, the people of New Zealand are today (nearly three months after the war has begun), without any protection whatever from exploitation by means of patriotic private enterprise. The Prime Minister and his 'Reform' Government have, according to the statement of a member of Parliament, distinguished themselves as being the last Government in Australasia to fix the price of wheat and flour, and the price so fixed for both is the highest. If that statement is correct (and we have every reason to believe it is), then there is no question that the present Government has made a name for itself which will be remembered for all time. At the present time the Prime Minister has his eyes on the Meat Trust, which is said to be operating in Australasia. In the House recently he is reported as saying:

> I have been watching this matter very carefully, and I am in a position to say that there is no man in New Zealand who knows more about the subject as myself. I am prepared to take action as soon as it has been proved to me that the action of the Meat Trust is contrary to the interests of the people of this country.

Mr Massey could as truthfully say he knows as much about the subject of wheat and flour as he knows about cattle, and if he deals as effectively with the Meat Trust as he has so far done with the wheat and flour question, then the Meat Trust is going to have a long life and merry time of it, and the public can expect to pay a nice little price for meat.

"The Government had early advice of the pressing need of legislation to prevent exploitation in the action of the Government of Great Britain immediately on the outbreak of war, promptly taking over the control of the flourmills of the United Kingdom and regulating the prices of the necessaries of life, and also in the action of the Government of New South Wales in immediately fixing the price of wheat and flour. But, instead of following the example of Great Britain and the principal State in the Commonwealth of Australia, the 'Reform Government' set up a Royal Commission to travel through the dominion wasting precious time taking evidence on matters which were common knowledge.

"After this commission had reported the Government attempted to regulate the price of wheat and flour at certain figures, but it was not till September 29—two months after the outbreak of hostilities—that the price was fixed. But what is the result? The merchants and holders of wheat are simply flouting the decision of the Government, and are ignoring those prices. Flour was fixed at £11 15s per ton at certain ports, but we are sure not one ton has been since sold at that price.

"In Dunedin to-day the price is £13 10s, and the Government seems impotent, or unwilling, to interfere with the men who are so flagrantly defying the decision of the commission. It must be apparent to all that the Government has shown a lamentable weakness in dealing with this question. If it is not possible legally to enforce the decision of the commission, then why was the country put to the expense of a commission at all? On the other hand, if the decision can be enforced, why does the Government not see that this is done? It strikes us that the real secret of this ineptitude is that the Massey Government is afraid to offend the farmers and moneyed men who deal in foodstuffs. To make the commission's report at

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LABOUR AND CONSCRIPTION

The Conference called by the United Federation of Labour, and held in Wellington, January 25-27, unanimously adopted the following Manifesto for publication:—

This Conference of New Zealand Labour Organisations, convened for the purpose of discussing Conscription, is steadfastly opposed to the spirit of militarism that made this war possible, and deplores the loss of human life and of property and the intense misery caused by this war, and it expresses its sincere and heartfelt sympathy with the relatives of those who have fallen in the fight.

CONSCRIPTION OF LIFE.

This Conference, representing 87 organisations of Labour (including all the Trades and Labour Councils with the exception of Otago), regrets that a section of the community should attempt to introduce Conscription—a system that has been consistently opposed by the working classes in all parts of the Empire.

We put forward the following contentions against the principle of those where life is concerned: That where only some are forced to give their lives for the country no equality of sacrifice is possible; that, were all our physically fit men compelled to enlist, certain of our primary industries would be seriously crippled, to the detriment of the people of the Dominion and of the Empire; that, if this is admitted, and certain men are exempted from military service, the doctrine of equality of sacrifice becomes absurd; that, when human life is at stake, all men stand equal and there can be no means of selection devised that can be considered fair; and that the policy of insisting on enlistment for service abroad of single men and youths is inimical to the best interests of the nation and the potentialities of the race.

"Thousands of our comrades strenuously opposed to compulsion in any form have gone as volunteers, and while their backs are turned we must use every effort to preserve intact the civil rights our people have won. There must be no surrender of principles which have raised British citizenship above serfdom.

We are convinced that Conscription is desired, not so much for the purpose of winning the war as to effectively hold the workers in subjection when the 'critical' after-war period is reached. Already the Trade Unions, which are the bulwarks of our industrial liberties, have surrendered many of their privileges and rights, won through long years of struggle, already our political liberties are being dangerously invaded, and when the war is ended, Conscription, if enacted, would prove an effective power to prevent Labour regaining these lost and surrendered rights, privileges, and liberties. Therefore, this Conference declares its opposition to Conscription, and will resist its introduction to the utmost.

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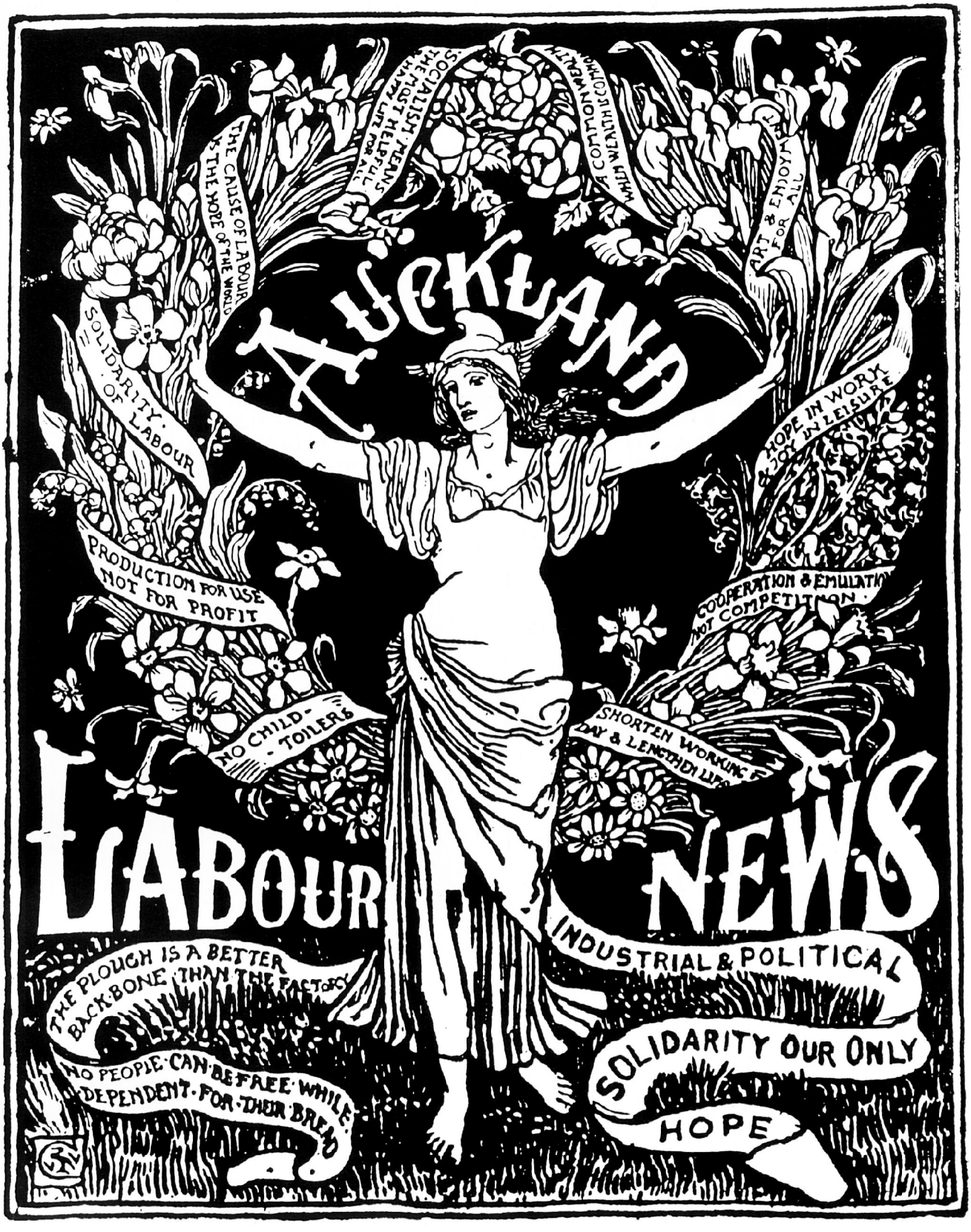

AUCKLAND
LABOUR NEWS
INDUSTRIAL & POLITICAL
SOLIDARITY OUR ONLY HOPE
THE PLOUGH IS A BETTER BACKBONE THAN THE FACTORY
NO PEOPLE CAN BE FREE WHILE DEPENDENT FOR THEIR BREAD
SOLIDARITY OF LABOUR
THE CAUSE OF LABOUR IS THE HOPE OF THE WORLD
SOCIALISM MEANS THE MOST HELPFUL HARMONY FOR ALL
WEALTH A COMMON WEALTH WITH WEAL FOR ALL
ART & ENJOYMENT FOR ALL
HOPE IN WORK JOY IN LEISURE
PRODUCTION FOR USE NOT FOR PROFIT
COOPERATION & EMULATION NOT COMPETITION
NO CHILD-TOILERS
SHORTEN WORKING DAY & LENGTHEN LIFE

Workers' Education

1. New Zealand Marxian Association member's booklet, 1919. (Roth Collection)

2. Auckland Socialist Sunday School meeting card. (Canterbury University Library)

3. A Socialist Sunday School picnic at Takapuna in January 1913. (Roth Collection)

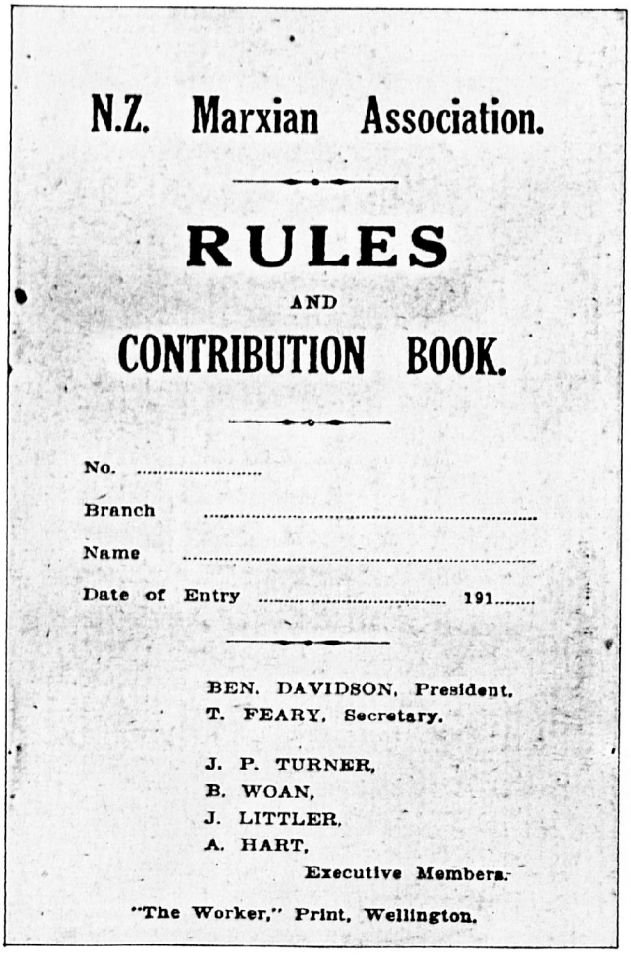
4. A weekend or summer school, probably under the auspices of the WEA, around 1919. Among the participants are Fraser, Semple, Webb and Walter Nash. (Roth Collection)

There was a strong demand for education in the labour movement, beyond what the official state schooling system was able to provide: education for the young in the spirit of socialism, and education in general subjects for adults who had missed schooling in their youth.

Copying British examples, Socialist Sunday Schools were opened in Auckland and Christchurch. The superintendent of the Christchurch school was the Rev. James Chapple, on whom the hero of Maurice Gee's novel *Plumb* is based. The children who attended were called Sunbeams; they had their own paper, *The International Sunbeam*.

Another import from Britain was the Workers Educational Association, which was established in New Zealand in 1915. This was a joint enterprise of trade unionists and academics, providing tutorial classes in such subjects as philosophy, economics or literature.

More specific in their purpose were clubs for the study of Marxism. First in the field was the Petone Marxian Club founded in 1912. Its members undertook to meet "every Monday night at 8 pm right up to the day of the Revolution". The last entry in the minute book is in November 1919. Similar Marxist study circles were formed during the war, mostly in the mining townships of the West Coast. In 1918 these clubs held a national conference in Christchurch and formed the New Zealand Marxian Association, a forerunner of the Communist Party.



N.Z. Marxian Association.

RULES

AND

CONTRIBUTION BOOK.

No. .....

Branch .....

Name .....

Date of Entry ..... 191.....

BEN. DAVIDSON, President.
T. FEARY, Secretary.

J. P. TURNER,
B. WOAN,
J. LITTLER,
A. HART,
Executive Members.

"The Worker," Print, Wellington.

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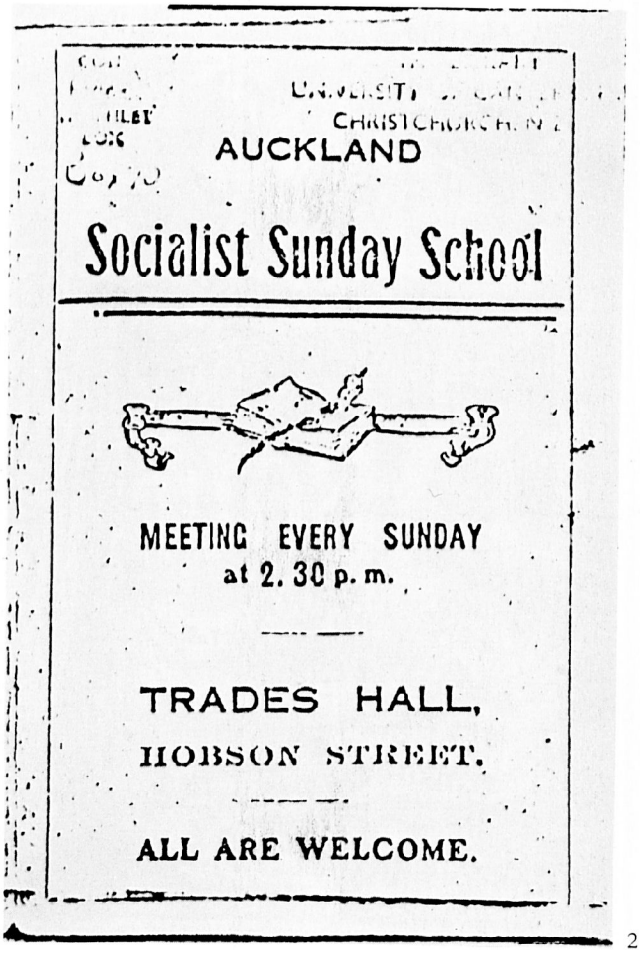


AUCKLAND

Socialist Sunday School

MEETING EVERY SUNDAY
at 2.30 p.m.

TRADES HALL,
HOBSON STREET.

ALL ARE WELCOME.

2


AUCKLAND SOCIALIST SUNDAY SCHOOL PICNIC
TAKAPUNA JAN. 1913
H.D. PRATO

3

4

The Miners Go Slow

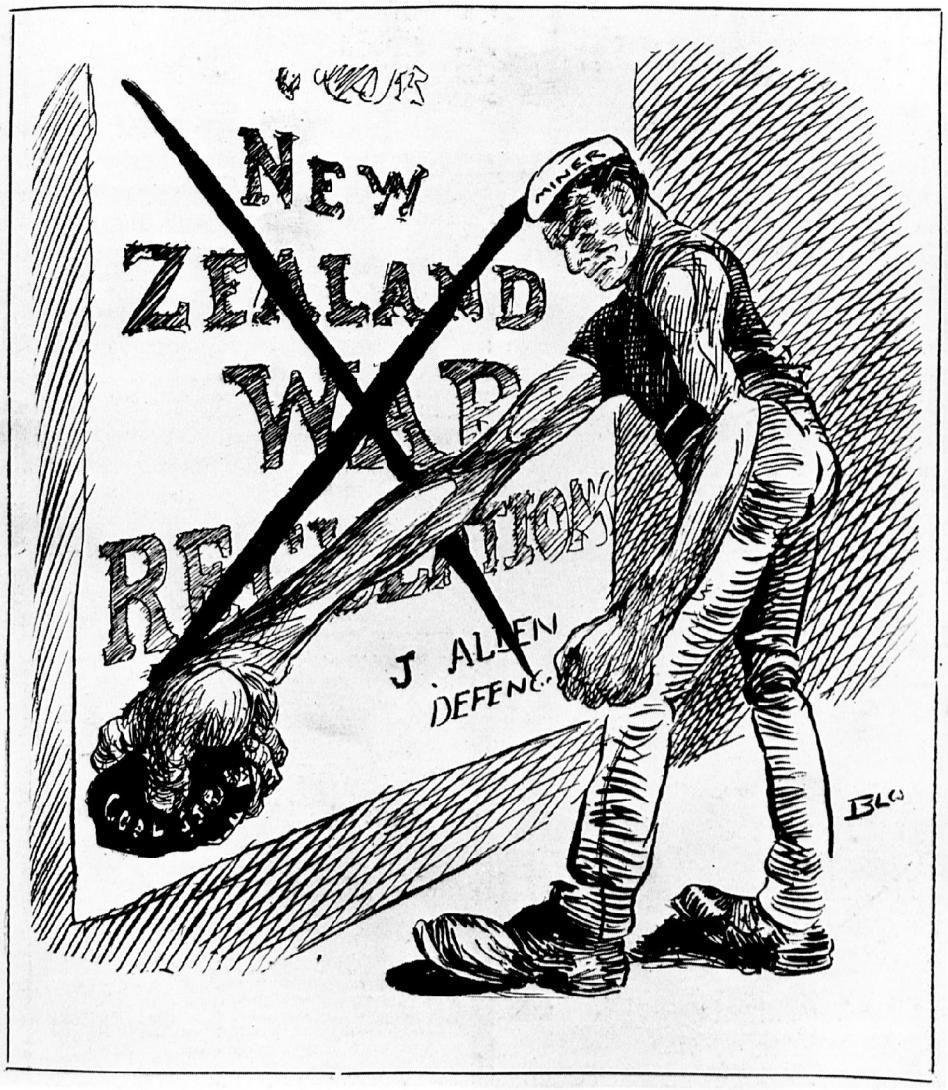
The watersiders rebuilt their shattered organisation under the leadership of "Big Jim" Roberts, a former gas stoker. In 1916 Roberts entered into negotiations with the railway unions, which led to the formation of a new body, the Transport Workers Advisory Board. Other national federations were formed to cover freezing workers and agricultural and pastoral workers.

The miners too had the problem of rebuilding their national organisation. They formed a Coal-Mine Employees Association in 1915, which later expanded to take in gold miners, tunnel and quarry workers. Sentiment against conscription was strong in the mining townships of the West Coast and Waikato; to show their opposition to the Military Service Act, the miners imposed a "go-slow" policy early in 1917.

The government retaliated by arresting the union leaders and prosecuting them under war regulations, but this merely led to a widely supported coal stoppage, the first political strike in New Zealand. After three weeks the government bought a resumption of work and the abandonment of the "go-slow", by agreeing to exempt miners from military service and by promising not to press for penalties against the arrested men.

Paddy Webb, the miners' MP, was however court-martialled in 1918 for refusing military service and was deprived of his seat. The miners elected another socialist, Harry Holland, to succeed him as member for Grey.

1. Delegates from the Miners Federation about to meet the employers in Wellington. With them third from right, is "Big Jim" Roberts, the secretary of the Alliance of Labour. (*Auckland Weekly News*, 21 Aug. 1919)



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At a meeting at Blackball the following resolution was passed:—"That this meeting of Blackball citizens regard the attempt to fasten conscription on New Zealand as mischievous, disruptive and dangerous, and declare that the success of the conscriptionists would be the supreme achievement of Prussianism, in view of the fact that men are volunteering in far larger numbers than the military authorities can immediately train and equip, we are justified in regarding the attempt to Prussianise New Zealand as an endeavour to provide for the ultimate defeat of working class and democratic ideals. Finally, we demand and urge the people of New Zealand to demand the nationalisation of capital as the most effective method of providing for the new situation created by war conditions."

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2. Blo's comment on the miners' strike.
(*New Zealand Observer*, 5 May 1917)

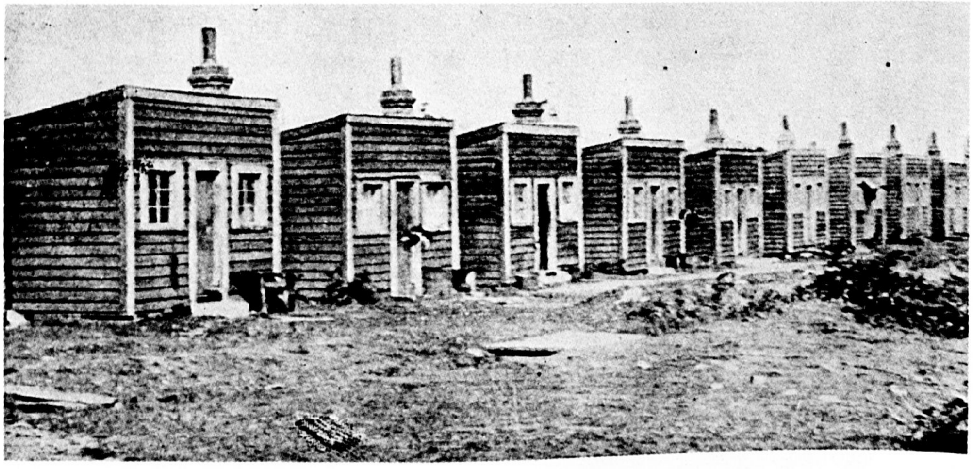
3. Blackball miners oppose conscription and demand the nationalisation of capital.
(*Greymouth Evening Star*, 25 Nov. 1915)

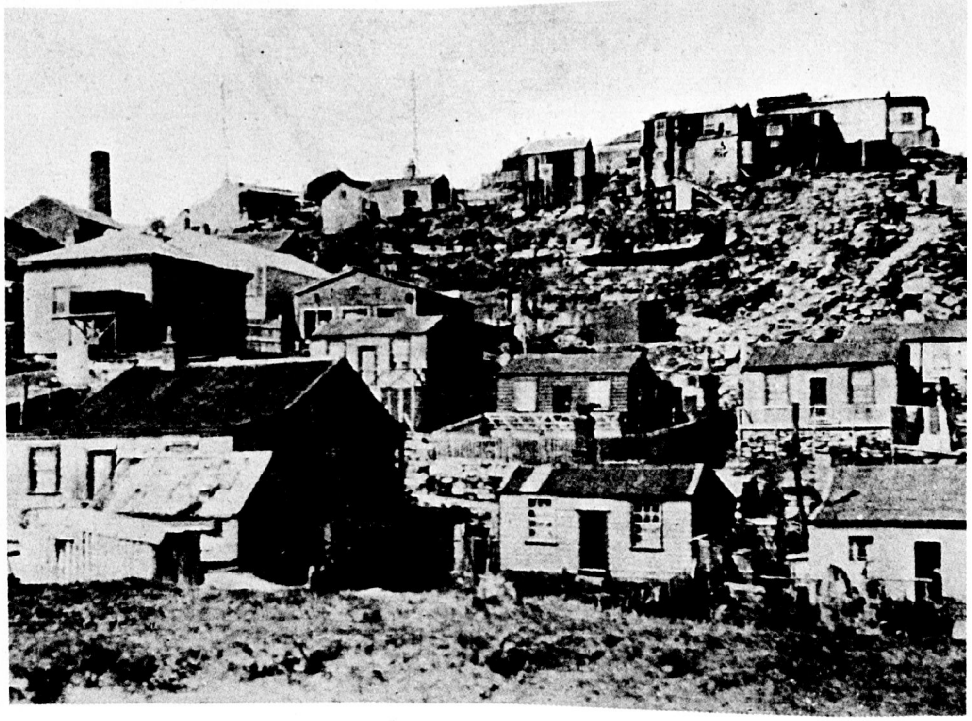
4. Henry E. Holland (1868-1933), the Australian socialist who entered Parliament in 1919 and became leader of the New Zealand Labour Party.
(Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

How They Lived

In 1911 Charles Reade, the editor of the *New Zealand Weekly Graphic*, gave a series of lectures in Auckland and Wellington on town planning and slum clearance. To illustrate his talks, Reade presented nearly a hundred specially prepared lantern slides, showing such horrors as an Auckland boarding-house where seven old-age pensioners crowded into one room measuring 12 x 14 feet, and a row of 14 houses containing over 30 people who shared one outside tap and only three conveniences.

Slum conditions were not peculiar to our cities. When the Board of Trade investigated the living conditions of coal miners in 1919, it found that "much of the industrial unrest and dissatisfaction of the miners may be attributed to the sordidness of their housing-conditions and monotony of their home life". Overcrowding was rife, made worse by lack of drainage and sanitation. "Generally," the Board concluded, "there has been little thought for the health, convenience or comfort of the workers"; to convince any doubters, it added a pictorial section to its report.



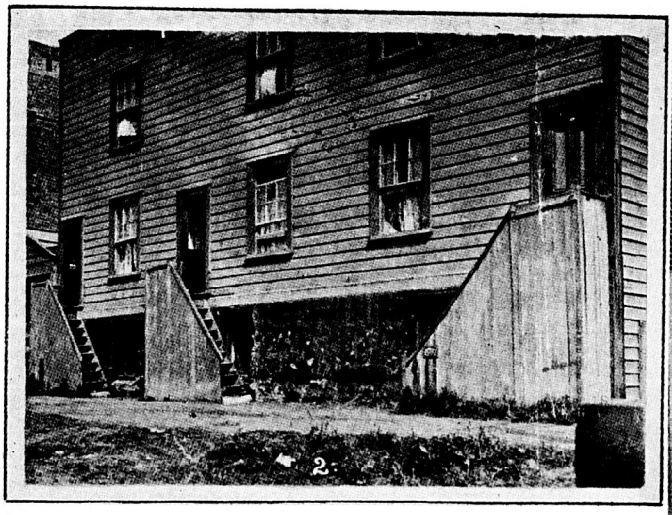


1. Miners' houses in Blackball. Owned by the company and let for 2s 6d per week, they measured 11ft 6in by 9ft 6in. (Report of the Board of Trade on the Coal Industry, 1919)

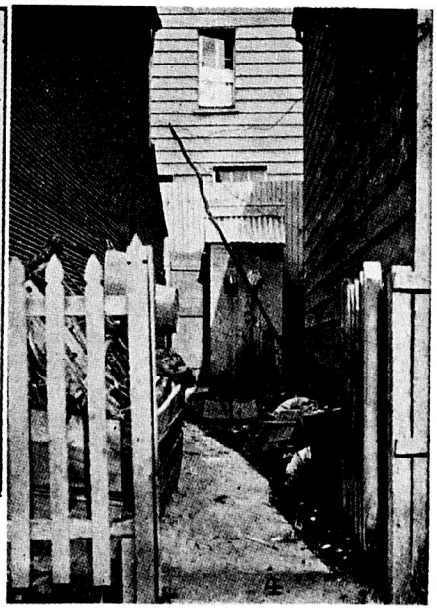
2. Collection of miners' huts and shacks on the western face of Denniston Hill. (Report of the Board of Trade on the Coal Industry, 1919)

3. Pictures of Auckland slums with which Reade advertised his town planning lectures in August 1911. (Roth Collection)

Four Picture Proofs of "SLUMDOM" in Auckland

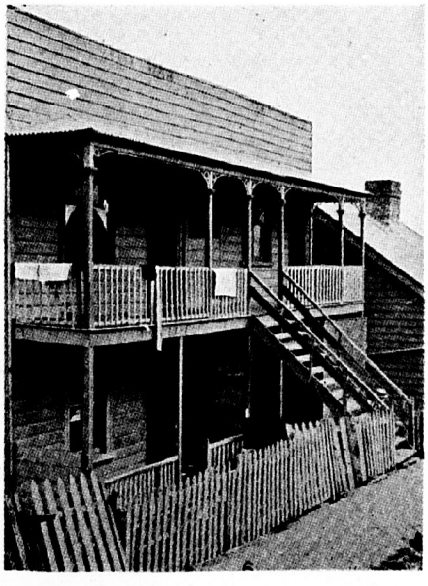


Three houses under one roof. In one house two families live, comprising 4 adults and 6 children. There is no water inside the houses. The yards are damp, narrow and dirty. The conveniences are of the usual antiquated type that need no description. One of the cellars when occupied held a separate family—father, mother, three children and a young girl boarder. They all slept in one room, the condition of which was filthy.



Total yard space of a four roomed house off a blind lane. There is only one outside tap and the convenience is of the usual antiquated type. This is one of a block of four houses.

MONDAY NEXT, AUGUST 7th.



Four houses built under one roof, two upstairs, two down. The combined rents yield the owner £2 1s. 6d. per week when let. The premises are in a wretched state.

Children playing at the back of old, condemned houses. The younger child has not been washed all day. The lecture will give instances of children having been in the hospital as the direct result of the filthy conditions in which they are being brought up in.

The remainder to be shown at the Lecture are WORSE

The Labour Party Enters Parliament

The elections scheduled for 1918 were postponed for a year because of the war. The Labour Party had to wait until 1919 to contest its first general election, but it was able to put up candidates in by-elections before that, and with great success. Though denounced as Bolsheviks and/or agents of the Kaiser, Holland, Fraser and Semple in quick succession won the Grey, Wellington Central and Wellington South seats in 1918. In 1919 the party put forward the largest number of candidates yet presented by a labour organisation, gaining eight seats and almost a quarter of the total vote.

Harry Holland became leader of the party. In his maiden speech he told Parliament: "We of the Labour Party come to endeavour to effect a change of classes at the fountain of power. We come proclaiming boldly and fearlessly the Socialist objective of the Labour movement throughout New Zealand; and we make no secret of the fact that we seek to rebuild society on a basis in which work and not wealth will be the measure of a man's worth.

"We do not seek to make a class war. You cannot make that which is already in existence. We recognise that the antagonisms which divide society into classes are economically foundationed, and we are going, if we can, to change those economic foundations, to end the class war by ending the causes of class warfare."

GENERAL ELECTIONS, 1919.

To the Electors of Auckland West.

Ladies and Gentlemen,—I beg to announce that I have been selected by the New Zealand Labour Party to solicit your suffrages at the forthcoming elections. My qualification to fulfil the task of representing the mental and manual workers in the Parliament of the Dominion is due to my experiences in office, mine, field, and workshop, covering a period of more than 30 years, and to my association with the Labour movement for a quarter of a century.

During the course of my rather strenuous career in the Labour movement, I have been entrusted by my fellow workers with every position of trust known to the movement outside of Parliament, until to-day, when I hold the position of National Secretary to the Party responsible for my nomination in this constituency.

At an early date I shall take the opportunity of fully explaining the Party's Platform, to which I am pledged, and shall be pleased to meet friends and opponents alike, in a spirit worthy of the great movement which I have the honour to represent.

Yours faithfully,

M. J. Savage

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1. Savage's election card in 1919, when he contested and won Auckland West. (Roth Collection)

2. Michael Joseph Savage (1872-1940), a brewery worker, was also national secretary of the Labour Party. (Roth Collection)

3. An election advertisement by the Auckland Labour Party. (*Auckland Star*, 28 Nov. 1919)

4. The Parliamentary Labour Party, 1919-1922. Seated in the centre, left Harry Holland, right Peter Fraser. (Supplement to *The Maoriland Worker*, 22 Nov. 1922, Roth Collection)

LABOUR'S LIBERTY CAMPAIGN.

Right Hon. R. J. Seddon's
LAST MESSAGE TO LABOUR.

Delivered at the banquet given in his honour by the Commonwealth Labour Party a few days before his death.

> "So great is the money power, so great is its grip even on New Zealand, holding as it does the means of life—the tools whereby men toil, the food whereon men live—that there is no single act, however originally intended for the benefit of the workers, but has been turned into a means and an aid for bringing more wealth to the already wealthy classes, and leaving an ever lessening share to those whose Labour produced that wealth."

These words are truer to-day than ever; and despite slanderous statements the following candidates are pledged ONLY to the principles underlying the great Stateman's remarks:

Auckland Central	W. E. PARRY
Auckland West	M. J. SAVAGE
Auckland East	R. F. WAY
Grey Lynn	F. N. BARTRAM
Parnell	T. BLOODWORTH
Eden	O. McBRINE
Roskill	G. DAVIS
Manukau	H. G. R. MASON

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A Black Ban on Racing

Some people dreamed of nothing less than One Big Union for all the workers of New Zealand, but short of perfection there were major moves after the war towards the concentration of union forces. In 1919 miners and transport workers got together and formed a new militant organisation, the New Zealand Alliance of Labour, with Jim Roberts as secretary. The decrepit United Federation of Labour dissolved soon afterwards, leaving behind Trades Councils comprised of small craft unions in the main centres.

A national rail strike in April 1920 left the Prime Minister and the visiting Prince of Wales stranded in Rotorua, which no doubt accounts for the speed with which the government accepted the unions' demands. The most curious dispute however, involved jockeys and the New Zealand Racing Conference.

The newly formed Jockeys Association put forward demands which the owners ignored. On 10 April 1920, at Avondale, members of the association refused to ride in the Waitakere Handicap; the races were delayed by almost an hour while replacement riders were procured, but two favourites had to be withdrawn. The unions then took up the jockeys' case and declared racing black. Labour MPs chaired protest meetings, seamen stopped the transport of racehorses on the inter-island ferries, and tramwaymen refused to run race specials. It all fizzled out when the jockeys by a large majority voted not to strike.

AN INJURY TO ONE THE CONCERN OF ALL

The One Big Union Council calls upon all wage-workers to organise, irrespective of nationality, sex or craft, into a closer organisation according to industry, so that we shall be able to more successfully carry on the every day fight for better conditions of labour, and prepare ourselves for the day when production for profit shall be replaced by production for use.

NEW ZEALAND

ONE BIG UNION COUNCIL.

AUCKLAND **MAY 1920**

AIMS:

To arouse the mind of the wage-workers to the fullest sense of their responsibility to their class and themselves, by exposing the futility of craft unionism, and all capitalistic governing bodies, as a means of attaining emancipation from wage slavery.

OBJECT:

The abolition of the wages system and the ushering in of the **"Industrial Commonwealth."**

Supplies of Industrial Union Literature can be obtained upon application to Secretary.

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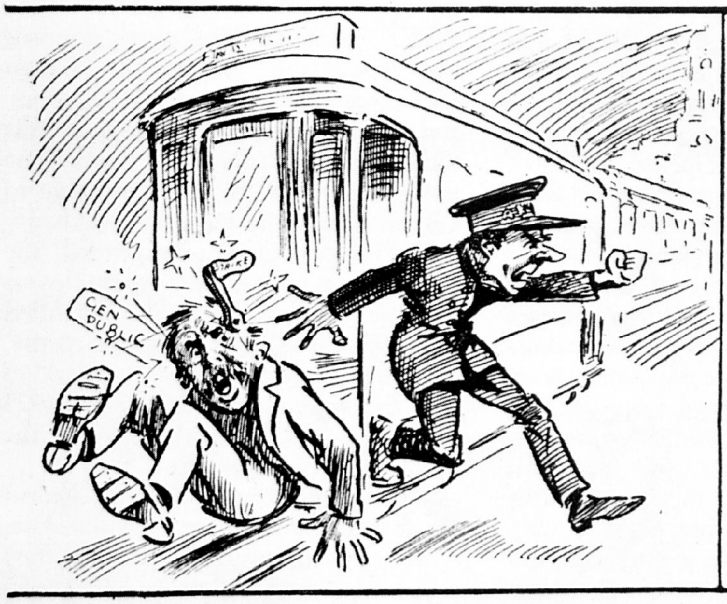
1. Leaflet advertising the very short-lived New Zealand One Big Union Council.
(Roth Collection)

2. The Prince of Wales in Rotorua, where a national rail strike disrupted his programme.
(Auckland Public Library)

3. The "sporting public" suffers from strikes by jockeys and tramwaymen.
(*New Zealand Observer*, 8 May 1920)

4. "His Majesty the Jockey": another hostile cartoon on the disruption of race traffic in Auckland.
(*Auckland Weekly News*, 10 June 1920)



The Tramway Men add to the Trouble.

The Jockeys Hit Out.

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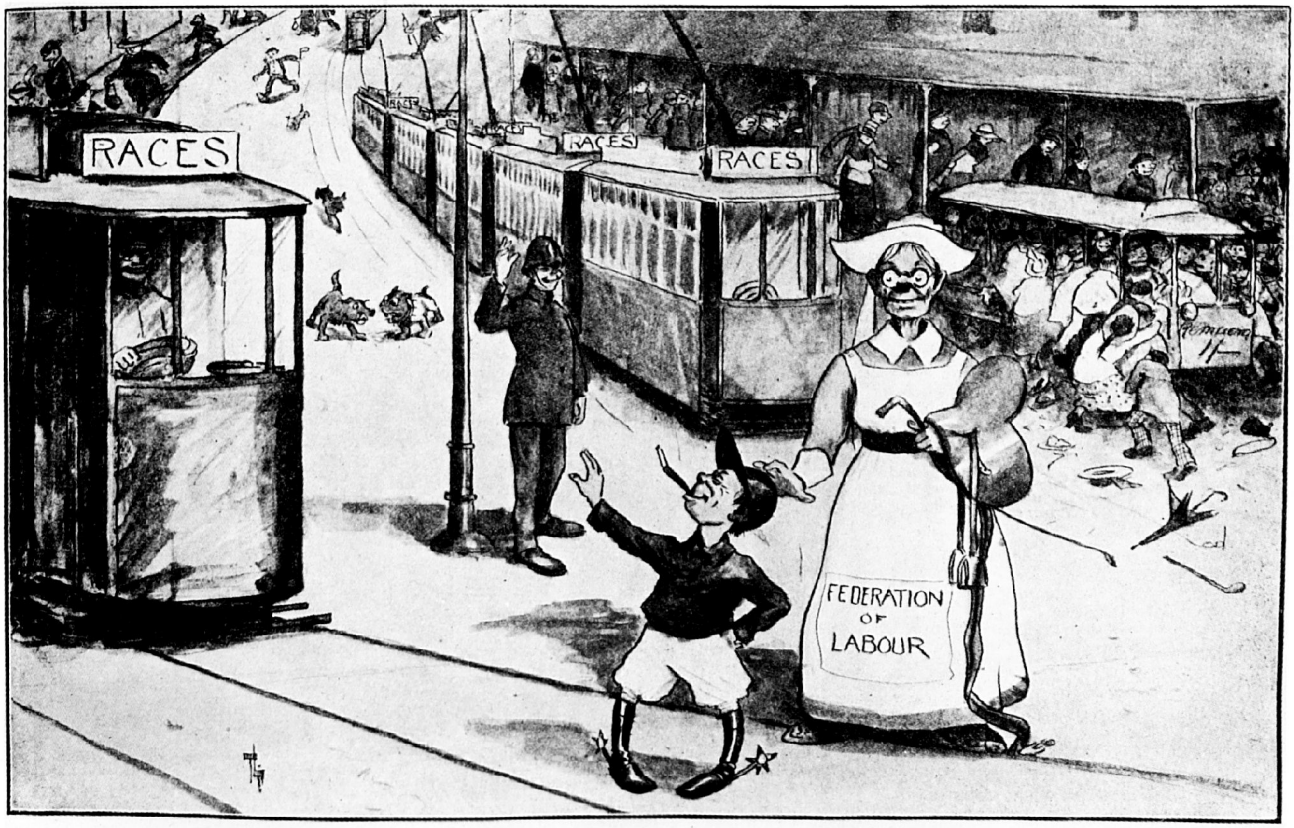


HIS MAJESTY THE JOCKEY!

With apologies to Drummond, the painter of the picture, "His Majesty the Baby."

A tramway strike developed in Auckland City last Thursday as the outcome of the edict of the Transport Workers' Advisory Board, declaring race meetings "black" and asking the tramwaymen to show their sympathy with the Jockeys' Association in their dispute with the racing clubs and racehorse owners by refusing to take any of the cars out to the usual destination of racegoers at Remuera.

4

The Employers' Offensive

1. The seaman's poultice burns the Labour Party, just before the general elections. Labour Party: "Wow! that's hot! Sticking a poultice like that upon me just now will be my death in these waters." (*New Zealand Observer*, 25 Nov. 1922)

2. "Is this fair?" asks little New Zealand. "You created this court and now you want to open and shut the door as you please." (*New Zealand Observer*, 18 Nov. 1922)

3. A Labour Party election leaflet. Prime Minister Massey pulls the worker through the Arbitration Court mangle. "It's great," says the employer. "He comes out thinner every time." (Roth Collection)

The postwar boom came to an end in 1921. The Arbitration Court kept wages level for a time, but when prices fell the court imposed reductions. When the Seamen's Union went before the court for a new award, it produced evidence of the enormous profits the shipowners had made during the war.

"The balance-sheets of the Union Company," said Tom Young, "disclose the most prosperous of business transactions financially. The shipowners want this court to take out of the pockets of working men and women something like £2,500,000 yearly, and place that sum into the pockets of a few wealthy men and women holding shares in various shipping companies, while the unfortunate, struggling worker is kept at starvation point."

The Arbitration Court ignored this plea. Its award, issued in October 19[illegible] cut seamen's wages and altered conditions to the union's disadvantage [illegible] some 55 instances. The men's response was predictable. Auckland seamen walked off their ships on 31 October, and within a fortnight the stoppage was total throughout New Zealand. The times however were not favourable to militant action and the union was badly led. The government suspended the legal manning provisions; the employers were now able to employ unqualified crews and, with unemployment rife, sufficient blacklegs came forward to keep the ships moving. In January 1923 the union was forced to call off the strike and to admit defeat.

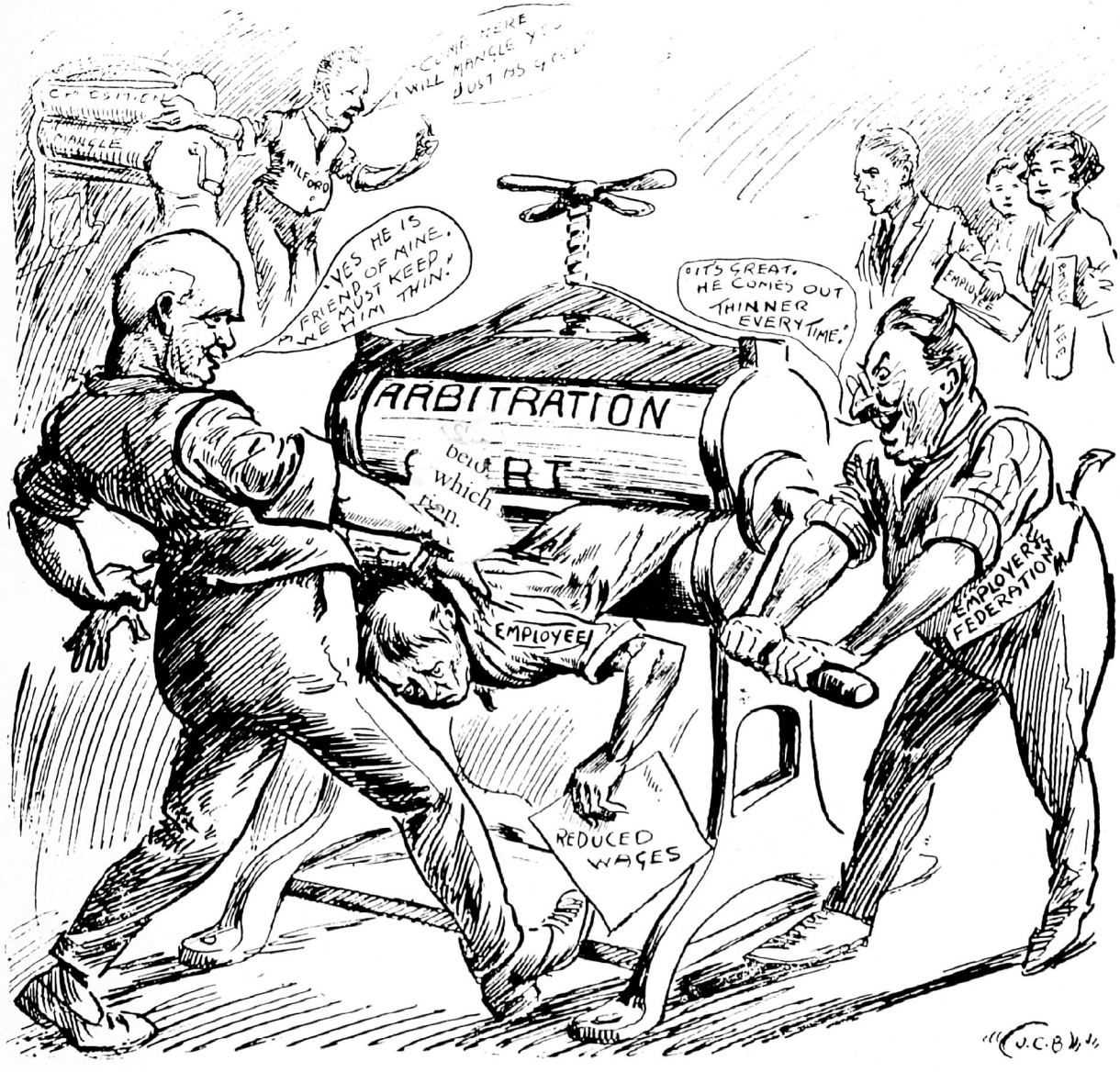
Freezing workers who struck against bonus reductions suffered a similar fate, when the employers found that they could replace them easily with non-union labour. West Coast miners endured a four months' lockout in 1923 [illegible]re they too abandoned the struggle, [illegible]mashed their national organisa-

THE SEAMAN'S POULTICE.

N.Z.: "Is this fair? You created this court and now you want to open and shut the door as you please."

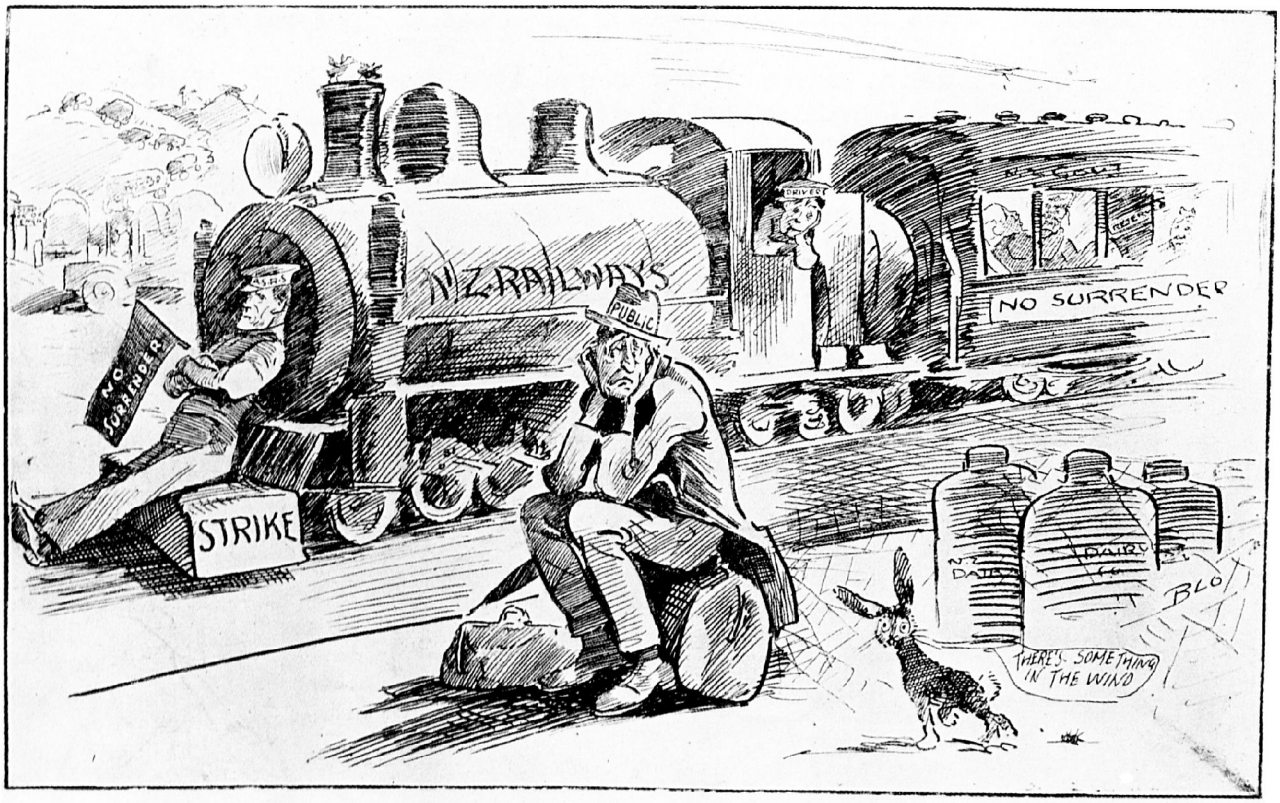
The Arbitration Court Mangle

Every time they turn the handle
Labour feels the squeeze



Vote Labour and Protect Yourself

The 1924 Rail Strike



STRIKES—WHO SUFFERS? WHO PAYS?

1. The public suffers while the ASRS holds up the trains.
(*New Zealand Observer*, 3 May 1924)

The railwaymen, together with other state servants, suffered a wage reduction in 1923. For a year they sought a restoration of these cuts through petitions to Parliament, deputations to Cabinet, and public protests. At last their patience ran out. A ballot of members of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants produced a 3 to 1 majority in favour of direct action, and at Easter 1924 the society called out its 11,000 members.

The response was almost unanimous but a sister organisation, the Engine-Drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners Association, refused to join the strike. By design or coincidence the stoppage came at the time of a visit by a British naval squadron, including the battleships *Hood* and *Repulse*. Both the Labour and Liberal Parties supported the railwaymen's demands, but the government firmly rejected them.

The government, for the first time in an industrial dispute, used expensive display advertising in the daily press to rouse public feeling against the strikers. "Are the Railways to Run in the Interests of the Public or for the Benefit of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants?" read the heading of one such advertisement. "Are the Railwaymen Entitled to a Living Wage?" asked the society in its reply.

After a week the strike had to be called off. The government agreed to safeguard the strikers' superannuation rights, but it exacted a heavy price for this concession: the ASRS had to disaffiliate from the Alliance of Labour, the government gave official recognition to a breakaway group, the Railway Tradesmen's Association, and it increased railwaymen's weekly hours from 44 to 48. Far from gaining a restoration of the wage cuts, the railwaymen now had to work longer hours for the same wages.

A.S.R.S.
STRIKE BULLETIN

Vol. 1 AUCKLAND, APRIL 23, 1924.

THE STRIKE.

AT NO TIME in the history of the A.S.R.S. have the men throughout New Zealand shown such splendid morale.

In Auckland only one member, F. Auger, a tive, and there was no reason for giving him other than praise.

It is with sorrow that we have to record the death of Mrs. J. White, the wife of one of our comrades. A resolution of sympathy was passed at our meeting.

2

"MY OLD COMPANIONS FARE YOU WELL."

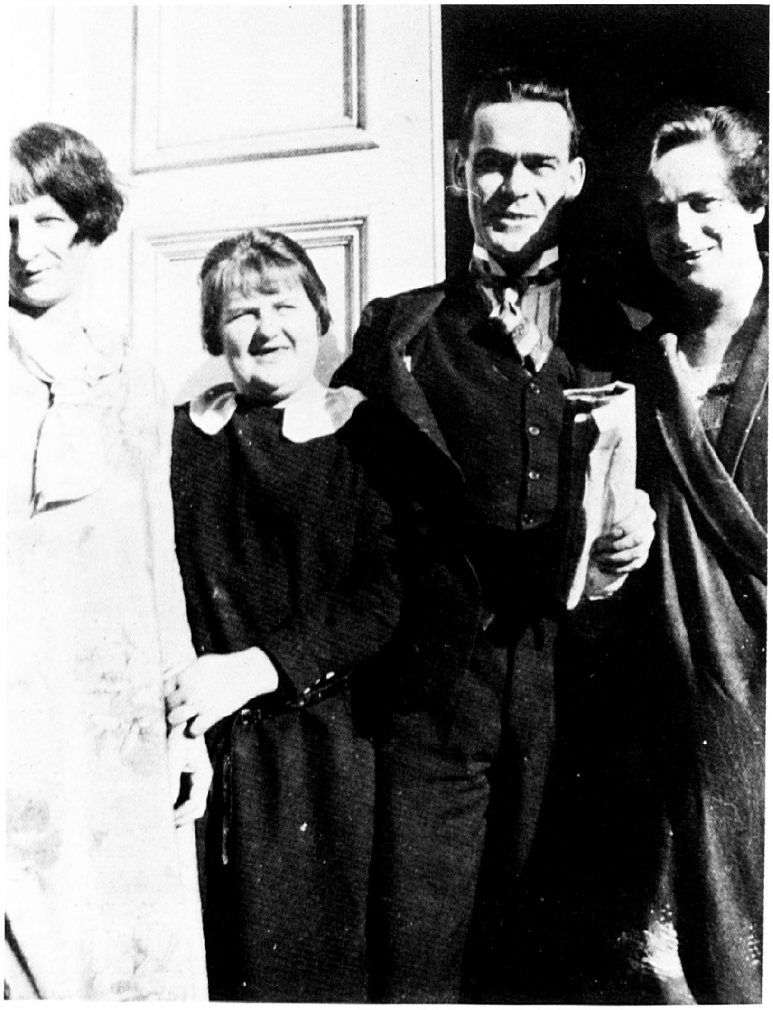
The Railway Department: I forgive you and take you back and return your privileges on strict conditions that you never consort or ally yourself with that or any other party outside this service. Now get to forty-eight hours' work quick and lively.

3

2. Masthead of the *Strike Bulletin* issued by the ASRS in Auckland. (National Archives, Wellington)

3. Mr Coates, the Minister of Railways, welcomes a contrite railwayman back to work, while the agitator rants outside. (*New Zealand Observer*, 31 May 1924)

The Home Boat Strike



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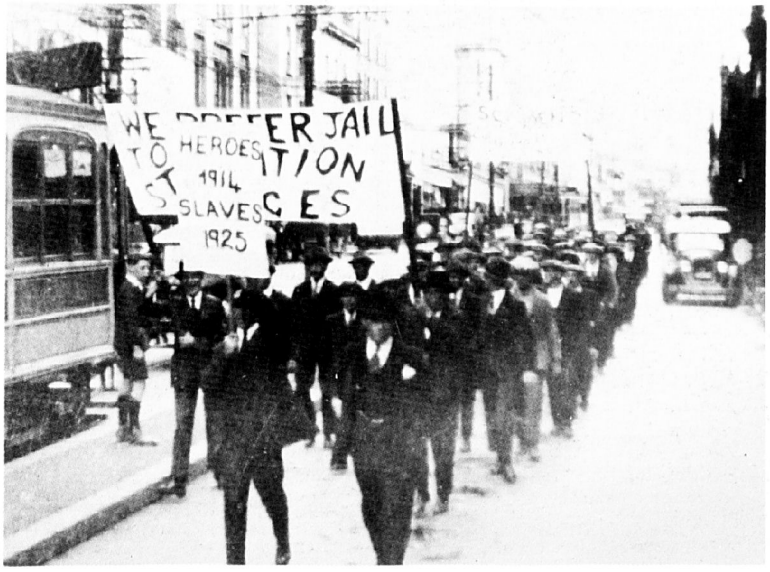

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In Britain too, seamen and other workers suffered wage cuts after the war. What was unusual, in the case of the seamen, was that these cuts were made with the full approval of their union and of their leader, Havelock Wilson. In July 1925, after the National Maritime Board decreed a further reduction of £1, British seamen walked off their ships at their nearest port of call in Britain, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. Thousands of men took part in this unofficial strike, which their union condemned and opposed.

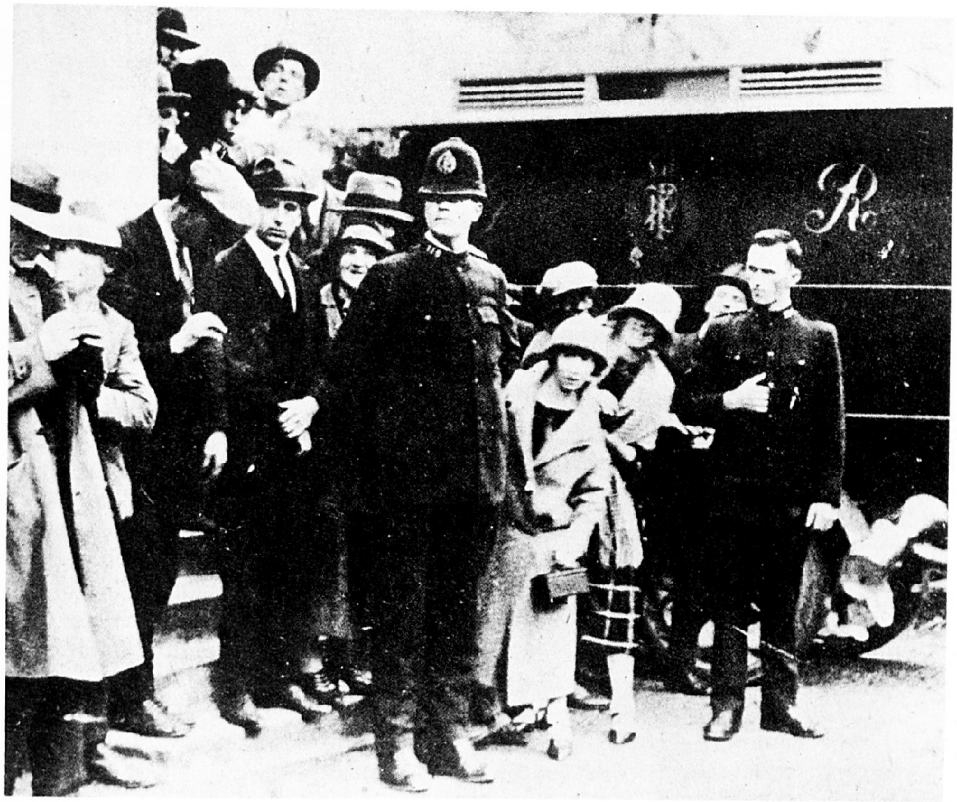
The "Home Boat" strike reached Wellington on 25 August, when the crew of the *Arawa* refused duty in Wellington. Eighty-six men were prosecuted and sentenced to six weeks in prison; they marched singing to the Terrace Gaol, followed by some 500 sympathisers, and as each man's name was called, the crowd cheered as he entered the gate. There were similar scenes in Auckland, where the crew of the *Benicia* marched to the Magistrate's Court behind a banner, "We Prefer Jail to Starvation Wages".*

Blacklegs helped to break the strike which collapsed after two months. The Alliance of Labour advised the men to return to their ships at the reduced wages, but some 400 British seamen whose jobs had been taken by "free labour" were left stranded in New Zealand.

Members of the New Zealand Seamen's Union and other unionists gave much assistance to their British comrades, by feeding and billeting the strikers and providing comforts for those in gaol. The organiser of this relief effort in Auckland was a young seaman who was soon to make a name for himself in the New Zealand union movement – Fintan Patrick Walsh.

*What did they sing? Not the *Red Flag* but, in Auckland:

"We are hale and hearty,
Don't break up the party,
We'll all meet together,
Under the garden wall."



1. Fintan Patrick Walsh (1896–1963) as a young seaman, with friends. (Mrs U. D. Cargill, Waikanae)

2. British seamen march to the Auckland Magistrate's Court. At the front right, F. P. Walsh. (Mrs U. D. Cargill, Waikanae)

3. Here they come! The Black Maria waits to take seamen to gaol. (*New Zealand Pictorial News*, 17 Oct. 1925)

4. Striking British seamen in Auckland. (*New Zealand Pictorial News*, 17 Oct. 1925)

THE FORLORN HOPE! MARTYRS TO A FAILING CAUSE! ARE WE DOWN-HEARTED? NO!

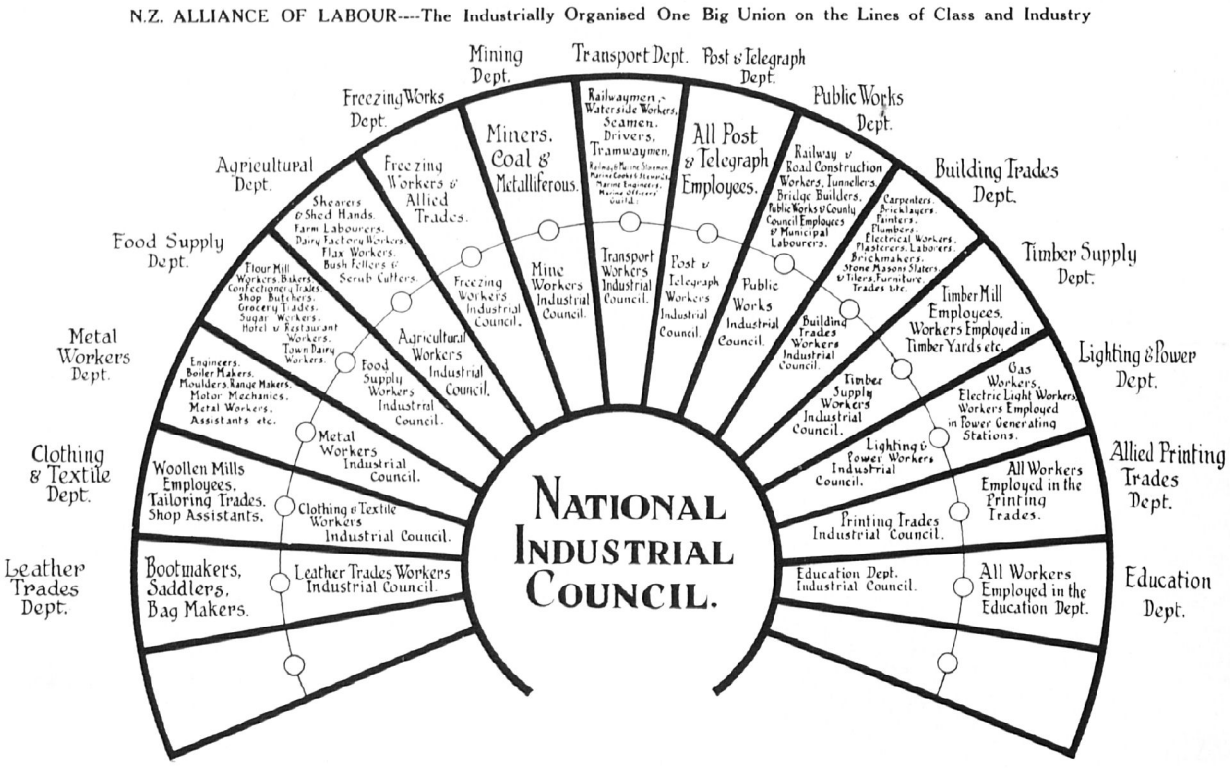
The Search for Unity

The Communist Party, founded in 1921, had fewer than 100 members six years later, but most of these were West Coast coal miners. The headquarters of the party was at Blackball; its general secretary, Angus McLagan, was also secretary of the United Mine Workers of New Zealand. Because of internal difficulties the party surrendered its independence and operated temporarily as a section of the Australian Communist Party.

In 1926 an Australian communist, Norm Jeffery, came to New Zealand on an organising tour. He met trade unionists from the two major organisations, the Alliance of Labour and the Trades and Labour Councils Federation, and conceived the idea of forming one united body which would be controlled by the rank-and-file. At Jeffery's prompting the United Mine Workers, who were not linked to either side, drafted unity proposals and sent out invitations to a Unity Conference, which met in Wellington in August.

The conference was well attended, but the results fell far short of Jeffery's expectations. Unity was not achieved. The miners did however decide to affiliate to the Alliance of Labour, where McLagan now became the spearhead of a militant opposition to the moderates around Jim Roberts, who dominated the executive. In 1927 McLagan gained a valuable ally when Pat Walsh and his supporters marched on the Wellington head office of the Seamen's Union, took possession and bodily ejected the union's officials. Court proceedings vindicated Walsh's action; he now became general president of the Seamen's Union and held this office until his death in 1963.

1. The cartwheel organisation chart proposed by the Alliance of Labour. (Roth Collection)



New Zealand Alliance of Labour

Leaflet No. 3

What Unity Means To You

New Zealand Worker Print.

2

UNITED MINE WORKERS' OF NEW ZEALAND.

DRAFT OF UNITY PROPOSALS.

CIRCULAR.

DEAR COMRADES,—

BY COMMON CONSENT the condition of the New Zealand Trade Union Movement, leaves much to be desired. DISUNITY is the main characteristic of this condition, although there has existed, and still exists a body of opinion which is emphatically in favour of UNITY, there has been no tangible achievement so far within the Trades Unions to unify them.

The United Mine Workers of New Zealand, is keenly conscious of this fundamental weakness of Trades Unionism in New Zealand, and, perhaps in the PAST has not done all that might have been done to expedite the UNITY PROCESS and so eliminate this weakness. However, the National Council of THE UNITED MINE WORKERS, in conference on March 17th, 1926, decided to endeavour to end the isolation in which the Miners found themselves, by taking steps to circularise all the Trades Unions in New Zealand, with the OBJECTIVE in view towards a unifying effort for the Trade Movement as a whole.

The path towards Unity is beset with grave and serious difficulties that require tact and patience to overcome. But the task must be faced no matter what the difficulties are. The position of the Movement is far more important than any section thereof; and nothing should be allowed to prevent or deter any action towards a unifying endeavour. The National Council, therefore, sends an invitation to .....

to send representatives to an open conference of N.Z. Trades Unions and Industrial Organisations, to take place at .....on ..... for the purpose of considering the following proposals, or such others as may be of importance in helping to unify the Trade Union Movement of New Zealand.

(1): Conference to go on record as recognising the need for a Central expression, together with an organisation for all the New Zealand Trades Unions; and considers the emergencies of all intelligent UNIONISTS should be directed towards the fulfilment of such an aim.

(a): Immediate tasks for achieving this are:—The election of a General Council, provisional if necessary until a later conference might review such election. The Council to be as far as possible representative of the main opinions or tendencies within the conference. The functions of the General Council to be:—

(b): The dissemination of all vital information National and International among the Trade Unions of New Zealand.

(c): To act in a consultative capacity to Unions engaged in industrial disputes; but if such disputes are of a National or semi-National character, then the Council to have two delegates on the Strike Disputes Committee with Executive vote.

(d): The Council as a whole to exercise purely consultative and advisory powers, unless specially asked by Unions concerned to take over control of Dispute.

(e): 1. The members composing the General Council and its officials to be determined by Conference.

2. As the Trade Union Movement of New Zealand, is going to have a formative period; it is essential to have a form of Unity possessing elasticity and permitting ample scope for International Development.

(f) 3. Adequate Housing Facilities.

(g) 4. A weekly minimum wage of £5 10/- per week.

(h) 5. The General Council to have power to authorise financial assistance to any section of organised workers who may be involved by the employing class in a dispute over wages or conditions.

(i) 6. A radical amendment of the Workers' Compensation Act.

(j) 7. A universal 44 hours per week.

TO ASSUME THIS:

(a): THE FEDERATION FORM of UNITED UNIONISM is deemed essential as allowing the development spoken of.

(b): The character and functions of the General Council are best fitted for the Federation forms of Unionising and fits in naturally in an organisational form where rigidity and over centralisation are absent.

(c): THE Conference to discuss the advisability of establishing a National organ for the Trade Union Movement of N.Z. Such an organ would: 1, Act as the general medium of information; and, 2, Would clarify and discuss the problems of Unionism, thus tending to unify the whole Movement.

The National Council in placing these proposals for Unity before the Trades Unions of New Zealand, does so for the purpose of providing the OPEN CONFERENCE with a concrete basis for discussion, and therefore does not consider them final or arbitrary. Any other proposals, other than the ones mentioned in this circular, will be given the same consideration by the National Council of the United Mine Workers of New Zealand, so long as they lead to the COMMON GOAL of UNITY.

These questions should enable all the Unions in New Zealand to make every endeavour to attend an open Conference to be held in the Trades Hall, Wellington, on Monday, August 2nd, 1926

Will the Secretaries of Unions kindly inform the Secretary of the United Mine Workers (H. L. Evans, Stockton), if their organisation favour the suggestions contained herein, and whether they intend taking part in the open Conference.

On behalf of the United Mine Workers.

E. LOCK, President.
H. L. EVANS, Secretary.
W. BALDERSTONE, Councillor.

ARGUS PRINT

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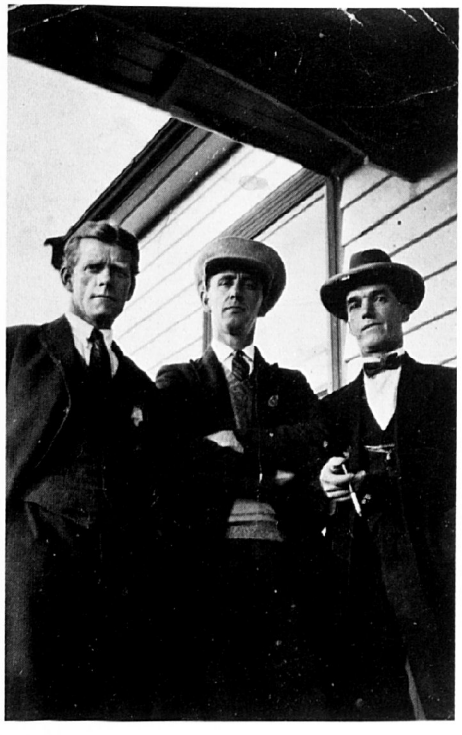

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2. Unity leaflet issued by the Alliance of Labour in 1925.
(Roth Collection)

3. United Mine Workers of New Zealand draft of Unity Proposals, 1926.
(Roth Collection)

4. Norm Jeffery (at right) with two miners' union officials at Nightcaps in 1926.
(Roth Collection)

Unemployment Spreads

The number of unemployed who sought assistance from the Labour Department tripled in 1926–27, and kept on rising. Trade unions estimated that 16 per cent of their members were out of work in August 1927. Yet these were good times on the whole – the worldwide economic depression was still several years away.

Economists had all sorts of explanations for the rise in unemployment: the drastic decline in timber and flax milling and in the kauri gum industry; the slump in building activity; and technological changes, such as the conversion of ships from coal to oil-burning, which required fewer seamen, and improved methods of cargo handling, which displaced watersiders.

Peter Fraser, for the Labour Party, put forward an Unemployed Workers Bill in 1926. It proposed the establishment of an unemployment board and the creation of an unemployment insurance fund, based on levies from employers, which was to provide weekly maintenance allowances for those out of work. "One of the inevitable effects of the capitalist system," Fraser told Parliament, "is unemployment; and all I ask is that the Government, standing as it does for capitalism, shall make provision for it."

The bill was rejected by the government majority. There was to be no national body to deal with the problem, nor any provision for dole payments to relieve hardship, though the government continued to pay passages for immigrants from Britain. New Zealand's unemployed were left to the mercies of soup kitchens and city missions.

1. Wellington unemployed march up to Parliament Buildings to confront the Prime Minister. The interview ended in uproar. Carrying the banner "Abolish this 9/- Slavery" is Fred Freeman, soon to become general secretary of the Communist Party. (*New Zealand Free Lance*, 22 June 1927)

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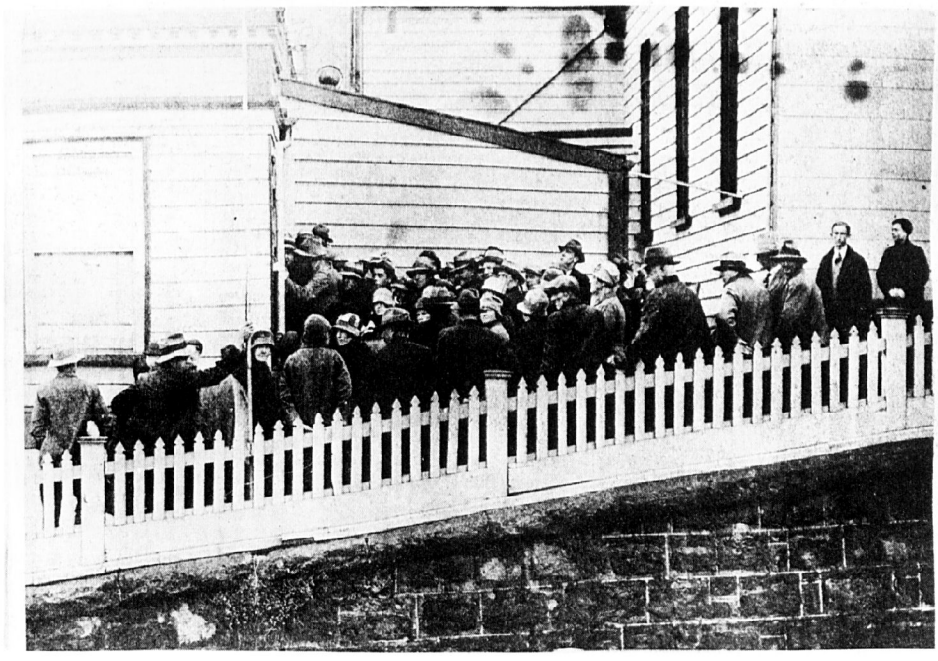

2. British domestic servants who arrived in Auckland on the *Ruapehu*. (*New Zealand Pictorial News*, 20 June 1925)

3. A demonstration by Auckland unemployed at the Civic Square site in Queen St. (*New Zealand Pictorial News*, 15 May 1926)

4. Auckland unemployed queue up at the Central City Mission for a handout of warm winter clothing. (*New Zealand Pictorial News*, 4 Aug. 1928)

The Great Depression

WELLINGTON COMMUNISTS CLASH WITH THE POLICE: AN UNUSUAL SCENE AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE GROUNDS OF PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS.

The forces of law and order and those representing advocates of direct action clashed at Wellington last Thursday, when a number of Communists attempted to force their way into the grounds of Parliament Building. A strong body of police was present and held the demonstrators in check. Three arrests were made. —E. T. Robson.

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1. Wellington unemployed clash with police at the entrance to Parliament grounds. Three men were arrested. (*Auckland Weekly News*, 29 April 1931)

2. Relief workers queue for payment at the Mt Roskill Rd Board office in Auckland. (*New Zealand Home Pictorial*, 1 July 1931)

3. Life in the "slave camps": standing in line for a hot drink. (*New Zealand Home Pictorial*, 23 Sept. 1931)

4. A Labour Defence League leaflet of 1929. (Roth Collection)

The world economic depression reached New Zealand in 1930. Unemployment rose rapidly to a peak in July 1933, when according to the best available estimates there were more than 81,000 New Zealanders out of work, or 12 per cent of the labour force. Maori men and women were particularly hard hit. The total membership of registered trade unions in 1933 was below 72,000, compared with a high of almost 104,000 five years earlier.

The government's answer to the adverse trade balance was retrenchment: cuts in wages, cuts in pensions, cuts in expenditure on health and education, and wherever else savings seemed possible. These reductions, wrote John A. Lee, "were stolen from the bodies of living, growing children. Home-builders had to abandon homes and savings because they could no longer meet mortgage interest. Women were unable to afford medical comforts ... the old-aged were compelled to eat less food, wear less clothing, buy fewer coals." The "smash-and-grab" government, as Lee called it, even cut the meat allowance for cats kept on government premises by 10 per cent.

The government also abolished the compulsory powers of the Arbitration Court, except in the case of women workers. This left the employers free to impose wage cuts: with thousands of unemployed waiting to take their jobs, workers were forced to accept whatever wages were offered.

The unemployed fought back as best they could. They formed their own organisations, issued their own crudely produced news bulletins, arranged supplies of food and clothing and, on occasions, even attempted to strike on relief jobs. All this in the face of severe repression and censorship by the government, which still operated emergency regulations originally introduced during the World War.

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Do you know?

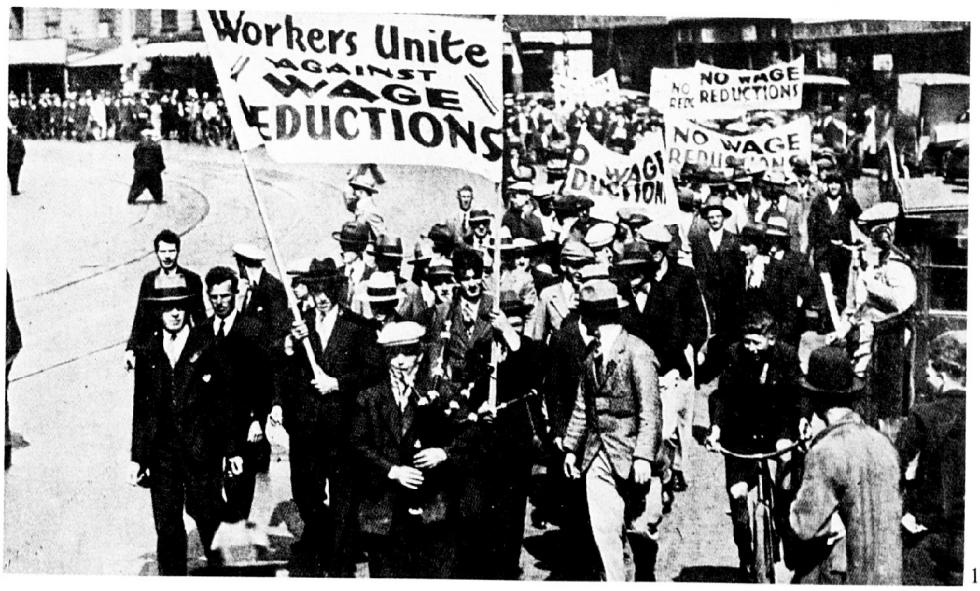
Free Speech,
Freedom of the Press,
Freedom for Political Propaganda

Are FORBIDDEN in N.Z.

Literature is Censored,
Raids are made on Workers' Organisations,
Meetings are Prohibited,
Liberties are Restricted.

LABOUR DEFENCE LEAGUE,
Room 10,
30 COURTENAY PLACE, WELLINGTON

The *Brisbane Maru*



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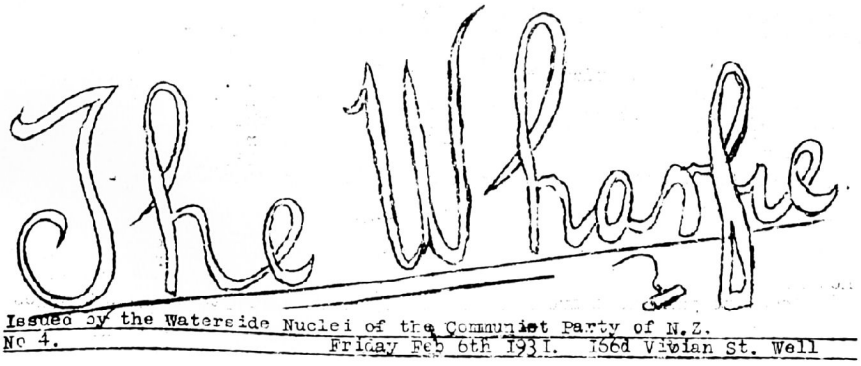
As the economic depression advanced across New Zealand, ships were laid up and their crews dismissed. According to Pat Walsh, in October 1930 over 1000 New Zealand officers, seamen, cooks and stewards were out of work. The Seamen's Union blamed the entry of foreign cheap-labour vessels into the New Zealand trade. Early in 1931 the union decided to make a stand in a particularly blatant case of undercutting: the Japanese ship *Brisbane Maru*, which was due to dock in Wellington on 1 February.

This was not a case of race prejudice, Walsh told a demonstration at the main wharf gates in Wellington. The union objected because Japanese seamen received between £3 and £4 a month, compared with New Zealand rates of between £15/4/- and £18/4/-. New Zealand workers, he said, could not live on such a wage as the Japanese were getting, and if the seamen were defeated in their battle, the watersiders would inevitably be affected.

The watersiders took the hint. When the *Brisbane Maru* arrived, the wharfies refused to unload her. The ship sailed on to Auckland, but there too Walsh organised a wharfside demonstration of seamen, watersiders and unemployed. The ship was not unloaded until after its owners had given an undertaking not to send any more vessels to New Zealand. It was a victory for the union, but there were few such successes during the depression. In 1931 the Arbitration Court cut all wages by 10 per cent and a further 10 per cent cut followed in 1932.


The Wharfie

Issued by the Waterside Nuclei of the Communist Party of N.Z.
No 4. Friday Feb 6th 1931. 166d Vivian St. Well

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1. Wellington unionists march along Lambton Quay to Parliament to protest against wage cuts. (*New Zealand Free Lance*, 18 March 1931)

2. Masthead of *The Wharfie*, a communist newsletter which attacked Walsh over his stand on the *Brisbane Maru*. (Roth Collection)

The Anti-Eviction League

Unemployed who fell behind in their rent payments faced the danger of eviction. In Auckland an Anti-Eviction League was formed, whose members occupied and barricaded houses under threat of eviction, rallied neighbours for support, and prevented the bailiffs gaining access. In a number of cases these tactics were successful in saving a family's home, or at least gaining a respite. The climax of the campaign came in October 1931 at 21 Norfolk Street, Ponsonby, where 15 armed defenders faced the combined strength of police and bailiffs.

The tenant of this house was a woman with five young children, who had been deserted by her unemployed husband. After the rent had remained unpaid for 11 weeks, the landlord obtained an eviction order, but members of the Anti-Eviction League took over the house, nailed down windows, and tied banners to the verandah posts reading "No Work, No Rent" and "Stop the Eviction". A red flag was hoisted from the roof.

After some preliminary skirmishes with the bailiffs, a strong force of police arrived on the scene. Using crowbars they broke down the front door and arrested the occupants who surrendered their homemade weapons: wooden batons, iron bars and lengths of piping. The bailiffs then entered and moved all the family's furniture into the street. A crowd of up to 500, who had booed the police and cheered the anti-evictionists, now took up a collection for the mother and her young children. "Never mind, we're not beaten yet," she called out when a woman from Ponsonby Road offered her a temporary home.

1. "Wake Up New Zealand!" A bearded dagger-chewing Bolshevik plunges the communist flag into the heart of the North Island, somewhere near Taumarunui. The original is in colour, with gory dripping blood.
(*The New Zealand Home Pictorial*, 12 Aug. 1931)

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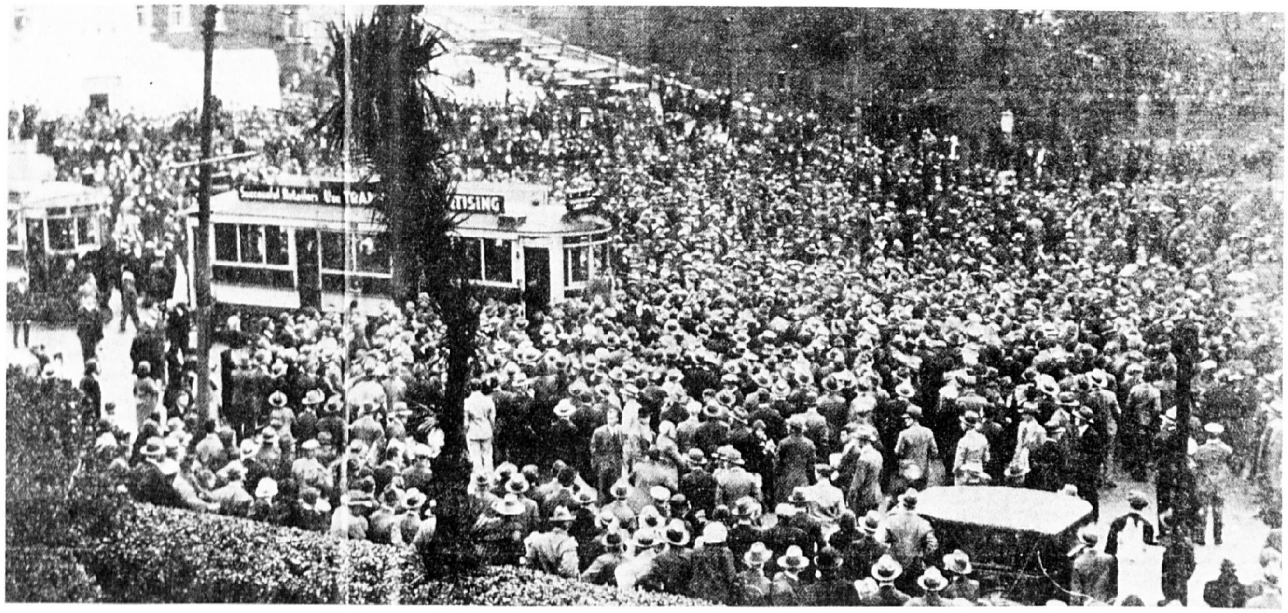
2. His young son looks on as Jim Edwards is arrested outside the house at 21 Norfolk St, which the Anti-Eviction League occupied. At the back is Mrs A. M. Cassie who tore the detective's coat in the struggle, and was bound over to keep the peace. She later claimed that this entitled her to keep the piece of cloth she had torn off.
(*Auckland Star* 13 Oct. 1931)

3. Members of the Anti-Eviction League confront the bailiffs in Nelson St, Auckland in October 1931.
(Roth Collection)

The Depression Riots



1. Thousands of Wellington unemployed block all traffic at the gates to Parliament grounds on 10 May 1932. (*Dominion*, 11 May 1932)

2. Jim Edwards addresses the Auckland unemployed at the Town Hall on the day before the Queen St riots, 13 April 1932. (*Auckland Weekly News*, 20 April 1932)

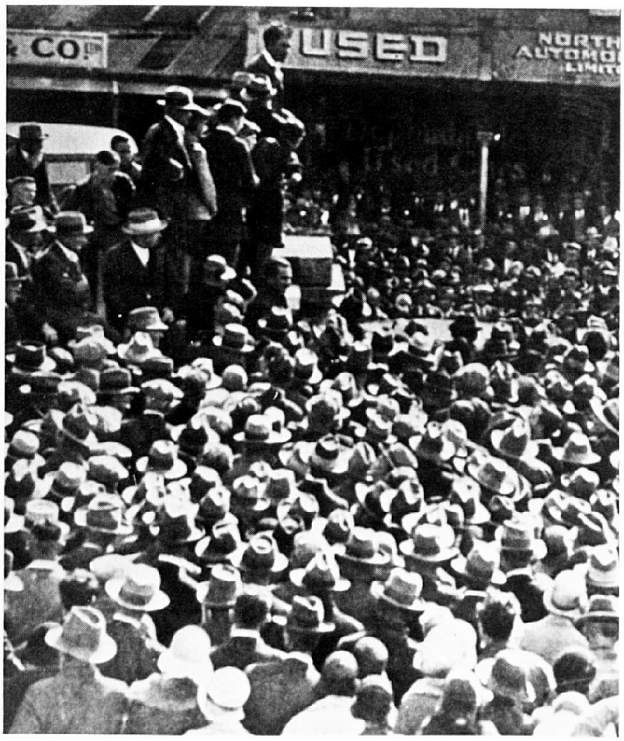
3. Armed sailors stand guard while a shopkeeper clears away the wreckage caused in the riots. (*Auckland Weekly News*, 20 April 1932)

4. Unemployed workers besiege a grocery store in George St, Dunedin on 9 January 1932. (*Auckland Weekly News*, 20 Jan. 1932)

The pent-up anger and frustration of years of unemployment and misery exploded in 1932. Spontaneous street riots occurred in Dunedin, Wellington and Auckland. In Dunedin the unemployed marched on a grocery store. In Wellington relief workers went on strike and, while a crowd of thousands assembled at the gates of Parliament under the watchful eye of the police, a section broke loose and ran through the inner city smashing shop windows and looting.

The most spectacular incidents took place in Auckland on the evening of 14 April. The post and telegraph workers had called a meeting in the Town Hall to protest against the 10 per cent wage cut. John A. Lee and others were billed as speakers. As the post office men marched up Queen Street to their meeting, crowds of unemployed formed up behind them and joined the procession. The Town Hall was too small to hold the marchers and by order of the police the doors were shut soon after the post office men had entered. Most of the unemployed were left outside and their mood turned ugly. Jim Edwards, the acknowledged leader of the unemployed, rose to address them through a megaphone but before he could say a word, he was felled by a policeman's baton.

This was the signal for the riot. "They've batoned Jim Edwards," someone screamed. "They've killed him." Pandemonium developed. The crowd attacked the police with stones and fence posts and, while the fighting raged outside the Town Hall, hundreds ran down Queen Street breaking into shops and looting. "Men and women," reported the *New Zealand Herald*, "put their hands through the opening in the glass and took watches, necklaces, gold and diamond rings, silk stockings, neckties, cigarettes and cigars, pipes, cigarette lighters, shoes and bottles of liquor, their pockets bulging with the stolen property as they continued their way down the street. Thousands of people came out of theatres when the looting was at its height and watched the destruction without moving a finger."



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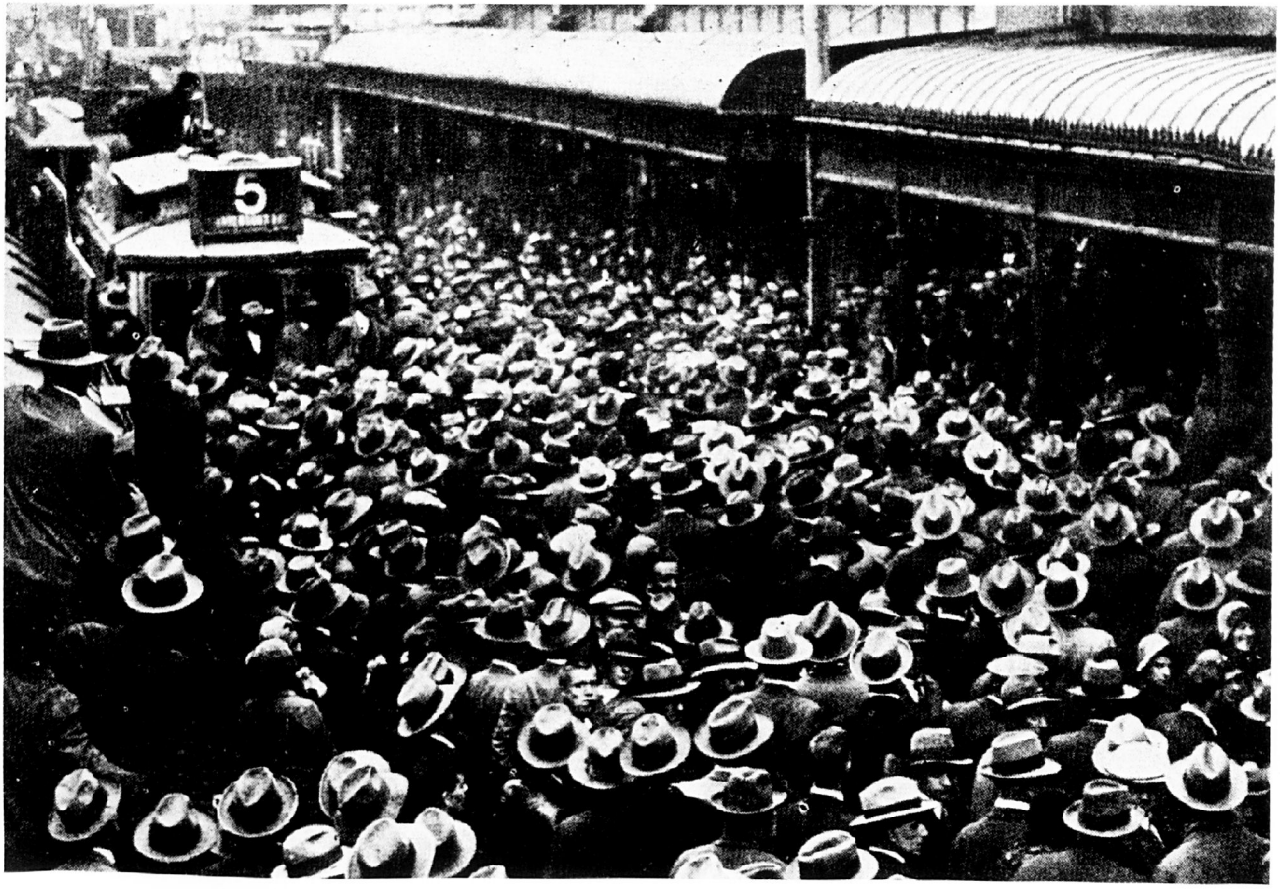

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The looting continued for almost three hours. Over 200 people were injured in the fighting, some seriously. Marines, naval volunteers and special constables helped the police to restore order, but there were further disturbances next day when plate glass windows were smashed in Karangahape Road and 50 men injured in police baton charges.

Jim Edwards, his head streaming with blood, had his wound bandaged at a hospital and then went into hiding. He gave himself up almost two months later after his injury had healed, was tried in the Supreme Court and sentenced to two years in prison for taking part in a riot. "In those days I wore a light suit and no hat," he wrote later. "If I'd known what was to happen I'd have worn a tin helmet." He recalled with pride that "never once, even by the least careless word, did the workers of Auckland betray my whereabouts. I lived in the city wearing only the simplest of disguises. My whereabouts were known to many and the whole of the police and detective force of Auckland were keen on my scent. Yet neither promises nor bullying could extract the secret from my family or my comrades." His young son, when pressed by the police, replied: "Do you think a chap would pot his own dad?"

After the riot the government introduced a Public Safety Conservation Act, which authorised the Governor-General to proclaim a state of emergency when public safety was in danger, and it took powers to dismiss "disloyal" public servants. The government also exempted the police from the second 10 per cent wage cut; it had earlier exempted Supreme Court judges from these cuts.

5. Details of the damage suffered by Wellington shopowners on 10 May 1932.
(*Dominion*, 11 May 1932)

DETAILS OF DAMAGE

Heavy Loss of Plateglass

The plate-glass loss in a number of individual shops will exceed three figures, and shopkeepers who suffered the loss of a single window only were inclined to congratulate themselves when they observed the havoc which had been created in neighbouring premises.

Following are details of the actual breakages, the loss being one window unless figures are indicated:—

Lambton Quay (West Side).

Stewart Dawsons, jewellers, 2.
Yeats, furnishers.
Whitcombe and Tombs, Ltd., 2.
Two empty shops in Commercial Hotel Buildings.
City Drug Store.
Watchmaker in Commercial Hotel Building.
Kodak Proprietary, Ltd., photographic merchants.
Gamble and Creed, tearooms, 2.
R. W. Armit, tobacconist, 4.
H. W. Lloyd, jewellers, 2.
Forresters, furniture dealers, 4.
Miss Daubney, jewellery.
Rowe and Co., art dealers, 2.
Woolf, furriers.
Young's Pharmacy.
Dixon's china shop, 3.
Gower's Pharmacy.
Ransom's fruit shop.
Vance Vivian, outfitters.
Lindsay's boot shop.
Murray Fuller, art dealer.
Wairarapa Farmers' Co-op., Ltd., 4.
Ford, draper, 3.
National Hotel, 2.
Misses Walker, confectioners.
Union Clothing Company, 2.
J. E. Evans Ltd., leather merchants, 2.
Miss Alcorn, drapery and fancy goods, 3.
Empty shop.
W. H. Tills, butcher.
Wong She & Sons, fruiterers.
Imperial Cake Shop.
R. H. Peak, bookseller.
Royal Hotel.
Ramona Tea Rooms, 2.
Chinese fruit shop.
S. S. Williams & Co. Ltd., furnishers, 5.
Hill Bros., grocers, 2.
K. Dotson, bookseller.
W. M. Sunley, Ltd., chemists.
Radford & Co., furnishers, 2.
Quinton's Ltd., drapers, etc.
Star Stores, 2.
Scoullars Ltd., furnishers, 2.
H. Savage, leather goods merchant.
Lambton Confectionery.

Lambton Quay (East Side).

Partridge, linen shop.
A. Paterson, art gallery.
R. Nicholas, tearoom.
Monarch Boot Warehouse.
Occidental Rubber Coy.
Coventry Motor Coy.
Barber and Co., butchers.
N.Z. Cab Company.
Public Trust Office.
State Advances.
Kirkcaldie and Stains, Ltd., department store, 9.
D.I.C., department store, 3.
—, Hatter, T. and G. Building.
Aubrey Gaulter, Ltd., china.
Doherty, tailor.

Willis Street.

Sherwood and Sons, jewellers, large show case broken, watches and clocks stolen.
W. Smart, pawnbroker, three, jewellery and coins stolen.
Miss Galloway, florist.
C. Baker, tailor, and confectionery shop adjoining.
A. E. Preston, Ltd., butchers.
Wardell Bros., grocers and provision merchants, 2.
Pinney's Music Shop, 2, and two wireless sets badly damaged.
J. R. McKenzie, Ltd., importers, 3.
Herb Price, Ltd., tailors, 2.
Lewis, ladies' outfitters
Carlton Hotel bottle store.
Carlton Jewellers.
Miss Murray, florist.
Stone's Boot Shop.
Keans, outfitters, 7.
Grand Cafe.
Alston's Bookshop, 2.
Grand Hotel bottle store.
Triggs and Denton, leather goods.
W. Allen, tobacconist.
E. C. Browne, outfitters, 4.
Chocolate Bowl Tearoom.
New Zealand Book Depot.

Manners Street.

C. Begg and Co., music warehouse.
Electric Lamp House, Ltd.
G. G. Watts, jeweller.
Radfords, furnishers.
Schneidemann's, tailors, 2.
Model House, Ritz Building.
Jones, photographer.
Dry Cleaners.
Ned Perry, tobacconist.
Duncan and McIntosh, outfitters, 2.
Lewis's, dressmakers.

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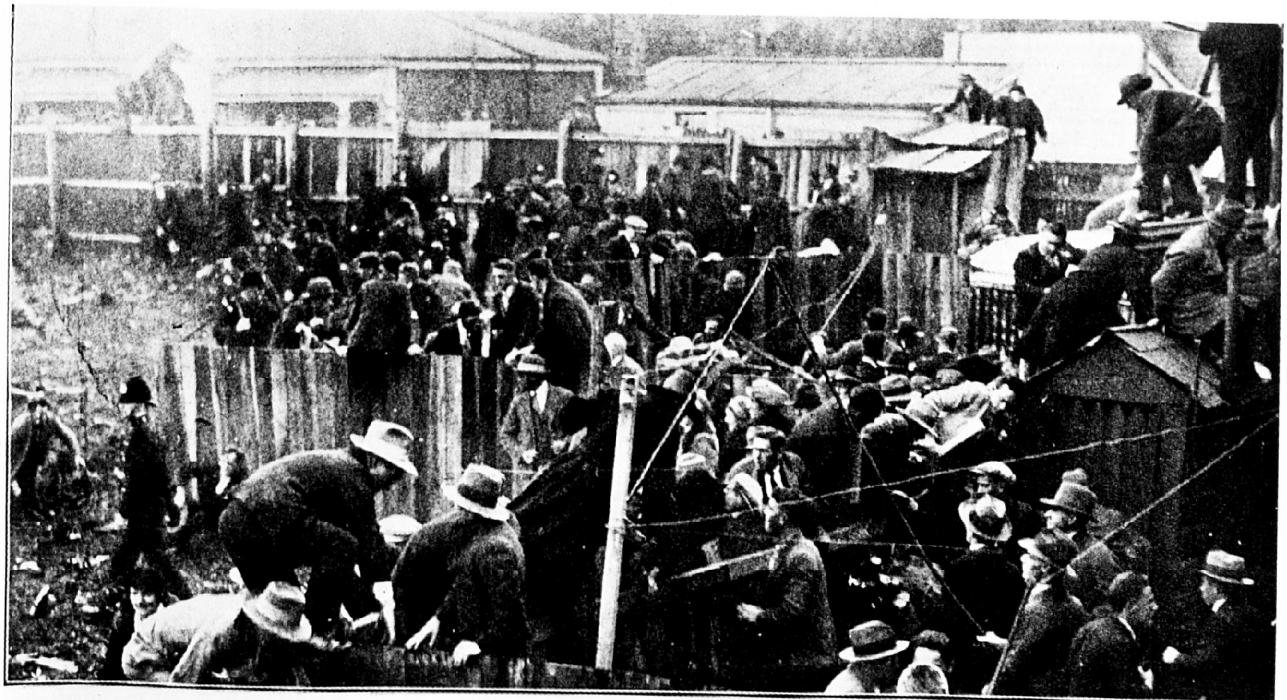
6. The baton charge by mounted and foot police, into a crowd of relief workers who had assembled on a vacant section at the top of Cuba St, Wellington.
(*Dominion*, 12 May 1932)

7. Demonstrators escape over a fence in the same incident.
(*Auckland Weekly News*, 18 May 1932)



BATON CHARGE BY WELLINGTON POLICE. CROWD OF DEMONSTRATORS SPEEDILY DISPERSED AFTER SHOWING SIGNS OF LAWLESS BEHAVIOUR.

Prompt action was taken by the police authorities in Wellington last Wednesday when a gathering of relief workers on strike and unemployed became unruly and missiles were thrown. A short sharp order from the inspector, and the police, mounted and on foot, were charging the crowd and laying about them with their batons. A scene of confusion followed and the assembly was broken up, many of the demonstrators running for safety with damaged heads. Several casualties occurred among the demonstrators some of whom are seen in this snapshot, endeavouring to escape through private properties adjacent to the vacant section on which the incident occurred.

—Dominion 7

The Christchurch Tram Strike

Christchurch saw no riots in 1932 due, it was said, to the fact that the city had a Labour mayor and council, and that its relief services were efficient and humane. There was however, one Citizen-controlled local body, the Tramway Board, which managed to goad its employees into a bitter and violent strike.

To save money the Tramway Board decided to sack some of its staff: among 12 men dismissed in late April was the Tramways Union president Jock Mathison and another union executive member. This provocative act caused a strike. Of the union's 368 members all but 39 joined the walkout. They were dismissed and their posts advertised. Many unemployed applied for the work and the board was soon able to resume daylight services, though on a reduced timetable.

The strikers reacted strongly. After some isolated attempts to disrupt the services, several hundred men armed with stones and iron bars attempted to storm the tram sheds but were beaten back by a force of regular and special police. Further violent clashes followed in Cathedral Square where the strikers were joined by a large crowd of unemployed men and women. There was great resentment against the temporary constables, many of whom were drawn from senior football clubs. The Christchurch, Varsity and High School Old Boys rugby clubs were declared black, and when Christchurch played Merivale at Lancaster Park, a crowd of thousands besieged the grounds, booed the Christchurch players, who included two All Blacks, and forced them to take refuge in a police van which escaped through side streets.

After a fortnight the union admitted defeat and accepted a settlement which involved further dismissals. Mathison was not reinstated but he had the last word: at the municipal elections in 1933 the Labour Party gained control of the Tramway Board and among the new members of the board was Jock Mathison, by now also a city councillor. A new award in 1936 reduced fortnightly hours from 98 to 88 and reinstated all the men who had lost their jobs in 1932.

1. John Mathison (born 1901), the president of the Christchurch Tramways Union. (*Christchurch Times*, 11 May 1932)

2. Every car carried a police constable to protect the volunteer motorman. (*Auckland Weekly News*, 11 May 1932)

~~Motormen~~:
Conductor:_____NO._____

NOTICE of TERMINATION of EMPLOYMENT.

As you have failed to report for duty your engagement with the Christchurch Tramway Board is hereby terminated.

Frank Thompson

General Manager.

May 4th 1932.

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3. The dismissal notice handed to strikers by the Tramway Board. (Roth Collection)

4. Strikers and unemployed hoot and jeer the blackleg motormen as they drive their tramcars into Cathedral Square. The police made seven arrests. (*Christchurch Times*, 7 May 1932)

5. Strikers arrested in Cathedral Square step from the Black Maria on their way to the Magistrate's Court. (*The Sun*, 7 May 1932)

The Hunger Marchers

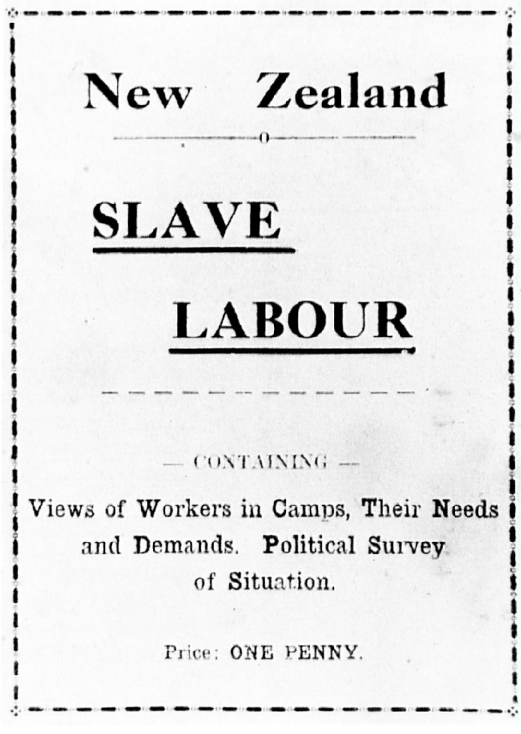
After the riots the government speeded up its programme of moving the unemployed out of the cities into camps in the backblocks. By 1933 there were an estimated 15,000 people in the so-called "slave camps". The rates of sustenance payments were lower in the country than in town, and over this issue a relief workers' strike started in the Gisborne area in January 1934. The local community supported the strikers with donations of food and money, but the unemployed wanted to put their grievances before the government in Wellington. Following the example of the British Unemployed Workers Movement which had organised a huge march on London, they decided to march on Wellington.

On 24 January a small but carefully selected group – 30 men and 2 women – set out on a "hunger march" to the capital. It wasn't a real march: they had a truck for most of the way, which they drove to the outskirts of a town. There they got off, marched into the centre, held a meeting, handed out publicity, collected food and money, met the local unemployed, arranged billets, and drove off next morning to the next town. In this way they worked their way down the East Coast to Napier and Hastings, then across to Palmerston North and south again to Wellington, which they reached on 5 February.

By then their numbers had about doubled and on the final lap they were joined by hundreds of sympathisers. They marched into the capital behind banners setting out their demands: "Full Sustenance", "No Piecework" and "Equal Rights for Natives". A deputation met the Minister of Unemployment, and the government graciously paid their rail and bus fares back home. This however was the only concession gained; when they returned to Gisborne, the strike had to be called off.

1. Title page of a communist pamphlet denouncing the "slave camps", 1933. (Roth Collection)

2. Poster advertising an unemployed concert and dance. (McAra Collection, Auckland University Library)



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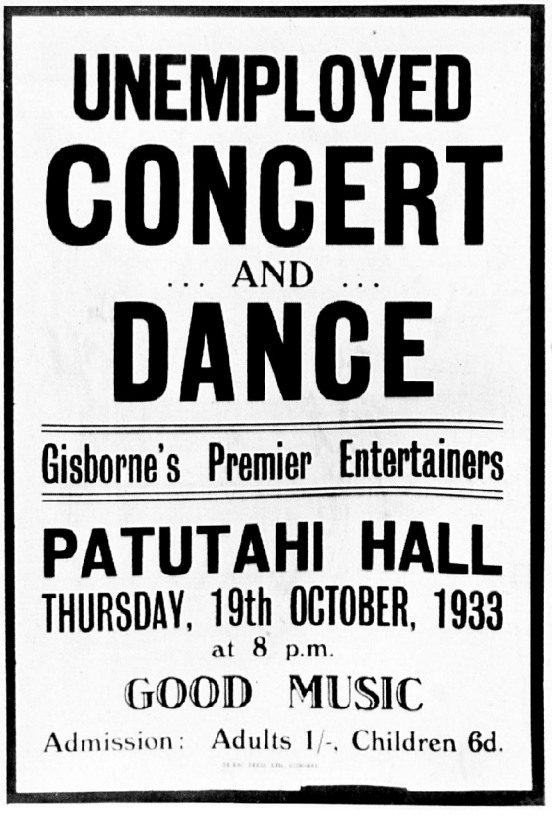

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3. Two women attempt to rescue an arrested man in Rangitikei St, Palmerston North, after the police had broken up an unemployed demonstration. (*Auckland Weekly News*, 13 June 1934)

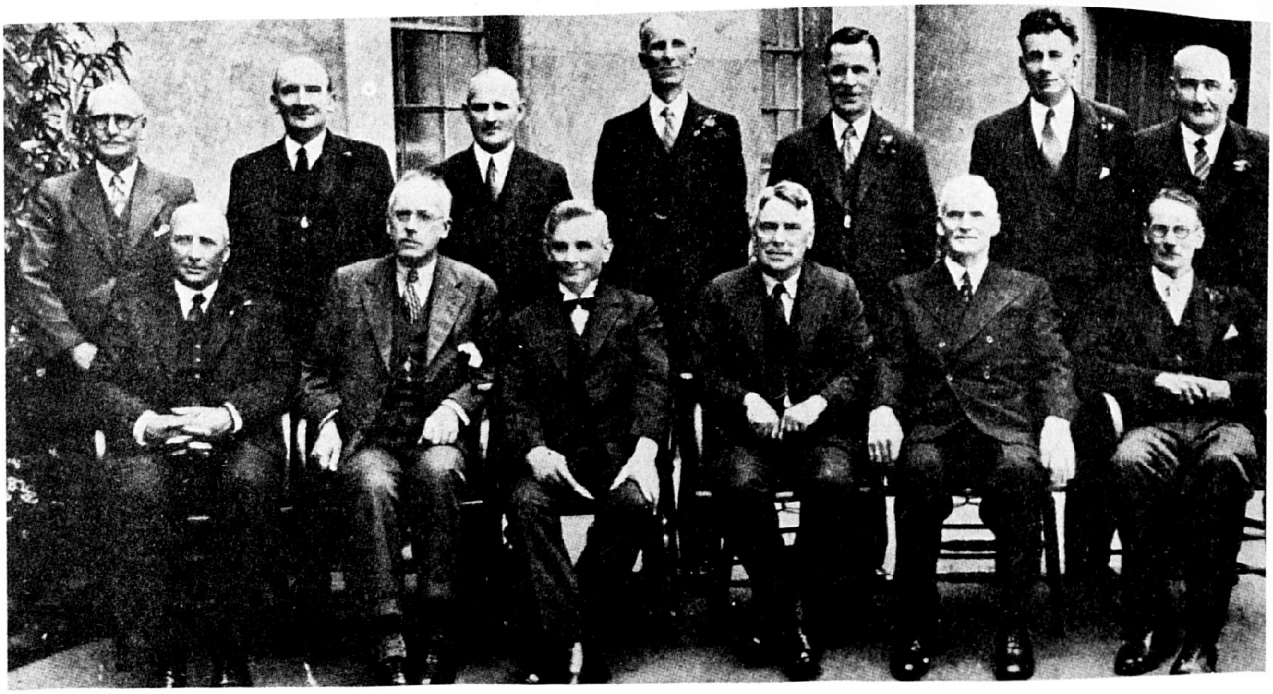
4. The Gisborne hunger marchers halt on the approaches to Wellington. (Max Riske, Raumati South)

Labour in Power

The Coalition Government postponed the general elections by one year, which made its eventual defeat all the more certain. In November 1935 – less than 19 years after its foundation – the Labour Party came to power. Of the 13 members of the new government 8 had been Red Fed activists before the First World War: Joe Savage, the new Prime Minister, Peter Fraser, Bob Semple, Paddy Webb, Bill Parry, Tim Armstrong, Mark Fagan and, to a minor extent, Frank Langstone. This is not to say, of course, that their opinions had not changed since 1912-13: the workers' flag was now palest pink (and "not as red as you may think").

The new government introduced a comprehensive range of measures designed to lift the country out of the depression and to restore prosperity. Like the Liberals after 1890, they did not seek to change the economic system but to make it more bearable for the poor and exploited. Thus the government increased pensions and relief pay-

1. Delegates to the foundation conference of the FOL in Wellington April 1937. (Roth Collection)



2. The first Labour Cabinet, December 1935. Seated, from left to right: Parry, Fraser, Savage, Nash, Fagan and Semple. (Roth Collection)

ments, rescinded the depression wage cuts, restored the powers of the Arbitration Court which had been curtailed in 1932, and introduced a minimum basic wage and a 40-hour working week.

Union membership became compulsory, which resulted in a tremendous growth in the number of trade unionists, from about 81,000 in December 1935 to 233,000 two years later. In April 1937 a National Industrial Conference, attended by more than 300 delegates, healed the longstanding split in the union movement by forming a new central organisation, the New Zealand Federation of Labour, with the miners' leader Angus McLagan as its first national president. The choice of name was a deliberate revival of the militant traditions of the past. Like the *Red Flag*, which the delegates sang at the close of the conference, it expressed the new spirit of hope and faith in the future.

LABOUR'S ELECTION MANIFESTO

SECURITY and PROSPERITY For All

Higher Wages, Guaranteed Prices, Credit Control

On November 27th, the electors of the Dominion will be faced with the responsibility of making one of the most momentous decisions in the history of the country.

Following four years of unprecedented hardship and worry, accompanied by poverty and deprivation in tens of thousands of homes, the electors will have the opportunity of recording their opinion of the acts of the Government, whose followers are now offering themselves as "Nationalist" Candidates, and also of the policy of the Labour Party, whose members in Parliament during the past four years have endeavoured to prevent the passing of reactionary legislation, and to ease the burden of those who have suffered, and are suffering, from the effects of the legislative and administrative actions of the Government.

LABOUR ONLY ORIGINAL PARTY LEFT.

It is well to remember that the Labour Party is the only political party to retain its original name. The Reform and United Parties have merged into the Nationalist Party—and the one-time organiser of the Reform Party, and subsequent founder of the United Party, has now formed another group, styled "Democrats."

It is, however, accepted by all students of Dominion politics that the responsibility of forming the next Government can only rest on either the Labour Party or the Nationalist Party. The electors must either approve of the acts of the Government during the past five years or support the policy and candidates of the Labour Party.

DEMOCRATS ARE ANTI-LABOUR.

The correctness of the interpretation as to the choice of the electors is confirmed by the statement of the Leader of the Democrat Party, in which he says that he will not give a vote that would mean the placing of the Labour Party in power, which means that the Democrats in Parliament would vote for the continuance of the present Government.

THE LABOUR PARTY'S OBJECTIVE.

The Objective of the Labour Party is to utilise to the maximum degree the wonderful resources of the Dominion.

First: For the purpose of restoring a decent living standard to those who have been deprived of essentials for the past five years.

Second: To organise an internal economy that will distribute the production and services in a way that will guarantee to every person able and willing to work an income sufficient to provide him and his dependents with everything necessary to make a "home" and "home life" in the best sense of the meaning of those terms.

The quickest route to the Objective is:—

(a) **Guaranteed Prices** to farmers for the supply of primary products sufficient to satisfy the internal and external requirements of the Dominion.

(b) **A Statutory Minimum Wage or Salary** based on the sum required to provide everything necessary to an adequate standard of living. This minimum will be graded upwards according to the value of the extra skill, knowledge or experience of the worker.

(c) **A National Health and Superannuation Scheme** to provide:—

1. Full medical, nursing, and hospital attention for invalids, together with maintenance for themselves and their dependents during ill-health. This covers the blind, victims of miners' disease, and those suffering from all accidents or diseases which prevent or restrict any person from working.

2. A payment to widows to enable them to maintain themselves and their children, until the children are able to earn their own living.

3. Superannuation to all persons at the age of sixty years.

(d) **The reorganisation of our School, College and University System** to provide the maximum facilities for all children through kindergartens to the University.

The attainment of these objectives is dependent only on the organisation of the Dominion's resources to provide the necessary goods and to organise the required services.

The Labour Party believes that in and out of our Public Service the men and women are available with the capacity and experience to carry out the organising and administrative work necessary to achieve these objectives.

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3. Front page of the Labour Party's election manifesto in 1935. (Roth Collection)

The Stay-in Strike

The Labour Government introduced a 40-hour working week, but left it to the Arbitration Court to insert this clause without loss of pay in awards, where practicable. The court took a conservative view and excluded some occupations, such as drivers, gas and laundry workers, and the seasonal food industries. Auckland freezing workers in January 1937 were up in arms when their new award retained a 44-hour week, without any compensatory pay rises. They adopted a go-slow policy, but when the companies threatened to dismiss them, the men occupied the works at Westfield, Southdown and Horotiu, and the cool stores on King's Wharf, and settled in for the night.

This was New Zealand's first stay-in strike, inspired of course by the wave of similar strikes in France after the Popular Front Government took office. The companies asked the police to eject the men, but this was countermanded from Wellington. Tim Armstrong, the Minister of Labour, hurried to Auckland for negotiations. He promised to arrange a conference with the employers, and to use legislation if necessary, to enforce the government's wishes. The men resumed work, but the employers proved obdurate and refused to concede either shorter hours or better pay.

Armstrong then imposed a settlement by directing that the men should be paid a flat rate bonus of threepence an hour above the award rate. There were howls of protest from farmers' organisations and in the daily press, but the government's prestige rose high among its union supporters. At the general elections of 1938, the Labour Party was returned with an increased majority.

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1. Labour Party poster for the 1938 elections, one of a set of four. (Roth Collection)

2. Outside the Westfield freezing works young women stand talking to their boyfriends on strike. (*New Zealand Herald*, 14 Jan. 1937)

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3. Westfield strikers play cards by candle-light. (*New Zealand Herald*, 14 Jan. 1937)

4. Improvised hammocks in the Westfield fellmongery department. (*New Zealand Herald*, 14 Jan. 1937)

5. A singsong at Westfield. The favourite songs were "Tipperary", "Mademoiselle from Armentieres" and "John Brown's Body". (*New Zealand Herald*, 14 Jan. 1937)

"We Must Win the War"

After the outbreak of war in September 1939, the Federation of Labour announced its unqualified support for the government's stand against the "unprovoked, wanton and brutal aggression of the Nazi dictatorship". A tiny minority opposed the war as imperialist, but the great bulk of New Zealanders followed the government's lead.

In the First World War Prime Minister Massey had given union leaders the cold shoulder, but now the Labour Government eagerly sought their advice and cooperation. McLagan joined the Cabinet as Minister of Industrial Manpower, while Walsh became a key figure on the Economic Stabilization Commission. Representatives of the Federation of Labour, together with employers' representatives, took their seats on numerous committees concerned with the civilian war effort, from the Industrial Emergency Council to Defence Construction Committees and Military Service Appeal Boards.

Industrial conflict did not cease during the war. There were still strikes and the occasional lockout, but a determination to win the war prevailed. Hard-won privileges, for which the union movement had struggled over many years, were more or less willingly surrendered for the duration of the war: penalty rates for overtime and weekend work, limitations on working hours, restrictions on shift work, and measures to protect women workers, young people and apprentices. Even the right to leave a job became subject to manpower regulations.

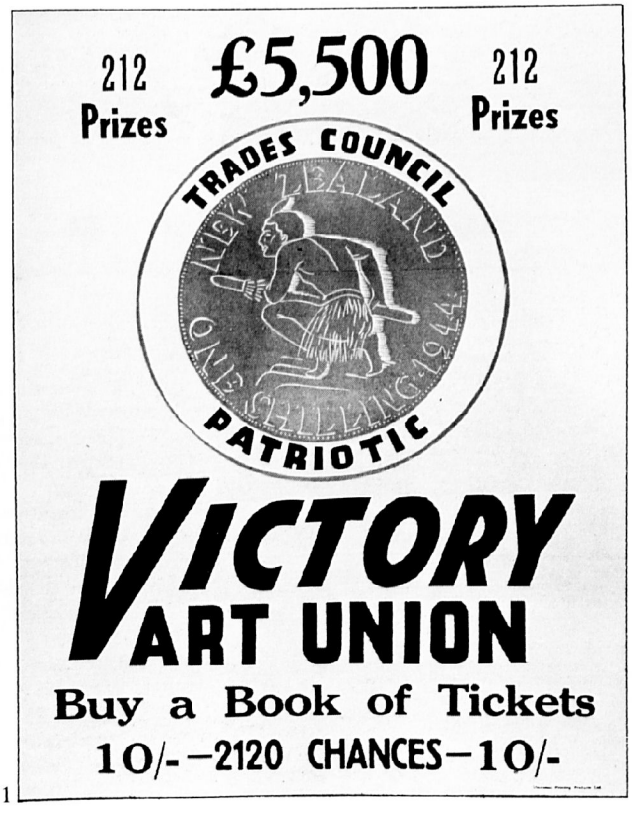
Unionists did not merely work harder to increase production, they also found time to raise funds for Victory Loans, Defence Bonds, and other patriotic causes. They looked forward to the New Order of social justice which was to follow victory over the fascist powers.

1. Poster advertising the Wellington Trades Council's Patriotic Victory Art Union in 1944. (Roth Collection)

2. Title page of the Prime Minister's call to arms, first broadcast in January 1940. (M. J. Savage, *A Clarion Call to New Zealand*, 1940)

3. A wartime union meeting in a miners' hall. On the wall a "Victory Loan" poster. (*Introduction to New Zealand*, 1945. Photo by John Pascoe)

4, 5. Production of hand grenades in an Auckland foundry. (*Metal and Munitions*, 1942, Roth Collection)



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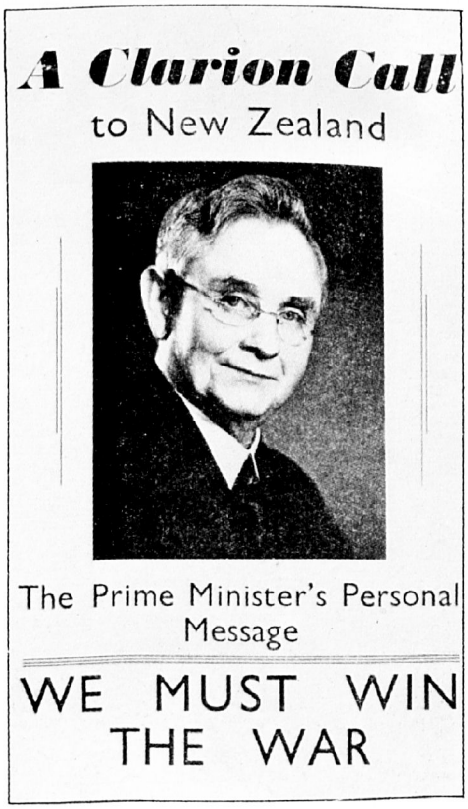

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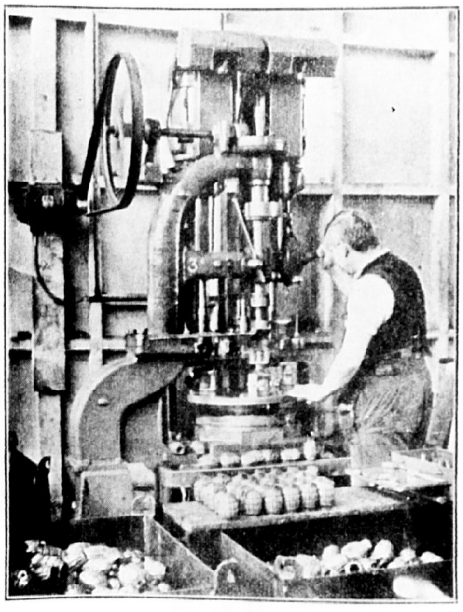

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The Hutt Workshops Strike, 1941

The Labour Government in 1936 reduced weekly hours in the railway workshops from 44 to 40, but on condition that no penal rates would be paid for overtime on Saturday mornings. As long as Saturday work was optional, there were few complaints, but after the outbreak of war hours were extended to 10 a day, Monday to Friday, and 8 on Saturday, making a total of 58 hours a week, 44 of them paid at ordinary rates. The men wanted penal rates for all Saturday work, and on 6 March 1941 a mass meeting at the Woburn workshops in the Hutt Valley decided to refuse work on the following Saturday, 8 March. The works manager suspended 280 men who failed to report that day, whereupon the entire staff – some 1600 men – ceased work on Monday, 10 March.

The strike – the first serious wartime challenge to the Labour Government – was not supported by the national officers of the two unions involved, the ASRS and the RTA (Railway Tradesmen's Association). It was also illegal under the Strike and Lockout Emergency Regulations of 1939. The government censored press reports and banned strike meetings, while the police sought to prevent Woburn delegates from speaking at the Auckland and South Island railway workshops. Only a few unions offered their support.

On 17 March work resumed, after another mass meeting had accepted a settlement reached by the national officers. Both unions expressed their regret for the unconstitutional action of their members. The department lifted the suspensions and allowed all men to resume work, but there was to be no overtime pay for Saturday morning work. The only concession gained was a rearrangement of the working week to five shifts of 11 hours per day Monday to Friday, and no work at all on Saturdays.

1. A mass meeting at the Woburn workshops during the strike, March 1941. (Roth Collection)

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2. Woburn railway workshops men vote in favour of striking, March 1941.
(Roth Collection)

3. Advertising leaflet for a meeting which never took place: it was banned by the police under the Public Safety Emergency Regulations of 1940 as "likely to be injurious to the Public Safety".
(Roth Collection)

4. Appeal for donations by the Woburn Dependants' Committee.
(Roth Collection)

HELP
STRIKERS' DEPENDENTS!

Mass Meeting
SUNDAY NIGHT
(16th March, 1941)
Trades Hall - Vivian St.

Hear the FACTS from the Men's Official Representatives
Hear Leading Trade Unionists,
Including:

"DIDO" MILLER (Veteran of Waihi)
(Imprisoned with others in 1912)
JIM O'DONNELL (Veteran Fighter for Workers)
E. NAPIER (Watersider)
W. WOOLHOUSE (Driver)
MRS. THORNTON, and the wives of men on strike.

Chairman: W. McARA.

WHITE & SONS PRINTING LTD.

3

WOBURN WOMEN AND KIDDIES NEED YOUR HELP!

1400 Men are on Strike !
-Their dependants must not suffer-

This is a sacred obligation imposed upon all New Zealand working people.

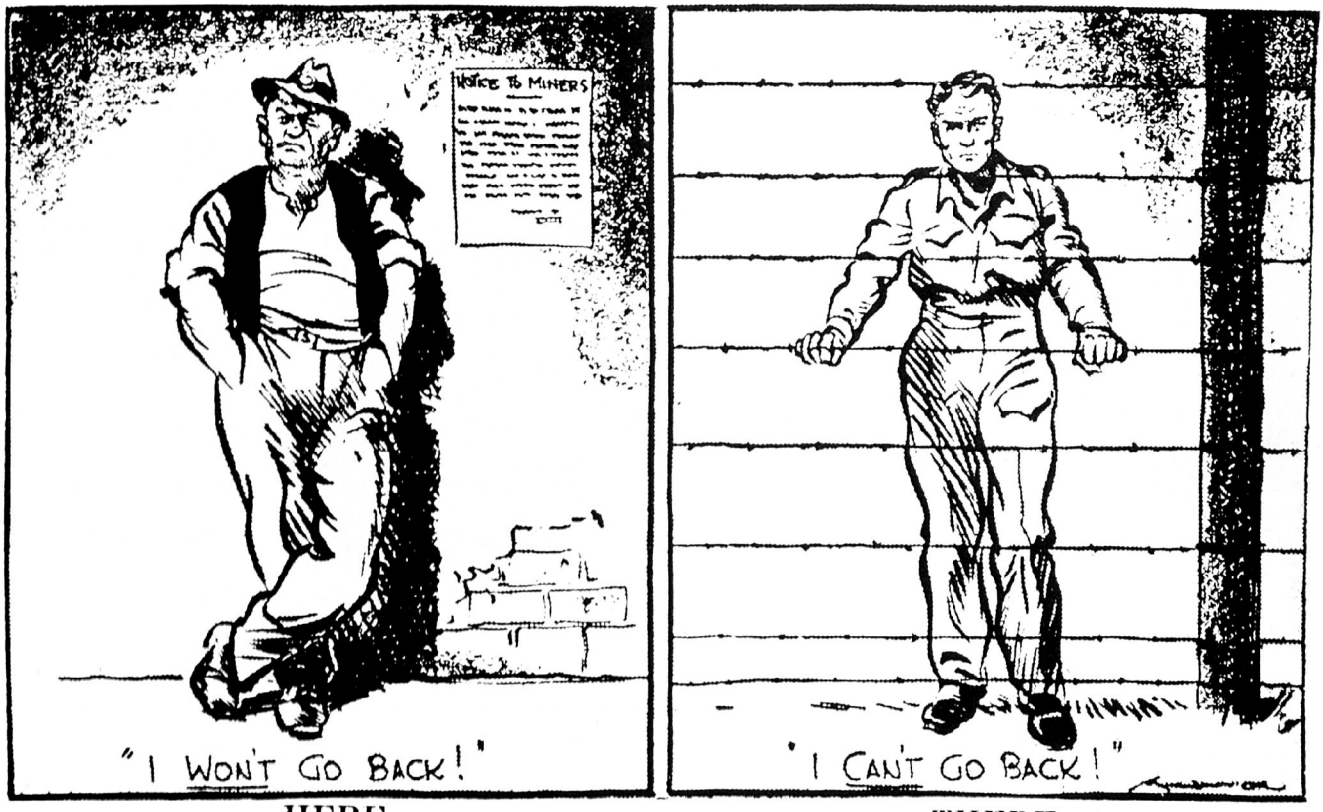
DO NOT FAIL THEM !

Send donations and union contributions to :-

Woburn Dependants' Committee,
33, Adelaide Street,
PETONE

4

The Waikato Miners' Strike



1. Minhinnick's comment: nasty-looking striker versus clean-cut prisoner-of-war. (*New Zealand Herald*, 15 Sept. 1942)

2. The emergency regulations which put the Waikato mines under government control. (Auckland University Library)

3. A National Party wartime election poster on the traditional theme that union leaders dominate the Labour Party. (Roth Collection)

4. Another Minhinnick cartoon. The figure on the far right is Prime Minister Peter Fraser. (*New Zealand Herald*, 30 Sept. 1942)

"After the war," Paddy Webb, the Minister of Mines and Labour, told a meeting of Denniston miners in 1940, "the capitalist will be as dead as Julius Caesar and the wealthy people will have played their last card." It was a bold bid to win the support of the traditionally militant miners, but it was spoiled by the Prime Minister's speedy repudiation of his colleague.

On 3 September 1942, a major confrontation developed in the Waikato coal fields when Pukemiro miners struck because 10 men had been paid less than the minimum wage. The total sum involved was £16. The executive of the Northern Miners Union urged a resumption of work; a ballot of Waikato miners supported the executive, but when the Pukemiro men stood fast, all Waikato miners – some 1400 in all – joined the strike.

Angus McLagan, Minister of Industrial Manpower and national secretary of the United Mine Workers, rushed to Huntly but could not get a hearing. The government then prosecuted the Pukemiro men, 182 of whom were sentenced to one month in gaol, but this too failed to break the strike. The dispute was settled late in September when the Prime Minister suspended the gaol sentences and promised to place the Waikato coal mines under state control for the duration of the war. This was done by means of emergency regulations, and after the war these mines were nationalised.

An unexpected side effect of the strike was the resignation of several National Party ministers from the War Cabinet and the War Administration in protest against the Labour Government's "surrender" to the miners.

Serial Number **1942/293**

THE WAIKATO COAL-MINES CONTROL EMERGENCY REGULATIONS 1942

C. L. N. NEWALL, Governor-General.

At the Government Buildings at Wellington, this 10th day of October, 1942.

Present:
THE RIGHT HON. P. FRASER PRESIDING IN COUNCIL.

PURSUANT to the Emergency Regulations Act, 1939, His Excellency the Governor-General, acting by and with the advice and consent of the Executive Council, doth hereby make the following regulations.

REGULATIONS.

1. These regulations may be cited as the Waikato Coal-mines Control Emergency Regulations 1942.

2. In these regulations, unless the context otherwise requires,—

"Board" means the Waikato Coal-mines Control Board established by these regulations:

"Coal-mine" means a coal-mine within the meaning of the Coal-mines Act, 1925:

"Controlled mine" means a coal-mine that is for the time being a controlled mine for the purposes of these regulations:

"Minister" means the Minister of Mines:

"Owner", in relation to any coal-mine, has the same meaning as in the Coal-mines Act, 1925; and "owned" has a corresponding meaning.

CONTROLLED MINES.

3. (1) While these regulations continue in force, every mine that is at the commencement of these regulations or at any time thereafter owned by any of the companies specified in subclause (2) of this regulation shall be deemed to be a controlled mine for the purposes of these regulations, whether or not it is subsequently owned by any other person:

Provided that every such mine shall cease to be a controlled mine upon the termination of the present war.

(2) The companies referred to in subclause (1) of this regulation are the following:—

(*a*) Glen Afton Collieries, Ltd.:
(*b*) Pukemiro Collieries, Ltd.:
(*c*) Renown Collieries, Ltd.:
(*d*) Taupiri Coal Mines, Ltd.:
(*e*) Wilton Collieries (1924), Ltd.

2

THE NATIONAL PARTY WILL
ABOLISH OUTSIDE DOMINATION OF PARLIAMENT!

Change the Government

VOTE NATIONAL

3

A NEW DANGER.

4

Equal Pay for Trammies

With so many men on service overseas, women began to enter traditionally male occupations. In 1942, the Auckland Transport Board resolved to employ women as tram conductors because of a growing shortage of male conductors. The alternative was to put the men on a six-day instead of a five-day roster, but this meant overtime penalty rates. Women, one board member suggested, would work for 60 per cent of the male rate, but this was not acceptable to the Tramways Union which insisted on equal pay and equal conditions. The board decided to give preference to wives, sisters and daughters of employees in the armed forces. The proposed uniform was a navy blue one-piece dress,with a pleated skirt and a soft felt hat.

The women trammies were the first female workers to achieve equal rates of pay. Transport boards in New Plymouth, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin followed Auckland's example, and by the end of 1944 women made up 14 per cent of the Tramways Union's national membership – 375 out of a total 2,653.

The women's loyalty and team spirit were loudly praised, but the war had hardly ended when it was suggested that they would have to resign. "I am sure our women comrades will be only too happy and willing to make way for our menfolk when the time arrives," wrote the secretary of the Wellington union in November 1945. Early in 1947, the National Council of the Tramways Union resolved by nine votes to four that no future applications from women should be accepted, and that employers should be asked to dismiss all women presently employed, if practicable.

The employers did not find this practicable, and women worked on the trams for several years after the war, in Auckland until 1956. They were never employed as motormen, which was apparently considered too difficult, but in recent years they have returned to the public transport service as bus drivers.

1. Members of the Auckland Tramways Union march behind their banner to the Domain on 2 December 1945 to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Labour Government. In the centre at the front, bareheaded, is the union's secretary, Ted Whitlow. (Auckland Tramways Union Archives, Auckland University Library)

2

2. Auckland women trammies pose for a photo before leaving the service in 1956.
(Auckland Tramways Union Archives, Auckland University Library)

3. Another photo of the farewell celebrations in 1956.
(Auckland Tramways Union Archives, Auckland University Library)

3

The Mangakino *Spark*

Victory in the war against Germany and Japan was followed by conflict between Soviet Russia and the Western powers, the so-called "cold war". Within New Zealand, and especially in the trade unions, this found expression in a campaign against communists and other militants. Among the early victims was Len Clapham, a returned serviceman wounded in Italy who was secretary of the Mangakino branch of the New Zealand Workers Union as well as president, for a time, of the local RSA.

Mangakino was a new township erected to house the workers on the local hydro-electric construction projects. Clapham, a tunneller at Maraetai, was active in the Communist Party for whom he published a lively little newssheet, *The Spark*. To the engineers in charge of the project he was "a troublemaker, an agitator and a disturber of workmen". They arranged to have him transferred to Auckland, but the union members objected, and on 10 March 1948, 900 men went on strike in support of their elected secretary.

Bob Semple, the Minister of Works, fumed about a "trial of strength between Communism and the Government", but the national officers of the Workers Union and of the Federation of Labour had no option but to treat the issue as one of trade union principle. Eventually, after one month on strike, both sides agreed to refer the dispute to a special tribunal, which heard evidence and upheld Clapham's removal. The men then elected another communist, Don Ross, the editor of *The Spark*, as their new secretary. To avoid any further victimisation, they made the secretary's office a full-time paid position.

1. Delegates to the Communist Party national conference in Wellington in May 1948. Standing second from left is Don Ross, fourth from left in the same row, Len Clapham.
(Roth Collection)

2. Cover of the special fifth year anniversary issue of *The Spark*, August 1952.
(Roth Collection)

THE SPARK

BULLETIN OF THE

MANGAKINO BRANCH N.Z.C.P.

The Auckland Carpenters' Dispute

The Auckland carpenters were another union with a communist secretary, Roy Stanley. Under his leadership the union won tool money, smoko breaks, daylight training for apprentices, and improved travelling allowances. Early in 1948 the Auckland carpenters conducted a go-slow which gained wage concessions from the employers.

In February 1949, when a new award reduced a travelling time allowance won earlier, the union again instituted a go-slow at some major companies, but this time the employers stood firm. They locked out all carpenters, whether they had joined the go-slow or not. Some 1500 men were affected, and all building work in Auckland came to a standstill. The union claimed that many small builders were willing to meet the men's claims but that they had been forced to join the lockout by the big firms. The master builders were equally convinced that many union members were prepared to accept the new award and that they opposed the union's hard-line stance.

The Labour Government had prosecuted Auckland carpenters' officials during the previous year's dispute. It now saw a chance to rid the union of its communist leadership and on 25 March Angus McLagan, as Minister of Labour, deregistered the union in Auckland and cancelled its award. Dissident members then formed a new union with the eager support of the master builders.

For a while two carpenters' unions operated side by side in Auckland, but in October the government changed the law to force all carpenters to join the new union. Stanley and other former officials went back to their trade, to lead a Carpenters Rank and File Campaign Committee for a Bona Fide Union. They did not succeed in regaining office.

1. Cover of a leaflet issued by the Provincial Action Committee, 1949. (Roth Collection)

2. Roy Stanley speaks on the lockout in an Auckland park. (R. Stanley, *Fighting Back!* 1950)

A mass meeting at Carlaw Park on Thursday afternoon, attended by members of the Waterside Workers' Union, Carpenters' Union, Drivers' Union, General Labourers' Union, glass workers and other affiliations affected by the lock-out,

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The *Tridale* Dispute

"The longest picket line in the world" was the name given to the Canadian Seamen's Union strike in 1949. It tied up 77 ships in 25 countries; and on 14 April it reached New Zealand where the Canadian ship *Tridale* was berthed at Wellington. When the crew refused to take the ship to sea, New Zealand seamen gave assurances that they would not man her, while the wharfies refused to make labour available for loading.

The crew were charged under the Shipping Act with "disobeying the lawful command of the master" and fined 14 days' pay. In May, after disobeying another "lawful command", 27 men were sentenced to four weeks' hard labour. Among them was the chief cook, 74-year-old Brother Johnston; when offered a chance, because of his age, to avoid gaol, he replied, "I'll never be so old that I'll want to start scabbing."

The Canadian Seamen's Union was led by communists. It was affiliated to the communist-led World Federation of Trade Unions, from which the New Zealand Federation of Labour was in the process of disaffiliating. While wharfies gave unstinting support to the *Tridale* men, Federation of Labour leaders denounced the strike as "an extension of the communist cold war" and requested affiliated unions to lift all bans. On 14 September, after five months, the strike was called off. The *Tridale* crew went back to work at the old rates of pay, but with a promise of no further prosecutions on their return to Canada.

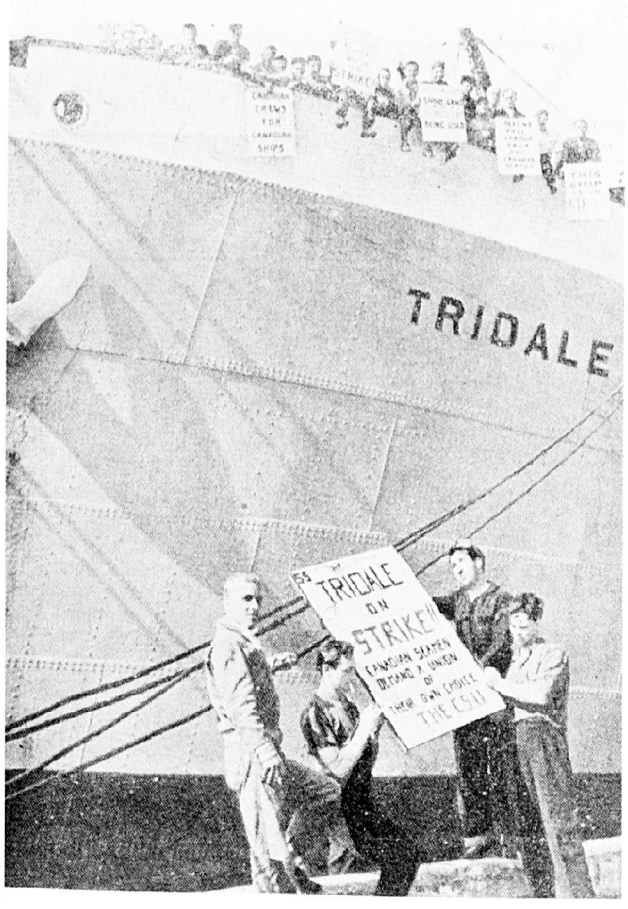
"We leave New Zealand proud of the bonds of international solidarity we have helped forge," wrote Don Williams of the Canadian Strike Committee. "The struggle is by no means ended. The principles of Unionism must endure and no terror — or treachery — can shake them."

1

1. Seal of the New Zealand Seamen's Union. (Roth Collection)

2. *Tridale* men attach a strike notice to her mooring lines. (*The Tridale Strike*, 1949, Roth Collection)

3. Leaflet advertising a meeting by Don Williams in the Auckland Trades Hall. (Roth Collection)



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TRADES HALL, Hobson St.

Sunday Night

17th JULY, 1949, at 8 p.m.

DON. WILLIAMS

(STRIKE DELEGATE ON S.S. TRIDALE)

will tell of

MURDER ON CANADIAN WATERFRONT

Hear this Amazing Story THAT WILL COVER—

"Thugs firing on battered bodies of Seamen."
"Eight men shot in one attack."
"I charge that Harvey Beauchesne was brutally murdered.
"Mysterious accidents."
"Murder (inc) on job."
"Scab Union supplies murderous weapons."

REMEMBER

TRADES HALL

SUNDAY NIGHT at 8 p.m.

P.T.O.

3

The Trade Union Congress

During the Auckland carpenters' dispute, the Waterside Workers Union wrote to the Federation of Labour accusing its leaders of strike-breaking and gross betrayal of an affiliated union. The Federation demanded the withdrawal of this "scurrilous communication" and threatened expulsion. Matters came to a head at the 1950 conference of the Federation, when the watersiders walked out, followed by more than 50 other delegates. The defectors then set up a rival union centre, the New Zealand Trade Union Congress.

This was the first split in the union movement since the unity congress of 1937, but it was short-lived. The TUC, at its inaugural congress in August, represented some 23,000 workers, only one-eighth of the Federation membership. It claimed however to speak for the active unions, the "solid industrial core" of the movement, such as watersiders, labourers, miners, carpenters, drivers and freezing workers, as against the large, apathetic bodies of "compelled unionists", such as shop assistants and clerical workers, who remained in the Federation fold.

The Congress also had the wholehearted backing of the Communist Party. It launched a very lively publicity campaign, with street marches and mass rallies, to gain the support of unionists, and it filed an application for a general wage increase in the Arbitration Court, in competition with the Federation of Labour. This feverish activity hid the fact that only half a dozen unions actually paid their affiliation fees to the Congress. Its leaders remained generals without an army; their only solid support was the Waterside Workers Union, and when this union was destroyed in 1951, the Trade Union Congress collapsed with it.

1. The TUC protest march in Auckland, 28 June 1950. (Canterbury Freezing Workers Union Archives, University of Canterbury Library)

The N.Z. Trade Union Congress

requests the pleasure of the company of

all members of the Seamen's Union

at the

United Demonstration of Protest

by the

People of New Zealand

against

The National Govt.'s Policy of Rising Prices

at

Myers Park

on the

Opening Day of Parliament

Wednesday, 28th June, 1950, at 2 p.m.

R.S.V.P.
Before 23rd June.

Box 9
Newton

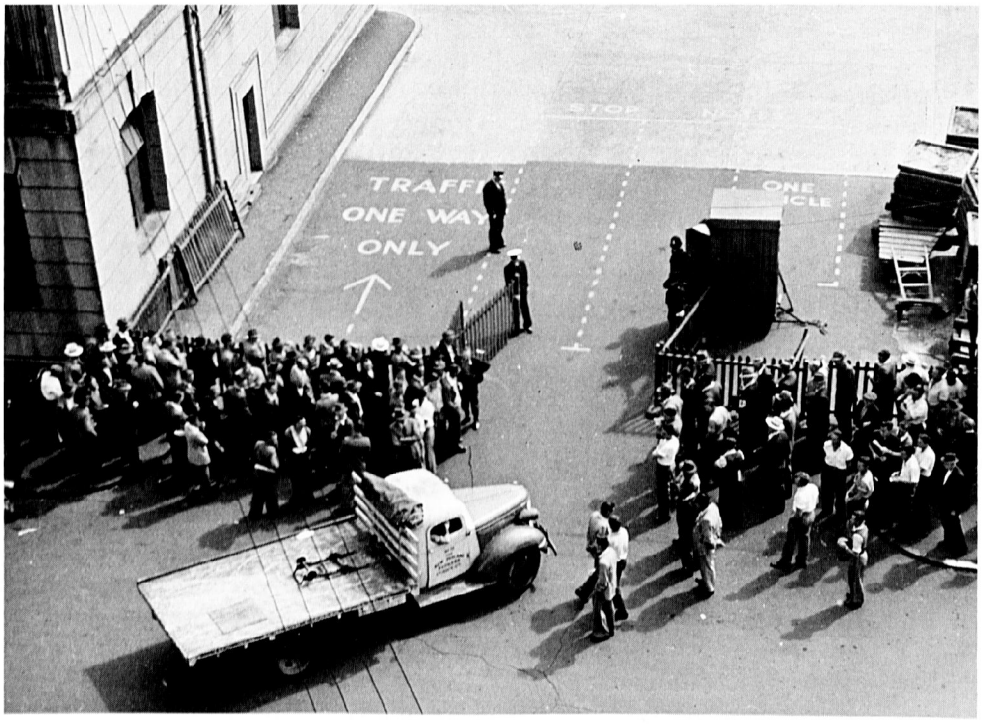
2

3

2. The TUC "requests the pleasure of your company" at a protest march.
(Roth Collection)

3. Another view of the TUC protest march.
(Canterbury Freezing Workers Union Archives, University of Canterbury Library)

Confrontation 1951



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1. Police control the wharves: a view of the entrance to the Northern Steam Ship Company's wharf in Auckland. (Roth Collection)

2. The first ship worked by the navy in Auckland. (Roth Collection)

3

1951 brought the long expected showdown with the watersiders. In the 1949 elections the National Party defeated Labour and a new government, led by Sid Holland, came to power. The first serious clash with the watersiders occurred in September 1950, when the government declared a state of emergency under the Public Safety Conservation Act. This dispute was settled in direct negotiations between watersiders and shipowners, but in February 1951 a new conflict arose when the employers refused to pass on the full 15 per cent wage increase granted by the Arbitration Court.

When the union, led by Jock Barnes, Alex Drennan and Toby Hill, imposed a ban on overtime, the port employers threatened dismissal unless normal work was resumed. The men refused and were dismissed, and before long the waterfront came to a standstill. According to the union, its members had been locked out, but according to the employers (and the government) the men were on strike. The government issued an ultimatum to force a resumption of work, and when this failed it again declared a state of emergency and gazetted regulations under which it deregistered the national waterside union and seized its assets. The armed forces were sent to the wharves to load and unload ships.

Thousands of other workers – miners, seamen, freezing workers, harbour board employees, drivers, labourers, and Mangakino hydro workers – went on strike in protest against the emergency regulations and against the use of troops in an industrial dispute. Altogether some 22,000 workers were out at the height of the dispute, but now the Federation of Labour entered the contest – on the side of the National Government.

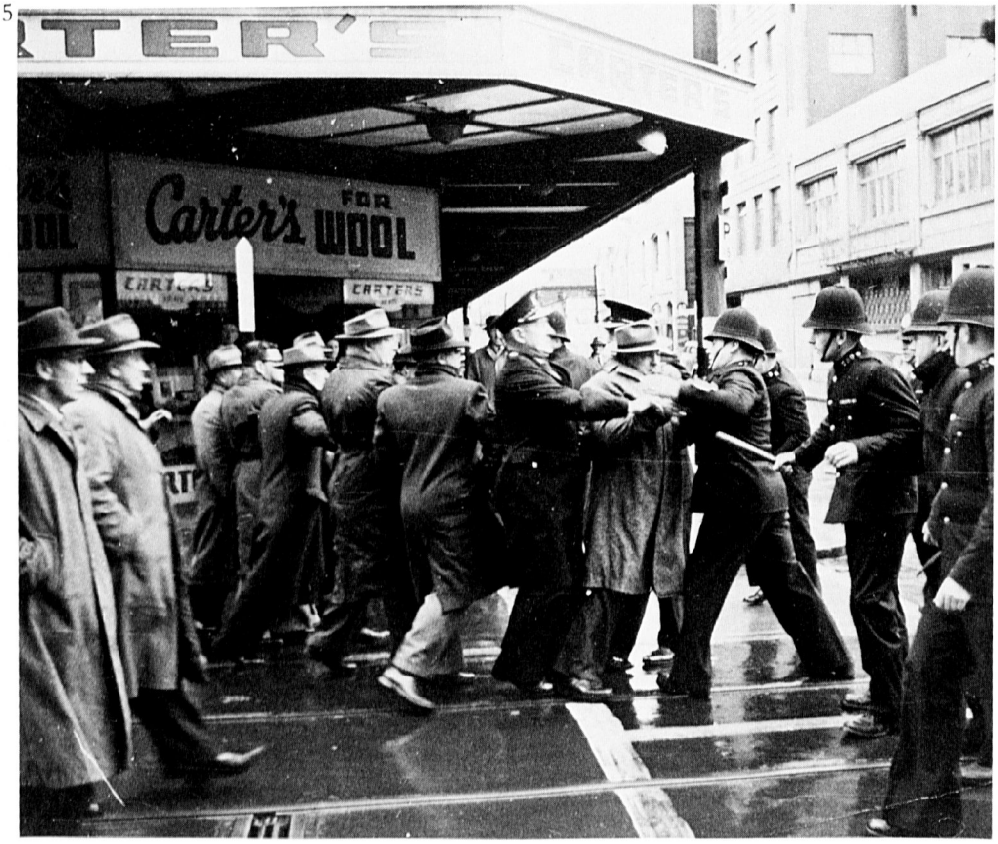
4

3, 4. Auckland, 1 March: deprived of their own premises by the government, the watersiders meet in the Trades Hall in Hobson St. (Roth Collection)

5. Wellington, 2 May: police stop a unionist march at the intersection of Cuba and Dixon Streets. Con Doyle, district president of the Freezing Workers Union, is being manhandled. (*Photo News* photo, Roth Collection)

6. Another view of the Cuba St batoning. Note the encounter on the far right. (*Photo News* photo, Roth Collection)

7. One of the numerous underground cartoons produced in Wellington. "Slippery Sid" is the Prime Minister Sid Holland, "Wild Bill Sullivan" the Minister of Labour and "Scabaxter" the secretary of the Federation of Labour, K. McL. Baxter. (Special Information Bulletin, 15 May 1951)



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6


DECENT CONDITIONS HIGHER WAGES
FASCISM WAR & HIGHER COST OF LIVING
W.W.U.
SLIPPERY SID
WHO'LL WIN ?
IT DEPENDS ON YOU BROTHER!
JOCK BARNES
BRUTE FORCE & IGNORANCE
A.F.C.L.
K. McL. SCABAXTER
WILD BILL SULLIVAN

The Federation saw an opportunity to destroy the rival Trade Union Congress and to eliminate communist influences from the union movement. It issued a call to return to normal work, which some of the striking unions obeyed. In the smaller ports, and soon also in Auckland, volunteers came forward to form new wharf unions; the Federation gave its blessing and so did the employers, who made a gift of £1500 to the new Auckland union.

By April the watersiders were on the defensive. The government kept raising its demands, which included elimination of the wharfies' militant leaders, fragmentation of their national union into separate port unions, and a return to compulsory arbitration of industrial disputes. There was no longer any prospect of peace with honour; it was war to the bitter end – a war of attrition in which the government held all the winning cards.

Tremendous pressure, psychological as much as economic, was put on the watersiders and their supporters. Under the emergency regulations their side of the conflict could not be told in the media (though it was told in numerous underground publications), and the same regulations prohibited financial help to strikers or their wives and children. Countless New Zealanders, including the Leader of the Opposition, ignored or bypassed these regulations and contributed in money or in kind to the wharfies' relief funds. Attempts by the watersiders to publicise the conflict through street marches in Auckland and Wellington were however broken up violently by the police.

WATERSIDERS CALL ON ALL WORKERS !

OUR WAGES FIGHT IS YOUR FIGHT !

The Holland Government's plans to attack the 40-hour week drag living standards to the bread-line and smash unionism, are out in the open.

Watersiders have been locked out as a test case. If the employers can weaken this strong union they intend to pick off the rest—one by one.

Workers ! The watersiders and their allies stand between you and a vicious employers' Government. Here are the facts :

Less than the Court Gave.

The Arbitration Court's decision was denounced by every union in the country including the F.O.L. Yet the shipowners final offer to the watersiders was LESS than the Court increase. They said we could live on overtime.

Since we were penalised for working long hours we offered to work 40 hours until they would re-open negotiations—and we still do. They refused to negotiate or let us work.

In Hitler's Steps.

To keep our case from the public and take the next step in condition-smashing the Government brought in fascist-like emergency regulations.

But no emergency existed. We were PREVENTED from working. It's all a pretext for moving in on the workers—first us, and then you.

Intimidation Fails.

The watersiders are determined their wives and children shall receive a fair share of life's necessities.

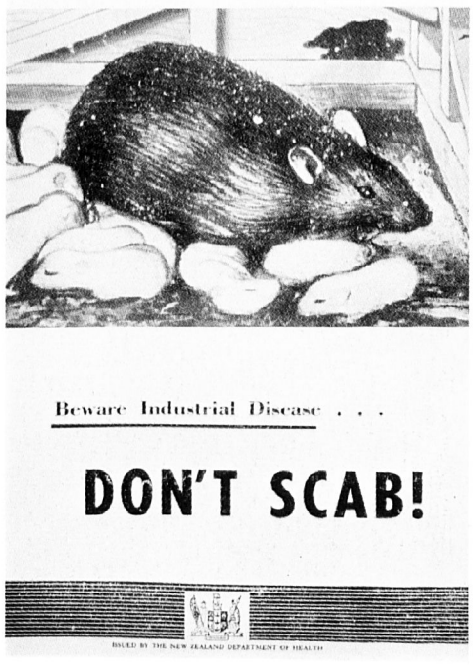
Tens of thousands of other workers—miners and freezing workers, seamen, hydro workers, cool store and harbour board workers—are on strike to help us defend living standards and trade union rights. **Thousands more won't touch scab goods.**

The issue is clear: Help us win or help Holland bring Tory misery to our fair land.

Handle No Scab Goods !

Beware Press and Radio Lies !

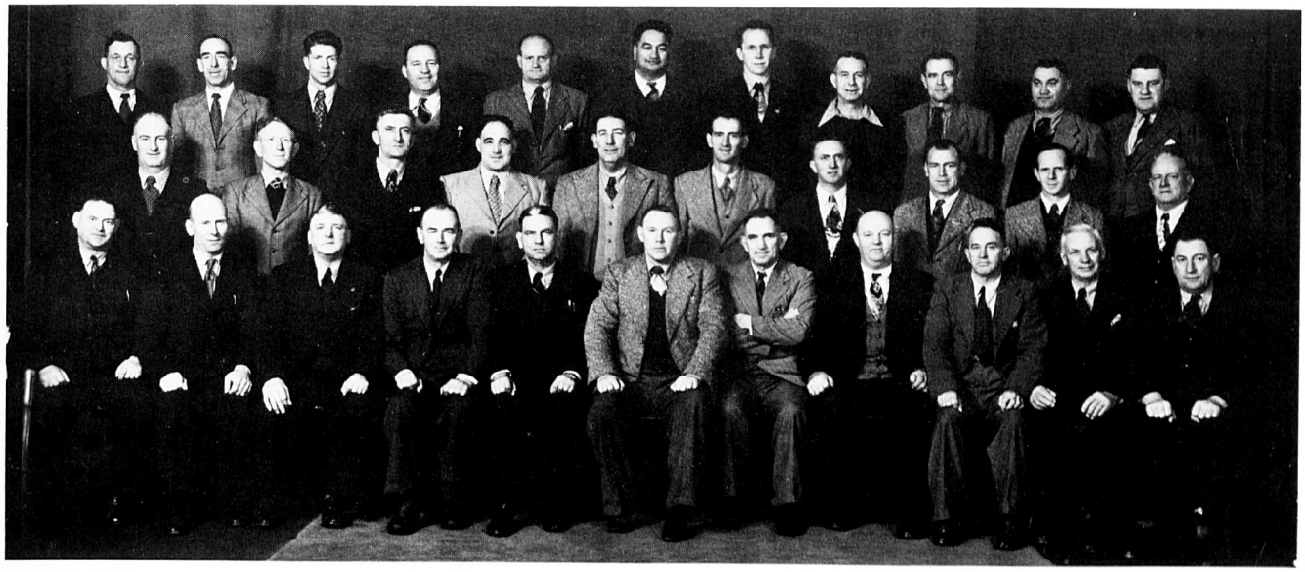
United We Must Win !



Beware Industrial Disease . . .

DON'T SCAB!

ISSUED BY THE NEW ZEALAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



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8. The first illegal leaflet. It was reprinted in the final issue of the Labour Party's daily paper, *Southern Cross*, on 17 March 1951. (Roth Collection)

9. This gummed sticker was made to look like an official notice. Contrary to the inscription, it was not "issued by the New Zealand Department of Health". (Roth Collection)

10. The Auckland Strike Committee. Seated in the centre, Jock Barnes, flanked by Alex Drennan and secretary Ron Jones. In the back row two future leaders: fifth from left, Jim Knox; fifth from right, Bill Andersen. (Alan Blakey photo, Roth Collection)

11. Auckland watersiders assemble for a march in the downtown area. (Roth Collection)

12. The executive of the Auckland Waterside Workers Union. Standing fourth from left, Jock Barnes; front row second from left, Alex Drennan. (Roth Collection)

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13. Auckland, 1 June: women head a unionist march up Queen St. (Harry Rose photo, Roth Collection)

Loyalty to their leaders and the traditional spirit of union solidarity kept the struggle alive for 151 days, but on 10 July the National Strike Committee approved an end to the dispute. Seamen and miners were able to resume work but many watersiders, especially in Auckland, found their places taken. The National Strike Committee in its final resolution argued that neither Capital nor Labour could claim victory, but there was no denying the serious defeat suffered by the union movement. At a cost of £42 million (according to the government statistician) and of more than a million working days, the government succeeded in destroying the militant wing of the unions.

The government exploited its victory by calling a snap election, which returned it to power with an increased majority. The activists driven from the waterfront had to find work elsewhere, but many of them remained activists. Jim Knox, president of the Federation of Labour in 1980, and Bill Andersen, president of the Auckland Trades Council, were members of the Auckland Strike Committee in 1951. The lessons they drew from the waterfront struggle were the overriding need for unity, regardless of political or other differences, and the need to avoid the simplistic formulas of 1951, when a minority of the union movement, however well organised and disciplined, thought it could "take on" the government and win.

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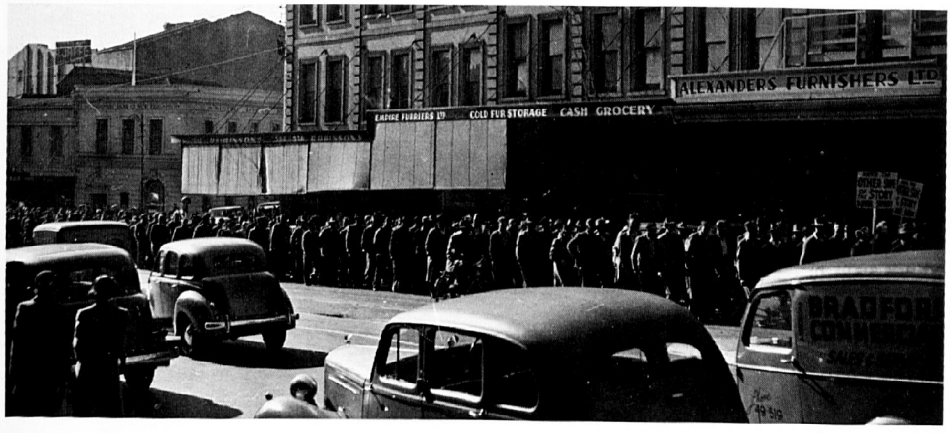

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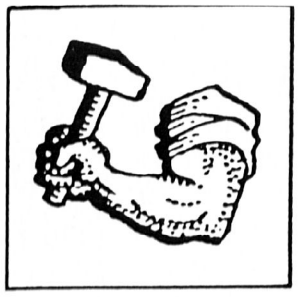
14. Auckland, 1 June: the unionist march meets a wall of police. The baton charge which followed caused many injuries. (Roth Collection)

15. Another view of Auckland's "Bloody Friday" march on 1 June. (Roth Collection)

16. Loyalty card issued to Wellington member John Joseph McArtney. (Roth Collection)



The Federation of Labour

When the Trade Union Congress went down with the watersiders, the Federation of Labour stood unchallenged as the central body of the union movement. F. P. Walsh, for long the strong man behind the scenes, became president of the Federation in 1952 and held this post until his sudden death in 1963. His successor, Sir Tom Skinner, initiated a process of consolidation: unions which had defected or had been expelled reaffiliated, new unions joined, and membership rose rapidly, from 185,000 in 1951 to 430,000 in 1979.

The major groups still outside the Federation are the large unions in the state sector. Other white-collar organisations — actors, insurance workers, journalists and transport inspectors — have taken the plunge and joined the Federation, and there are prospects that the state service unions will also affiliate in due course.

At the local level the Federation is represented by District Councils, still popularly known as Trades Councils. There are 20 in all, ranging in size from more than 100,000 members in Auckland to a mere 1500 in Buller. The national executive of the Federation is elected at the annual conference, the president and secretary-treasurer for a five-year term. When Sir Tom Skinner retired in 1979, the previous secretary-treasurer W. J. Knox became president. His post fell to K. G. Douglas of the Drivers Federation, the first communist to hold national office since the Federation was first formed in 1937.

Contrary to public belief, the Federation of Labour is not affiliated to the Labour Party. The only formal link is through the Joint Council of Labour, a body set up in 1952 on which the Federation and the Labour Party have equal representation. The Federation seeks to work with whatever government is in office and to protect the interests of its members regardless of party politics. It has no power to direct its affiliated unions, who are free to walk out if they disapprove of conference decisions, but the Federation's growing unity and prestige have been a significant feature of recent years.

1. The raised hammer, symbol of the FOL. (Roth Collection)

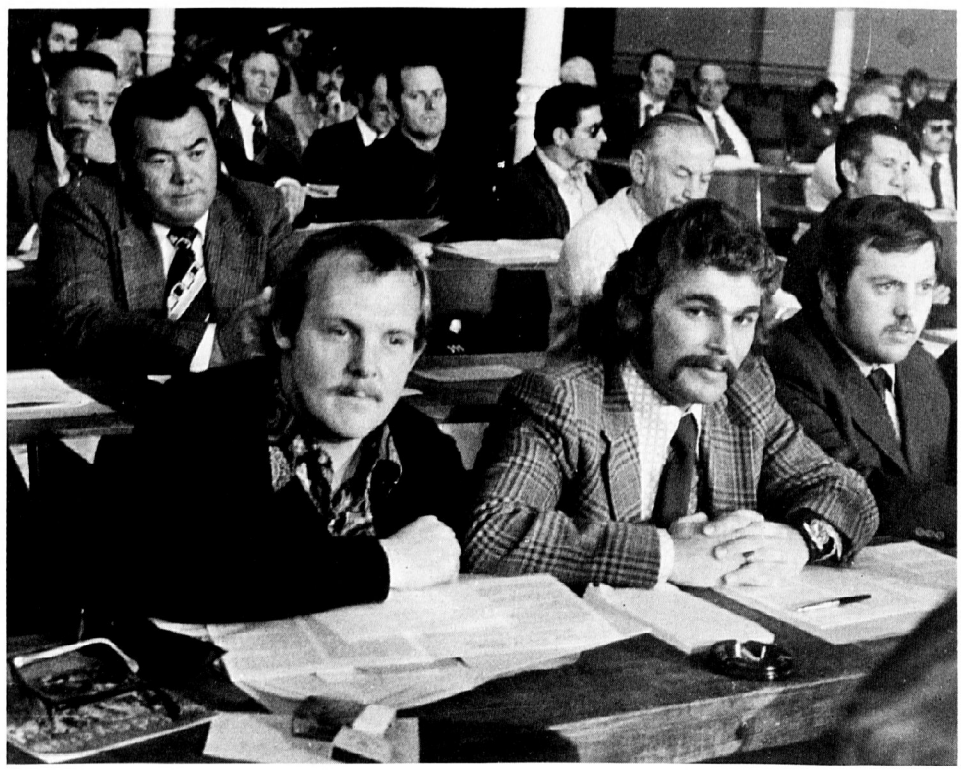
2. Delegates to the FOL Conference, Wellington, 1975. (Roth Collection)

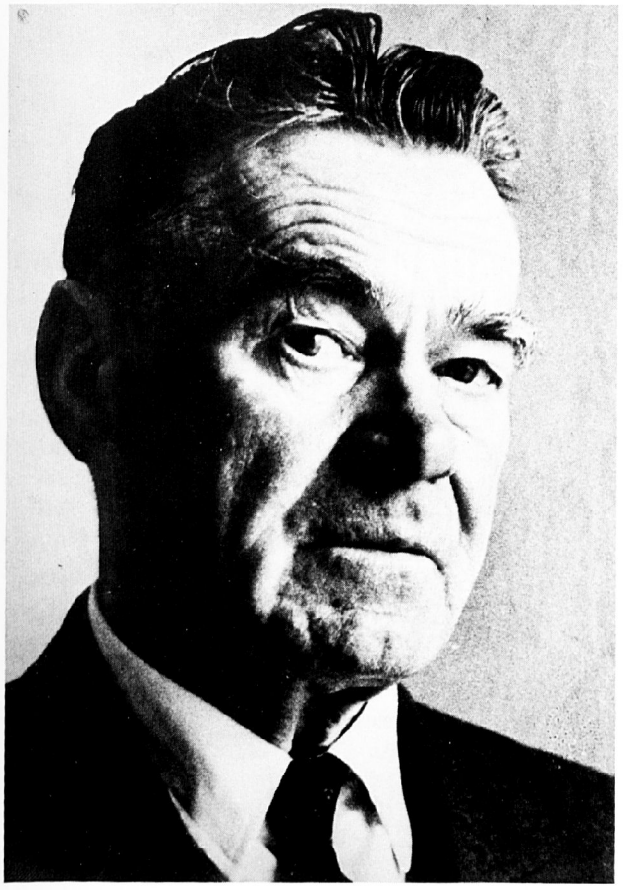
3. Fintan Patrick Walsh (1896-1963), president of the Federation from 1953 until his death. A controversial figure, he was often called the "Black Prince". (*New Zealand Herald*, 18 Nov. 1959)

4. Sir Thomas Edward Skinner (born 1909), president of the FOL 1963-79. (Roth Collection)

5. Walter James (Jim) Knox (born 1919), formerly active in the Auckland Trades Council, current president of the FOL. (*New Zealand Herald*, 29 June 1979)

6. Ken Douglas, (born 1935) secretary-treasurer of the FOL and the first member of the Socialist Unity Party to hold national office. (*New Zealand Herald*, 19 May 1980)





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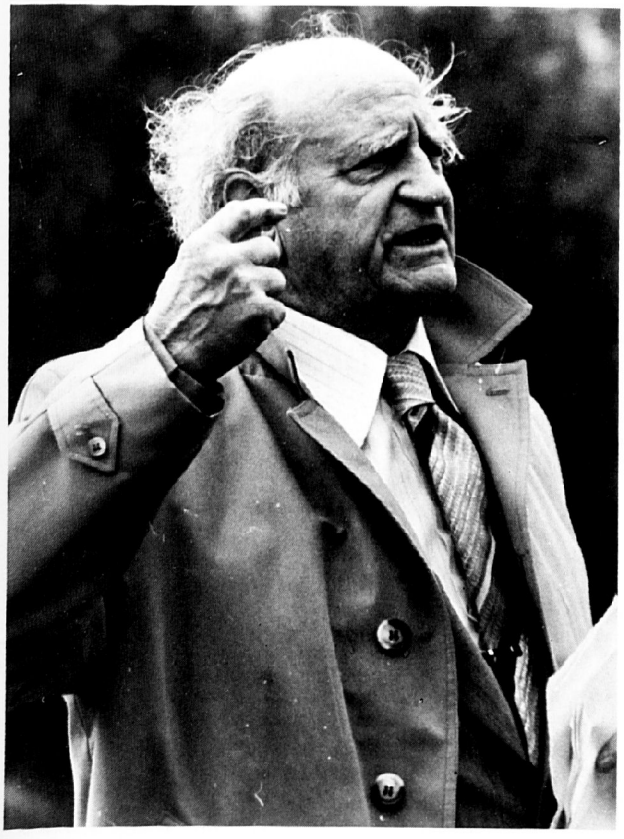

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The End of Arbitration

The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, first passed into law in 1894, was officially laid to rest in 1974, when it was superseded by the Industrial Relations Act. For most of its 80 years, the Act had dominated industrial relations in New Zealand, but its effective demise predated its formal death. The turning point was the Arbitration Court's "nil decision" of June 1968.

The Federation of Labour that year sought a general wage order from the court and produced evidence of a decline in the living standards of its members. The court acknowledged that the Federation had proved its case, but refused to make an order because of economic difficulties facing New Zealand. This "nil decision" had an angry reception from unionists. Thousands of workers took part in stopwork meetings and protest marches, resolutions flooded into the Federation office, and widespread action seemed imminent. A special Federation of Labour conference urged all affiliated unions to press for a minimum five per cent increase "through all available channels".

The Employers Federation averted an upheaval by agreeing to submit a fresh application for a general order jointly with the Federation of Labour. The two nominated members of the court, acting in unaccustomed harmony, outvoted the judge and awarded a general increase of five per cent in August. Barely seven weeks passed between the two decisions, but though the unions gained their objective, the court stood discredited.

Unions now preferred to meet their employers in direct negotiations, outside the official arbitration system. "Trade unionists," reported the Federation of Labour, "are becoming increasingly aware that compulsory arbitration protects the interests of the employers and restricts the efforts of the workers."

WAGE FREEZE MUST BE FOUGHT !

The Arbitration Court refusal to grant a general wage order of even one cent is a slap in the face of every worker in New Zealand. It must be answered by the workers. They must fight for wage increases independently of the arbitration system. Their strength lies in united action, not in reliance on a wage-fixing system imposed by the employing class and run for the employers' benefit.

Prices are rocketing. Profits are unrestricted. But the wage workers are subjected to a wage-freeze, with unemployment thrown in for good measure. The economy of the country can be made to stand the expenditure of millions of dollars on Skyhawks. It can be made to stand more millions of dollars for aggression against the Viet-Namese people. But it can't stand wage increases for New Zealand workers !

Legalised Robbery

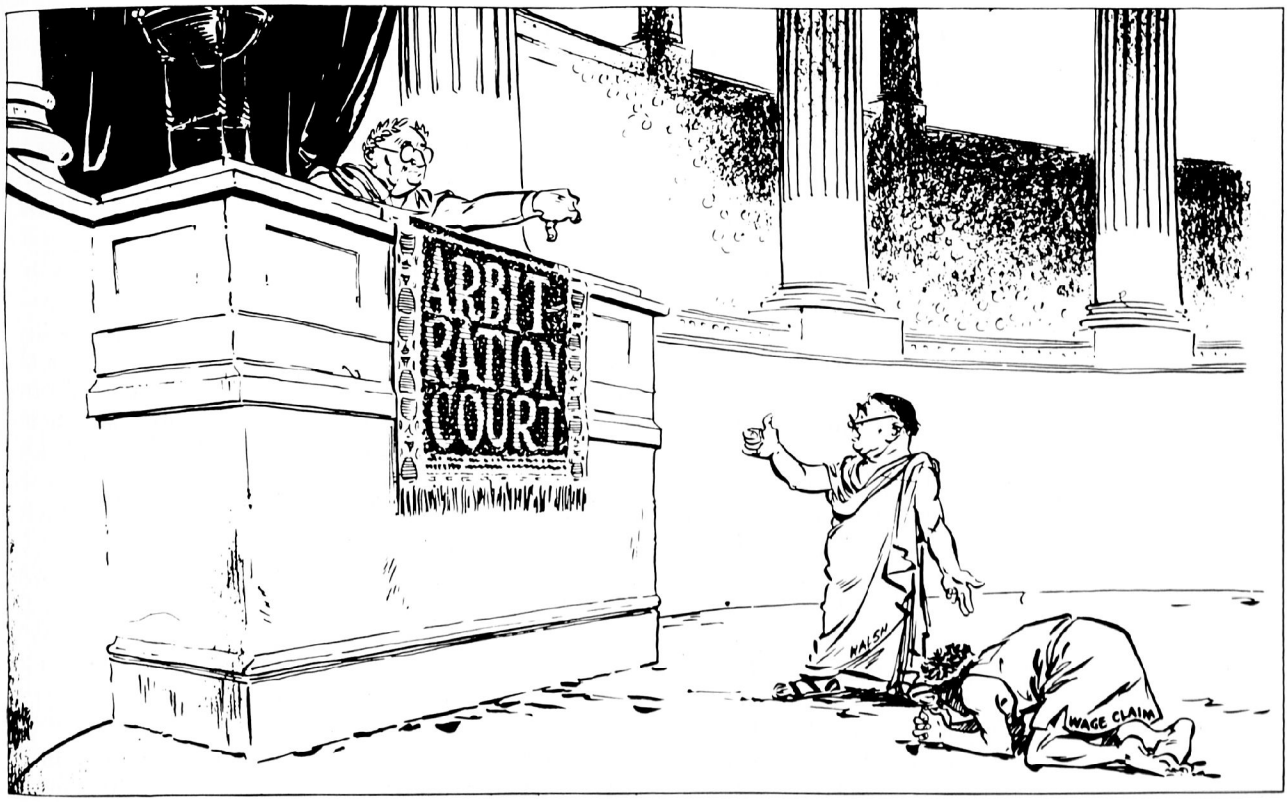
We live under a system of legalised robbery of the workers. They make the wealth, together with the small producers, but they own none of it. Those who own the wealth are those who own the factories, the machines, the buildings and other means of production. And this class, the capitalist class, is dominated by a handful of giant banking and industrial monopolies.

The monopoly capitalists are determined to keep wages down to ensure that their profits are kept high. And they have command of the machinery of state to enforce their will. But the workers have their weapons too. They have their own organisations such as the trade unions. They have the numbers to make these organisations powerful. And they have the decisive place in the economy. They can defeat the monopolists !

But they will not do this by relying on the arbitration system. They will only do it by relying on united class action.

1

1. Angry protests at the "nil decision" of the Arbitration Court also came from groups other than the organised unions as this Communist Party folder shows. (Roth Collection)



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CASE FOR A WAGE ORDER

THE Federation of Labour application for a General Wage Order begins on March 12 at 10.30 a.m. The Court's decision will affect—adversely or otherwise—every working family in New Zealand.

Employers' organisations, newspapers and even the Government have been selling the idea that an increase in wage rates is wrong. The truth is—it isn't.

The country's economic position was reviewed extensively by local union representatives at a meeting called by the Engineers' Union recently.

With members interests at stake it was agreed that a concerted effort should be made to encourage interest and develop support for the General Wage Order.

The best means of defence is often attack.

This leaflet is the first of three designed to outline the case of the worker; explain the importance of the situation; and activate the support of all wage and salary earners for the winning of an immediate wage increase.

3

2. A general wage order application as seen by Neville Colvin in a cartoon prepared for the *Evening Post* but never published. (*New Zealand Listener*, 29 May 1976)

3. "In the last 12 months the Arbitration Court has indulged in a practice of taking the country's economy into consideration whenever awards have been presented for renewal" states this leaflet issued by the Combined Trade Unions. (Roth Collection)

Anti-Union Injunctions

The Arbitration Act provided penalties for striking, but after 1955 the Labour Department ceased to bring prosecutions. When a Labour government abolished penalties altogether in 1973, some employers turned to the common law and took out injunctions against striking unions.

An injunction either tells the defendant to do something which he has failed to do, or orders him to stop doing something which he has been doing. In 1974 an Auckland shipowner obtained a Supreme Court injunction against the Seamen's and Drivers Unions and their secretaries, which ordered them to cease interfering with oil deliveries to his ships and hydrofoil.

The unions ignored the order. The drivers' secretary, Bill Andersen, was gaoled, but when this news spread in Auckland, thousands of workers — drivers, seamen, boilermakers, labourers, carpenters and many others — spontaneously walked off their jobs. The next day, 2 July, thousands marched down Queen Street to the Supreme Court where Andersen was due to appear, but hurried negotiations averted the threatened clash.

Andersen was released, the unions resumed work, and the controversial hydrofoil was taken out of service. The Minister of Labour allegedly promised to amend the law so that injunctions would no longer be used in industrial disputes, but his colleagues denied that any undertaking had been given and the law remained unchanged. The cost of the two-day stoppage, according to the *Auckland Star*, amounted to 1.6 million dollars.

When the National Party came to power in 1975, it restored the penalty clauses, but the first attempt to invoke them, against 192 Ocean Beach freezing workers in September 1978, miscarried. The charges were dismissed and the government withdrew other pending prosecutions. In July 1979 the Auckland City Council obtained an interim injunction restraining the Drivers Union from impeding city rubbish collections. Andersen again ignored it and, rather than press charges for contempt of court, the Council preferred to reach a negotiated settlement.

1. Bill Andersen, secretary of the Drivers' Union, is met outside the Supreme Court in Auckland by thousands of workers. (Trade Union Centre, Auckland)

2. Flanked by union officials, Bill Andersen leads a march of approximately 10,000 unionists and workers up Queen St. (*New Zealand Herald*, 3 July 1974)

3. Cartoonist Ronken takes a sceptical view of Andersen's imprisonment. (*Sunday News*, 7 July 1974)

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MOJO'S
NITESPOT

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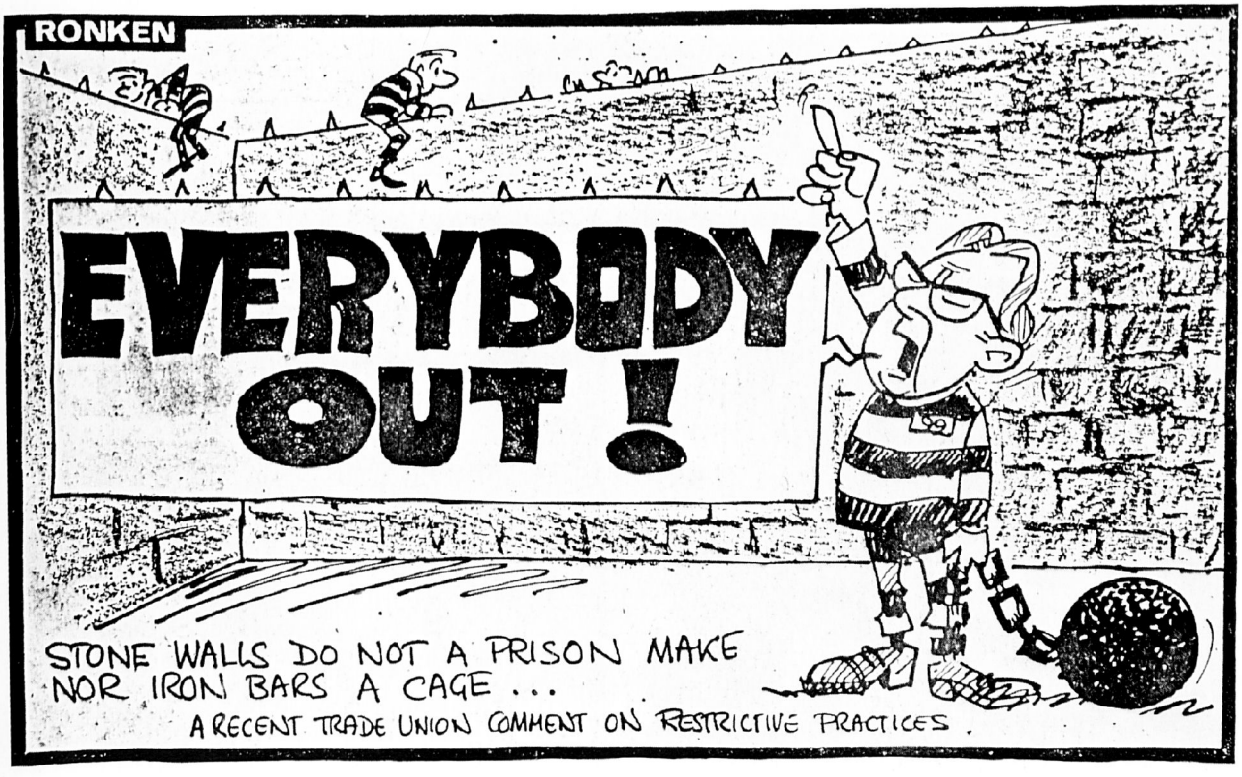
RONKEN
EVERYBODY OUT!
STONE WALLS DO NOT A PRISON MAKE
NOR IRON BARS A CAGE ...
A RECENT TRADE UNION COMMENT ON RESTRICTIVE PRACTICES.

3

The Combined State Unions

1, 2. Dental nurses, who are members of the PSA, march to Parliament on 19 March 1974 in protest at the breakdown of negotiations.
(John Milne, New Zealand PSA)

1

2

Government employees formed unions (invariably called associations, institutes or societies, but not unions) in the 1880s and 1890s. After some initial resistance they achieved official recognition, but they operated outside the conciliation and arbitration system and negotiated directly with their employer, the government and its departmental heads.

A "government billet" was very desirable employment, for state servants gained reduced working hours, graduated salary scales, paid holidays, sickness leave, seniority and appeal rights, pensions on retirement and other benefits. Over the years however, their privileged position has been eroded. All workers are now entitled to annual holidays, superannuation and accident benefits, and today it is the government employee who struggles to keep up with wages paid in the private sector.

About a fifth of New Zealand's labour force works directly for the government, and the state unions are among the largest and most active in the country. There are eight major unions: the Public Service Association, Post Office Union, New Zealand Educational Institute, Post-Primary Teachers Association, and four railway unions — the National Union of Railwaymen (formerly Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants), Railway Officers Institute, Railway Tradesmen's Association and Locomotive Engineers Association.

The state unions have their own central organisation, called Combined State Unions (CSU) which also comprises other smaller organisations, mostly in the hospital service. Three of the four railway unions are also members of the Federation of Labour, but the other state unions have so far stood apart from the great body of private sector workers.

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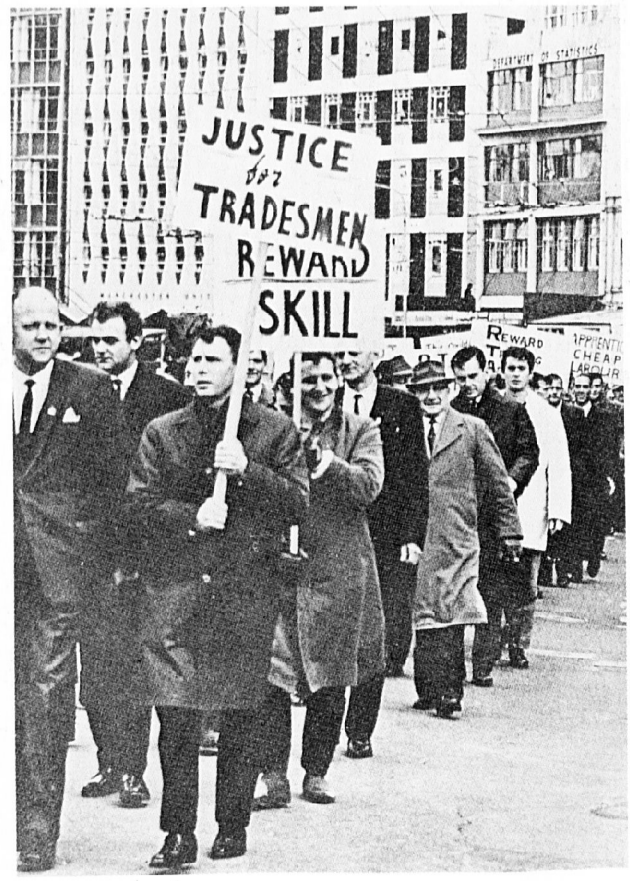

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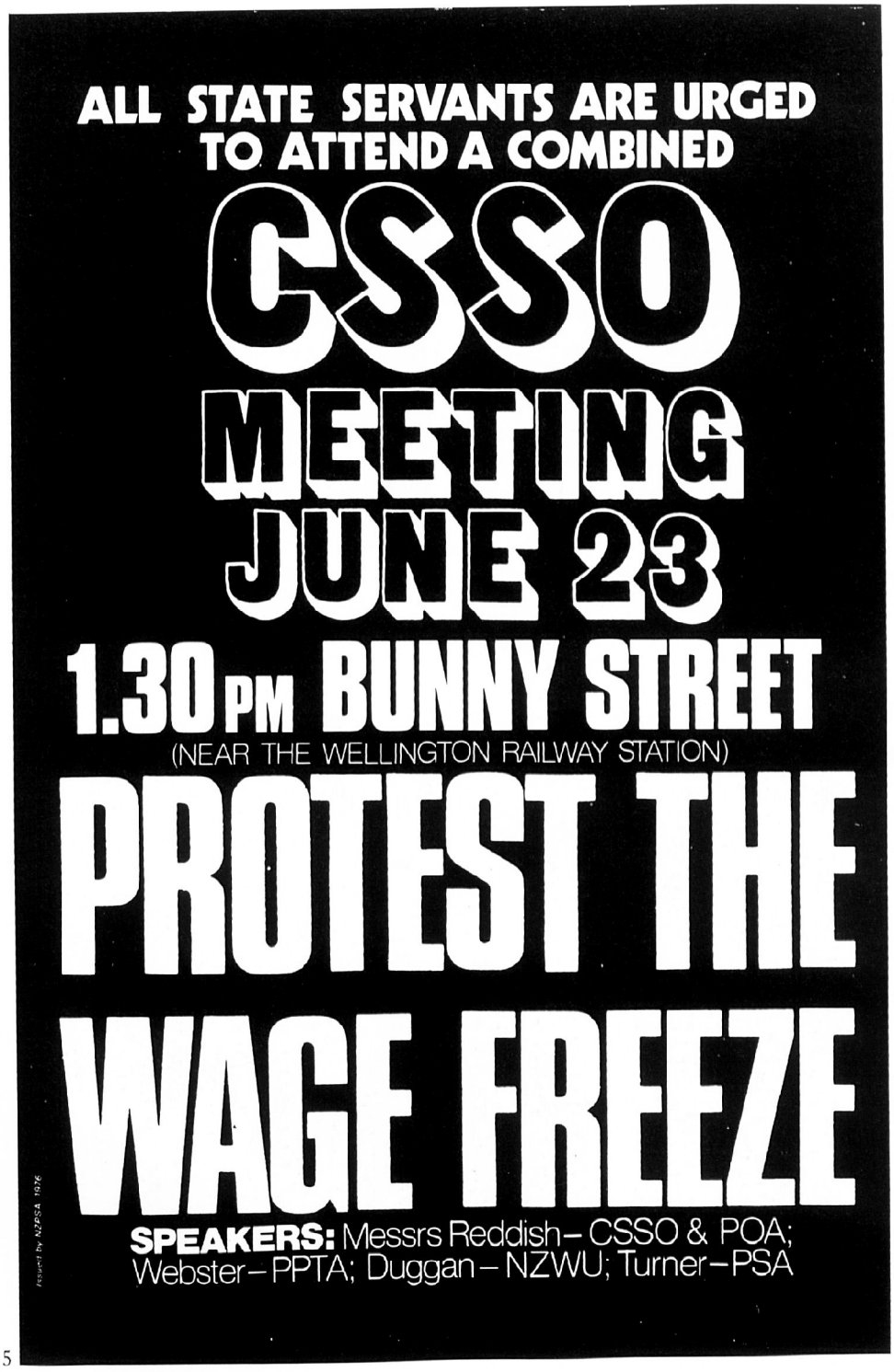

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3. Such obvious direct action by white collar state employees roused a good deal of public interest. (Graeme Cookson photo, *Socialist Action*)

4. Railway tradesmen march to Parliament in May 1967. Doug Crosado, National President, is on the left. (Trade Union Centre, Auckland)

5. The PSA issues an invitation on behalf of the CSU to attend a protest meeting over the government's wage freeze. (Roth Collection)

6. A billboard in Lambton Quay, Wellington, makes an effective advertisement for the meeting. (John Milne, New Zealand PSA)

White Collar Militancy

The 1976 census showed for the first time a majority of the labour force employed in "white collar" occupations: clerical, sales and service, professional, technical, administrative and managerial. Many of these workers are women. For many years white collar occupations had been the weak link in the union chain; unions barely existed here outside the government service, but in 1936 the compulsory membership clauses created thousands of often unwilling unionists.

The large, artificially blown-up unions which were established at that time — 14,000 clerical workers, 15,000 shop assistants — were praised for their moderation. Their leaders manipulated these huge block votes, while the members were notoriously passive, though often resentful at having to pay union dues for minimal service.

The seventies have seen a dramatic change: white collar has become vocal and militant. New unions have been formed by such groups as commercial travellers, production supervisors, flight planners, professional engineers, nurses and technicians. Middle management is beginning to take an interest in industrial organisation, and major white collar unions have joined the Federation of Labour. Even name changes have been a pointer to a new outlook: the Post Office Association transformed itself into the Post Office Union, while the Combined State Service Organisations became the Combined State Unions.

Most significant however has been the sudden eagerness to take industrial action of a startling variety: overtime bans, go-slows, picketing, sit-ins, withdrawal of good will, street marches, boycotts, stopwork meetings, strike threats and actual strikes. A decade of mounting industrial unrest ended symbolically with a strike of bank employees in Auckland and Christchurch on Christmas Eve of 1979.

1. Public Service librarians vote overwhelmingly in favour of strike action. (New Zealand PSA circular, 13 March 1980)

2. Sonja Davies, first woman member of the FOL executive and long time Shop Employees Union representative. (Trade Union Centre, Auckland)

3. Lyttelton Road Tunnel staff stop traffic from passing through the tunnel after the announcement of the abolishment of tolls. (*Working Life Calendar*, 1979)

4. Members of the NZEI march on Parliament. (*Dominion*, 11 May 1976)

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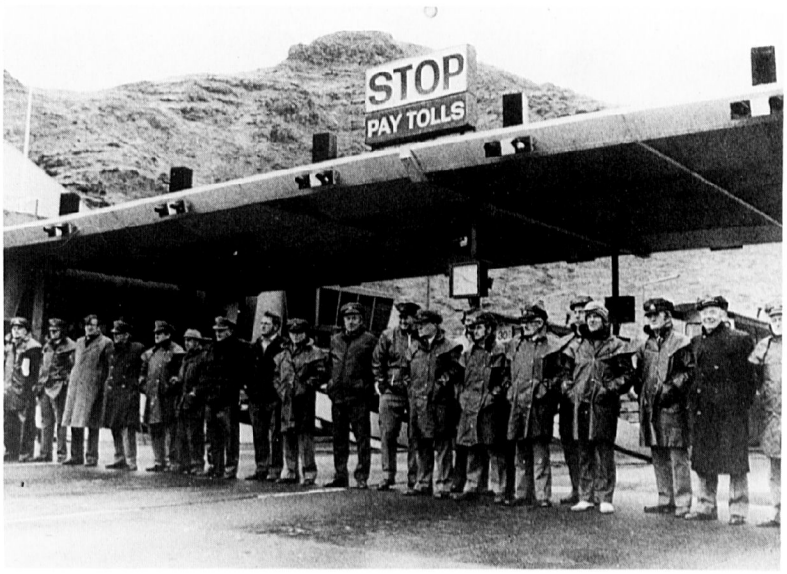

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The Return to "Free" Bargaining

1. The Arbitration Court hears the general wage order application, 13 Sept. 1956. On the bench from left to right are Noel Hewitt (employers), Arthur Tyndall (judge) and F. C. Allerby (workers). The registrar, R. D. Lomsden, sits in front.
(Tyndall Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library)

2. At Parliament on 23 June 1976 an angry demonstration of workers from both the public and private sectors protest at government intervention.
(John Milne, New Zealand PSA)

Awards of the Arbitration Court are the legal minimum which employers are required to pay, but there is nothing to prevent an employer from paying more. In the past, above-award payments were usually made to individual workers at the employer's discretion, but after the last war unions were able to take advantage of labour shortages and strong consumer demand to negotiate above-award payments to all workers in a particular factory, firm or even industry. This so-called "wage drift" – the gap between minimum award wages and the wages actually paid – grew from about 8 per cent in 1947 to about 30 per cent in the mid-1960s.

The awards of the Arbitration Court therefore became increasingly irrelevant to many workers, and after the nil judgment of 1968 unions tended to ignore the court altogether. Direct bargaining between unions and employers became the rule, but most employers were not happy about this. Neither was the government, which now felt constrained to interfere directly in the wage-fixing process.

Acts were passed and regulations issued to hold down workers' wages. There were guidelines and ceilings, and pauses and freezes. Equally unsuccessful were attempts to set up new wage-fixing tribunals in place of the discredited Arbitration Court. The Remuneration Authority (1971-72) was followed by the Wages Tribunal (1973-74), which in turn was superseded by the Industrial Commission (1974-78). Since 1978 there is again a Court of Arbitration, now responsible for both the private and public sectors. Pay restraints were removed in 1977, but the government later took powers under the Remuneration Act to regulate wages and to cut back what it considers to be excessive wage settlements.

Inevitably there has been great resentment when statutory authorities or the government itself interfered in freely negotiated pay settlements and reduced the amount of wages the employer was prepared to offer. Much of the mounting industrial unrest of recent years has been caused by such interference.

In October 1980 the government felt constrained to scrap the Remuneration Act.


PSA
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UNION

The General Strike

1. Marchers at the upper end of Queen St on 20 Sept. 1979. "Use working class politics to fight monopoly boss class politics" states one of the placards.
(*Auckland Star*, 20 Sept. 1979)

2. The Federation of Labour issues an "all out" message.
(*Auckland Star*, 19 Sept. 1979)

3. The Auckland Trades Council leads the march.
(*New Zealand Herald*, 21 Sept. 1979)

4. Arriving at the bottom of Queen St.
(*New Zealand Herald*, 21 Sept. 1979)

Government intervention in a negotiated wage settlement was the immediate cause of the first national protest stoppage, on 20 September 1979. The drivers' award negotiatons opened in May of that year but broke down, with the unions asking for increases of 20 per cent, while the employers offered an average 9 per cent. In July the drivers held a 48-hour strike, but the deadlock continued, with negotiations interspersed with industrial action to put pressure on the employers.

Early in September the two sides reached agreement on a basic 11 per cent increase but, 36 hours before the agreement was due to be signed, the Prime Minister issued a statement that the proposed settlement was unacceptable, being "clearly inflationary" and "excessive by any reckoning". When the drivers' employers stood by the settlement, the government threatened to issue regulations under the Remuneration Act to cut back the increase to 9.5 per cent.

The unions now mobilised their forces. A meeting of 900 delegates in Auckland called for a minimum 24-hour general stoppage, and union meetings in other centres showed overwhelming support for strong action. In response to this rank-and-file pressure the Federation of Labour executive issued a call for a 24-hour national strike from midnight September 19 to midnight September 20.

This was the first general stoppage in New Zealand history. It was not universal by any means, but it was effective in halting transport and most manufacturing throughout the country. A government speaker called the strike "an absolute fizzer", but Labour speakers estimated a loss of half a million working days. The president of the Chamber of Commerce spoke of a wage loss of $27 million that day, which is more than the total wage loss through stoppages in the previous four years.

After the strike the drivers' dispute was submitted to the Arbitration Court, which awarded a wage rise of 10.5 per cent plus allowances, which in effect brought the increase up to the 11 per cent agreed to earlier by the two parties.

it is our living standards that are being wrecked...
it is our freedom that is being threatened...
do something about it ...

SUPPORT THE F.O.L. ACTION

'ALL OUT ON THE 20TH'

Rally and March, Town Hall at 1oo PM. Thursday.

Issued by the Auckland Trades Council.

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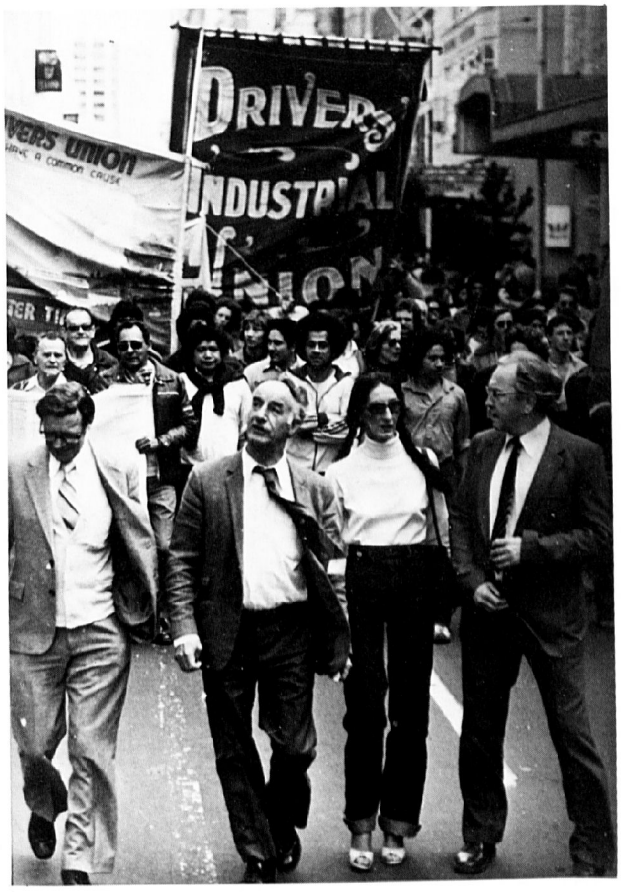

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4

A Bridge to Nowhere

1. Mangere bridge declared "black" in 1978 stands uncompleted — a symbol of industrial relations of the time. (*Auckland Star*, 24 June 1978)

2. Carpenters and labourers protest on the old Mangere bridge at the lack of redundancy agreement discussions. (*Auckland Star*, 11 July 1978)

3. This leaflet put out by the New Zealand University Students' Association publicised meetings at universities in support of the workers' action, and outlined the necessity of their claims. (Roth Collection)

4. Workers continued their protests in 1979 because Wilkins and Davies still received $30,000 a month from the government to maintain the bridge (*Auckland Star*, 24 March 1979)

Mangere Bridge was the site of the longest dispute in New Zealand industrial history, lasting almost two and a half years. The firm of Wilkins and Davies won the contract from the Ministry of Works to build a new bridge across the Manukau Harbour, linking Auckland with its international airport. Construction started in August 1974 and was expected to take three years.

In 1977 the carpenters' and labourers' unions became concerned over threatened lay-offs at the completion of the contract. They wanted to negotiate an improved redundancy agreement, but Wilkins and Davies refused to go beyond the Master Builders' standard agreement which provided for a maximum of two weeks' severance pay regardless of length of service. When the unions exerted pressure with a series of rolling strikes the company, on 30 May 1978, dismissed the entire workforce of 140 men.

Wilkins and Davies advertised for new staff to replace the sacked men, but the unions declared the contract "black", and mounted daily pickets which succeeded in discouraging job seekers. Work did not restart and lengthy negotiations failed to reach agreement on the redundancy issue. Most of the dismissed men found work elsewhere, but a small core of some 35 carpenters and labourers kept the dispute alive by regular meetings, picketing and occasional public demonstrations. When the government cut off their unemployment benefits, workers on other construction projects stepped in and levied themselves in support of the Mangere Bridge men.

In May 1979 the government terminated the contract with Wilkins and Davies, but another year went by before a new contractor was chosen.

The Federation of Labour was able to negotiate a satisfactory site agreement with the new firm, including greatly improved redundancy clauses. At the end of November 1980 work resumed on the contract.

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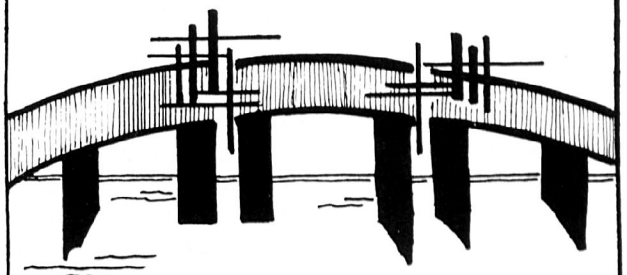
MANGERE BRIDGE



the history of an industrial dispute

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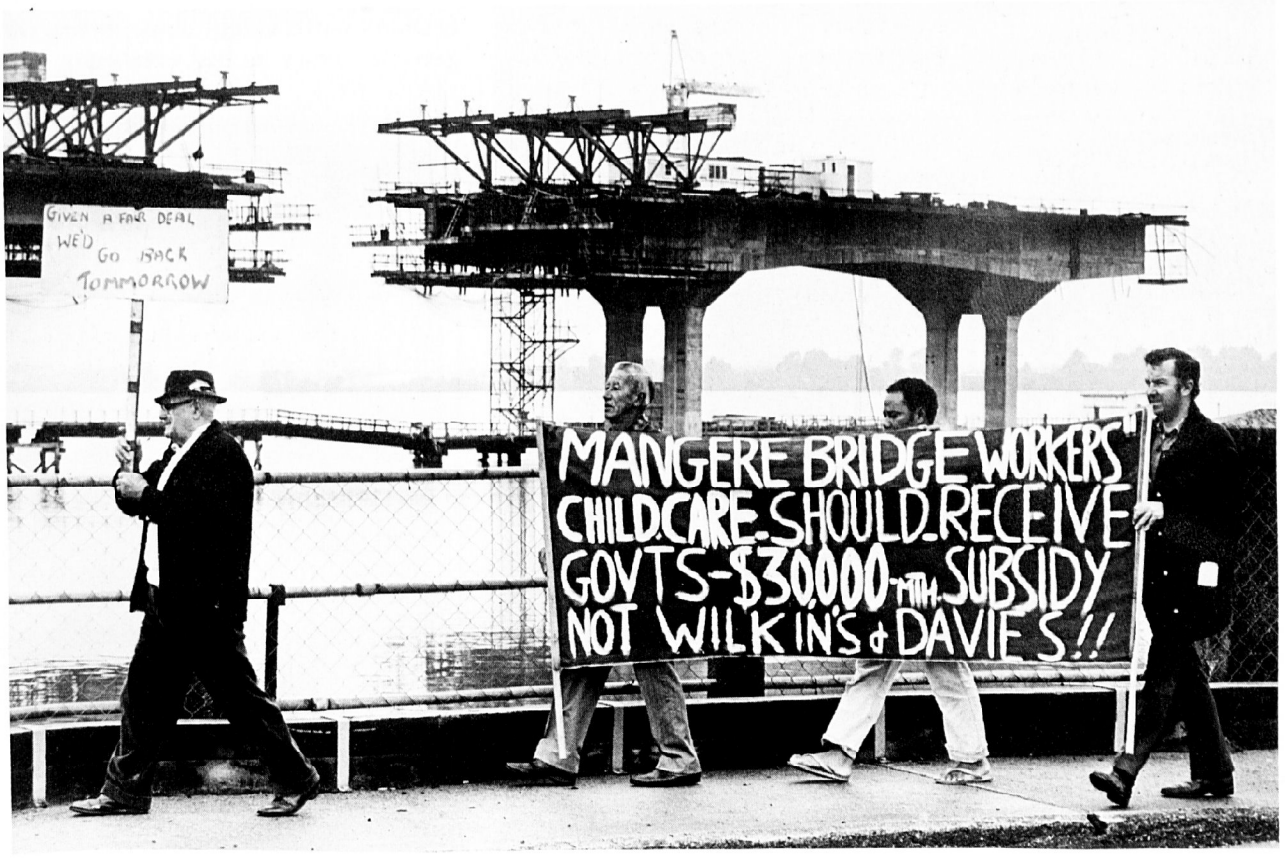

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Victory at Kinleith

1. Jim Knox, president of the FOL, in discussion with workers at Kinleith. (*Auckland Star*, 18 March 1980)

2. On 26 March 1980 the government revoked the regulations. (New Zealand Statutory Regulations 1980/45)

3. Bill Andersen, Jim Knox and Jim Butterworth talk with reporters. (*Auckland Star*, 18 March 1980)

4. Jim Knox makes the case clear. (*Auckland Star*, 18 March 1980)

5. Relief centre, Kinleith. (*New Zealand Herald*)

6, 7. Women strike supporters. (*New Zealand Herald*, 13 Mar. 1980)

Kinleith is the site of a large paper mill owned by New Zealand Forest Products Ltd. Other major mills are at Kawerau, owned by the Tasman and Caxton companies. The workers in the paper industry have separate house agreements with these firms but they were generally paid at very similar hourly rates until 1978, when a successful strike enabled Kawerau to move ahead. The Kinleith workers were determined to make up lost ground in 1980; when New Zealand Forest Products, rejected their claims, the tradesmen called rolling strikes which rapidly brought the giant mill to a halt.

By the middle of February 1980 almost 3000 Kinleith workers were either on strike or suspended. Unions throughout New Zealand launched a campaign to collect money for Kinleith, and with these funds a Drop-In Centre was opened in Tokoroa, where strikers received financial help, regular grocery vouchers, and provisions of food brought in by sympathisers. Women strikers and strikers' wives played a major part in keeping the centre operating and in maintaining morale.

After seven weeks on strike New Zealand Forest Products was ready to concede wage parity with Kawerau. An agreement was drawn up, but now the Prime Minister stepped in and denounced the settlement because, he said, it had been reached under duress and would start another wage spiral. The government issued regulations under the Remuneration Act, which set new wage rates for Kinleith at a level below the Kawerau rates.

The Kinleith workers decided to continue the strike. The nationwide relief effort intensified, guided by the Federation of Labour which had now taken control of the dispute. After a further month the government was forced to revoke its regulations and to accept the original wage settlement, with some face-saving concessions by the unions. "An exercise in futility from start to finish", said the Prime Minister, but to Jim Knox, the president of the Federation of Labour, Kinleith was the greatest victory he had ever seen.

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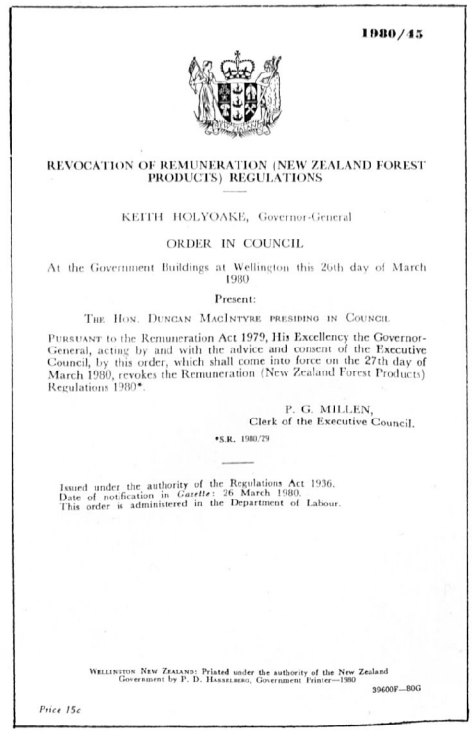

1980/45

REVOCATION OF REMUNERATION (NEW ZEALAND FOREST PRODUCTS) REGULATIONS

KEITH HOLYOAKE, Governor-General

ORDER IN COUNCIL

At the Government Buildings at Wellington this 26th day of March 1980

Present:

THE HON. DUNCAN MACINTYRE PRESIDING IN COUNCIL

PURSUANT to the Remuneration Act 1979, His Excellency the Governor-General, acting by and with the advice and consent of the Executive Council, by this order, which shall come into force on the 27th day of March 1980, revokes the Remuneration (New Zealand Forest Products) Regulations 1980*.

P. G. MILLEN,
Clerk of the Executive Council.

*S.R. 1980/79

Issued under the authority of the Regulations Act 1936.
Date of notification in *Gazette*: 26 March 1980.
This order is administered in the Department of Labour.

WELLINGTON NEW ZEALAND: Printed under the authority of the New Zealand Government by P. D. HASSELBERG, Government Printer—1980

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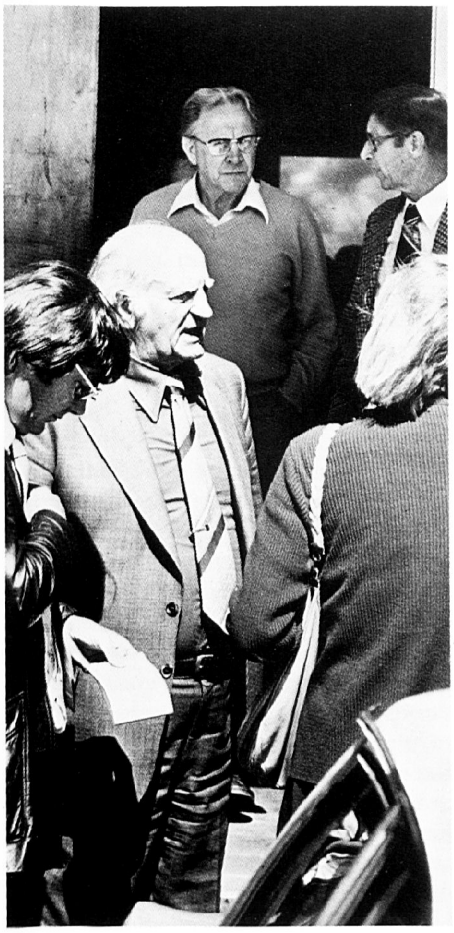

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The Right to Picket

New Zealand law does not recognise a right to picket, peacefully or otherwise. On the contrary though the word "picket" does not appear in any act, there are various statutes under which picketers can be prosecuted on charges of trespassing, intimidating, obstructing, or watching and besetting. These laws however have been rarely used. Picketing became accepted as a normal part of industrial conflict, and unionists assumed that they were exercising a legal right.

There was great indignation therefore when 33 picketers were arrested in Dunedin on 17 February 1981, and charged under an obscure clause of the Police Offences Act. The men, members of the Meatworkers Union, had been demonstrating outside the Ravensdown fertiliser works in protest at the dismissal of a colleague. The employer alleged that they were denying access to maintenance staff and complained to the police who arrested the picketers, including the local union secretary. According to the Chief Superintendent of the Dunedin Police District, there was no violence at the gates but the police "feared there might well have been some interference between the different parties, which may well have provoked a breach of the peace, possibly involving assault and obstruction charges". The men appeared in court the following day and were remanded at large. They then returned to the picket line.

Thousands of members of the Meatworkers Union walked off their jobs throughout New Zealand in protest against the company's "violence" in calling the police. Other workers struck in sympathy. The Federation of Labour asked the government to amend the law under which the men had been charged, and to "do something" about the charges. There were no further arrests at Ravensdown, and on 19 February a settlement was reached, whereby the company agreed to give the dismissed man the choice of reinstatement or of taking a lump sum of $1500 (he chose the latter), to pay $200 each to the strikers, and to ask the Attorney-General to drop the charges. The union lifted all bans and pickets and normal work resumed.

1. 20 February. Striking engineers picket the main entrance to Auckland Airport. (*New Zealand Herald* photo)

2. 23 February. Shop stewards lead a march to the airport gates. (*Auckland Star* 23 Feb. 1981)

3. 23 February. The engineers' protest march has entered the airport. *New Zealand Herald* photo)

Within a week the police again arrested picketers, this time at Auckland's airport. This dispute arose out of award negotiations between Air New Zealand and its ground engineers. When the talks broke down, the union gave the required fortnight's notice of intention to strike and imposed an overtime ban. From then on events escalated rapidly: the company dismissed men who refused overtime, about 1200 union members ceased work in sympathy, the company then used non-union labour to keep the planes flying, and the engineers picketed the airport. On 24 February a mass picket of hundreds of engineers effectively stopped Air New Zealand from operating, but 48 picketers were arrested on charges of trespassing under Civil Aviation Regulations. They were remanded on bail but Jim Butterworth, the Auckland secretary of the Engineers Union, and five other union officials refused bail and went to prison.

Again, as in the case of the Ravensdown arrests, thousands of workers struck in sympathy, mostly in the Auckland area. The Engineers Union

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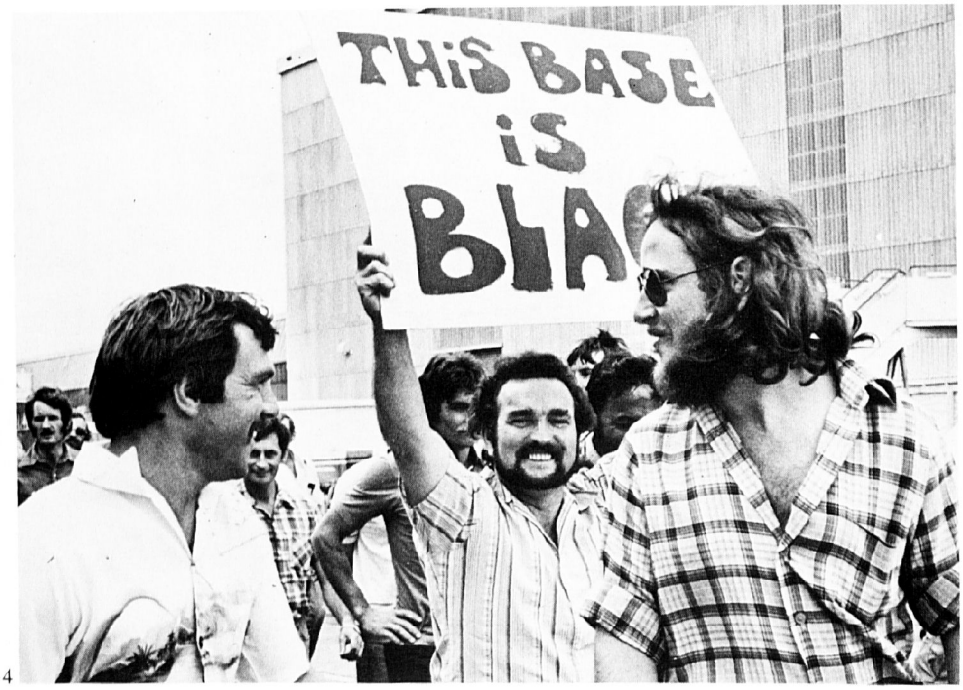
called out all its members in the Northern Industrial District, and the Auckland Trades Council issued a call for widespread stoppages. Transport, the waterfront and most major industries came to a halt. The Federation of Labour once more pressed the government to drop the charges and amend the law so as to establish a right of peaceful picketing.

On 26 February, Jim Knox addressed a meeting of 3000 union delegates in Auckland called to implement the general stoppage. It was 30 years to the day since an earlier National government had threatened to use emergency regulations against the watersiders' union. That afternoon, when the Attorney-General rejected all requests to interfere with the pending prosecutions, another confrontation far exceeding in scale the 1951 dispute seemed to be shaping up. At this point however, the Federation of Labour executive decided to seek a compromise solution. It offered a return to work if



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4. 23 February. "This base is black".
(Auckland Star photo)

5. 24 February. Picketers link arms to close the airport gates.
(Auckland Star 24 Feb. 1981)

the government agreed to hold discussions on changes to the picketing laws. Cabinet accepted the deal and the strikers, including the airport engineers, returned to work on 3 March.

The week's turmoil ended with a union march and a massive countermarch in Auckland's Queen Street. The unionists were heavily outnumbered. "We must pull together, not apart", was the message, but the conflict brought to the surface the deep-seated contradictions in New Zealand society. "You're all low class", a heckler shouted at the unionists, and the *New Zealand Herald* noted how "one well-dressed woman had abandoned her shopping to run along the footpath yelling at the marchers. 'I think the unionists are disgusting,' she said."

Jim Butterworth, however, was unmoved: "I'm not employed by the public," he said. "I'm employed by the Engineers Union. If Air New Zealand uses scabs again, we'll shift them again."

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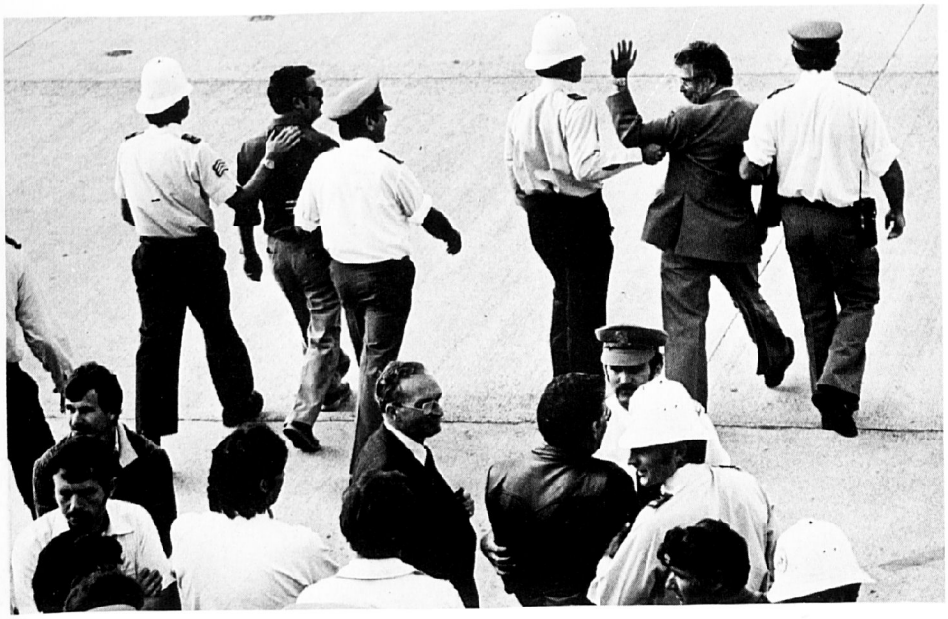

6. 24 February. A police inspector warns the picketers that they are trespassing in a security area. *(Auckland Star* 24 Feb. 1981)

7. 24 February. The first arrests: Jim Butterworth waves as he is led away. *(Auckland Star* 24 Feb. 1981)

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