The Maritimes

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Magazine of the Maritime Union of New Zealand

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NO SELF LOADING BY CREWS »»»»»»»»

Dockworkers' work is done by dockworkers . . .
Seafarers' work is done by seafarers . . .
IT'S THAT SIMPLE.

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The Maritimes

Edition 30, Winter 2010

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For more on-line photos, see www.flickr.com/maritimeunion

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Turning 30

by Victor Billot

This winter 2010 edition of the Maritimes magazine is the 30th edition since we began publishing at the start of 2003.
"Turning 30" is always a big deal, and a good time to look at where we've come from and where we are going.
The first edition of the Maritimes magazine came out shortly after the amalgamation of the New Zealand Waterfront Workers' Union and the New Zealand Seafarers' Union into the Maritime Union of New Zealand.
Since then the magazine has covered many of the major issues. Casualization, the shipping industry, strikes and lockouts, elections, and battling anti-union employers and their yellow associations have all featured prominently.
We've published a lot of history and had a strong international focus, because this reflects the heritage and present day approach of the Union.
There's also been coverage of the social and cultural side of the union - from the annual Interport sports tournament, through to Picnic Days, Old Timers functions, books and even music.
Our magazine circulates around the members of the Union, the maritime industry, politicians, veterans, the union movement and even the international scene.
We believe that the Maritimes is one of the leading New Zealand union magazines. However there is always room for improvement and we look to our Maritime Union members to tell us what they want to see in their magazine. So if there is something we are doing wrong or right, or something you want us to be doing, let us know, because it's your Union and your magazine.
On that note, we have seen a big upsurge in industrial and political campaigning lately.
Around the world the ongoing fallout from the global crisis of finance is slowly but surely creating resentment amongst working people.
Here in New Zealand, the National Government has started to return to its traditional approach by attacking the welfare system, while standing by and watching unemployment rise to the highest levels seen for years.
As a union we have to respond by both being active on the job and being active in promoting the interests of working class people politically, industrially and socially.
The Maritime Union has not only been active on the job, negotiating with employers, but is also going through a stage of renewal and building new connections.
The strategic alliance we have formed with the RMTU is already making progress, and we have been actively involved in international work with the ITF, offshore oil and gas, trans Tasman transport, and Mining and Maritime alliances.
In New Zealand we've been actively supporting campaigns to phase out methyl bromide, stop privatization, call for a trial of national standards in schools, keep an eye on free trade deals, and take GST off food. You can read about some of these campaigns in this edition of the Maritimes.
The Maritime Union is an active union and a campaigning union. That's one thing that hasn't changed after 30 editions of the Maritimes magazine.

Strategic alliance builds unity in transport industry

by General Secretary Joe Fleetwood

The Maritime Union has made good progress in a number of areas in the last few months.

These have included a good executive meeting in Wellington plus the signing of a couple of new initiatives that will see us working together closely with other transport unions.

National Executive Meeting, April 2010

This was the first national meeting of the Union since the 2009 Triennial Conference. It was a two day meeting and the feedback is that it was a productive session.

The Union is entering into a renewal phase and we are working on improving how we do things. These new plans were the focus of the meeting.

A strategic plan for the development of the Union which has been developed by the national officials was presented by me to the Executive.

This plan shows the way forward for the Union and a copy is enclosed in the middle pages of this edition of the Maritimes.

It is now up for discussion at the Branch Level and we hope to make good progress and have this plan well underway by the end of the year.

Another key event was the signing of a Strategic Alliance charter between the Maritime Union of New Zealand (MUNZ) and the Rail and Maritime Transport Union (RMTU.)

RMTU National Secretary Wayne Butson, National President Jim Kelly and National Vice President Aubrey Wilkinson attended the signing and discussions that took place.

This is a good forward step for both Unions and provides the framework to get us working together in New Zealand ports. A full report is included later in this edition of the Maritimes.

On this issue, the Maritime Union attended the RMTU Ports Forum where I spoke and stated that the Strategic Alliance will not work or amount to much unless there is trust and we agree to fight as one when we have to.

Other guests included NZEI General Secretary Paul Goulter, who has been a good friend of the Maritime Union for many years and has provided assistance for our Union in planning its future.

Paul gave us a good rundown on what the NZEI, the primary teachers union, is up to and the reasons behind their campaign against the National Government's National Standards.

Other union business we discussed included branch reports, finance, remits, international, communications, superannuation, political, industrial and ITF reports.

Paddy Crumlin stands for ITF President position

Our national executive meeting also heard from Paddy Crumlin, National Secretary of the Maritime Union of Australia, who took time out of a very busy schedule to drop by and address our executive.

Paddy is a leading figure in the global union movement and has been a good friend to both me and the Maritime Union of New Zealand for many years.

His knowledge of the industry is second to none and is combined with his ability to put things in a straightforward and colourful way.

Paddy is standing for the position of President of the International Transport Workers' Federation.

As we all know Paddy's tireless efforts on behalf of workers speak for themselves and we are confident he will continue his active style and get things done when elected.

He has the full support of the Maritime Union of New Zealand in this and we look forward to his successful candidacy.

Alliance Party transport meeting

I attended a meeting in Wellington recently where one of the speakers was the recently appointed Alliance Party transport spokesperson Trevor Hanson.

Trevor delivered an in-depth overview of the challenges facing the transport industry and workers in it, which he asked me to supplement from the floor.

It is good to see the Alliance Party supporting cabotage, public ownership of ports, and action on casualization, three areas of major concern in the transport sector, three areas that no other political party has been pushing.

The second speaker was Maria McMillan of Right to Water, a group fighting to stop privatization of Wellington water.

The Government is pushing to have water meters and privatization. This could see working class people being charged to drink the water that belongs to all of us.

Metering our water is wrong and the Maritime Union is strongly opposed to user pays and metering what belongs to all New Zealanders.

Wellington city councillor Paul Bruce from the Green Party spoke on local government issues where it seems local democracy is under attack from the National Government.

The Maritime Union will not stand by while democracy, local, national or international, is under attack.

Labour Party public meeting

I recently attended a Labour Party public meeting in Johnsonville. The meeting was opened by local MP Charles Chauvel who introduced Labour Party leader Phil Goff. Phil gave a good overview and touched on topics of the day including GST, ACC and mining in our national parks, which are three good working class issues.
I asked when the Labour Party is returned to Government that they commit to stopping any mining in our beautiful national parks.
I asked if National put up GST, would Labour reduce it, restore to current level or abolish GST altogether.
Finally I asked about National messing with ACC, and is Labour committed to returning ACC to how it has been working for some years.
As a Labour Party affiliate, the Maritime Union will be working to keep Labour on track and assist in the development of pro-working class policies for the next Labour-led Government to introduce.

Offshore resources

With all the debate about mining in national parks, it is interesting that one key issue has not received much attention. That is who makes the money from any industry extracting resources that belong to all of us.
It was interesting that Phil Goff in his talk also mentioned the pittance we will receive in royalties from the big multinational mining company Rio Tinto (who are part owners of the Bluff smelter).
This is a multinational that workers have been struggling with throughout the world for decent union jobs and conditions.
I told the meeting that there is offshore underwater mining going on in New Zealand which will only increase with time. This includes gold, silver and zinc, along with offshore oil and gas, with massive profits flowing overseas.
There is no reason why these resources should not be utilized by a public owned corporation and the benefits returned to the workers of New Zealand.
We note that two major oil and gas producers with offshore reserves do this. Norway and Venezuela are two very different nations but both are making sure in their own way that the benefit of these resources are returned to the people, not just a small elite of shareholders.
On that note, Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd has introduced a higher rate of tax on mining 'super profits.'
The Maritime Union believes our own Government should be looking at this model.
In our view, the only complaint we have with Kevin Rudd's approach is that it does not go far enough.

Trans Tasman Transport Union Federation

I attended a meeting in Sydney in April where representatives of the big Australian and New Zealand transport unions formalized a federation to help us work together and be more effective.
The Alliance is comprised on the Australian side of the Maritime Union of Australia, Rail, Tram and Bus Union, and Transport Workers' Union of Australia.
In New Zealand we have MUNZ, RMTU, EPMU and NDU on board.
A further report on this later in this edition of the Maritimes.

Seafarers History

The long awaited history of the New Zealand Seafarers' Union has now entered the final phase with the approval of the manuscript.
It is now with the publishers and we hope to have the final product in our hands within a year.

That's all for this issue of the Maritimes. All members should be vigilant of health and safety issues and remember we should ask what can I do for my Union, not what is my Union doing for me.
It takes guts and principles to stay collective, and through working collectively we will get the best results for the working class.

Contributions welcome.

All members are welcome to send in contributions and suggestions to The Maritimes. We need photos, letters, articles, comments and anything else you can think of.

If there is something you'd like to see in The Maritimes, tell us!

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Safety in the workplace

by National President Phil Adams

Crew deaths aboard log ship

The death of two overseas crew members aboard the TPC Wellington at Marsden Point in May was one of the worst incidents we have seen in recent years on the New Zealand waterfront.
It is believed that the crew members were asphyxiated after going into the ships hold, but until a full report from official sources is available the Maritime Union is not jumping to conclusions, unlike some others in the maritime industry.
Nor are we assigning blame or responsibility for the incident until the full facts are known.
The TPC Wellington seems to be a very unlucky ship. Or perhaps it is more than unlucky.
A further crew member was injured in the incident, another crew member was injured earlier in the week of the fatalities in a separate incident, and there was another death aboard the vessel in recent months in unusual circumstances.
New Zealand ITF inspector Grahame McLaren attended the vessel in the days after the incident and worked hard to get the crew repatriated, for which they were grateful.
The Maritime Union will be following up the incident and we hope it serves as a warning to all members of how easily things can go badly wrong in a very short space of time in the unforgiving work environment we are in.
Be aware and if there are any concerns about you or your workmates working environment, stop work, contact the Union and make your concerns known.
It's too late after the fact.

Methyl Bromide

On the issue of health and safety, the Maritime Union has joined a coalition working to end the use of this fumigant in New Zealand.
The Union has supported submissions by the Council of Trade Unions to the Government agencies reviewing the use of Methyl Bromide.
The health risks and environmental hazards of this substance are too great and we need to introduce alternatives as soon as possible.

No self loading

An ongoing problem both in New Zealand and around the world is the constant pressure for dockers' work to be done by seafarers.
We must ensure that waterfront work traditionally done by waterfront workers is kept that way.
If any waterfront workers are encouraging 'self loading' by crews by allowing it to happen, then don't complain when your jobs are axed.
Employers would be very happy to have your job done for free by an overseas seafarer who has no choice in the matter.
At the end of the day, it's your job, so look after it.

Unemployment

Something that should be worried about is how unemployment has risen to around 7% in recent times. It is supposed to be dropping again but with the latest series of world economic problems it is likely that the worst may yet be to come.
As a nation we seem to have become complacent about unemployment, and accept that nothing can be done about it.
The biggest enemy for working people is unemployment.
Even a short period without work can mean for many workers a descent into debt, family problems, health issues and stress.
Unemployment can lead to workers accepting low paid and casual jobs, and allow employers to play off workers against each other for jobs.
The disgraceful comment of the Prime Minister that some unemployed people need a 'kick in the pants' should be looked at in the light that since coming to office tens of thousands of workers have lost their jobs through closures and the effects of the global recession.
The National Government is offering nothing to solve unemployment and has returned to their reprehensible attitudes of the 1990s which saw unemployment top 10% and the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of people turned upside down.
We need to be demanding that unemployment is sorted out.

"If any waterfront workers are encouraging 'self loading' by crews by allowing it to happen, then don't complain when your jobs are axed."

Flag of Convenience behind rig disaster

The flag of convenience system has been connected to the oil disaster in the Gulf of Mexico. The US Congress has been told that Deepwater Horizon's registration under the flag of convenience of the Marshall Islands was a factor in the nation's worst oil spill disaster.

The Deepwater Horizon rig was owned by Transocean but under lease to BP when it exploded and sank on 20 April 2010, 64 kilometers off the coast of Louisiana, killing 11 crew members and gushing an estimated 12,000 to 19,000 barrels of crude oil a day into the Gulf of Mexico.

According to Guardian newspaper: "Political ripples from the Deepwater Horizon oil disaster have travelled as far as the north Pacific, where authorities of the remote Marshall Islands have been found to be the ones technically responsible for scrutinising safety standards on the doomed BP rig."

Questions have been raised in the US Congress about 34 of Transocean's oil rigs. At issue is whether the Marshall Islands' shipping registry could be responsible for ensuring compliance with quality standards for construction, equipment and operation on the rig.

Jim Oberstar, a Democratic congressman from Minnesota, suggested last week that the move was to scrimp on safety inspections:

"Coastguard inspection of a US-flagged mobile offshore drilling unit takes two to three weeks, but safety examination of a foreign flag offshore drilling unit, such as Deepwater Horizon, takes four to eight hours."

Judy Chu, a Democratic member of Congress, from California said Transocean was seeking "to avoid safety regulations by flagging the vessel outside the US".

The International Transport Workers' Federation has long warned that flags of convenience are best known for being a way of avoiding taxes, paying cheap registration fees and enabling ship owners to exploit cheap labour.

Transocean has admitted to registering its rigs in the Marshall Islands in order to gain a "financial tax benefit" and to solve the solution for the existing logistical issues.

The Marshall Islands shipping registry is administered by a private firm, International Registries Inc.

According to the Daily Telegraph, BP revealed that "the accident disaster had cost it almost $US1 billion dollars, helping spark a near 17 per cent plunge in its shares after a failed operation to fix the leak".

US President Barack Obama has pledged that if US laws have been broken leading to this death and destruction, that his government will bring those responsible to justice.

The US Government has launched civil and criminal investigations into the oil spill.

For more information see http://www.mua.org.au/media/uploads/Horizon.pdf

Photo © Kate Davison / Greenpeace.
Check the climate change webpage http://www.greenpeace.org/new-zealand/campaigns/climate-change

Senior geologist talks of potential 'Pacific Norway'

As big multinational energy explorers focus on New Zealand's offshore petroleum basins, the chief petroleum geologist for Crown Minerals, Dr Richard Cook, says the oil and gas yet to be discovered could be key drivers of the nation's economy.

Dr Cook said New Zealand's oil and gas exports totalled $2.8 billion in the past financial year, beaten only by dairy and meat exports, and these exports were expected to rise significantly.

"We're looking to transform the country," he said.

State-owned GNS Science has previously talked about the potential for up to 10 billion barrels of oil to be recovered from the nation's deepwater frontiers.

Dr Cook said that rather than simply meeting a percentage of the nation's needs, the Government would like to provide energy for the nation over decades -- which would require multiple fields of the size of the Tui/Pohokura production area, and the conversion of lignite deposits to liquid fuels such as diesel, as well as the tapping of frozen methane hydrates on the seabed.

But a "major step" for the nation would be several large finds of natural gas or oil.

"The real ultimate aim would be to become a 'Pacific Norway', he said. This would need multiple big discoveries in the 10 prospective basins offshore - likely all at greater depths than the 100m water depths of production wells off Taranaki.

The government has been providing seismic data on some of the basins to attract explorers and had recently collected seismic data in the Bounty Trough off Canterbury and the Pegasus Basin off Wellington, and these areas may be opened up to exploration bids this year.

Offers for the Reinga and Northland basins were due to close on August 18 and allocation of exploration permits would be decided on the basis of how much work companies were willing to do.

Brazilian giant Petrobras recently obtained a five-year exploration permit to explore the Raukumara Basin off the North Island's East Coast, and a few months ago American company Anadarko Petroleum Corporation acquired acreage off Otago, while ExxonMobil planned to explore the Great South Basin.

Texas-based Anadarko, which has until August 21 to decide whether to go ahead with a $100m exploration well in its Otago prospect, in which it is a 50 percent shareholder with Origin Energy, is a 25 percent partner in the leaking Gulf of Mexico well, where BP is the operator.

About $314m was spent on New Zealand exploration in 2008-2009 and development of fields such as Maari, Manaia and Kupe totalled $1.27b, and in the same year the Government picked up royalties of $519m, with exports from the newly-developed fields expected to lift from this year.

Rail workers fight for jobs

by Victor Billot

The Rail and Maritime Transport Union are fighting for their members to have the right to build electric train units for Auckland in New Zealand workshops.

But KiwiRail management and the National Government are refusing to back jobs, income and industrial by weakly claiming that New Zealand is incapable of doing the job.

National want to send the $500 million contract for building the units overseas.

The Rail and Maritime Union says that New Zealand rail workers are skilled, experienced, and want to do this work.

They have facts to back them up, and have even gained the support of local Government and business.

A report carried out by economists BERL has estimated that building these trains in New Zealand would add between 770 to 1270 additional jobs and $232 to $250 million to the New Zealand economy.

From both a job creation point of view, and wider benefits to the New Zealand economy, there is a strong case to build these trains in New Zealand.

Maritime workers back rail plan

Maritime Union General Secretary Joe Fleetwood says the news of the failure of public owned KiwiRail to bid for the contract to build the electric units reflects badly on the Government.

The Maritime Union, who earlier this year joined in a strategic union alliance with the RMTU, is backing the rail workers' campaign.

"The decision by Kiwirail not to bid for the job shows a failure of leadership, at both the corporate level and at the Government level."

He says since National came to office, tens of thousands of New Zealanders have lost their jobs, and now it appears National have sabotaged hundreds more high quality jobs for workers in a recession by failing to provide leadership and giving away work that can be done locally.

Mr Fleetwood says that New Zealanders must continue to put pressure on the Government to deliver jobs and industry to New Zealand.

Blame the system

It's important to remember the key issue here is not New Zealand workers versus Chinese workers. That attitude simply becomes a racist attitude of "us against them."

The real issue is that under free trade policies, which have been pushed for the last generation, and a global capitalist economic system, workers are forced to compete with each other by the system. Unemployment and recession is an inevitable result.

Jobs needed

New Zealand should have the ability to manufacture its own electric trains through our publicly owned KiwiRail, develop our industrial base and provide much needed work.

Driving through South Dunedin the other day, it is obvious to me this is a resilient but not wealthy community. Unemployment is high. When 170 jobs were advertised at a new Bunnings warehouse in the area, they received over 1700 applications.

The jobs and incomes from a major contract like building electric train units at Hillside could provide a huge boost to a hard pressed community like South Dunedin.

There would be skilled and unionized jobs available on decent wages rather than the casual, low skill jobs that many workers are now trapped in.

The jobs would create a local income boost that would flow through to the local service economy resulting in more jobs and probably an improvement in local facilities. The long term benefits to New Zealand industrial and manufacturing capacity would be positive.

Yet the National Government refuses to back the project.

That is why the RMTU is fighting back and demanding that the Government and KiwiRail management get the trains built in New Zealand workshops.

All workers should support their campaign and petition which is available on their website at http://www.rmtunion.org.nz/articles/article-building-rolling-stock-in-nz.php

RMTU members march up George Street, Dunedin, 8 June 2010, supported by Maritime Union and other workers, in their campaign to have New Zealand rolling stock built in New Zealand workshops. A rally in the Octagon featured speakers from the RMTU, Council of Trade Unions, several Labour MPs, Maritime Union and Alliance Party (photo by Victor Billot)

Australian minimum wage lifts to $15 an hour

The Fair Work Australia's specialist Minimum Wages Panel last week lifted their minimum wage to $15 an hour from 1 July 2010.

About 1.4 million Australian workers are affected by the decision, including about 100,000 who earn the National Minimum Wage.

This means that the Australian minimum wage is around 45 percent higher than the $NZ12.75 minimum wage. Unions in New Zealand have targeted a lift to $15 in the minimum wage and recently collected nearly 200,000 signatures in support.

New Zealand Council of Trade Unions Secretary Peter Conway says "It is all very well for our Government to have a target to catch up with Australia by 2025 but what about a target for 2011 or 2012?"

"The reality is that we are drifting further and further behind.

Ordinary time average weekly earnings in Australia rose 5.9 percent in the year to February. New Zealand's average ordinary time hourly earnings rose 2.2 percent in the year to March, and actually fell between September 2009 and March."

The gap in take home pay between those on low and high incomes will widen even further in October with the effect of the tax cuts.

For instance the gap in take home pay between someone on $30,000 and $120,000 grows by $72.89.

Peter Conway said, "We can't close the gap with Australia with tax cuts. We need to lift wages through regular and considerable wage rises, a lift in the minimum wage, and improvements in productivity that flow on to workers."

Maersk concerns on port merger hard to take seriously

The Maritime Union has dismissed comments by global shipping line Maersk about the merger of Port of Lyttelton and Port of Otago.

The two ports announced a planned merger of operations in April, subject to approval by the Chamber of Commerce.

Maersk claimed concerns about the "dominance" of the new port structure and how this would affect prices, services and market competition.

Mr Fleetwood says it is hard to take such concerns with a straight face.

"Maersk is a massive operation, the world's largest shipping and container terminal conglomerate, and they must really be short of things to worry about if this is all they can come up with."

He says that Maersk's ongoing global growth through mergers and acquisitions indicated that they had no concerns with any effect on competition by their own operations.

Mr Fleetwood says the goal of any capitalist corporate like Maersk was to dominate the market and reduce their risk and exposure to competition.

"Let's face it, the reality is that they are the ones dominating the market and threatening competition, not two ports in the South Island of New Zealand."

Mr Fleetwood says the problem with New Zealand ports was the exact opposite of Mr Bevis' claims.

"New Zealand ports have long been played off against each other by powerful shipping companies, and even large local corporates such as Fonterra."

This has resulted in serious disruption to regional ports, which had many negative implications for New Zealand's economy and social stability.

Mr Fleetwood says the Maritime Union was cautiously optimistic about the merger between Port of Lyttelton and Port of Otago.

"Obviously it is early days, but ports working together like this could have benefits, as long as it does not lead to any regional ports being undermined."

He says the Union would like to see ports remain under public ownership, but also come under some form of national co-ordination, a concept which the Union calls "Kiwiport."

"Ports are not just another business, they are key infrastructure, and the gateway for New Zealand exports and imports. They need to be operated in the national interest."

The Maritime Union had been active in the Keep Our Port Public campaign in 2006 during an unsuccessful attempt to part-privatize Port of Lyttelton through a deal with global terminal operator Hutchison.

National budget an attack on working class

The Maritime Union of New Zealand says the 2010 budget is an attack on working class New Zealanders.

Maritime Union General Secretary Joe Fleetwood says the increase in GST to 15% was taking money from the pockets of workers to pay for tax cuts for people like John Key, who had so much money they would have trouble knowing what to do with it.

He says rather than increasing GST it would be easier for workers just to hand over a $5 note every time they saw someone walk past in an expensive suit, because this was the actual effect of the GST increase.

"It is a wealth transfer from low to middle income earners to the wealthy."

GST was a regressive tax that would hit struggling New Zealand families hard.

Mr Fleetwood says that a major problem for New Zealand is growing inequality of wealth.

Inequality leads to social breakdown and long term economic and social problems, as international research has shown, and National's budget was making inequality worse.

He says the idea promoted by John Key that only high income earners contributed to New Zealand's economy and society was both offensive and wrong.

"If we are at the stage where New Zealand is being held hostage by a tiny minority of the super rich, maybe it is time to question whether we still live in a democracy?"

Mr Fleetwood says that the international evidence shows that excessive wealth was being accumulated by a few at the top end of the wealth scale, while the majority of workers were squeezed by rising costs and static incomes.

"John Key is rewarding the big business, finance sector CEO types who are the backers of the National Government, whose greed knows no limits."

He says the obsession with tax cuts was leading New Zealand down a dead end road as tax was essential to pay for hospitals, schools, infrastructure and other vital public goods.

However the tax burden was increasingly falling on low to middle income earners rather than the wealthy, which was the wrong way around.

The Maritime Union is backing the tax justice campaign petition to remove GST on food, for more information see www.nogstonfood.org

New Zealand ITF inspector Grahame MacLaren with relieved crew members of the TPC Wellington following negotiations to repatriate them

Deaths aboard the TPC Wellington:
2 dead in onboard incident in Marsden Point

Two deaths and serious injuries aboard a Flag of Convenience log ship in Whangarei in May created national headlines. ITF New Zealand inspector Grahame MacLaren worked with the crew in the aftermath of the tragedy and he reports here on his experiences.

On the 3 May 2010 there were two fatalities on board the Panamanian registered vessel TPC Wellington IMO 8921822 while loading logs at the far north port of Marsden Point near Whangarei.
It appears the Korean First Officer had gone down a manhole access to the number 5 hold and collapsed, then a Myanmar AB followed him down in an attempt to rescue him and also collapsed.
A third man, an Engineer then went down to aid the first two and collapsed as well.
Two further men, this time using breathing apparatus entered the space and removed the three collapsed men.
Tragically the First Officer and AB were already dead. The Engineer fortunately was still alive and was rushed to hospital in a serious condition, he later recovered and rejoined the vessel.

The day after this tragedy I received a telephone call from Chaplain Des Olney from the Marsden Point Mission to Seafarers.
Des informed me that he had been on board the vessel that morning where the crew had raised concerns with him regarding fears for their safety. There was extremely low morale amongst the Myanmar ratings, and they made it clear to him that they wanted off the vessel.
After discussion with Maritime Union of New Zealand General Secretary Joe Fleetwood, I travelled to Marsden Point to look into the situation.
I arrived at the vessel later in the day and spoke with the crew.
They told me that apart from the two deaths the day before there has also been an earlier death of another Myanmar AB, and that a Myanmar oiler had been flown home that very morning with a serious shoulder injury.
This vessel had had three deaths onboard and a serious injury within two months.
The men were understandably upset and feared for their safety, they expressed to me their desire to be repatriated home from Marsden Point, and told me they were willing to refuse to sail the vessel to achieve repatriation.

I approached the Captain and company officials who were on board and insisted that the men be replaced and repatriated as soon as possible.
I told them that the crew were refusing to sail the vessel in order to achieve their repatriation.
Telephone calls and emails were exchanged between the vessel and the company in Korea and the manning agents in Myanmar, but no progress was made that day.
I left the vessel around 2100 that night promising the men I would return in the morning.
The next morning I returned to the vessel and carried on with negotiations on the crew's behalf.
The company were very unwilling to let the men leave the vessel in New Zealand but eventually proposed a compromise where if the crew took the vessel to its next port of Incheon in Korea they would repatriate them from there.
The crew rejected this offer and negotiations continued for some hours until that evening a phone call was received from Myanmar that changed everything.

The nature of this phone call left the men unwilling to continue in their quest for repatriation from New Zealand. This obviously was a very difficult situation but the welfare of the crew had to remain our top priority.
With the men's new concerns in mind I again approached the company representatives to seek some sort of compromise.
We eventually came to a tentative agreement where if the men agreed to sail the vessel to its next port of Incheon (a 20 day voyage) they would be repatriated on arrival at the company's expense and all wages owing would be paid in full and each man would receive a cash bonus. The men would also have the right to refuse any work they felt was unsafe.
I put this to the men and after a short discussion they agreed to accept the agreement.
The terms of the agreement were put in writing and signed by company official Sean Kim, with each man receiving a copy.
I informed the Company men, Captain and crew that I would arrange for someone to meet the vessel on arrival in Korea to talk to the men to ensure that the terms of the agreement were met.
I contacted the Korean ITF Coordinator Ms H.K. Kim in Seoul who kindly agreed to arrange this.

While we were ultimately unable to get the men repatriated from New Zealand, the men were happy with the compromise and very grateful for our intervention on their behalf.
As I left the ship that night the men were smiling: it was the first time I had seen any of them smile since my arrival at Marsden Point.

Update from Korea

On the arrival of the TPC Wellington in the Port of Incheon, Korea, on the evening of 25 May 2010, ITF inspector Kyoung-woo Jang visited the crew aboard the vessel.
Among the Myanmar crew, four crew decided to sign off and five crew would be on board until their contract finished during last voyage.
The following day meetings took place with the employers and Master and the ITF requested that the company pay repatriation costs for the crew returning home and give a allowance for shorthand manning and compensation for accident to crew.
Additionally, the company should conduct education and training to prevent accidents like this.
The company accepted this. The ITF checked repatriation for the four crew and their allowance and the crew were happy with this.

"The Engineer was still alive and was rushed to hospital in a serious condition – he later recovered and rejoined the vessel"

TPC Wellington at Marsden Point, following the death of two crew members (photo by Grahame MacLaren)

Crew concerns include pay and pirates

By Grahame McLaren
ITF Inspector

On 30 March 2010 at the port of Auckland I conducted an ITF inspection on the Antigua and Barbuda registered and New Zealand managed flag of convenience vessel Charelle.

As part of my ongoing ITF contact training program I was accompanied on this inspection by MUNZ member and new ITF Contact Jennifer Neilson, and existing ITF Contact and MUNZ Auckland Walking Delegate Dave Phillips.

The Charelle is managed by Tradex Marine Ltd of Auckland and has no ITF approved agreement in place.

It was at the time manned by Sri Lankans with the ratings on board being paid below ITF rates, and even less than ILO minimums.

The Captain was very polite and cooperated with all requests for documentation without argument. I made him aware that the lack of an ITF approved agreement was a big problem and that something must be done to rectify the situation.

At this point the Captain informed us that the manager of Tradex Marine Ben Evans was on board.

A few minutes later Mr Evans came in and introduced himself to us. I explained our situation to him and he explained his to us,that he was operating in a very competitive area around the Middle East competing with companies paying very low wages.

After some discussion about the situation I suggested to Mr Evans that I put together an example agreement for the vessel and send it to him for his appraisal with a view to an eventual signing. He agreed to this and we left the vessel.

Three weeks or so later I received a phone call from the Captain of the vessel now back in Auckland, to the effect that no one on board had been paid for the last 3 1/2 months. I informed him that I would arrange for someone to visit them the next day to investigate the situation.

I called MUNZ Auckland Secretary Garry Parsloe who kindly agreed to arrange the visit. The next morning Walking delegate Dave Phillips went on board, Dave obtained details of all names and relevant joining dates necessary for a wage claim calculation and forwarded them to me to process the claim.

In the meantime Garry Parsloe contacted Ben Evans of Tradex Marine informing him the men must be paid as a matter of urgency.

The crew were eventually paid, with Dave Phillips confirming the payments totalling around US$75,000 and collecting all relevant paper work.

During the course of the back pay process it came to our attention that the crew previous to this one were also owed around US$80,000 in unpaid wages.

What makes this case worse is that this previous crew were held captive on board the Charelle in Somalia by pirates for six months from 12 June 2009 to 3 December 2009, and it is for this period that they are owed the wages.

I am currently in negotiations with Tradex Marine to have these outstanding wages also paid.

The story doesn't end there however, I have since been contacted by the crew of Tradex Marine's other vessel Southern Express, they also informed they had not been paid for three months.

After negotiation with Tradex Marine the crew of this vessel have now also been paid in full. The total for this vessel amounting to around US$70,000.

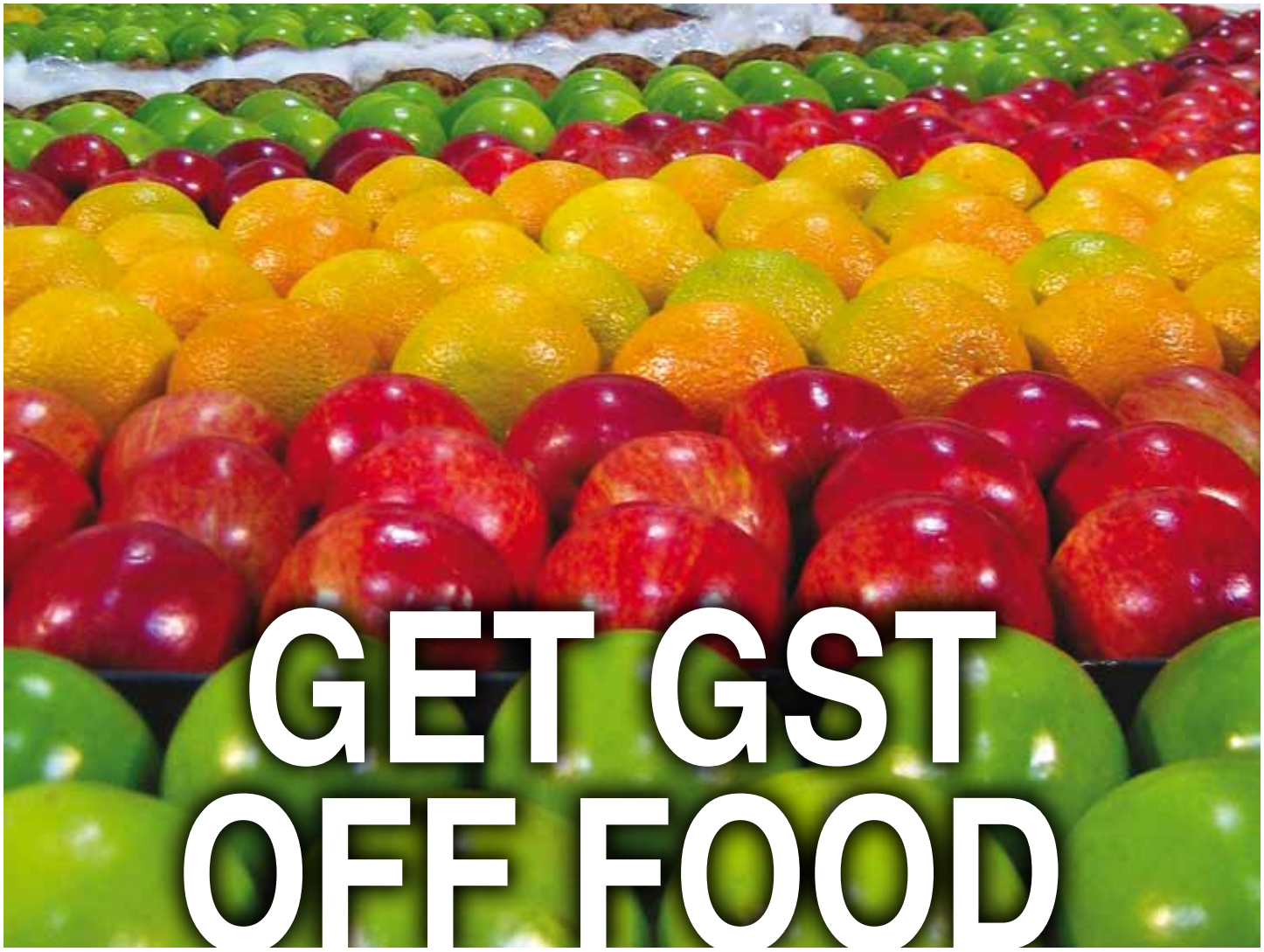
Dave Phillips once again confirming the payments and collecting all necessary documentation.

I'd like to thank Garry Parsloe and Dave Phillips for their all their help getting these seafarers paid what they were owed.

International Transport Workers' Federation, Berlin, 15–19 March 2010

By Garry Parsloe
National Vice President

Maritime Union General Secretary Joe Fleetwood and I arrived in Berlin late on the 14 March 2010 to be met with snow and freezing conditions.
The Dockers" Section meeting was opened on the 15 March by Paddy Crumlin, the Dockers' Section Chairman. Paddy welcomed everyone to the meeting and laid the platform for the week of Dockers' issues.
We discussed and approved the previous minutes from London (November 2009) which contained the MUNZ/RMTU update on the situation in the Port of Tauranga where the Port Company was actively promoting Yellow Union Labour to the disadvantage of ITF Affiliated Dock Workers.
After dealing with the above we went into a section headed "Dockers' Moving Forward into 2010".
We had discussions around the Ports of Convenience Campaign and other major issues facing Dockers' around the world
In this Section we talked about the massive move that is going on to introduce more Yellow Unions onto the New Zealand Waterfront.
In the afternoon on the first day we worked on Flag of Convenience campaigns, International Bargaining Forum (IBF) agreements, information gathering, Seafarers' Charter, funding and audits and the formation of a 'Maritime Round Table.'
In the late afternoon we addressed the problem of non-Seafarers' work, that of seafarers being asked to do cargo handling and other work traditionally or historically done by dockworkers.
After some discussion it was agreed to change some wording within the Clause so it was made absolutely clear that there is a clear breach if Seafarers' are asked to do this work.
Late in the afternoon we had a Gender Work Report which reported from the Women's February 2010 Conference.
General Secretary Joe Fleetwood gave a presentation in this section regarding women's involvement and activities within the Maritime Union of New Zealand.
On day two 16 March both Joe and I attended the second day of the Dockers' Section. Paddy opened the meeting by re-introducing the discussion around gender work.
Frank Leys then gave an update report on the GTI Mumbai dispute.
The case with Gateway Terminals (APM) is ongoing in Mumbai, India and the violence is ongoing.
Paddy Crumlin then reported on the SIPTU dispute in Ireland.
Frank Leys reported on a major dispute in Costa Rica.
Bob McEllrath gave a report on the ILWU dispute in Canada and the Rio Tinto lockout in Boron, California.
I gave the next report which was on our dispute with the Ports of Auckland. I gave a lengthy report on the dispute and enlarged on the Ports' attempt to outsource and introduce contracting out onto the Auckland Waterfront. After my presentation the Dockers' Section carried a resolution of full support for our struggle with the Ports of Auckland.
The resolution put up by MUNZ was:
"That this meeting of the Fair Practices Committee give full and unequivocal support to the Maritime Union of New Zealand in their struggle to resist the introduction of outsourcing and contracting out onto the Auckland Waterfront which will damage the conditions of employment of the ITF Dockers' in the Port."
The final resolution carried was:
"The Dockers' Section Committee, meeting in Berlin on 16 March 2010 gives its full and unequivocal support, which is lawfully possible, to the Maritime Union of New Zealand in their struggle to resist the introduction of outsourcing and contracting out in the Auckland Waterfront which will damage the conditions of employment for the ITF Affiliated Dockers' in the Port."
Paddy Crumlin and Frank Leys both spoke on how we vote at Congress in Mexico in August 2010.
The next issue was the ITF Seafarers' Trust and who should sit on that Trust.
The final issue on day two was "The Tallinn Declaration".
This is to declare that under no circumstances should the wages within the area be lower that ITF TCC Benchmark.
The above issue was discussed then set aside.
This concluded day two.
The first day of the ITF Fair Practices Committee (FPC) was held on the 18 March 2010.
After the welcome address we had a power point presentation on the Flag of Convenience (FOC) campaign review.
The session covered the FOC policy review, formation of a Maritime Round Table, Mexico Policy, international bargaining, crew interests, national flags, cargo handling clause, bilateral relationships, wages for nationals, training, education, inspectorate review, bilateral agreements and regional standards.
Later in the day we addressed the resolution on non Seafarers Work cargo handling.
There is growing concern that there seems to be more and more incidents of Seafarers' doing lashings onboard their vessels.
This is Dockers' work and Seafarers must not do this work and Seafarers must not be required or induced to carry out cargo handling.
The Shipping Companies are the enemy. They instruct the Captains who in turn instruct the crew to do this work.
We must focus on these Companies that are doing this and mount a campaign against them.
On Friday the 19 March 2010 was the second day of the ITF Fair Practices Committee.
The committee addressed changes and amendments to the FOC Campaign Review.
The next session was to endorse all the Resolutions from the Dockers' and Seafarers' Sections.
I presented the Resolution on our dispute with the Ports of Auckland from the Dockers' Section to the Fair Practices' Committee.
After my report the Resolution was endorsed unanimously.
We had a Dockers' Section Report then a Seafarers' Section Report from the Monday and Tuesday meetings.
There were Cruise Ship Reports before Campaign Reports.
Just before we closed for the day we had a Fishing Industry Presentation.
The ITF Dockers' Section and the Fair Practices' Meeting were both most productive.



GET GST OFF FOOD

The Maritime Union of New Zealand has endorsed a new campaign to remove GST from food and tax financial speculation.
The Maritimes magazine is urging all workers to support the Tax Justice campaign.
Organizers say GST hits workers on low to middle incomes hard and that is why they want GST taken off food.
Maritime Union of New Zealand General Secretary Joe Fleetwood says the campaign is "an important cause for the working class to get behind."
Mr Fleetwood says the Maritime Union is the first union to endorse the campaign and would be promoting it to the rest of the Union movement in New Zealand.
The petition kicked off with a national day of action on Saturday 22 May, with nearly 900 signatures collected at the seven petition stalls organised around the country.
Since that time hundreds more signatures have been collected.
The tax justice campaign was launched shortly after the budget was announced in May 2010.
Campaign spokesperson (and Maritimes magazine editor) Victor Billot says National's game plan is to increase GST and give tax breaks to the rich, while attacking government spending on public services.
Mr Billot says rising food prices are hurting working people.
"Removing GST from food would provide an immediate and lasting benefit."
Taking GST off food was affordable if the government was to tax financial speculation, he says.
"A modest financial transactions' tax that targets large financial institutions is gaining support around the world following the global financial crisis."
He says the "Robin Hood Tax" campaign in the UK, which is calling for a financial transactions tax to be implemented, is gaining mass support.
The tax justice campaign is a joint campaign by the Alliance Party and Socialist Worker.
More information on the campaign is at the website www.nogstonfood.org

How can you help?

Over the next few weeks and months what's going to matter most is numbers of signatures, says campaign spokesperson Victor Billot.
"The more signatures we collect the more support we'll attract from individuals and groups. And if we start to record really good numbers of signatures, we'll be more likely to get local and national media attention, essential for growing the campaign."
Everyone can help by collecting signatures from friends, family and workmates. Every little effort will count.
You can download copies of the tax petition from the respective websites of the Alliance Party (www.alliance.org.nz) and Socialist Worker (http://www.UNITYblogNZ.com)
Or if you want to be sent print copies of the petition directly, contact Victor Billot at email victor.billot@munz.org.nz or mobile/txt 021 482 219.
If you would like to help out at tax petition stalls in any centre where we have organisers, get in touch with us.
If we don't have a local organiser in your centre, you can become the organiser. We can give you some advice and other assistance.
Contact campaign coordinator Vaughan Gunson email svpl@xtra.co.nz or ph/txt 021 0415 082.

Tax Cuts and Income Inequality

by Peter Conway and Bill Rosenberg

Budget 2010 has worsened income inequality in New Zealand.

We have had a problem of a widening income gap for years mainly because of low wages for many and high income for a few. But this inequality is magnified if there are also tax reductions which favour those on high incomes.

There are many measures of inequality. One easy measure to use is the difference in take home pay. Of course this does not take account of Working for Families, or the effect of property taxes.

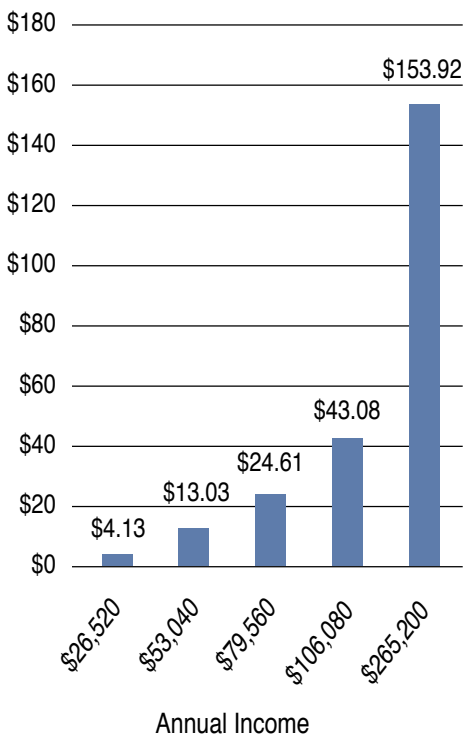
But as you can see from the Table, the gap in take home pay between workers on $30,000, $40,000 and so on and someone on $120,000 will widen considerably in October. The gap between someone on $30,000 and $120,000 grows by $72.89 and even the gap between someone on $60,000 and $120,000 grows by $53.85.

If we look at some other examples apart from those in the Table, someone on $15 an hour and compare them with someone on $50 an hour or $104,000 a year, the gap in take home pay now is $916.08. In October the gap will be $56.69 higher at $972.77. And the increase in the gap in take home pay between someone on $200,000 and $30,000 grows by $150 a week ($149.81).

Increase in the Weekly Take Home Pay Gap

Annual Income	Increase in Gap
$30,000	$72.89
$40,000	$66.16
$50,000	$59.62
$60,000	$53.85
$70,000	$48.08
$80,000	$38.46
$90,000	$28.85
$100,000	$19.23
$110,000	$9.62

Weekly tax reductions after GST increase



The Government will argue that property taxes will even up this inequality to an extent.

While it may be true that those who own investment properties are likely to be on high incomes, the reverse is not true. There are plenty of high income earners that will not be affected by new property taxes and those who are affected have the option to move their investments elsewhere.

And in any case we are yet to see what effect these taxes have whereas we know the impact of GST will be a higher cost of living and some will face higher rents and early childhood education costs contributing to a steep rise in inflation.

In fact, if we include the impact of GST the income gap widens even further.

The graph shows the difference between someone on the minimum wage and those on twice, three times, four times and ten times the minimum wage.

It also takes account of the GST increase. Look at the huge difference in benefit from the tax package.

It's your magazine.

All members are welcome to send in contributions to The Maritimes.
It's your magazine, and every issue we have rank and file members who send in their photos, letters, and articles about what they're doing on and off the job.
If you need some advice we can help, and if there is something you'd like to see in the magazine let us know.
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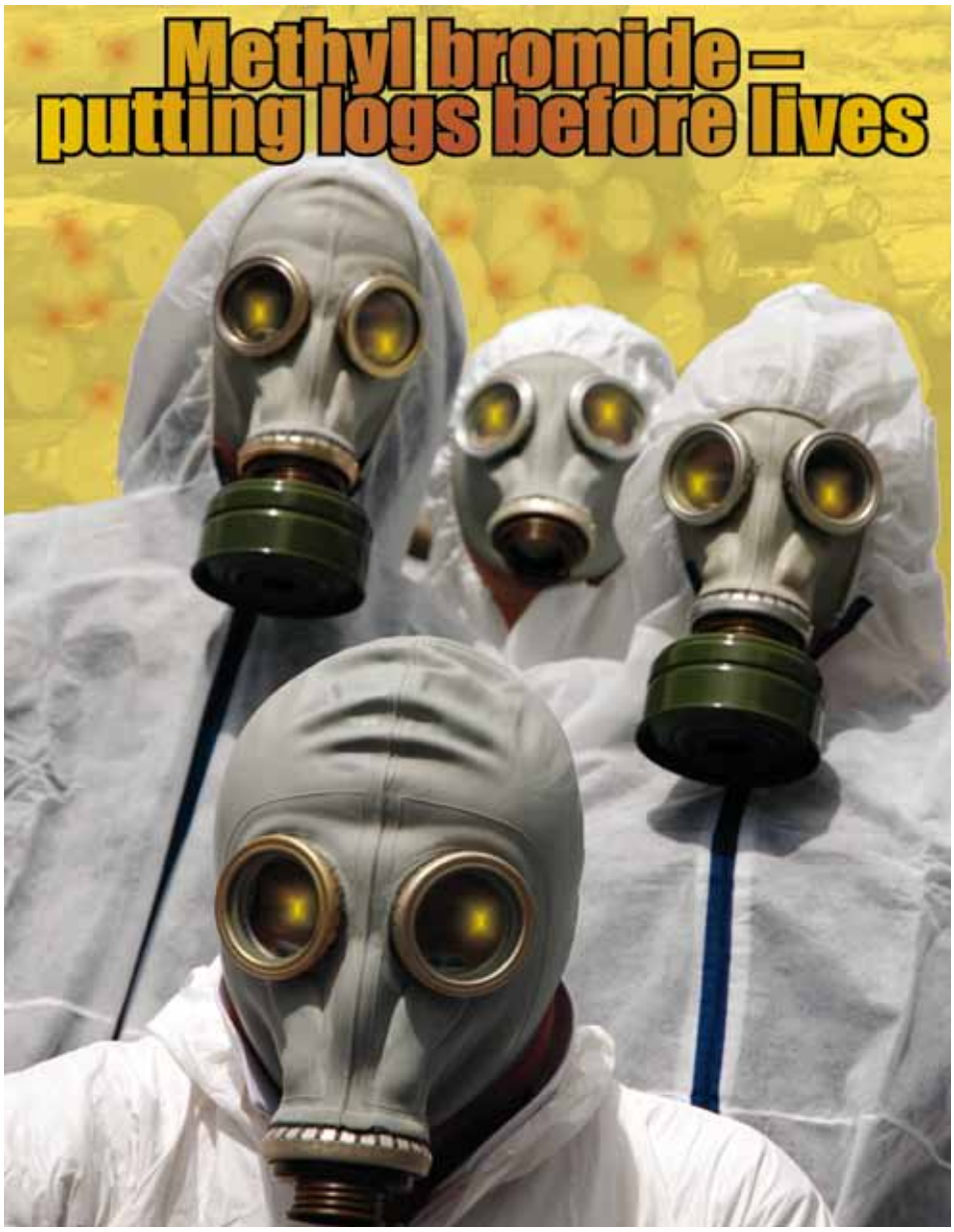
Trade Unions call for end to Methyl Bromide fumigation

The New Zealand Council of Trade Unions has called for methyl bromide fumigation to end in a submission to a Government agency.
The Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA) is currently reassessing the use of Methyl Bromide, and deciding whether to allow the continued use of the highly toxic gas which has already been banned in the European Union.
Six Nelson port workers have died of motor neuron disease in recent years.
A cluster of deaths such as this is 25 times the international average for the general population.
One thing they all had in common was their workplace, where methyl bromide is used to fumigate logs for export.
Professor Ian Shaw, Toxicologist and Pro Vice-Chancellor at the University of Canterbury, says that methyl bromide may be linked motor neuron disease in the Nelson Port workers.
The bromine from methyl bromide is also 60 times more destructive to ozone on an atom-per-atom basis than the chlorine from CFCs.
So not only is it bad for workers, it's bad for all of us.
There are much safer alternatives to methyl bromide including heat treatment, irradiation, water soaking, debarking, and microwave treatment.
There are other chemical treatments which present fewer hazards to workers and to the environment.

To read the CTU submission to ERMA on the use of methyl bromide, see http://union.org.nz/methyl-bromide-submission



Methyl bromide protests build pressure

The Maritime Union joined rallies in Picton, Wellington and Tauranga in April 2010 demanding an end of the use of methyl bromide.
Maritime Union of New Zealand General Secretary Joe Fleetwood says maritime workers want to see the toxic gas taken out of use.
"The time is up for methyl bromide and New Zealand needs to be moving into line with where the world is going."
He says the Union is part of a new Coalition Against the use of Methyl Bromide bringing together workers, environmental groups, political parties and community organizations.
Methyl bromide is used in ports and aboard ships to fumigate logs for pests but most of New Zealand's major trading partners will accept other treatments.
Methyl bromide also harms the ozone layer, and is being phased out internationally under the Montreal Protocol.
Mr Fleetwood says the deaths of six port workers in Nelson from motor neuron disease has led to ongoing debate about possible links with methyl bromide.
He says that further research is being carried out on the effects of methyl bromide on human health, and there was cause for concern.
He says the Maritime Union is very concerned that businesses profiting from methyl bromide use and Government agencies have been too closely linked up until 2009 through the STIMBR group.
"It seems once again that profit has taken priority over the safety of workers, communities and environment."
The protests at the ports of Picton, Wellington and Tauranga will highlight the large amount of methyl bromide gas that is being used at these ports, and the risk this poses to workers' health and the ozone layer.

Members of the Coalition are:

Soil and Health Association of New Zealand
The Green Party
Rail and Maritime Transport Union
New Zealand Council of Trade Unions
The Safe Food Campaign
Guardian of the Sounds
Pesticide Action Network Aotearoa New Zealand
Maritime Union of New Zealand
Friends of Nelsonhaven and Tasman Bay
The Alliance Party

Don't experiment with childrens' learning

by Lyndy McIntyre
NZEI

Maritime Union members have been adding their voice to calls for a trial of the government's controversial National Standards education policy.

In a strong show of support MUNZ members stood alongside teachers at a rally at Parliament.

The rally was part of NZEI's campaign to highlight the widespread community concern about National Standards. It marked the end of a two-month National Standards bus tour which visited schools and communities up and down the country, talking to parents and raising awareness of the issues.

The Government claims National Standards will help our children do better and raise the so-called "tail of underachievement".

The reality is there is absolutely no evidence to support those claims. National Standards are untried and untested. They take a "one size fits all" approach which could label children as young as five as failures. They will open the door for damaging and misleading school leagues tables which will impact on individual communities.

It is also unheard of for such sweeping education change to be introduced without proper consultation and evaluation.

NZEI President Frances Nelson says "the Government is pumping more than 30 million dollars into National Standards. Without any real guarantees about their value or worth, they risk going down in history as a costly educational experiment on New Zealand's children."

NZEI, teachers, principals, education and increasing numbers of parents and school communities are not prepared to see our children's education experimented with.

A trial makes sense.

The government continues to ignore the growing concern of Maori and Pasifika educators about the effect National Standards could have on their students' learning and their motivation to achieve.

Prinicipal of Moerewa School in Northland, Keri Milne-Ihimaera says "National Standards in their current form will be yet another tool which marginalises Maori learners."

Karl Vasau, the principal of Holy Family School in Porirua says a lot of his students start behind the norm and the school works hard with them to lift their achievement.

"My board and I are concerned about how data from National Standards will be used. Our priority is to support teaching and learning, not to demoralise schools and children's confidence by naming and shaming them in simplistic league tables."

MUNZ General Secretary Joe Fleetwood says it seems the National Government is trying to save face over a flawed policy rather than improve the education system.

"It appears the government is not listening to the real experts - teachers and parents."

You can support the NZEI campaign as fellow union members and as parents.

NZEI urges parents to go into schools and talk through the issues with teachers, principals and boards of trustees.

You can also go to www.handsupforlearning.org.nz to send a message to John Key or download copies of the petition "Trial National Standards not our Kids".

If you want to get active email updates on the campaign please contact lyndy.mcintyre@nzei.org.nz

Make the Government sit up and listen and add your voice to the call to trial the National Standards. Our children's learning is too important to experiment with!

NZEI members rally at Parliament in their campaign against national standards, March 2010" (photo courtesy of NZEI)

Ports of Auckland Dispute Update

A presentation to the Asia Pacific Regional Meeting, International Transport Workers Federation

Manila, Philippines, 13–14 May 2010

by Garry Parsloe
New Zealand ITF Convenor

New Zealand: A brief background

New Zealand is an island country in the south-western Pacific Ocean compromising two main landmasses (the North Island and the South Island).
New Zealand is geographically isolated, situated about 2,000 km (1250 miles) southeast of the eastern coast of Australia.
It has a largely temperate maritime climate and a great diversity of land forms and regional variations.
The population is estimated at around 4,300,000. This population is made up of several main groups including those of European descent (Pakeha) 78%, Maori 14.6%, Pacific Islanders 6.9% and Asian 9.2%.
The modern New Zealand economy is largely dependent on exports, mainly agricultural products, and this is supplemented by a tourism industry.
The great majority of imports and exports arrive and depart via shipping, therefore New Zealand is highly dependent on maritime transport.

History of New Zealand

The first settlers of New Zealand were the Maori, who migrated from east Polynesia sometime between around 700 and 2000 years ago.
The first Europeans known to have reached New Zealand were Dutch explorer Abel Tasman and his crew in 1642. No Europeans returned to New Zealand until British explorer James Cook's voyage of 1768-71.
Following Cook, New Zealand was visited by numerous European and North American whaling sealing and trading ships.
The British Government claimed sovereignty and negotiated the Treaty of Waitangi with Maori in 1840.
The Treaty is seen as New Zealand's founding document but its role remains controversial right to the present day.
The later decades of the nineteenth century saw expanding numbers of white settlers arriving in New Zealand. Armed conflict between settlers and Maori resulted in the Land Wars.
New Zealand experienced several major surges in working class struggle in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century.
The 1890 Maritime Strike and the 1913 Strike were major national events in which maritime workers took a leading role.
World War One resulted in a high level of casualties of New Zealand soldiers.
The great depression in the 1930's saw widespread poverty and the election of the first Labour Government with a successful democratic socialist programme.
The Second World War also saw active service by New Zealand armed forces and merchant mariners throughout the world.
The post war periods saw full employment and strong economic growth that faltered in the 1970's with economic shocks including oil shocks and the entry of the UK into the EEC.
Right wing economic programmes introduced ironically by the labour Government which also pursued a nuclear free policy and socially liberal policies.
Compulsory unionism was abolished and the level of union membership dropped substantially.
In the last two decades the New Zealand economy has become highly deregulated in most aspects.
The divide between the wealthy and the poor has grown markedly, as has the overseas ownership of the economy and the national debt.
In recent years basic living costs including housing and food have risen steeply, while the wages of working people have not.

Recent political events

The election of a right-wing National Government in 2008 signalled a new era.
The new Prime Minister John Key initially presented a moderate face, to the extent of entering into agreements with the Maori Party who have traditionally been political enemies of National.
The National Government has focused its efforts largely on goals such as cuts in personal taxation.
The previous centrist labour government of Helen Clark had a successful 9 year term from 1999 - 2008 when it replaced an unpopular, free market National Government.
Clark initially based her Government on a coalition with the left wing Alliance Party and in later years of her administration came to depend more on the centre right parties such as United or the nationalistic New Zealand First party for support.
The Clark Government pursued socially liberal policies along with left reforms in the area of workers' rights and ending privatization of assets.
However in many macroeconomic policies they continued with the right wing status quo embedded during the 1980's and 1990's including support for free trade policies.
Due to excellent trading conditions, the Labour government governed at a time of low unemployment and rising national income based largely on buoyant commodity prices.
The election of the National Government in 2008 has placed New Zealand at odds with much of the developed world, where a shift to centrist or leftist policies has been the trend.

The National Government has been busy dealing with the Global Financial Crisis after being elected, but it has now become focused on legislation changes that will affect many working class families.
Major changes to ACC, Welfare, Local Government and Education are currently underway.
In conjunction with these policies the government has embarked on a rationalisation of the Public Sector.
In a time when governments should be focusing on creating employment opportunities, the number of public servants in New Zealand is being substantially reduced.
The drive is to dust off the privatisation agenda and ram this down the throats of New Zealand workers.

Privatisation agenda

In Auckland, the largest city in New Zealand, the Government is backing a radical change to the governance of Local Councils whereby elected representatives will be replaced by political appointments under the Auckland Reform Bill.
This Bill is designed to prepare many public strategic assets for privatisation.
Currently New Zealand ports are publicly owned with the profits generated being returned to the public.
The Ports of Auckland are an excellent example of the benefits of a publicly owned port.
Over 200 million dollars have been returned by way of dividends in the last five years.
This money has enabled the City Council to fund infrastructure that would otherwise have been funded through increased rate charges.
The Ports of Auckland are protected from sale through legislation. This legislation, Section 28 of the Local Government Amendment Act 2004 requires Auckland Regional Holdings to conduct a poll of Auckland residential electors before it sells or disposes of ownership or control of more than 24.9% of the shares it holds in the Ports of Auckland.
The obvious intention of this act is to firmly place the future of the Ports of Auckland in the hands of the voters (Public of Auckland) not in the hands of Politicians to decide the future of the port.
To remove the protection that exists in the Local Government Amendment Act 2004 is contrary to the very provision of the Act. That is that the future of the Ports of Auckland is singularly for the public of Auckland to decide not for any administrative body.
The Auckland Reform Bill will by the stroke of a pen remove this protection without meaningful consultation. The only conclusion that can be reached from such a draconian reform is that the Government wants to remove the impediments that exist to Port privatisation.
Rail, Shipping and Ports in general have suffered under the present government especially with the loss of the Roadways to Waterways initiative that was agreed under the previous Labour Government.
Recent announcements of the closure of some rail lines and the relaxing of laws governing the size of trucks to allow loads to increase from 44 tonnes to 53 tonnes has signalled that the carbon footprint has been ignored.
Coastal Shipping and Rail are by far the most energy efficient means of shifting cargo yet the present government has opted for Road Transport.

Industrial situation and Ports of Auckland

The industrial climate is somewhat strained to say the least, there have been a large number of disputes throughout the Country.
It is noticeable that many of these disputes are in Sectors that previously have been settled for many years. Prisons, Hospitals, Dairy Workers, Telecom Technicians, Polytechnics, Bus Drivers, and Justice Workers are just a sample of the disputes over the last year.
Some of these have been bitter disputes where employers have locked workers out in order to protect company profits.
ITF affiliated Dockers in the Port of Auckland are fighting to protect their terms and conditions.

[continued on next page]

Photo by Alex Hague

[continued from previous page]
The attack by the employer, the Ports of Auckland is focused on increasing profits at the expense of fulltime employment in the port.
The Ports of Auckland up until mid year 2009 operated two separate Container Terminals, Bledisloe terminal and Fergusson terminal.
Each terminal had a separate schedule detailing terms and conditions within a Collective Employment Agreement between the Maritime Union of New Zealand, Local 13 and the Ports of Auckland Limited.
The Port Company undertook a restructuring process they called 'Consolidation' where the majority of the ship calls at Bledisloe terminal would be transferred to Fergusson terminal and Bledisloe would only handle the overflow that could not be handled at Fergusson Terminal.
This operation was named Axis Terminals.
MUNZ was notified of 21 redundancies at the Bledisloe terminal operation with the remainder of stevedores being transferred to the Fergusson terminal operation to handle the enlarged operation.
Local 13 at the time disagreed with the company's decision to reduce stevedoring numbers as the number of extra shifts being worked in the Port supported the need to retain qualified stevedores to handle the number of containers being worked at the Port.
The Port Company used the pretext of the Global Financial Crisis and the predicted downturn in cargo volumes as the reasoning for the redundancies.
It became clear by December 2009 that the Port Company had totally misread the situation and found itself short of skilled labour and unable to service its shipping contracts.
It also came under severe criticism from trucking companies because of the delays in loading and unloading trucks.
This peaked in December 2009 when the trucking companies threatened to boycott the R&D operation at Bledisloe terminal because of the delays they were experiencing.
Adding to the Port Company service failures was an inability to man up at Fergusson Terminal, the Company went to the lengths of using Interport Transfers from within New Zealand to bolster their workforce.
It must be noted that this is a very expensive alternative as it involves airfares and accommodation plus out of Port expenses.
The Union achieved eight new fulltime stevedoring positions during the month of December and an agreement with the company that a further review would take place in June 2010 where another six fulltime positions would be considered.
The Port Company again cited a forecast of diminishing volumes over the first six months of 2010 as the reason for not employing these extra stevedores straightaway.
Local 13 received notification from the Port Company on 14 January 2010 that it was undertaking a further review of its stevedoring operation and would be undertaking a study to gather information on contracting out some of its stevedoring operations.
The primary target would be the lash and engaging supplementary straddle driving and crane driving labour, shuttle operations would also be part of the contracting out exercise.
The company has endeavoured to explain this contracting out as supplementing the existing workforce.
The Port Company also announced that it intended to supplement the existing workforce with fixed term straddle drivers while it undertook the study on contracting out. Currently there is no provision within the Collective Agreement for the classification of fixed term employees as this was removed some years ago following the repeal of the Employment Contracts Act.
It is worth noting that the Port Company was an employer that used fixed term employees during the time of the Employment Contracts Act to reduce the terms and conditions of Union stevedores employed on a Collective Agreement.
The Port Company has the ability to employ additional stevedores under the current Collective Employment Agreement that would address the shortages that it currently faces in this area.
The Union believes that the Port Company is moving to a model where they remove themselves from directly employing stevedores.
There are many reasons for the company to adopt this strategy:
By contracting out they can control the price of labour in the Port of Auckland, through the use of a fire wall e.g. by setting a price with a contracting company it can more easily control the cost that it pays for labour.
The Port of Auckland is a highly Unionised workplace with some of the best working conditions within New Zealand Ports. It is highly organised and has been involved in ongoing industrial campaigns to increase the terms and conditions for members and their families.
By contracting out the intention would be to have a non union, pliable workforce that it could use to destroy the current Union conditions within the Port of Auckland.
Local 13 has focused on permanent employment within the Port and has been successful in this campaign.
At times the Local has sacrificed pay increases to increase the number of permanent positions.
The policy within the Port has been to protect fulltime positions at all costs and part of this strategy has been to restrict the use of casuals to the Lash.
The company is now training casuals to drive straddles and it is the Unions opinion that these workers will be used as the basis for a supplemented alternative workforce.

Union Strategy

Firstly to make sure that all work undertaken in the Port of Auckland, Axis Terminals is by bonafide MUNZ members who are a party to the current Collective Employment Agreement and affiliated to the ITF.
Agree that to successfully resist the attempts from the employer to further casualise their container operation and contract out traditional Dockworkers' work the campaign cannot be fought on any singular issues.
The campaign must be industrial, legal, political and international in order to be successful.
The current Collective Agreement was signed in July 2009 and during the negotiations for this Agreement the Company never raised any claim for fixed term stevedores or for the ability to outsource or contract out services.
The main focus of the Company during the negotiations was to have a more flexible workforce through transferability of labour.
The Union agreed to new terms and conditions in the Collective that allowed this to happen.
The Union believes that the Company has acted in bad faith and the introduction of fixed term agreements would undermine the conditions within the current Collective Agreement.
The current Collective Agreement contains a classification that was introduced to allow for the troughs and peaks within the stevedoring industry.
The classification of AA's is a schedule to the Collective that allows the Company to employ part-time permanent stevedores who are only on a three shift per week guarantee.
This classification reduces the contingent liability for weekly guarantees. Currently the Port Company is under its allowed percentages for this classification and there is no need to create a separate fixed term classification that mirrors the AA classification but removes any liability from the Company for redundancy if the Company finds itself with excess labour.
The creation of a fixed term AA undermines the Collective Agreement.
Specifically the agreed 'Click over Clause' that expressly sets out conditions where part-time permanents move to fulltime employment when consistent hours of work are identified. This is a robust clause that uses statistics to trigger permanent employment.
In conjunction with the legal challenge the Local must lobby politicians and the Auckland Regional Authority who are the owners of the port to make them aware of first what the management of the Port Company are up to and secondly

the disruption that the Port will face if it proceeds with contracting out.
The New Zealand Council of Trade Unions and the International Transport Workers Federation have been advised of the events that are taking place in Auckland and will be pivotal to the success of the campaign going forward.
If the previous initiatives are unsuccessful then the Union will approach the ITF and for solidarity action to prevent non union or contracted out labour from working in the Port of Auckland.

Legal Action

The Union challenged the decision from the Port Company to train casuals as straddle drivers employed as fixed term Axis Ancillary Employees.
Local 13 requested that this legal challenge be heard in the Employment Court, the Port Company opposed this and the action was referred to the Employment Authority.
The Authority found in favour of the Port Company, it was interesting to note that even though the fixed term employees are members of the Union the Authority member ruled that the Union had no standing to bring the challenge.
Only the fixed term employees had this right.
Our lawyer was only allowed three minutes to sum up at the hearing and it was our opinion that the Authority member just did not understand the issues involved.
Local 13 appealed the decision from the Authority within an hour of the decision coming out, yet the Port Company couriered out offers of employment to the casuals nevertheless.
To date approximately fourteen casuals have been offered fixed term agreements.
Coincidently the fixed term agreements expire around the time that the Port Company is scheduled to announce their decision on Contracting Out.
On the 24–25 February the appeal was heard in the Employment Court with Chief Justice Colgan presiding. I am pleased to report that Local 13 was successful on two counts, where the Judge has ruled that the employment of fixed term employees is illegal and that the Port Company has acted in Bad Faith.
What this means is that the Company will have to employ these workers permanently and place them into the Collective Agreement.
This has been an excellent result for the members concerned and more importantly the Company will not be able to use these workers as the base for an alternative workforce.
The simple fact of the matter is that that following the redundancies in 2009 the Company has found itself undermanned.
One option would be to use cross hire within the Port of Auckland from the Conventional Stevedoring Companies.
There are currently some seventy odd permanent stevedores within the Conventional Company's that could be trained and used under cross hire to clip the 'Peaks and Troughs'.
The Port Company is taking the stance that they will only do this under the terms of a formal contract with a Stevedoring Company.
While on the surface this may seem reasonable, but we must rely on past experience with contracting out. Our experience with contacts to date has been less than satisfactory, the Port of Tauranga best describes the dangers such contracts pose for workers.
NZL (a New Zealand Stevedoring Company) held the contract for the lashing in the Port of Tauranga and recently we watched as that contract was transferred to a non union company and our members all lost their livelihoods.
The Port Company will be careful how it approaches the first contracts awarded and they would more than likely contract to a Union Company in the port, but the sting is in the tail, any subsequent contracts will go to the lowest bidder and history shows us this will be a non union company.
It was worth noting that when the Company was asked whether it had considered contracting to a stevedoring company with the provision that any contracted stevedores would work under the terms and conditions of the current Ports of Auckland Collective Agreement the answer from the Company was that it would not consider this as there were no savings in it for the Company.
This is not a matter of a shortage of labour, there are plenty of options available to the Company under the terms of the current Collective Agreement to address labour shortages.
This is a push from the Company to reduce the cost of labour within the Ports of Auckland. To quote the Port Company Managing Director Jens Madsen from a recent speech he delivered to the 4th International Asia Conference in Sydney "variable costs, including labour, will also come under increased and ongoing scrutiny, with new, more flexible labour models needed for ports to remain competitive".
The Ports of Auckland filed for an injunction against Local 13 on 26 March 2010 alleging the Union was undertaking an illegal strike on 29 March 2010.
Local 13 appeared at the hearing to find that after reading our affidavits in reply the Port Company pulled their application.

Meetings

Since mid 2009 Local 13 had been battling with the Port Company over stopwork meetings.
The end result is that at the moment Local 13 is entitled to four paid stopwork meetings per year, one of which is for the AGM and another is set aside for the local union candidate election speeches. This leaves two meetings where other issues can be discussed.
We have instigated informational meetings on every Monday and Friday of the week, the 1st at 1:00pm followed by a second meeting at 3:00pm.
These are essential for us to communicate with the membership, especially considering the current contracting out issue. These have proved to be popular and the numbers attending are steadily increasing each week.

"The Union challenged the decision from the Port Company to train casuals as straddle drivers employed as fixed term Axis Ancillary Employees"

Mediation

Local 13 has been in mediation talks with the Company.
These talks we believe have been due to pressure from the New Zealand Trade Union movement, especially the Council of Trade Unions, and the support from the ITF affiliated unions.
The Maritime Union of New Zealand would like to take this opportunity to thank the ITF and all of its affiliates for their support. This support and pressure has been pivotal in forcing the Company back to the table.
We hope that our next report will be that 'Traditional Dockers Employment' has been protected in the largest port in New Zealand.

Update

The Ports of Auckland have withdrawn their attempt for large scale contracting out of the workforce, which is an excellent victory for MUNZ.
However there are still attempts to attack parts of the workforce so the battle is far from over.

South Pacific ITF affiliates and ILO meetings

4–10 February 2010, Port Vila, Vanuatu

by Garry Parsloe
National Vice President

National Assistant Secretary Ray Fife and I attended the ITF and ILO meetings in Vanuatu from the 4–10 February 2010.
Mark Davis opened up the ITF Affiliates meeting where he reported on the setting up of the ITF Sub-Regional Office which will be stationed in Sydney.
The meeting had a discussion around a budget and costings for housing this new position in Sydney.
The above discussion led us into Affiliates priorities in the region where every Country gave their Country Report.
The main theme was under the heading of 'Decent Work'.
I presented a MUNZ Country Report which was well received and raised questions from Delegates which helped in the debate around decent work.
There was a long discussion around the development of the ITF approach to SPOCTU (South Pacific and Oceania Council of Trade Unions) before reports on Sub-Regional Solidarity requirements.
The last issue on the first day was our participation in the World Congress which is to be held in Mexico in August 2010.

Pacific Union capacity building

On day two Ray and I attended the ILO ACTRAV/ITUC/GUFS Pacific Trade Union Seminar on Union capacity Building.
The introductions and opening remarks all addressed 'Decent Work for Sustainable Development in the Pacific'.
The opening speakers also spoke on all the damage that the recent economic crisis did to workers and their families and how unions will have to work hard to try and repair that damage.
We next had a presentation on ILO Global objectives which are:
1. Standards and Fundamental Principles and rights at work.
2. Employment.
3. Social Protection.
4. Social Dialogue.

After the presentations we went into groups to discuss the following topics.
1. What do you see as the priorities for union development in your country?
2. What do you see as some common Regional priorities?

We had the Cook Islands and the Solomon Islands in our group and took the session time to set out the issues mainly from the Solomon Islands and report those issues back to the Seminar.
Issues were capacity building, social security and the labour market.
The damage to employment is causing hardship to many working women and men, families and communities, and worsening poverty.
It is threatening the achievement of the Millennium development goals, weakening middle classes, heightening risks to social cohesion and eroding confidence in decision makers.
In addition, with 45 million new entrants to the Global jobs market annually, most of them young women and men, some 300 million new jobs will need to be created from now to 2015 just to keep pace with the growth in the labour force.
We also know from past crises that there has been a considerable lag in the recovery of employment.
All this explains why the global job crisis could linger on for many years unless more forceful and targeted decisions are taken now to accelerate employment recovery in step with an economic pick-up.
The last session on the second day had presentations and discussions on climate change in the Pacific and the role of the union in this problem.
The Saturday morning session opened as a planning session where we put ideas forward on how to conduct our input going forward.
Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) President Sharan Burrows gave a presentation on employment in the Pacific sub-region before other speakers spoke on human rights, decent work, job creation and economic growth.
Mick Doleman gave a report on the ILWU dispute with Rio Tinto/Boron and called for international solidarity with the locked-out ILWU Miners.
After morning smoko we went into groups to discuss our presentations on climate change and on global jobs.
Prior to lunch we met with the employer group and put our views to them.
1. Employment.
2. Decent Work.
3. Social Protection.
4. Climate Change.

In the afternoon Ray and I attended the South Pacific and Oceanic Council of Trade Unions (SPOCTU) Special Conference.
This session was under the heading of "Strengthening Trade Union Movement in the Pacific."
The Minister of Internal Affairs and Labour in Vanuatu Hon. Moana Carcasses opened the session and welcomed everyone to Vanuatu.
The meeting had a long discussion about the role of SPOCTU and what it should be doing to promote itself and workers' problems.
The question was should we put SPOCTU on the back burner, or should we promote SPOCTU and have it promoting workers rights?
The answer is that we must restructure SPOCTU to meet the demands of today and keep it there as a vibrant functioning unit.

ILO Meeting

On Monday 8 February 2010 Ray and I along with the rest of the New Zealand Delegation (Peter Conway CTU and Mark Davis ITF) attended the ILO Tripartite High Level meeting.
The meeting was opened by Vanuatu Commissioner of Labour Lionel Kaluat.
The meeting was conducted under the heading of "Decent Work for Sustainable Development in the Pacific".
As we progressed into the meeting we went through the following issues.
- Labour Market Governance and Labour Law Reform.
- Employment and Growth.
- Expand scope for Social Protection.
- Capacity Building of Tripartite Constituents.

All of the eight Pacific Island countries gave their country reports with all of them addressing the above four issues.
On the last day the official opening of the Ministerial meeting was delivered by the Prime Minister of Vanuatu.
He spoke about the problems associated with the unemployment situation in Vanuatu and how the labour market needs a major shake up.
After the opening speeches there was a technical session headed "Economic crisis and sustainable recovery in the Pacific."
The speakers spoke on climate change, decent work, labour market governance and a regional approach to a sustainable recovery.
Before the lunch break we had a Ministerial Panel discussion where Ministers from the eight Pacific Island countries were asked a number of questions around employment issues.
This session was facilitated by News Director of the Fiji Broadcasting Corporation, Stanley Simpson.
In the afternoon session Stanley Simpson facilitated a Social Partners panel discussion which consisted of the NZCTU, the Samoa Trade Union Congress, the Papua New Guinea Trade Union Congress and three employer representatives.
The discussion centered around issues of climate change, green jobs, employment and the social recovery along with social protection.
Later in the last afternoon we endorsed the adoption of conclusions and a Pacific Action Plan.
As you can see by the above it was full on at all the meetings which turned out to be most productive.

What's the difference between a FOC, a FPC and an IBF?

We've included some information on some of the important work the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) does. The Maritime Union of New Zealand is involved or represented on many of these groups within the ITF.

For more information on other ITF and maritime terms, check out the following website: http://www.itfseafarers.org/glossary.cfm

Fair Practices Committee (FPC)

The decision-making body for the ITF's Flag of Convenience Campaign.
The FPC consists of representatives of the ITF's affiliated maritime unionism, 50% seafarers and 50% dockers.
The FPC manages the FOC (flags of convenience) campaign policy and oversees ITF minimum collective agreements for seafarers which ensure decent salaries and conditions for FOC seafarers, thus helping to prevent unfair wage-based competition, which contributes to the tendency for vessels to be flagged out.
The FPC is the forum where ITF affiliates from developed countries, which tend to own FOC vessels but whose members' job opportunities are declining, and unions from developing countries - often labour supplying countries - adopt common policies.
The key policy for seafarers internationally is to stay unionised and resist the tendency for shipowners to displace national crews in order to reduce labour costs, and replace them with exploited, stateless FOC crews.
FOC ship owners and those who charter their vessels know that by not having an ITF-approved Collective Agreement in place, they risk industrial and other forms of action in many of the world's ports.
Some less respectable operators are ready to take this risk although the majority are not. The very existence of the minimum ITF conditions over the years has meant that many ship owners now offer better employment than that which would have existed if the free market were the only factor involved.
In the shipping industry, where disreputable ship owners get rich by exploiting the expanding global maritime labour market, the ITF exists to guarantee a balance.
For more information
http://www.itfglobal.org/itf-americas/fpc.cfm/languageID/1

International Bargaining Forum (IBF).

The IBF is where the ITF and its affiliates negotiate with shipowners to conclude IBF Agreements.
The International Bargaining Forum (IBF) is the forum that brings together the ITF and the international maritime employers that make up the Joint Negotiating Group (JNG).
Negotiations take place every two years for the IBF framework agreement. Once the framework agreement has been negotiated, ITF affiliated unions begin local negotiations with companies in their country.
These local negotiations result in national and sometimes company level IBF agreements. While the entitlements may vary slightly, all IBF agreements must be within the IBF framework agreed for the period.
IBF agreements are only available to shipping companies that are members of the JNG and can only be signed by ITF affiliated unions.
The IBF has a disputes procedure to deal with any problems, for example regarding compliance with or interpretation of the agreements.
For more information:
http://www.itfseafarers.org/about-IBF.cfm

Seafarers' Bill of rights

The name sometimes given to the ILO's Maritime Labour Convention, also known as the seafarers' charter.
This convention brings together more than 65 previous ILO maritime labour instruments, setting the minimum standards to ensure satisfactory conditions of employment for the world's seafarers.
Sometimes referred to as the Seafarers' Bill of Rights, it was adopted in 2006.
It is hoped that the convention will represent the "fourth pillar" of the international regulatory system for the global maritime industry, alongside the International Maritime Organisation's safety, training and pollution conventions.
The convention brings together and updates over 65 other ILO maritime labour instruments' will provide the world's more than 1.2 million seafarers with comprehensive social protection for the first time.
It sets minimum requirements for seafarers to work on a ship, with provisions on conditions of employment, accommodation, recreational facilities, food and catering, health, medical care, welfare and social security protection.
Most critically, the convention is enforceable. Ships governed by it will not be allowed to sail by port states without securing certificates proving that they meet key labour, health and safety standards.
New provisions, including those for seafarers' complaints procedures and enhanced port state inspections, will help to ensure compliance.
The convention applies directly only to ships carrying the flag of a state that has ratified it. However, the enforcement provisions contain a "no more favourable treatment" clause. This means, for example, that a ship flagged by a country that has not ratified the convention could still end up in trouble during a port inspection for falling short of the standards it lays down.
For more information:
http://www.itfseafarers.org/charter.cfm

ITF South Pacific campaign coordination meeting, 16 April 2010 Sydney, Australia

By Garry Parsloe
National Vice President

On the 16 April 2010 MUNZ General Secretary Joe Fleetwood and I attended the ITF South Pacific Campaign Coordination meeting in Sydney, Australia.
Mark Davis addressed the Seminar and spoke on the 2009 Sydney Seminar and the priorities from that meeting.
These included:
Targeting anti-union employers, young Worker organising, Womens organising, protecting conditions by unionising low cost operators, Freight forwarding and supply chain organising, Offshore Oil/Gas organising, Cruise Sector organising and a Mapping campaign.
Shannon O'Keefe of the MUA gave a report on International Labour Organization (ILO) issues, decent jobs and employment on cruise ships.
Shannon went on to report on the South Pacific and Oceanic Council of Trade Unions (SPOCTU) and how the group was performing.
After morning smoko we went into Workshops. Joe and I went into a workshop headed "ILO Pacific Action Plan for Decent Work" and "Kiribati and Tuvalu Climate Change Impact".
These headings bring in maritime organising, sector mapping, union capacity building, as well as strengthening the Flag of Convenience campaign and developing targets for the Ports of Convenience Campaign.
After lunch we had reports back from the Workshops before entering into a discussion on how best to move forward on the findings from the workshops.
The Seminar/Meeting was productive and helpful in planning our way forward.

Maritime Union of New Zealand

**The Maritime Union is engaged in a process of renewal.
The following strategy for our future success was presented to the National Executive meeting in April 2010.
Input from members through their branches is welcomed.**

What we want our Union to be

"A great nationally organised transport union that is a powerful industrial and political force in New Zealand and internationally"

Our principles

- Effective, respected and powerful
- Disciplined and focussed
- Participative and empowered members
- Socially and financially supportive
- Militant, progressive and democratic
- Financially and structurally sound

Be One Union Inside the Wharf Gates, as a long term goal

- Finish Consolidation of the MUNZ Amalgamation
- Build a Single Branch Structure with Clear Accountabilities
- Review Governance Structures
- Develop and implement organizing strategy involving branches and national office
- Map and identify targets and recruitment opportunities

Rationalise Bargaining

- Moving to nationally based Collective Agreements

A Strategic Plan for 21st Century

Be Financially Sound

- One Union/One Fee
- % based fee implemented in all branches
- Central Funding
- Operating income that meets operating expenditure
- Campaign funding that allocates agreed costs between national office and branches

Grow

World class health and safety on all sites

Build our Organising and Campaigning Capacity

Ensure EEO (equal opportunity) exists on all sites and within MUNZ

Be Internationally Organised

Be politically powerful and active in our communities

Work Plan to achieve our goals

- Committee of Management to guide the process
- Extensive ongoing consultation with membership
- Internal communications
- Ongoing review of progress and necessary decisions by National Executive and National Conference with strategic plan signed off
- Committee of Management to confirm time frames

Auckland Local 13

by Russell Mayn

'Contracting out' or 'Contracting out of the collective agreement' – which one is it?

How as a worker do you ever have faith in what is a deal and what is the sanctity of an agreement once you enter into it?
At the moment in the Port of Auckland I think every worker employed by the Ports of Auckland is struggling with this.
The events that have unravelled since the Collective Agreement was signed in June 2009 have left a bad taste in everyone's mouth.
The risks to the workforce in agreeing a Collective for a considerable amount of time are substantial, but these are weighed up at the time taking into account pay increases and the terms and conditions that will be in place for the duration of the agreement.
These are carefully thought through and if they pass muster then the Collective Agreement is ratified.
One of the trade offs in securing the terms and conditions for that term is that workers relinquish their right to take industrial action for the term of the Collective Agreement.
In return for that the Company agrees to the terms that exist in the agreement.
The point I am trying to make is that both parties enter into the agreement freely and should be prepared to honour that agreement for its term.
The Collective Agreement between the Maritime Union of New Zealand, Local 13 and the Ports of Auckland Limited is bringing these principles into doubt.
The announcement from the Port Company in January 2010 that it was investigating moving to a contracting out model for the Lash, Shuttle Driving and supplementary Straddle and Crane driving was perceived by our membership as a direct attack on the very agreement that they had just ratified.
Workers: "Hang on here haven't we just signed an agreement"
Company: "Well we have but this is nothing to do with the Collective. We have a justified business argument. We can no longer meet the peaks and troughs the world has changed since the financial crisis. This has come as a real surprise to us but surely you understand that the rosters and shifts that you work are really the cause here. As a unit of work you are just not efficient enough, we can't compete, the customer can't be serviced, we can only achieve this by contracting your work out".

A crane mishap occurred on the Pacific Chief at Ports of Auckland at 5am Thursday 6 May 2010 leading to machinery damage but luckily no injury. Auckland Local 13 Walking Delegate Dave Phillipps says the incident was a timely reminder for MUNZ members to do regular checks on the ship's deck logs to ensure the gear is certified and maintained and also a reminder to stand well clear of cranes under load. The box netted gangway was also fixed as according to national union policy gangways that are only box netted are not safe and must be correctly rigged before use (photo Dave Phillipps)

Workers: "Hang on here, we traversed all this at the Collective Agreement negotiations when we agreed to the changes that the Company required regarding Consolidation. The Company said that the forecasts were for a downturn in cargo volumes and you needed redundancies. What's this you can't service the customer, the box rate has dropped, the reason is that you made stevedores redundant. What you need is the right number of stevedores back in the port".
Company: "No, we don't need any more stevedores. We have enough, we now need you to change, utilisation! utilisation! utilisation! We need to contract out, it will be good for you, you will be better off."
Workers: "Hang on here, if you contract out doesn't this just really mean that extra stevedores will be in the port".
Company: "No, it will be a better model. We can compete".
Workers: "Bugger this, you're having a loan of us. This is second tier bargaining."
This goes on for some considerable time and would take up the entire journal but I think you get the gist of things.
I am sorry I just don't believe that all of this happened in October of last year. When was contracting out first investigated? If it was a serious alternative then this should have been discussed in depth at the Collective negotiations.
If all of these problems only arose after the settlement of the agreement then there should be some serious questions asked of management.
The pricing for the shipping contracts must have been in place at the signing of the agreement so if the price of the contracts could not sustain the price of the labour, then simply why would the Company agree to the Collective, unless there were other reasons that we are not aware off.
Bearing in mind that the wage increases for the agreement were modest, this would suggest that the existing shipping contacts were still sustainable.
If the gains in volumes were bought at a cost that was not sustainable and this has impacted on the entire operation then the fault does not lie with the workforce.
Or if you are cynical and like a good conspiracy theory, then the situation has been manoeuvred to place the agreement in jeopardy.
This, if true, would give the Company some considerable advantage by being able to renegotiate core aspects of the agreement whilst the Union was in a vulnerable position because it was party to a current Collective and unable to take action to defend its terms and conditions.
One could become even more cynical and suggest that the push to have an alternative contracted out workforce in the port was to destroy unionised labour in the port.
The alternative workforce would be on a different agreement than the existing agreement.

The term of the agreement would be inconsistent with the current agreement. This would be to weaken any collective action to increase terms and conditions going forward.
Then there is the matter of whether both workforces would be unionised or whether it would be a unionised workforce and a casual non union workforce.
My first guess is that to make it look good some tokenism will be applied.
Then further down the track contracts will be given to non union operators once the model is firmly entrenched.
The interesting thing is where the increased profits will go.
Over a considerable number of years productivity has increased dramatically with new technology.
The number of containers going through the port has increased dramatically.
The workers are engaged on a 24 hour, seven day a week operation.
There have been no great leaps in the conditions, yet the return to the public of Auckland has reduced considerably.
We can only surmise that the winner here has been the Shipping Companies at the expense of the shareholders, the public of Auckland.
The concerns that Local 13 have are simple, all the gains will just be passed back by way of reduced costs for the Shippers and it won't be long before the same arguments return to the table.
The difficulty with productivity and utilisation is that the reality is that workers do not really have any control over this.
Productivity was increasing, box rates were increasing but simply if you do not have the operators then you cannot move the boxes.
The problems in servicing the ships occurred when the volumes increased and there were not enough stevedores to drive the machines.
This was not only reflected in the service to the shippers but in the service to trucking companies.
The number of articles in the Shipping Gazette regarding the waiting times since consolidation for trucking companies clearly speaks to the dissatisfaction.
Consolidation has upset the balance.
This may or may not be attributable to consolidation, but what is clear is that there are just not enough stevedores in the straddles to work vessels and trucks.
The final message is the Union does not want to lose ship calls as this affects our members livelihoods but we expect our Collective to be honoured.
The productivity in the port since the announcement of contracting out and fixed term agreements etc has reduced significantly.
The workers have lost faith in the management.
This has to be addressed if the port is to prosper going forward.
In closing, the amalgamation between the Seafarers and Dockers in Auckland has been a breath of fresh air and long overdue.
For our membership and officials it will mean learning new skills as we deal with different employers.
I have been starting to attend some of the negotiations for the renewal of Seafaring agreements and while there is a lot to absorb and it is a steep learning curve I hope to gain a lot better understanding as the months tick by.
Stopwork meetings have been well attended and whilst issues that arise may be focused on what is happening at Sea or on the Wharves, the real issue of working class representation has been the guiding principle.
On behalf of the officials and executive of Local 13, thanks to the membership who have over the previous months attended numerous meetings to formulate policy and have their say.
"If you aren't at the meeting don't come bleating".

Nelson

by Bill Lewis

The budget

The Tory budget has been delivered and it will be seen as a divisive document featuring a growing gap between the lower paid and the top earners.
Whilst lowering taxes favouring the top bracket, under this budget the bulk of the workforce will have their gains quickly eroded by rises of GST to 15%, transport, power, fuel, and inflation set to peak at 5.9%.
The ETS scheme also means that the majority of workers will soon fall further behind.
The state sector workers will also be up against headwinds as they will not receive extra funding for wage increases unless it can be found through cost cutting or attrition so this group will also fall behind.
There is also no specific mention of increasing jobs – not even on the great job summit commitment of our now infamous cycleway from North Cape to the Bluff.
The choices as Finance Minister English has stated are fair to all are far removed from reality. Lower income workers have a choice of extra bread and high income earners have to choose which luxury to purchase.
In the transport sector roading and rail get the dosh.
Rail is beneficial to our needs with long haul freight and urban transport but once again there is no mention of inter island shipping as an environmentally and efficient movement of freight.
This gives encouragement to foreign flag vessels to increase their numbers on our coast to the detriment of New Zealand ship operators and maritime crews.

Unions

With the current economic climate, growing number of workers need to think about seeking a collective union contract with their employers whereby their conditions will generally improve or at least remain stable.
Compare this to individual contracts which are usually inferior and weighted in favour of the employer.
Now is the time to be organising as any further downturn in the economy will see worse labour laws introduced and a decrease in purchasing power as workers will be expected to tighten their belts and there will be no wage increase on the table.

Marsol pride

This is a 60 metre multi purpose offshore vessel with a four point mooring system chartered by the Nelson company Unimar.
The ship also has a DP system and is aiming to secure work as a stand by, ROV survey and supply as it is also fitted with a bulk system.
It carries a crew of 12 or more when on specific operations and has a capacity to accommodate up to 66 in total.
Some credit is due to Unimar obtaining a vessel to work in New Zealand and beyond and in these uncertain economic times with high unemployment, thus giving some relief to a full maritime crew on our collective union contract.

Wellington Seafarers

by Mike Clark

Once again we have been reminded of the dangerous nature of our industry with the untimely death of two foreign nationals on board the log ship TPC Wellington at Marsden Point on 3 May.
The victims, one Korean and one Burmese, died in one of the ship's timber holds. We will have to wait for a full enquiry before we can comment on what went wrong.
In New Zealand we have strict procedures before entering confined spaces, tanks or any other part of the vessel where lack of clean air is suspected.
These include permits, oxygen meters, extraction fans, breathing apparatus (BA) sets and rescue equipment at the point of entry.
The Maritime Union offers its deep condolences to the families of the deceased for this avoidable tragedy.
We remind all members to be vigilant when carrying out this type of work.

Maritime Union of New Zealand attends Wellington methyl bromide protest, from left Wellington Seafarers' Branch President Mike Clark, Wellington seafarer Marion Leslie, General Secretary Joe Fleetwood (speaking), Wellington seafarer Alan Windsor and Wellington Waterfront Branch secretary John Whiting

ACC Broke

Don't be fooled by the headlines, this is Government invented propaganda to prepare the public for the sell off of ACC to private insurance corporations.
If this happens workers will end up paying higher levies and it will become harder and more time consuming to get compensation following an accident.
According to the latest 2009 financial report ACC had a revenue of about $4 billion per year and expenditure of less than $3 billion. These figures don't stack up to an outfit in dire straits.
As union members and workers we have to fight hard to retain ACC and I urge all members to attend rallies and meetings to support ACC.
The Council of Trade Unions is running a campaign in support of ACC and has a website www.fairness.org.nz for more information and to register your support.
The Maritime Union has also been active supporting Darien Fenton's Redundancy Protection Bill at Parliament and the UNITE union's Campaign for a Living Wage.

Interisland Ferries

On the local scene, the Arahura will be in survey in Nelson from 2–30 May with crew not needed doing training courses and taking up the slack on the other vessels during this period.
The Kaitaki is due for dry docking in July–August. The agreement for dry docking took some time to negotiate and we are currently working with Interislander management to tidy this up so we can speed up the process.

Kent

The Kent, Strait Shipping's old warhorse, sailed out of Wellington for the last time recently, destination unknown. Renamed the "Ken" and flying the Zanzibar flag.
Our members aboard the Kent have been re-absorbed into other vessels and the company has confirmed they are looking for another vessel.

NIWA

As stated in a previous issue, the NIWA research vessel Tangaroa is going to Singapore for a major three month refit in September.
We have to work through some crew issues and the drug and alcohol policy also has to be tidied up.

Offshore

The offshore remains quiet both here and in Australia.
The Marsol Pride operating out of Nelson has been laid up briefly as the company (UniMar) endeavor to secure contracts for further work.
This has been difficult for us as we have had to try to broker a deal for the crews as they have been laid off.
This is unique in this industry as all other vessels that we dealt with in the past have fixed term contracts so there are no problems with split crews. We are currently working on a plan to accommodate this.
We also currently have a problem with several employers refusing to pick up one of our members for work.
This is totally unacceptable to us and we are endeavoring to find a resolution.

To conclude, could all members please ensure both their branch and national office have their updated address, phone numbers and emails for correspondence and notification of job opportunities.

International Workers' Memorial Day

Wellington union members gathered outside Te Papa on the Taranaki Street wharf on 28 April to mark International Workers' Memorial Day.
The day honors those who have lost their lives at work or who have died prematurely from work related causes or diseases.
The International Confederation of Trade Unions chose "Unions make work safe" as the theme for this year's action.
Council of Trade Unions' Secretary Peter Conway said in a statement that "historically it has been Unions who have been responsible for identifying, publicizing and campaigning against unsafe work."
"Today in New Zealand it is still unions who take a lead in training and providing workplace health and safety representatives and drawing attention to threats such as methyl bromide in the timber industry."
Speakers at the rally were Labour MP Darien Fenton who spoke on road transport and her Redundancy Protection Bill, CTU rep Henry Fagaiva on health and safety, CTU health and safety researcher Tina McIvor on methyl bromide and Glenn Barclay of the ACC coalition who spoke on the proposed changes to ACC.
Thanks to all who braved the cold and blustery conditions for their support.

Wahine Memorial Day, 10 April 2010

by Mike Clark

On the 10 April 2010, a number of past and present members attended a memorial service and unveiling of the foremast of the Wahine.

The weather on the day was bright and calm, unlike the atrocious conditions of 42 years ago which resulted in great loss of life when the Wahine struck Barretts Reef at 6.40am.

The ship's foremast was saved from scrap by the late Sir Len Southward and donated to Hutt City more than a decade ago. It was restored by local firms Aztec Engineering and Seaview Blasting and erected by Downers.

This was the result of efforts by the Eastbourne Historical Society, Eastbourne Community Board and the Hutt City Council who covered the costs.

Community Board Chairman Ian Young said the mast was not authentic in every way – it was now white where the original colour was "buff" (dark cream) – yet was a symbol across the harbour to all New Zealanders.

Other speakers included Lower Hutt mayor David Ogden, marine historian Ken Scadden, and former Lower Hutt policeman Jim Mason who was involved in rescuing survivors.

The old Union flag was broken out by the local Scout Company and was flown at half mast. Flowers were attached to the halyard by Shirley Hicks, one of the more public faces of the survivors, who lost her little daughter aged 3 in the disaster. Her son Gordon survived the sinking but died of his injuries later in life.

As she spoke, the Interisland ferry Arahura blew a blast on its foghorn in tribute to those who perished. Two local Coastguard vessels were anchored off the beach. These vessels were established by local seafarers for rescue work as a result of the disaster.

Steward Frank Hitchens, one of the last crew members to abandon the vessel, thanked the Hutt City Council on behalf of the survivors.

Other survivors who spoke included a purser Gerry Quaid and Alan (Scruff) Windsor who was a deck boy on that ill fated voyage. 42 years later and a sea going career taking him over the world, Alan is now back plying his trade on the Interisland ferry Arahura.

The memorial at Korohiwa is a fitting tribute to those who lost their lives, and also to the survivors. It is a stark reminder to all of us that the power of the sea should not be underestimated by those of us who go to sea, whether commercially or recreationally.

To all the personnel involved it is a wonderful memorial and setting to be enjoyed by many for years to come.

At the unveiling of the Wahine memorial, 10 April 2010, Korohiwa, Wellington, from left: Former New Zealand Seafarers' Union President Dave Morgan, Maritime Union of New Zealand General Secretary Joe Fleetwood and former New Zealand Seafarers' Union national secretary Jimmy Woods

Polar Bjorn

by Joe Fleetwood
General Secretary

On a return trip from concluding the Offshore Agreement on 21 April I received a phone call from MUA Sydney Branch assistant secretary Joe Deakin.

A vessel that had been working in Australian waters, was heading into Wellington en route to Tahiti.

The purpose of the visit was to change crews and hand it over to a foreign crew.

Because of the volcanic ash from the Icelandic volcano disrupting flights, the Polish crew could not make it in time, so therefore the company wanted to change to an Australian crew, but instead of the original eight they wanted to reduce numbers to six.

The following day the vessel was due to berth at 1600 so Grahame McLaren, Mike Clark and I were waiting on the wharf for it to arrive along with the oncoming Australian crew.

After discussions with them, and waiting for Customs and MAF to clear the ship, we proceeded on board to have a meeting with both crews.

Various options were put up to get the manning levels put back up to the original eight and all were knocked back by the skipper and the company OMS, based in Perth, Western Australia.

The main thrust of my argument was that if it took eight to do the run from Australia to New Zealand, why was it only six were required to take it up to Tahiti.

After further discussion the company's position remained firm with six to go being paid shorthand pay. This was rejected by the crew. I then informed the skipper and the company that the ship was in dispute and wouldn't be leaving the wharf until the situation was resolved.

It was now after 1800 and the vessel was up for 2000, by now the original crew had left the vessel and had booked into their hotel. We spoke to the on crew again and suggested if we were to get a resolution to the dispute two of the off crew would have to make themselves available to complete the voyage to Tahiti.

Things were now getting tense as it was close to sailing time.

After several more calls to Perth and contacting the off crew, two agreed to stay on. I contacted the company and told them this would be bottom line for us. After several minutes I got a call back from the company saying they would accept and the two crew members returning to the ship would be paid as per the overcycle payment in the agreement.

I would like to conclude by thanking the MUA members for their solidarity. Also to MUA Sydney Branch assistant secretary Joe Deakin and Victoria branch assistant secretary Bobby Patchett.

Napier

by Bill Connelly

Around and about

We are now in the busiest part of the year for the port of Napier, which services all the main cargoes from the Hawke's Bay and other districts such as Manawatu, Wanganui and more recently Taranaki, as a result of the Fonterra decision.
The visit of tourist vessels has ended for this season and the last vessel to visit had some 400 French tourists aboard on a round the World cruise, which would last some 127 days.
Napier city and retailers rolled out the red carpet and gave the tourists something to remember with guided tours of Napier, with French interpreters.
I understand they were also taken to other Hawke's Bay tourist destinations, such as Te Mata Peak and a brief tour of Hastings city, which is about 12 kilometres south of Napier.

C3

The current Collective Agreement expires on 31 December 2010.

Kelcold Limited

Their agreement expires on the 1 December 2010.

Hawke's Bay Stevedoring Services Limited

The current Collective Agreement has been rolled over for six months, until the end of February 2010 and we will shortly be into negotiations for a Local Port Schedule, which will be an attachment to the Multi-Employer Collective Agreement (MECA), which is negotiated nationally.
Our members employed by this company have been in continual employment on a regular basis and their idle time content is minimal, approximately 4%.

Workers' Memorial Day

We were again blessed with another fine Hawke's Bay day - the area has been reasonably dry over the past few months and the farmers must be just about ready to complain about the lack of moisture.
About forty people turned up for the service which was conducted by the Port Chaplain, Neville Stephenson.
Speakers included Russell Fairbrother, Thomas O'Neill our Local Affiliates Council convener representing the CTU, and Dave Marden, the local Secretary of the RMTU.

Industry Training Organisation (ITO)

On 15 April I attended a CTU organised seminar on industry training, where union representatives from all over New Zealand gathered to listen to the presentations from the people in government departments and the CEO from the Industry Training Federation (ITF), Mr Jeremy Baker.
This was a most informative and worthwhile seminar that had all the delegates listening to the various presentations put forward from speakers from the Department of Labour, CTU and the ITF.
I have done a brief report for the General Secretary on my views of the seminar, but it was not as lengthy or as detailed as that distributed by Don Farr of the CTU, who has to be complimented for organising such a worthwhile and interesting seminar.
Members might be interested to know that with the demise of the Waterfront Training Organisation (WTO) that Tranzqual are now responsible for recommending and implementing training modules for the transport industry.
They have a dedicated website should members wish to explore further.

RMTU Ports Forum Seminar

On 5 May I attended the RMTU "Ports Forum" seminar.
This was a continuation of what transpired at the ITO seminar in that three members of Tranzqual were in attendance to give their overview of the industry and in particular their view of the training requirements in the transport industry.
Both the RMTU and MUNZ members questioned them on training within our industry and the consensus was that more could be done to introduce younger people into the industry, but that a prerequisite would be adequate training.
I said with the demise of the WTO that the job of the old Waterfront Worker as we knew it has slowly diminished.

Workers Memorial Day commemorated on the Napier waterfront, 28 April 2010 (photo by Bill Connelly)

Prior to Port Reform we topped and lowered derricks, knew how to put a chain stopper on a topping lift wire and we had a good knowledge of how to tie various knots.
We knew how to do these things, because they were part of your training to gain your Hatch and Deckman certification at the WTO in Auckland.
Most of our older members who attended the WTO are fully conversant with how to set a midship and yard derrick and ensure that the guys and preventors are properly rigged.
Now we have seamen from third world countries, who probably have less training than we do, rigging the gear and putting our members at risk.
I asked the members at the seminar how many of them are aware that all shackles above head height are supposed to be seized.
This is a requirement in the Code of Practice for Health and Safety in Port Operations.
I would like to thank the RMTU and Don Farr from the CTU for making the time available for both Unions to have the opportunity to express their views on the training requirements within the wharf gates.

Box Rigged Gangways

This problem continues and the only way to stop it is to refuse to board a vessel until such time as the gangway is rigged safely. This is also a directive from the past and present General Secretaries, which has been discussed repeatedly at National Executive meetings.
Clause 2.5 (b) of the "Code of Practice for Health and Safety in Port Operations", spells it out quite clearly.

"Access to a ship:

(b) From a wharf (quay) access to the ship must be by means of a gangway with nets slung from the ship's side to the opposite side of the gangway, or an enclosed solid structure, or by other means that will prevent a person falling from the gangway and landing on the wharf or in the water."

This particular clause as well as the majority of others were put in the Code by the Union.
I would ask you all to abide by the Code of Practice regulations as they were put there for your safety and ignoring them will only lead to more serious injuries to our members and as we all know, sometimes death.
A sombre thought, but one we all need to give serious consideration to.
I have personally e-mailed the Code to all Branches, so there is no excuse for not abiding by its contents.

Different generations, same Union: from left, Wellington Seafarers' Branch member Peter Torrance, Wellington Waterfront Branch member Tracey Foster, Veterans' Association President Doug Phillips and Wellington Waterfront Branch member Bradley Clifford at the Maritime Union of New Zealand National Executive meeting, April 2010 (photo by Victor Billot)

Veterans' Roundup

by Terry Ryan

Editors note:

This edition of the Maritimes we start a new regular column from the Maritime Union of New Zealand Veterans Association. The veterans now have a observers seat at all National Executive meetings and continue to grow in numbers.
To contact the Veterans Association write to PO Box 2645, Shortland Street, Auckland 1140 or email terry@munz.org.nz
For those with internet access a membership form can be downloaded from the Maritime Union website at: http://www.munz.org.nz/about-2/veterans-association/

Further losses since the last publication include Cliff Mitchell, one time C.T.K., well known as President of the Marist Rugby League Club, on the 1 April aged 88.
Derek Brunning 2 days later on the 3 April at Middlemore Hospital. Derek was also a C.T.K., later becoming a foreman and an official of the Foreman-Stevedores union.
Derek was also a member of the Auckland Waterside Workers' Union executive in 1969 and, along with brother Ken, was a member of the union's Chess Club.
Then on the 6 April, big Bruce Phillips passed over after suffering a ruptured aortic aneurysm in the lower abdomen.
Bruce, before joining the union, was a K-Force veteran and his funeral was held at the Waihi R.S.A. clubrooms where music and recitations were the order of the day.

As we are going to press we learn of the sad passing of Whitianga veteran member Hugh Barrow.

National executive

Veterans' Association President Doug Phillips attended the national executive meeting in April where he took the opportunity to meet with Paul Martin and Richard Hart of the Waterfront Industry Superannuation Fund (WISF) and received reasonable answers to all his enquiries regarding problems faced by the veteran members.
He advised the national executive that the veterans in no way wanted to take a trustee seat on the WISF and were only seeking observer status which, at this point in time, is being blocked by the employers.
He advised that the veterans welcomed the opportunity to be involved in the protest rally against the Ports of Auckland plan to contract out waterfront work during the Around the Bays run.
It was pleasing to see a good turnout of veteran members.
He also noted the excellent turnout by veterans at the interport sports and thanked the New Plymouth branch for their hospitality. He thanked the branches for their support at conference of the two veteran remits, both carried unanimously, especially the second one supporting the Veterans' Association financially.

Tauranga Mount Maunganui

by Eddie Cook

It would be fair to say that the last two years have been among the most challenging in the Tauranga branches history.
This statement is not intended to minimize in any way the struggles faced by our brother branches or the national office.
However this branch was hit with two damaging events that came in succession.
The first of course was the undignified exit of the previous branch secretary which did nothing to help the transition to a new secretary and branch executive.
The second was the large number of job losses by our members at the sulphur point terminal after New Zealand Lumber lost their contracts for that stevedoring work there.
This union responded well to that eminent job loss by being able to negotiate a cross hire arrangement with the new stevedore C3.
This arrangement was not only innovative but incredibly beneficial for those members facing redundancy and showed how potent this union can be in what was a melt down of jobs.
Many of those members are now employed by a new stevedore in Tauranga called New Zealand Marshalling which is hoping to pick the work of New Lumber at Sulphur Point once their dispute with the port company is settled.
Despite these events the branch membership and administration are stable.
This is in no small way attributable to the support through this period from comrades such as Garry Parsloe, Russell Mayn, Joe Fleetwood and of course our brother branches and national office. This support has exemplified the principle of national unionism and the force of true collective action in the face of threats to us.
We have had to let our office lady Corrine Paraore go after many years of loyal service and we thank her dearly for that and wish her all the best in the future.
We have just settled the Balance and Wilson Parking collective agreement with good results and are in negotiations with C3 and Comvita and retain positive outlook for these and the future of the branch.

Late News

Port worker Brian Shannon, 61, was killed on the evening of Monday 21 June in the Port of Tauranga in a forklift accident.
There was a previous forklift fatality in Tauranga in 2003, another forklift fatality in the Port of Napier in 2006, and another one earlier this year in Port Botany, Australia.

Gisborne

by Dein Ferris

News wise, as far as the Branch is concerned there is very little to report.
We have requested a meeting with management to update our employment contract.
Also we are currently attending company courses, our next being our OSH forklift tickets.
We are doing the odd kiwifruit vessel now, mixed in with our Plywood shipments.

Timaru

by Kevin Forde

Some fish and fertilizer work in the port.
The Branch recently got a new computer and the new email address for the Secretary is tony.townshend@munz.org.nz

Bluff

by Ray Fife

It so far has been a year when the National government has backfired on a huge range of issues, from tax cuts for the rich only and the cancelling of future promised tax cuts and Superannuation contributions; to a Jobs Summit which created virtually no jobs; to the most dramatic rise in unemployment since National was last in government; to lies about the financial state of ACC; to a cycleway that stuttered to a halt; to the debacle of spending $68 million to promote Education National Standards instead of putting that money into frontline services; to Adult and Community Education services cuts and Public Service Job Cuts; to the scandals over Bill English and others rorting expenses; to proposing mining in National Parks and allowing more whales to be killed; and announcing yet more Welfare and Health Cuts, and a rise in GST.

It is more important than ever that we as a union start working with parties that will deliver on policies that will benefit the working class people of New Zealand. To do this we must support a party that traditionally has backed the union movement. MUNZ is now affiliated to the Labour Party nationally and it is time for every branch to get out and get actively involved.

To do this we must work within, I know some may disagree but if we want to push issues that affect our union we have to be able to directly influence from the inside as it is no good looking in from the outside. We as a branch determined that many years ago, we are actively involved in the party, have a member on the Invercargill LEC, deliver leaflets, attend rallies and support in any other areas when there is a need to.

For some time now we have been having discussions with the employees of Southport who are not in any union and are on individual contracts.

The meetings held have been informative in which we have laid out the benefits of joining a union.

General Secretary Joe Fleetwood addressed one of those meetings and since have been successful in signing up 24 of the 25 permanent workers.

We welcome all these new members into our Branch and into our national structure. You are now part of a pro active union that is nationally organised and is a powerful industrial and political force in New Zealand and Internationally.

Our saying is “touch one, touch all”.

Loading billett (metal) at Tiwai Point, Bluff (photo by Harry Holland)

Port Chalmers Dunedin

by Phil Adams

Greetings from the South. As the winter tightens its grip, the port is going through a busy spell, not only in in the Terminal but also on the conventional side, particularly with logs. A good sign for the port.

Terminal

The terminal has its two new high straddles and these will soon be joined by another two high straddles.
The terminal is continuing to be extremely busy, which is ironic with all the hype last year when were told transships would be dropped off at our port. The opposite has happened.
This added work is putting a lot of strain on the members but as usual they are responding to the challenge.
Since the voluntary redundancy we have lost some very experienced and dedicated members of the Union.
We wish them a long and healthy retirement. A function for these retiring members will be held in July to recognize the contribution of these members.

Elections

Our local elections have been held with nine contenders for five executive positions. Branch president Ian Quarrell, Vice President Graeme Wall, Secretary Treasurer Phil Adams and Trustees Graham Hutton and Roger Crawford were elected unopposed. Tim Camp, Paul Cavanagh, Andrew Corbett, Paul Napier and Steve Smith were elected to the Executive. Congratulations to those elected and thanks to all who took part as the elections show a healthy democratic spirit in the branch.
Commiserations to Stu Crawford who did not make it back on, but we look forward to his ongoing contribution to the branch.

Port Chalmers Cargo Services

The company have had a change in managers with Ross Birkett leaving suddenly and being replaced by former watersider Brett Dalwood.
We hope the branch's relationship with Brett is better than with the former manager. Our delegate Noel Currie hopes for a constructive relationship.

Fonterra

With the establishment of a Fonterra depot in Mosgiel, we have members working there in a supervisor and straddle driving capacity.
With this essentially an inland port, having our members working there is a major plus and although only two at the moment it is hoped as the depot grows so will our membership.

Negotiations

Our remit committee met in May to go through remits for the upcoming negotiations.
Steve Smith, Andrew Jennings and officials from both unions will meet to look at the remits. It is aimed to start negotiations in June and the collective agreement expires in July.
One notable omission in the negotiations will be management's Matt Ballard who leaves in late June to take up a position in Brisbane as HR officer with BHP Coal.
It is understood the port company will be using an Auckland advocate to negotiate for the company which will prove extremely interesting.
But it does not matter who they put up as long as we are united in getting what is best for all.

Life Membership

At our last stop work meeting attended by 70 members, Bryan Berryman was elected as a life member of the Social Committee, for his work over the years.
Bryan has recently retired to Hanmer

Port Chalmers Dunedin Branch members of the Maritime Union at the RMTU Rally to get electric train units made in New Zealand workshops, Dunedin, Tuesday 8 June 2010, from left, Branch Vice President Graeme Wall, executive member Paul Kavanagh, Branch President Ian Quarrell, and branch member Stu Crawford (photo by Victor Billot)

Springs. Well done Bryan, thoroughly deserved.

Drug testing

The Port Company is strongly advocating random drug testing. We are strongly resisting it, as our Union national policy is quite specific – no random testing.
This will be our stance until the law changes or our national policy is changed.
Management is also looking at serious misconduct if people coming to or from work are found to be under the influence.
Our stance to this is because of the short notice for work, at times people will be forced to become teetotalers and again we will resist this.

Logship

Recently we had a near drowning at the logberth where a casual fell into the harbor while trying to avoid a heave.
He was plucked out of the water by a workmate just in time.
The incident happened during a 12 hour night shift and what it did expose is the lack of safety equipment to assist a person in this situation.
In the bad old days there would have been walking boards between ship and wharf, life buoys, stretchers and a dedicated trained First Aider.
My, how things have changed.

Ports of Auckland

Our branch is intently watching the Ports of Auckland situation.
We continue to offer our full support to our fellow members in Auckland as what happens there will no doubt flow on to the rest of the country.

Dealing with management

We need to remind members that if they are summoned to the manager's office for a chat, they should always take an official or an executive member as meetings should always have a witness as what is said can be misinterpreted.
It strengthens your position and the position of the Union to have us there.

Peter Sharples

Member Peter Sharples lost his battle with cancer in early May. Peter worked for the port company for 26 years and was a very popular and dedicated member of staff. Our sympathy to his family at this time. Peter was one of the good blokes.

Clothing

Caps and beanies are available from the Secretary, just ask if you require. Polo shirts are also available.

Interport sports tourney

In 2011 the Port Chalmers branch will be hosting the Annual Sports Tourney and Winky Waugh is seeking assistance to run it. Winky is also keen to hear from anyone who would like to attend the Tauranga interport event in 2012 and wants to put some money away to pay for it.

Holiday unit

The Queenstown Unit has a few vacancies for the remainder of the year and those wishing to book it or enquire should contact Ian Quarrell on 021472021 or Alan Middleditch on 0212298726.

We are in for a challenging time with the upcoming negotiations but the rewards will come if we are united.

An Observer's View

Maritime Union National Executive Meeting, 7-8 April 2010

by Graeme Wall
Vice President Local 10
Port Chalmers Dunedin Branch

The recently held National Executive meeting was my first opportunity to attend such a forum, and was my first visit to Waterside House, our head office in Willis Street, Wellington.
This brief report is my overall impression of the actual meeting and the view of the top from an observer's vantage point.
Although having attended the 2009 Triennial Conference which provided an introduction to the other branches that makes up our organization, it is seeing the Executive in action that enables one to have an appreciation of the overall structure of our Union.
Whilst some of the substantive aspects of the meeting will be covered in this publication in greater depth I would like to comment on the feel of the meeting.
Although I'm in no position to compare to previous such meetings I was able to discern an air of positive restructuring as our new General Secretary, Joe Fleetwood, stamps his own style on the national head office.
Joe certainly had a well organised couple of days planned for us, interspersed with guest speakers and presentations.
The overall theme, for want of a better term, for me was that MUNZ does have to establish and maintain its own identity but at the same time forge close bonds and alliances with likeminded organisations so as to build strength from shared common interests.
This 'theme' was shown throughout the 2 days that I attended.
The shared relationships were clearly evident by the signing of the Alliance Charter between MUNZ and RMTU.
Whilst this has now been widely discussed elsewhere it was, from my perspective, the new leadership's direction that clearly spoke to the membership: 'that although differences may remain between these two organisations we will achieve very little if we allow ourselves to be guided exclusively by past failures'. As Joe said it is now up to all of us to make this alliance work.
The aspect of relationships was further illustrated by the attendance at the meeting by NZEI National Secretary Paul Goulter, Paul Tolich of the EPMU and Labour Party, ITF Inspector Grahame MacLaren, and National Secretary of the Maritime Union of Australia Paddy Crumlin, with a short visit also made by Secretary of the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions, Helen Kelly.
Further to this were the reports of the recent international meetings and rallies that our executive officers have attended.
Some may question the validity of such international travel but it nevertheless forges the international connections that we may need at times of strife. Our industry is very much rooted in the international arena hence it does make sense to maintain a respected presence there.
But the other side of the theme that I discerned from the 2 days was that regardless of what inter Union relationships that may be forged we must never lose our own identity.
This was clearly spelled out by Paddy Crumlin in his address when he questioned the strength and visible face of some of the British Dockers organisations that have amalgamated into bigger bodies and have lost their own identity in the process.
As far as MUNZ goes, the General Secretary has been working on some initiatives that clearly spell out who we think we are and where we plan on being.
Our brothers in Auckland are obviously taking this onboard and are making their displeasure with the Ports of Auckland felt.
Joe had prepared a powerpoint presentation that reiterates our shared values, our collective face and the fact we are not afraid to engage in militant action when the need arises.
As a Union we are relatively small numerically but on a visit to our head office our history is clearly evident in the photos and banners on the walls.
Along with the people who are constantly visiting it makes one realise that we are a recognised player with strength in the national arena.
As with all meetings there is plenty of minute detail that is discussed but the above is the overall feel that a first time observer took away from his two days in Wellington.

Breaking Rio Tinto's Lockout:

Boron workers go back to work with heads held high

From the ILWU Dispatcher

With help from their neighbors and supporters around the world, 570 working families in Boron, California successfully faced down global goliath Rio Tinto.

The ILWU Local 30 members who work at Rio Tinto's massive mine in Boron approved a new contract on 15 May 2010, breaking the company's 15-week lockout. The agreement provides guaranteed raises and a $5,000 per worker bonus, protects full-time jobs and seniority rights, and removes scabs from the workplace.

"Most of us are happy to be going back to work, earning our paychecks, and doing the jobs that we love," said Terri Judd, war veteran and heavy equipment operator who served as an official spokesperson for Local 30 members during the lockout. "We're going back with our heads held high, but we're also guarded about dealing with a company that locked us out."

The tentative agreement with Rio Tinto was reached in the early morning hours of 14 May with help from ILWU International President Bob McEllrath,Vice President Ray Familathe, and Secretary Treasurer Willie Adams.

Local 30 President Dave Liebengood and the rank and file Negotiating Committee asked the ILWU International officers to assist them during the final week of intensive negotiations.

Settlement meets key goals

The settlement met members' key goals of securing good jobs and stopping Rio Tinto's assault on their union contract. Rio Tinto had been pushing a package of 81 "take-away" demands, part of the company's ultimatum that was rejected by workers one day before the 31 January lockout.

Those ultimatum demands included:

- Converting full-time jobs into part-time positions with skimpy benefits.
- Authority to cut employee pay at any time for any reason - or no reason at all.
- Eliminating seniority and allowing discrimination, favoritism, and nepotism.
- Allowing management to pick and choose who would or wouldn't get raises.
- Giving management unlimited power to outsource and subcontract work.
- Declaring parts of the plant to be "non-union" where workers had no union rights.

ILWU Local 30 members rally to protect jobs and conditions (photo courtesy ILWU)

The new six-year agreement protects workers from the worst of the company's attacks and includes guaranteed annual wage increases of 2.5 percent. The new agreement will also:

- Limit outsourcing by requiring full utilization of all workers and machines before any work goes outside.
- Retain seniority protection for shifts, layoffs, and vacations. Transfers and promotions will remain subject to seniority for workers with relatively equal qualifications.
- Expand opportunities for overtime while reducing coercive, mandatory overtime.

The agreement includes several compromises that were negotiated before the final bargaining sessions, including the replacement of guaranteed pension benefits with a 401(k) savings plan for all new hires.

At the ratification meeting, some members noted that this "two-tier" retirement plan could undermine unity between new-hires and veteran employees, erode the pension funding base for current employees, and will eventually eliminate the defined benefits pensions for the next generation of workers.

Another compromise in the new contract requires that any wage and hour violations be arbitrated, instead of allowing members to file lawsuits in court.

"Local 30 members deserve the credit for sticking together and fighting for the best agreement we could from a company that wanted to destroy our union", said Local 30 President Liebengood.

"We didn't get everything we wanted, and we had to make some compromises, but the final contract was a real victory for us."

Victorious outcome far from certain

A victorious outcome was far from certain in the minds of many workers when the company locked them out on 31 January. Member Kim Evans expressed the views of many: "When we first got locked out I thought there was no way in heck we would win this. But we had so many people that showed up out here. I grew up out here, but for other people it's a shock – a little tiny desert town that looks like it would blow away... The Teamster trucks brought us $30,000 worth of groceries and then another $20,000, so we had a food bank."

Food and financial contributions continued to roll in to help Local 30 families. Members of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union in Southern California delivered hundreds of Easter Baskets to families and helped purchase groceries at deep discounts. Members at UFCW Local 8 in Sacramento donated 3,500 pounds of chicken.

Members of ILWU Local 17 collected enough donations to buy and deliver 2,000 pounds of rice.

Financial support important

Local 30 President Dave Liebengood also praised the financial support from unions that put food on members' tables and kept bill collectors at bay, adding, "I want to personally thank President Bob McEllrath and the entire staff of the International for helping our cause during this campaign to win a fair contract. Without the ILWU and other unions, we would have been destroyed."

Kevin Martz, who also served as a spokesperson during the lockout, agreed that supporters from throughout the ILWU and broader labor movement deserve credit for raising the funds that helped pay for COBRA health insurance fees, utilities, mortgages, and car payments.

Darrell Nichols was typical of many Local 30 members who stepped up and took on new responsibilities during the lockout. Before it was over, he had served on the Contract Action Team (CAT), as a Gate Captain, and as a member of the Emergency Support Committee that allocated funds to families in financial distress. And that's all in addition to his duties as a local pastor.

"The support we got from our community and from around the world was unbelievable," said Nichols.

"It's just amazing when you come from a little town like we do. It was really mind blowing to see all the unions donating food and money to help our families because it showed everyone that people really do care about each other."

"I learned that if you stick together and you have a common goal, you'll come out OK."

Mining and maritime international committee meeting

16–17 February 2010, California, USA

by Garry Parsloe
National Vice President

On the 16–17 February 2010 General Secretary Joe Fleetwood and I attended the Mining and Maritime International Committee meeting in Palmdale California.

International Vice President ILWU Ray Familathe, and ILWU Secretary Willie Adams opened up the meeting by giving a background report on the Rio Tinto dispute at the Boron Mines.

At 7.00am on 31 January 2010 multinational Rio Tinto, the second largest mining company in the world, locked out nearly 600 members of ILWU Local 30 at its Borax mine and plant in Boron, California.

This mega conglomerate is trying to force an extremely concessionary contract ultimatum down the throats of Local 30.

The meeting heard a number of reports on the dispute, then on the strategy that the ILWU has adopted to date.

We had a lengthy discussion from all the international delegates in attendance expressing support and raising ideas of how to expand on a strategy which would resolve this dispute in favour of the ILWU.

Joe Fleetwood spoke in this session and pledged support from MUNZ.

After Rio Tinto we heard reports from the United Steelworkers of Canada. The speakers expanded on the Grupo Mexico dispute.

In 2006 Grupo Mexico and the Mexican Government launched a campaign to destroy the union in Mexico. Union leaders have been jailed without charges and some are still in jail today without charges and there seems that there is little hope with all the corruption of resolving this dispute.

The last report for the day was from MUA Deputy Secretary Mick Dolman on the ITF and ICEM Offshore Taskforce Group.

In the afternoon on the first day the whole Delegation got into vans and went up to Boron and addressed the Local 30 mine workers on their picket lines.

Day two opened with the Chairman giving me the floor to report on our dispute with the Ports of Auckland.

I expanded on the recent redundancies, the Term Agreements, Good Faith Bargaining, the recruitment of labour and the cost savings that the Ports of Auckland are seeking. After the report Delegates asked questions to which I replied.

The President of Local 30 addressed the meeting and thanked all the Delegates for joining the picket which lifted the moral and spirits of all those locked-out workers.

The meeting again addressed the Grupo Mexico dispute and discussed ways of dealing with this dispute.

The next session was headed "Future of the Mining and Maritime". In this session we discussed how best to promote activities within the Mining and Maritime Structure.

The next session was a progress report on the planning for the Mining and Maritime Seminar/Conference which is to be held in Durban, South Africa in September 2011.

The last session was Calendar items/next Regional Meetings.

It was agreed to hold the next Regional Meeting in Auckland, New Zealand on the 10–11 November 2010.

This was a very positive and productive meeting with the highlight being meeting all the locked-out Local 30 picketers.

Maritime Union of New Zealand General Secretary Joe Fleetwood (right) and National Vice President Garry Parsloe join the ILWU Local 30 boron miners rally, Boron, California, February 2010

"Trans Pacific Partnership"
21st century agreement or 19th century?

By Bill Rosenberg
Policy Director/Economist,
New Zealand Council of Trade Unions

A second round of negotiations towards the Transpacific Partnership Trade Agreement (TPPTA) will open next week in San Francisco.
New Zealand is one of eight parties along with the US, Australia, Singapore, Chile, Peru, Brunei and Vietnam, and others may join.
This is much more than a trade agreement. It will reach into medicine prices, our ability to regulate important services such as finance, telecommunications, and education, our right to control foreign investment, our competition rules, rights to copy music and other digital media, the international trade effects of combating climate change, how local and central government can use their buying power for economic development purposes, and much more.

The Obama administration has put significant emphasis on this agreement, and has stated it wants it to "set the standard for 21st-century trade agreements".
It wants it expanded to include China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and other major Pacific economies.

In New Zealand it is sold as opening the US market to our agricultural produce, despite well engraved writing on the wall that any additional access will be bitterly fought, and if it comes will be at a glacial pace.
By the time additional access is a reality, producers from many other countries would be competing for the same market.
This emphasis on opening markets with inadequate consideration as to the domestic effects of such agreements in weakening our ability to shape our own society and economy is distinctly 19th rather than 21st century.

Effects of globalisation

The globalisation of the 19th century ended with the First World War. The globalisation since the 1980s produced lower growth rates and repeated financial crises.
Prominent Harvard economist Dani Rodrik says he has an "impossibility theorem" for the global economy: "democracy, national sovereignty and global economic integration are mutually incompatible: we can combine any two of the three, but never have all three simultaneously and in full".
Our trade and investment agreements have ignored this incompatibility in favour of increasingly intense global economic integration, resulting in the wilting of our national sovereignty - our ability to make rules that would assist our development.

Our democracy has weakened as a result: we still elect governments, but they are increasingly powerless to change the rules.
So what might a truly 21st century agreement look like - one which learns the lessons of the past?
First, open up the process of negotiation. This agreement will be more important than much of the legislation that goes through Parliament, yet it is negotiated behind closed doors with no opportunity for public scrutiny of proposals until the deal is signed, when it is too late.
Let the citizens of the eight nations see the negotiating texts as they develop, and open them to debate.
Learn the lessons of the global financial crisis.
It grew from high risk financial practices, and was spread rapidly round the world due to the absence of international financial regulation.

Time to control finance

It's time to build new agreements in which nations cooperate in managing international financial movements, tax international financial transactions and regulate financial practices which are a danger to the health and safety of our economies.
Instead, the financial rules being proposed give banks and other financial corporations the right to sell risky products, increasing international borrowing and trade risky instruments overseas with only limited protection for our financial system and economy.
"21st century" agreements should respect people's need for affordable health care, and to organise their health services the way they choose.
Instead, the vital work Pharmac does to force down monopolist prices charged for medicines is under attack from big US pharmaceutical corporations who want to use the TPPTA agreement to allow them to charge whatever the market will bear.
Many New Zealanders have been concerned at the control of strategic assets and land by overseas interests.
A forward-looking international agreement should enhance our ability to select the investment we think is best for our needs.
Instead the US has made clear its corporations dislike even our feeble foreign investment rules, and want the right to sue the government for damages before secretive international panels.
Such disputes have led to the award of hundreds of millions of dollars against governments which took action to protect the environment or to reverse privatisations which went wrong.
In a current case, tobacco multinational, Philip Morris, is suing the Uruguay government to prevent it taking stronger anti-smoking measures.
International agreements have for decades been a recognised way to improve the rights of people at work. This one should be no exception.
If the TPPTA is genuinely there to improve people's wellbeing it will ensure that core international labour rights conventions are just as enforceable as trade access and bad labour practices are not used as silent trade subsidies.

Workers' rights sidelined

Instead previous agreements have sidelined labour rights, while workers lose from the endless restructuring forced by globalisation, many seeing their high paid skilled job being replaced by a low paid, insecure one.
Similarly, international agreements are essential to protect our environment: many environmental threats require global solutions.
Climate change is one, and controls on emissions can be undermined by trade with countries which have lower standards.
The TPPTA should allow us to ensure our environment and our contribution to avoiding climate change are not undermined by trade. But the TPPTA countries all have very different approaches - in climate change, some have as yet done nothing.
Protecting the environment should be an enforceable part of any agreement.
For the first time, the peak union bodies of most of the countries involved are cooperating in order to act on their concerns at the likely direction of the TPPTA.
They have issued a declaration outlining their concerns, which include the above and many more.
Will the TPPTA be truly a 21st century agreement - or just more of the same?

For more information, see www.nznotforsale.org

"Many New Zealanders have been concerned at the control of strategic assets and land by overseas interests"

Find us on Facebook

www.facebook.com/maritimeunion

Local MP selects local young person to represent community

Carol Beaumont, Labour MP based in the Maungakiekie electorate with Youth MP Cameron Jacob-Sauer

Carol Beaumont, Labour MP based in the Maungakiekie electorate has selected Cameron Jacob-Sauer, Deputy Head Boy of One Tree Hill College to represent them and our community at Youth Parliament 2010.
Cameron, of Ngai Te Rangi descent, is a young man who has already shown leadership potential at school not only as Deputy Head boy but also as a prefect, a maths tutor and a peer supporter with younger students. He has attended a Rotary leadership course and connects to the wider community through the school's Interact group.
Youth Parliament 2010 will bring 122 young New Zealanders from across the country to Parliament for two days on 6 and 7 July 2010. While they are there they will share their views with the country's decision-makers.
"I've been so impressed with the calibre of applications I received as part of selecting Cameron as my Youth MP. I will be working with Cameron to connect him to key organisations in our community so they can take our community's voice to Youth Parliament 2010" says Carol Beaumont. "I intend for this process to create an ongoing network of young leaders to work with me in the community."
The Youth Parliament 2010 Bill will focus on an age of majority. Youth MPs will be able to debate the merits of different age thresholds. There are also ten select committees of inquiry ranging from entrepreneurship education to copyright infringement.
Young people who want to connect with the Youth MPs and let them know what they think can join the official Youth Parliament 2010 group on Facebook.
Youth Parliament 2010 is a joint initiative of the Minister of Youth Affairs and the Speaker of the House of Representatives and is organised by the Ministry of Youth Development in collaboration with the Office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Office of the Clerk, the Parliamentary Service and New Zealand's 122 Members of Parliament.
Further information about the topics to be discussed can be found on the Youth Parliament 2010 website http://www.youthparliament.govt.nz

Youth Parliament

by Cameron Jacob-Sauer
Youth MP for Maungakiekie

Youth Parliament is an opportunity for youth to gain a first hand experience in the New Zealand democratic system.
Youth Members of Parliament spend two days in Wellington and take part in legislative debates, get to sit on select committees and ask parliamentary questions to Cabinet Ministers.
It has been held every three years since 1994 with the next one in July 2010. To be involved, young people apply to one of their local electorate or list Members of Parliament to be a Youth Member of Parliament and then go through a selection process to be picked.
I first heard about the 2010 Youth Parliament at school and was interested in signing up to be the Youth MP for the Labour List MP Carol Beaumont based in the Maungakiekie electorate.
The selection process involved writing responses to the questions "Why do you think fairness is an important measure in deciding how successful a country is?" and "What experience have you had in showing leadership?"
This was followed by an interview in which I and three other people who had been shortlisted got together to meet with Carol. We discussed some of the things we had written as well as being asked about things related to parliament.
I was really excited when I was told I had been selected to be the Youth MP for Carol Beaumont.
My Dad is in the merchant navy and it was interesting to find out he had already known a bit about Ms Beaumont who had spoken at the Old Timers' Do last year which Dad attended.
He showed me some of the pictures of Carol with the Auckland Branch Secretary, Gary Parsloe in the Maritimes and Port News.
I remembered when I was about 7 and won $20 for a really short piece I wrote on why Trade Unions are important (we'd been down to visit the ITF ship 'Global Mariner')
It is great to know that I will be the Youth MP for someone who represents values that I believe in such as fairness and is currently pushing the Credit Reforms (Responsible Lending) Bill.

Postscript written by Dad/Darryl and Mum/Lin:

With Darryl having been at sea for for nearly 30 years, and Lin having been at sea for a much shorter time of 7 years until just before Cameron was born, it is very exciting for both of us that Cam not only has this opportunity to be part of Youth Parliament but especially that he will be representing an MP (Carol Beaumont) who has had some connections with the MUNZ and is passionate about equality and fairness.

Unions in a modern economy

By Hector Thorpe
MUNZ 3111

A Veteran's Tale

I enjoy listening to my father, William Henry (Bill) Thorpe 2nd, a veteran seaman and wharfie, when he occasionally reflects on past workplace sagas or injustices to workers.
A worldly and wise man who is up-to-date with current issues but has always maintained "the gains for ourselves and for society have been achieved by the working man and working woman."
His own father, William Henry (Bill) Thorpe 1st, my grandfather was also a veteran who served at sea as a fireman (engine-room coal- stoker).
Its obvious there's no love lost when Dad speaks of the ship-owners' deeds during his father's working career, including that "firemen were required to supply their own shovels" and "they slept on a donkeys breakfast"(straw mattress).
Moreover, Dad recalls the time when his father's ship sunk from a torpedo attack during the war.
The ship-owner's reaction was to stop their wages from the time of the sinking, and for those lucky enough to scramble back into the lifeboat their leave started!
Many MUNZ veterans could tell a similar tale or two, which highlights the fact that the conditions we enjoy today are a direct result of the struggles achieved by past union comrades.

Pro Union

The objective of unions is to advance the interest of their members. History proves unions have contributed to the improvements of working conditions and wages, collective bargaining, fair treatment, equally, grievance issues and simply giving workers a voice.
At times unions can created a real sense of their own power by exerting pressure on employers and governments to achieve better terms and conditions.

Anti Union

However, controversy has always surrounded unions, as employers and some governments approach unions from different perspectives.
For many unionists it seem every possible obstacle has been put in place to limit their growth, undermine their influence, or discredit their existence.
Successful campaigns have also been launched by employers, governments and the media to portray unions as corrupt, a burden on society, and relics of a bygone era.

What does the public think?

There is no doubt the public have been influenced by the one sided portrayal of unions, "union bosses," disputes or disruptions.
Moreover, many aspects of the business environment have changed, including government legislation, industry deregulation (see http://www.investopedia.com/terms/d/deregulate.asp), free trade market expansion, increased competition, automation, computers and increased worker productivity resulting in fewer workers needed to do the same job.
These changes reinforce Statistics NZ findings that unions have experienced limited growth in the last couple of decades. Currently about 20% of the work force are union members.

Unions in a modern economy

There are millions of union members throughout the world enjoying the benefits of union protection. However, like the fortunes of our Trade Union Movement, this protection is often reliant upon the outcome of general elections.
Since the first Labour Party election win of 1935 and subsequent Labour and Labour-coalition governments, workers have generally received favourable labour laws including compulsory unionism or de facto compulsory unionism.
However, from the National Party's first election victory in 1949, and subsequent Party or coalition election victories, workers have suffered from market and industry deregulation policies and laws that overturn compulsory unionism.
This swinging pendulum of electoral fortunes may press unions to focus on growth via the infrastructure of the NZ Council of Trade Unions.
Increasing union density by means of an education and recruitment campaigns, a branding strategy, or PR exercise, may increase options to launch strategies such as a fight-back, consumer boycotts against companies who outsource jobs and industry overseas or to help influence tripartite structures involving unions, employers and the government.
Labour MP Darien Fenton's Redundancy Protection Bill is set to help workers facing hard times in a modern economy. This is a principled union based initiative.
Should National not support this bill into law, it will emphasize exactly who serves the interest of workers - unions or the National coalition?
Union strategies may have to change in a modern economy but the facts remain clear, the gains for ourselves and for society will continue to be achieved by the working man and working woman.

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Maritime Union photos online at www.flickr.com/maritimeunion

Thai Labour Activist released

Thai trade unionist Somyot Pruksakasemsuk, was released on 13 June from a prison at a Thai army base.
He had been imprisoned since 24 May, together with academic Suthachai Yimprasert from Chulalongkom University, after the two presented themselves to police after they heard arrest warrants had been issued for them.
Yimprasert was released 5 June from a prison at the Adisorn military base in Saraburi, 115 kilometres north of Bangkok.
Both were arrested under the government's Centre for the Resolution of the Emergency Situation (CRES), a hastily put together decree stemming from May's political turbulence in Thailand.
The release of Brother Somyot follows a criminal court's decision rejecting the CRES arrest order. Even after that decision, the government held him for another seven days.
The CRES charges against him were for inflaming public sentiment against the government for holding a news conference on 21 May in which he called for the resignation of Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva.
He also edited a newspaper that supported the viewpoints of the Red Shirts in recent political strife.
The International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions called the charges a serious breach of universal free speech rights.
International human rights groups throughout the world, as well as several Global Union Federations, sent protests to the Thai government over the unfair arrests of Somyot and Suthachai.

For more information see www.icem.org

MUNZ General Secretary Joe Fleetwood (left) and New Zealand ITF inspector Grahame McLaren (centre) present the ITF affiliates letter regarding the detention of Thai labour activists to an official at the Thailand Embassy, 9 June 2010

Letter to Thai Prime Minister from New Zealand ITF affiliates

Abhisit Vejjajiva
Prime Minister
Government House
1 Pissanulok Road
Dusit
Bangkok 10300
Thailand

8 June 2010

Dear Prime Minister
I write on behalf of the New Zealand International Transport Workers' Federation Affiliates and its member unions to express grave concerns over the continued targeting of trade unionists by your government.
The Affiliates have been informed that Somyot Pruksakasemsuk, a respected trade unionist, is currently being detained without charge at Adisorn Calvary Unit.
From the information we have received, Mr. Pruksakasemuk was arrested for his connection with a peaceful event; a press conference hosted by the 24th of June Democracy Group on 21st of May outside the House No. 111 Foundation.
We also understand that the Criminal Court has twice approved the request of the Centre for the Resolution of Emergency Crisis to extend the detention of Mr. Pruksakasemsuk for a further seven days, despite the fact that no formal charges have been laid.
The New Zealand ITF Affiliates fully supports the right of its members and allied trade unionists to engage in peaceful and legitimate political activity.
We therefore join our sisters and brothers in urging you to immediately release Mr. Pruksakasemsuk from his arbitrary and unjustified detention.
We await your reply that this matter has been resolved as it is causing growing concern within the International Community.

Yours sincerely

Garry Parsloe
Convener
New Zealand ITF Affiliates.

World push for piracy action launched

An unprecedented coalition of organisations, from trade unions to shipowners' associations and insurers, has joined forces to back a global e-petition demanding concrete action to end the piracy that is putting lives at risk and threatening world trade.

The petition www.endpiracypetition.org, which launched in May 2010, is the centrepiece of a new campaign to persuade all governments to commit the resources necessary to end the increasing problem of Somalia-based piracy.

It is intended to deliver at least half a million signatures to governments by IMO World Maritime Day, 23 September 2010.

It calls on nations to:

- Dedicate significant resources and work to find real solutions to the growing piracy problem.
- Take immediate steps to secure the release and safe return of kidnapped seafarers to their families
- Work within the international community to secure a stable and peaceful future for Somalia and its people

ITF General Secretary David Cockroft commented: "With one click everyone can now make their feelings about piracy known, and then pass the link on to all their colleagues around the world who feel the same. In this way we can signal our belief that it is past time for all governments to do what has to be done to protect seafarers, ships and the goods that they carry and on which we all rely."

Enough is enough!

The text of the petition is:

Enough is enough! Governments must act now to fight piracy

Almost every day seafarers are being kidnapped and exposed to an increasing risk of injury or even death

Every day seafarers transport the world's goods through areas where the risk of pirate attack is increasing

Every day seafarers' families are suffering worry and uncertainty

Every day the chances of attracting people to jobs at sea – on which all our economies rely – are shrinking

Every day shipping companies and their insurers have to pay for increasing anti-piracy measures, extra fuel and ransoms - costs that are eventually passed on to the consumer

Every day the risk of a major ecological disaster due to an oil spill caused by piracy increases

Every day the chances of a recovery in the world economy are being jeopardised by this threat to world trade

We, the undersigned, urgently call on Governments to do everything possible to protect the thousands of seafarers and the hundreds of ships at risk of attack by pirates by:

- dedicating significant resources and concerted efforts to find real solutions to the growing piracy problem;
- taking immediate steps to secure the release and safe return of kidnapped seafarers to their families;
- working within the international community to secure a stable and peaceful future for Somalia and its people.

Piracy and crime at sea have been perennial problems for seafarers throughout history.

But, in recent years, there has been a dramatic upsurge in the threat to shipping and crews, particularly with attacks originating from the lawless coastal regions of Somalia.

2008 saw an increase in attacks on shipping in the Gulf of Aden from pirates operating out of certain coastal regions of Somalia.

In that year, almost 100 ships were attacked and more than 500 seafarers taken hostage.

By 2009, the number of ships attacked had increased to 217, with 47 vessels and 867 crew taken hostage.

Somalia remains a country torn apart by past wars, with no functioning government or criminal justice system, a desperately poor people whose traditional fishing grounds have been depleted, and ready access to arms. Piracy has become a viable option in some of its lawless regions.

For more information or petition forms, contact New Zealand ITF inspector Grahame McLaren at email maclaren_graham@itf.org.uk http://www.endpiracynow.org/

ITF Seafarers website breaks language barrier

www.itfseafarers.org, the website the ITF launched two years ago as an "online lifeline" for everyone working at sea, is now in three new languages.

Originally available in English, it is now reaching out to seafarers in Chinese (Simplified Mandarin), Russian and Spanish.

ITFSeafarers is a free-to-use help, news, advice and support website for seafarers anywhere in the world.

In the new language versions the website offers information on health, pay and safety and includes advice, help, maritime news and crew talk forums.

For more information, see www.itfseafarers.org

Maritime workers condemn Israeli attack on aid ship

The ITF, which represents professional seafarers worldwide, is shocked and appalled by Israeli forces' attack on 31 May 2010 on the lead ship of a humanitarian aid convoy, the Turkish vessel "Mavi Marmaris", killing at least ten people.

The ITF holds the Israeli authorities entirely responsible for the provocative storming of the ship, and condemns the harm caused to the civilians on board, who included peace activists and parliamentarians from many different countries.

With the rest of the international trade union movement, including the International Trade Union Confederation, the ITF is calling for a full, open and independent enquiry to establish the details of what took place when Israeli soldiers boarded vessels in the convoy.

The ITF denounces Israel's blockade of Gaza and calls on the international community to support a political solution in which a viable Palestinian state can play a full part in international trade and commerce, which would include the full restoration of transport links.

Murdered for fighting for workers' rights: 101 Unionists killed in 2009

The annual survey of trade union rights released in June 2010 shows a dramatic increase in union leaders killed for protecting workers' rights.

The International Trade Union Confederation reports 101 unionists were killed last year, almost half (48) in Colombia, 16 in Guatemala, 12 in Honduras, six in Mexico, six in Bangladesh, four in Brazil, three in the Dominican Republic, three in the Philippines, one in India, one in Iraq and one in Nigeria.

Of the 22 Colombian trade unionists who were killed, five were women.

"Colombia was yet again the country where standing up for fundamental rights of workers is more likely than anywhere else to mean a death sentence," said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder.

The Survey provides detailed documentation of harassment, intimidation and other forms of anti-union persecution.

Many trade unionists like Mansour Osanloo in Iran remain in prison and have been joined by around hundred newly incarcerated in 2009.

For more information see: http://www.ituc-csi.org/ituc-annual-survey.html

Contracting Out

by Pat O'Dea

Though it is not widely known, contractors have no legal rights to question their employers - even on safety grounds. The following account of what I experienced as a contracted out worker at Griffins Ltd., exposes the powerlessness that all contracted out workers are confronted with if they want to challenge basic issues around their employment, even if it is matters of safety.

Contracting out gives bosses a lot of power, that's why they like it.

If contracted out workers are not even able to raise safety issues with their union, how could they possibly raise any other workers rights issues, or even openly retain their union membership?

In 2008 I was dismissed for trying to report a near miss incident at Griffins Ltd. bakeries in South Auckland.

When I tried to raise a complaint about lax safety standards, instead of being listened to, I was ignored and when I persisted, dismissed.

Legal opinion from the union was, that because the job was contracted out, even though it was a permanent position at Griffins, because it was done through a sub-contractor, the Employment Law around unfair dismissal does not apply.

Here are the facts of the matter:

As the shift electrician at the Griffins factory in Papakura, I was responsible for doing the safety lockouts.

On 6 October 2008 during second shift, I was asked by the Griffins shift supervisor to lock out the main switches on the Line 2 conveyors. This is done by turning the isolators to the off position and putting padlocks through them, to stop any remote automatic starting of the machinery.

Unlike any other major workplace I have worked there was no proper Lockout Procedure, or Safety Lock out register. Safety Lock Out Registers are kept to record the names of all workers required to work on machine under Safety Lockout. In most major workplaces no worker is allowed to work on locked out machinery without signing on in the Safety Lockout Register. A Safety Lockout can only be lifted when all the workers have signed off the Safety Register.

The reasons such procedures are needed will become clear, when I was ordered by the Griffins supervisor to remove my locks. Before removing the padlocks from the isolators, I asked the attending workers, if it was all clear, they assured me it was. I then started to undo the locks.

For some reason I felt uneasy and thought I would do another check. Again I asked the workers and operators in that area if everything was OK to turn the conveyors on, and again they assured me that it was all clear.

Still feeling uneasy, I walked further up the line, to the line 2 Ovens (about 25 metres) and spoke to the oven operator, and informed her that I was about to turn on the line 2 conveyors further down the line. She said, "Don't do that, there is still someone still in there."

She then pointed out to me the position where a worker inside the conveyors was still cleaning, oblivious to the fact that I was about to turn the conveyors on.

I and the other workers had not been aware of her presence because she was up above us in an overhead part of the conveyors lying on her stomach between the rollers, invisible from the ground.

After helping her get out, I tried to make a report on the dangerous nature of this near miss.

The supervisor called over the safety supervisor who said that I should fill out an incident report form if I was concerned, but she didn't have any.

She then said she had to go back to supervising her workers, and I never saw her again.

I went and saw the senior supervisor on site and she told me that she didn't have any incident forms either. And that I should go back to work. Which I did.

Later, at the end of my Shift I went to see the Senior Supervisor again. And again asked her for the incident forms to fill in. She said she hadn't been able to find them. She then searched her company desktop computer files to down load and print out a copy for me. But was unable to find a copy of the incident form in the company computer system.

Still determined to record this near miss incident I wrote a full report of the incident and my concerns which I left for the company in my Log book which is kept in the Griffins' fitters' workshop.

I also wrote out another report, which I got the two workers involved to read, and counter sign as being a true account of the near miss incident.

This hand written and counter signed document I have kept because I had concerns that the workers involved might face repercussions if I just handed over to the management without proper explanation and support.

The next day on day shift I rang the EPMU office and spoke to an official of the union I explained to him the near miss incident and of the trouble I was having trying to make a statement about it. The union official told me that he would come out to meet with Griffins as soon as possible, but because it was near the end of the day he would contact Griffins to arrange to meet at the factory the first thing the next day.

Not long after talking to the union I was phoned on my mobile by the Factory Production Manager, who demanded that I meet him in his office straight away. His tone on the phone was hostile.

The Factory Manager told me on the phone that he was angry that I had contacted the union over a safety matter.

Despite having a scheduled workshop meeting to attend with him at 4pm the Factory Manager demanded that I be in his office immediately.

Because of his hostility I asked him if we could meet tomorrow with the organiser present, he told me there would be no meeting tomorrow. He told me "there are proper procedures to go through which you didn't do".

I asked him if he could just attend our regular 4 o'clock meeting, as normal to air his views, but he refused and demanded that I be in his office at once.

I told him that a union organiser had already arranged to attend a meeting with him on this issue the next day, The Factory Manager said he wasn't interested in that.

I told him on the phone that I was uncomfortable meeting him alone in his office under these circumstances. He then hung up.

The Factory Manager then came into the production area where I was working and approached me directly and told me I had been dismissed, effective immediately.

When I asked him why. He said that I should not have gone to the union about my safety complaint. "Company rules, demand that you raise any safety issue with the company first, before going to any outside body." he said.

I told the Factory Manager that I had tried to raise this near miss incident with the supervisors at the time.

The Factory Manager replied that his supervisors would have told him if I had done that, and that I should have filled out an incident report form.

I told him that there were none available and his supervisors couldn't find any.

He then repeated that I was dismissed and that I had to clear out my locker and get my tools and leave and leave site immediately.

The Factory Manager then escorted me as I gathered my tools and belongings together and cleared out my locker.

As he was standing behind me while I was doing this, I asked him if I could make a copy of the near miss incident report I had made in the log book. The Factory Manager refused to allow me do this, and said the log book was company property.

I asked the Factory Manager if he would give me his assurance that my report in the log book on the near miss incident was was not lost or destroyed. The Factory Manager replied, "I will do whatever I see fit, with the log book."

The Factory Manager then escorted me to my car in the company carpark. I asked him if I could still meet with him and the union organiser tomorrow about the near miss incident. He said, "There would be no meeting about this."

Griffins continued to refuse all meetings over the safety issue.
On my dismissal the union lawyer sent a letter from the union to Griffins protesting my treatment.
Griffins replied in writing saying that they had already held their own investigation "and at no stage was Mr O'Dea or another employee placed in any harm's way or injured."
As far as Griffins was concerned, because I was a contractor that was the end of the matter. Though I was employed to work full time at Griffins, and was even required by Griffins to use the Griffins' company time clock and clocked in and out along with all the other workers, legally I was employed through a contract firm (Abel Electrical) to work at Griffins. Legally Abel Electrical was my employer. Therefore Griffins was not answerable allowing them to escape all legal liability. Accordingly, because the only work Abel's had for me was at Griffins, Abels had to make me redundant when Griffins asked them to.
Despite being a union member the union could not take an employment case on my behalf for wrongful dismissal, because 'legally' I had been made 'redundant' by Abels when Griffins removed me from the job site. In the legal language of the employment legislation such 'redundancies' are legally "justifiable". From this unchallenged position of strength Griffins continued to claim that no near miss incident occurred.
The slightest of cross examination of Griffin's story would have exposed this as a lie. But legally contract employees do not have the right to take their primary employer to the employment court, so Griffins claim went unchallenged.
It seems that a union cannot represent one of their members in the employment court if their Primary Employer had to make them redundant because that worker had been dismissed by that worker's Secondary Employer.
Legally the Secondary Employer are not that worker's employer. However the worker cannot take the Primary Employer to court either, because legally the Primary Employer had had to, 'justifiably' make their employee redundant, because the actions of the Secondary Employer had removed the work. Talk about Catch 22.
Contracting out your workforce means employers can sack any worker at any time for any or no reason including safety, and legally the union can do nothing.
The benefit for employers in contracting out is not just cost savings but also in legally disempowering unions.
Primary Employers (like the Ports Of Auckland Limited), would rather deal with fawning Contractor Managers (terrified of losing their contracts) than Union Organisers and Delegates legally able to represent permanent workers.

Letters

Dear Members

I was fortunate enough to attend the latest Organizing in the Workplace course run by the CTU in May and early June.
Listening to other delegates and officials from other work sites I now appreciate even more the problems faced by other Union members in some work sites, and realise the importance for all of us to do our bit to maintain conditions and safeguard workers rights.
The importance of our stopwork meetings came to light as others are not as fortunate as we are to be able to have such regular meetings.
I would urge members to stop the apathy amongst us and attend their respective stonework meetings and to also support the social events like the Picnic Day, Oldtimers and the MUNZ end of year bash. Some attend these events and neglect the meetings which is disappointing in itself. It would be a sad reflection on us if we were to lose any of these due to lack of interest.
Unlike a lot of organisations we are lucky enough to have them so give a bit back and attend.
Even if it is just out of respect for workers less fortunate than us.

Tony Mowbray
MUNZ 1154
Wellington Branch

Tony has asked the Maritimes to pass on his thanks to those members who supported him in his recent successful election to the Wellington Seafarers branch executive - Editor.

Jack Cameron

John Mouritsen of Sydney recently contacted MUNZ Vice President Garry Parsloe to advise of the passing of former seafarer Jack Cameron.
John, a former New Zealand seafarer, received a call from Gordon Cameron who lives in Perth, who advised his brother Jack Cameron had passed away Monday 7 June 2010, aged 85, at his home on the Gold Coast, Queensland.
Jack is survived by his wife, Lorraine, son John, and daughter Marie.
The family were from Dunedin.
Jacks two brothers, Gordon and Ewen, were also Seafarers.
Jack did two trips on the Pamir, one being the 6th Voyage Wellington to Vancouver.

Nominations for the 2010 Roger Award are now open!

The Roger Award For The Worst Transnational Corporation operating in New Zealand has run annually since 1997.
There are no prizes for guessing whom it is named after. It is organised by CAFCA and GATT Watchdog, both Christchurch-based groups.
The criteria for judging are by assessing the transnational (a corporation with 25% or more foreign ownership) that has the most negative impact in each or all of the following categories:
Economic Dominance - Monopoly, profiteering, tax dodging, cultural imperialism
People - Unemployment, impact on tangata whenua, impact on women, impact on children, abuse of workers/conditions, health and safety of workers and the public.
Environment - Environmental damage, abuse of animals
Political interference - Interference in democratic processes, running an ideological crusade
Previous winners include Telecom (2007), Progressive Enterprises (2006), Tranz Rail (2002) and Carter Holt Harvey (2001).
For more information see http://canterbury.cyberplace.co.nz/community/CAFCA/publications/Roger/index.html
Email organizer Murray Horton for a nomination form at cafca@chch.planet.org.nz

Greek shipping strikes successful

Joe Fleetwood
General Secretary
Maritime Union of New Zealand

Dear Joe
Many thanks for your solidarity message received on the occasion of the PNO strikes held on 26 April and 1 May 2010 at the port of Piraeus and Greek ports, respectively.
Our strike actions had 100% success and no ship sailed from the ports concerned.
We have been encouraged by the number of solidarity messages received from the ITF family. Greek seafarers are determined to safeguard present and future employment opportunities in the cruise ship sector.
Yours fraternally

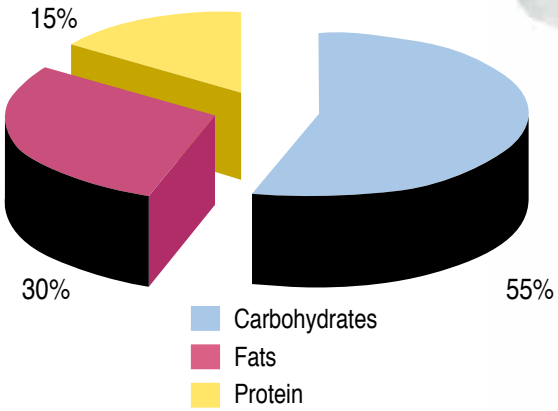
John Halas
General Secretary
PNO (Greek Seafarers Union)

Eating right important for crew health

Hello MUNZ readers. I'm Carl Paddick of the Physical Initiative – my company supports the health, fitness and wellness of our members involved in all aspects of shipping. In this issue, I wanted to simply explain the foods and drinks that are important to our health on a daily basis.

For Optimal Daily Nutrition, food must be eaten in the correct proportions. Here's a guide for the daily percentages of Carbohydrates, Fats and Proteins you should have in your diet, unless under the medical or nutritional guidance of a health practitioner.

Food Groups



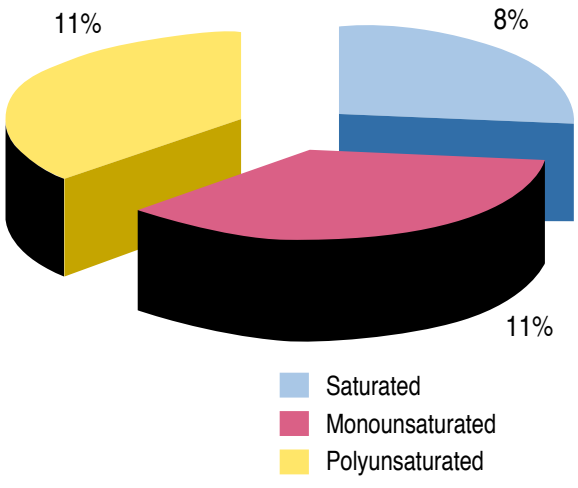
Fats

Fat containing foods often get a lot of bad press for obvious reasons (they make you fat), but a small amount of fat each day is very good for you and vital for health. Fats can be broken down into 3 types:

Fat	Healthy for You?	Found in...
Saturated	No – eat sparingly	Cakes, red meat, chips, butter, cream, cheese, frying food, chocolate, full fat milk, processed foods
Polyunsaturated	Yes – eat moderately	Oily fish (salmon, herring, mackerel) Omega 3 & 6 (enriched) foods, cereals, some milk, whole grains, sunflower and hemp seeds, soft margarines
Monounsaturated	Yes – eat moderately	Olive oil, canola oil, avocados, nuts, grapeseed oil, ground nut oil, peanut oil, sesame oil, corn oil, popcorn, whole grain wheat, cereal, oatmeal, safflower oil, sunflower oil, avocado oil.

Fats should be consumed in their appropriate proportions:

Fats



Protein

Foods containing protein provide the building blocks for cell repair and organ function within the body. Like fat containing foods, these foods also provide energy.

Eat...	Found in...
Eat sparingly	Red meat, butter, cream, cheese, full fat milk, roast chicken and turkey
Eat moderately	Fish, chicken, lite/trim/soya/rice milk, whole grains (breads and cereals), sunflower and hemp seeds, nuts, soft margarines, low fat yoghurt, eggs, protein shakes, fortified fruit juices
Eat plentifully	Vegetables and fortified wholegrain foods

Carbohydrates

Forget about the current fad diets, the most required nutrient in our diet should always be Carbohydrates. Essential for organ function, immunity and energy, carbohydrates convert to energy the quickest too.

Eat...	Found in...
Eat sparingly	Processed and refined foods and meals, sweets,milk shakes, biscuits, desserts, cakes, beer/larger, chips, crisps, fizzy drinks, ice creams and lollies
Eat moderately	Pre-prepared low calorie/diet based meals, whole grains (breads and cereals), rice, pasta, seeds, nuts, soups, fruit juice
Eat plentifully	Vegetables, wholegrain foods, salad, fruits

Hydration

Most of our body's contents are made of water. It stands to reason we need to replenish its supply daily by drinking a variety water based drinks.

Drink...	Examples...
Drink sparingly	Cocktails, spirits, fizzy sugar drinks, energy drinks
Drink moderately	Coffee, tea, milk and milk based drinks (not milkshakes), wine and beer, soups, cordials, hot chocolate/milo, fruit juice
Drink plentifully	Water, herbal teas, vegetable juice

Putting it all together

It goes without saying seafarers eat VERY well when on board. Many profess to eat better on board than they do on shore!
It's therefore imperative that they eat sensibly whilst on their swing otherwise unwanted weight and fat will be gained.
A gain in weight of more than 2.5 Kg illustrates: a daily diet too high in calories, not enough daily exercise/physical activity or both.
Most seafarer's admit to their duties being light to moderate in intensity and the majority exercise moderately too.
A daily diet that amounts to between 2000 to 2500 calories should be adequate for most male seafarers and 1500 calories for female seafarers.
From the information about fats, protein and carbohydrate containing foods on the previous pages, you can now choose the appropriate types of food served at and in between mealtimes that will not put on the kilos.
It would take too long here to list the calorie content of every good food, suffice to say you'll be safe if you eat them in the right quantities each day.

Carl Paddick – Director of the Physical Initiative.
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