



# The Maritimes

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# The Workers United

# **Pike River Mine**

**19 November 2010**

**In memory of the 29 miners  
who lost their lives.**

**“They will not be forgotten”**

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Cover photo:  
Top: Maritime Union of New Zealand  
Tauranga Mt Maunganui Branch President  
Peter Harvey speaks at the 20 October day  
of action in Tauranga against Government  
law changes  
(photo by Claire Fraser reproduced with  
permission of the Bay of Plenty Times)  
Bottom: Maritime Union of New Zealand  
Nelson Branch members at the 20 October  
Fairness at Work Rally, from left, J.  
Stephens, B. Kisby, I. Barker, D. Robb,  
B. Lewis, R. Alexander, J. Thompson and  
T. Hicks

For more on-line photos, see  
[www.flickr.com/maritimeunion](http://www.flickr.com/maritimeunion)

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Fairness at work page 16

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# The Shaky Isles

by Victor Billot

2010 has been a tough year for New Zealand. Unemployment is high, wage growth is low, and the cost of living including food and housing continues to hammer most wage earners. The South Island alone has suffered three major blows in recent months.

The most expensive earthquake in New Zealand history hit Christchurch. The cost in personal disruption, stress, and illness, is hard to quantify. But the economic implications are massive. There were earthquakes of a financial kind too. The collapse of South Canterbury Finance busted the mythology of the safe, canny and conservative provincial lenders. It proved that the instability of the deregulated financial system extended far beyond the wide boys in the big city with the high rolling lifestyles and imploding investments.

Finally, and most devastatingly, the loss of 29 lives in the Pike River mine disaster. Yet even the day after the memorial service, you can open up a newspaper and read of how Chinese and Australian multinationals are already planning steel mills, mining and "port purchases" in New Zealand. Capitalism, like rust, never sleeps.

Outside New Zealand, the global scene is equally chaotic. The United States is still in the grip of massive unemployment. Europe is reeling as the list of countries in prolonged political and economic crisis grows. China continues to walk a tightrope of economic growth and the expectations of its new urban class. Making predictions is a fool's game. But here are a few suggestions about what we might see going into the New Year. We will see a supposed "economic recovery" where business will swing back into profitability for shareholders. However outside a few sectors, this will not translate into job security or pay rises. Instead we will continue to see casualization and mass unemployment as a permanent feature.

Amplifying this process will be the increasing use of automation and technology that will replace human jobs. Been down to the supermarket checkout or airport counter recently?

This will result in the continuing divide between a small group of professionals and management, and a growing number of low skill, low security jobs at the margins of the service economy. This is the reason behind the John Key Government's "welfare crackdown" which will form a central part of his election campaign in 2011.

Having a large group of unemployed and poor people living in poverty is a bad look for the system. Therefore, much energy will be spent on showing how unemployment is the result of the moral and personal failings of those without work.

It doesn't have to be this way – but as long as the majority accept the status quo, we will continue down this path. It may take some more shocks to the system before people start to react.

# A year of progress for the Maritime Union of New Zealand



by **Joe Fleetwood**  
General Secretary

## National Executive Meeting

The national executive of the Union met at our national headquarters at Waterside House in Wellington on 1–2 November 2010.

That meeting covered a lot of ground. It's been a hectic year with lots happening. The union leadership is working to get our Union up to speed in all areas of operation. We've identified what we want to achieve and now it is a case of staying on each task until we get a positive result.

The goals of our strategic plan were published in the winter 2010 issue of the Maritimes.

We have also outlined a work plan to achieve these goals and deliver results. The general principles of trade unionism are out there in the open for all members to engage in.

Our national executive meeting featured a report on progress – which has been good. Some areas are proving to be easier than others, as expected.

Representatives from all branches attended the national executive and will be reporting back to their stopwork and branch executive meetings.

A full report on the national executive meeting is also published later in this Maritimes.

The two other points I would make are to note how our national executive heard from many guest speakers.

These included the leader of the Labour Party, Phil Goff, the two senior officers of the Council of Trade Unions, President Helen Kelly and Secretary Peter Conway, MUA Assistant National Secretary Ian Bray, and RMTU National Secretary Wayne Butson and Vice President Aubrey Wilkinson.

In addition to thanking them for taking time out of their busy schedules to speak to us, it is worth considering the respect the Maritime Union is held in by the wider workers movement, that we attract people of this calibre to our meeting.

## Pike River miners

I attended the memorial service for the Pike River miners along with National Vice President Garry Parsloe on 2 December.

Miners and maritime workers have a long history together in New Zealand that goes back over a century.

Miners have supported maritime workers during our struggles and thus we see the Pike River miners, their families and communities as our own.

I have been in touch with their Union, the EPMU, to express our support.

The Maritime Union will be contributing to the EPMU fund for the families of the victims.

Tragedies of this kind should not happen in this day and age. All workers should be able to go to work in the expectation they will return to their homes and families safe and well.

## Secure union jobs

I have recently attended negotiations and meetings around New Zealand including Gisborne, New Plymouth, Napier, Bluff, Port Chalmers, Auckland and Nelson.

We have seen a large group of workers recently come under the MUNZ coverage in Bluff, due to the national officials and Bluff branch working well together.

In Auckland, ongoing negotiations have ensured the retention of secure permanent jobs for union members on the waterfront, a process that has required commitment and discipline from our members. United we Stand - Divided you Crawl.

In addition, I have been working on negotiations in Australia along with other officials including Garry Parsloe and Mike Clark to secure employment for our seafarers in the Trans Tasman industry.

## Mining and Maritime International

The Maritime Union hosted the international committee of the Mining and Maritime Initiative in Auckland in November.

Unions from USA, Canada, Australia, the UK and New Zealand attended the meeting, with apologies from the South African Unions.

The Mining and Maritime Initiative brings together some key international unions and will complement our affiliation to the ITF.

With the minerals boom around the world at the moment, there are many common interests between workers in these two industries, especially in the Pacific Basin, Pit to Port.

The maritime industry is a global industry. There are enormous benefits for us to form alliances with like minded unions around the world who can provide the horse power when needed and vice versa. Dare to Fight, Dare to Struggle.

## TPPA Free Trade Agreement

One of the great threats to workers in the modern world comes from free trade agreements.

The most dangerous thing about free trade agreements is that very few people understand what they mean.

Even the politicians who are signing the free trade agreements don't seem to know what they mean.

Free trade agreements are about far more than just selling dairy products overseas. They will allow global corporations to take over the New Zealand economy,



At the November 2010 national executive meeting, from left, Maritime Union of New Zealand General Secretary Joe Fleetwood, Assistant General Secretary Ray Fife, National Vice President Garry Parsloe and National President Phil Adams

and threaten the ability of democratically elected Governments to set rules around ownership and regulation of our economy. The latest free trade agreement is the TPPA (Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement.) Internationally, maritime workers are well aware of how free trade has been used to attack workers' rights and conditions. The 'open coast' policy means that global shipping conglomerates have the right to trade in New Zealand waters undermining local jobs and shipping.

The fishing industry has exploited foreign crews while young New Zealanders are out of work.

There is also a concern that short-term overseas labour may be used by employers in ports and industry. This will lower wages and conditions, reduce training and career opportunities, and increase casualization. This has already happened in many parts of the world.

The Maritime Union makes it clear that this is not an issue of worker versus worker.

It is a case of employers and politicians working the capitalist system and globalization for their own advantage – "Profit".

That is why the Maritime Union is supporting the New Zealand Not for Sale campaign along with other unions, organizations and individuals. More information on the campaign at their website [nznotforsale.org](http://nznotforsale.org)

### Political scene

The local body elections were a mixed result around the country, but it was very good to see a strong left vote in Auckland. The Union was pleased to see the election of Len Brown as Mayor along with other good left representatives, including on the Auckland Regional Council which is the owner of the Ports of Auckland on behalf of the people of Auckland.

The concern that we had that the "SuperCity" created by Rodney Hide would be a machine to privatize local assets and place control of the city into the hands of anti-democratic private interests, was obviously shared by Auckland voters. They did the sensible thing and elected local representatives committed to democratic principles that are shared by the Maritime Union.

2011 is election year and we are probably less than a year away from a General Election.

The Maritime Union, as an affiliate of the Labour Party, is looking to return a Labour-led Government. Our Union has been active in pushing for union connected Labour candidates and we also achieved a commitment to Cabotage at the Labour Party conference recently.

As passed by Conference, the Maritime Union continues to offer our support to pro-worker and left parties such as the Green Party and the Alliance Party whose Conference I was invited to open recently in Wellington.

### Personal thanks

The Fleetwood family would like to personally thank all those members and vessels that sent in donations to Mary Potter Hospice on the passing of our father Dick Fleetwood. Thank you.

On behalf of the national officers of the Maritime Union of New Zealand, I wish all members a happy and safe summer, Christmas and New Year.

"Militant trade unionists should not become dizzy with a victory nor should they become despondent with a defeat. We need to keep our balance in both of the above situations and learn from our victories and our defeats."

On behalf of the Maritime Union of New Zealand I would like to wish all Union members and their families a very Merry Christmas and a Great New Year. Take care if you have to travel, be safe and Kia Kaha.

# Protecting our rights and conditions on the job



by Phil Adams  
National President

## National Day of Action

Workers throughout New Zealand took action on Wednesday 20 October with rallies from Kaitaia to the Bluff.

The Maritime Union was represented at many of these events. This edition of the Maritimes features photos and a full report.

The Fairness at Work campaign is aimed at protecting workers' rights and conditions on the job.

The National Government, which has always been a friend of the employer and an enemy to working people, is behind current changes to employment laws. These include allowing all employers to give workers the sack within 90 days of starting a new job. No reason is required. Of course if they get this through, the next step will be to promote the idea that workers can be fired at will for the first six months of a new job. Then given the sack any time in the first year. In fact, National would probably like to see employers have the right to fire workers at any time, for any reason, or no reason, full stop. Another attack is on trying to restrict union access to workplaces.

The goal is simple. It is to create a nation of scared, divided workers who will accept anything in order to stay in a job. More profits for shareholders, lower wages and conditions for workers.

It's a pretty simple equation.

The workers' campaign will continue next year, and more and more people are becoming aware of the pernicious effects of these law changes and the Tory agenda.

## Methyl Bromide

The Maritime Union was not happy that the Government and its agencies are going to allow the continued use of methyl bromide on the waterfront and vessels. The decision seems to have been based upon profit considerations rather than health and safety considerations. The reality is that the jury is still out on the effects of methyl bromide. What is known is that it is highly toxic, extremely bad for the environment and atmosphere, and also extremely bad for those who have been exposed to it in the workplace.

We will continue to keep this issue alive and press for the phase out of methyl bromide.

## Pike River

All Maritime Union members share the concerns for the victims of the Pike River mine disaster and as a Union we will do what we can to assist those left behind and ensure that this type of event never occurs again.

## Hobbit dispute

At the same time as workers were speaking out to protect our rights at work, another dispute ended up with unions being accused of wrecking the Kiwi movie business.

The level of media hysteria and public confusion was at an all time high.

It was hard at times to remember that we were living in a real country called New Zealand – not a fantasy world outpost called Hobbiton.

The issues behind the Hobbit dispute have been covered elsewhere but a few points are worth making.

One of the strangest aspects of the Hobbit dispute was the screaming about "Australian" unions taking over New Zealand.

We are constantly told we are living in an era of globalization.

Companies operate internationally and move around to maximize their profits. Overseas corporations and individuals have bought up large chunks of the New Zealand economy, cherry picking productive sectors and sucking profits offshore.

This is accepted as normal and even a good thing by the establishment.

But when workers start to unite across borders, all hell breaks loose.

The utter stupidity of this "Australian union" complaint was brought home to bear when the craven National Government rushed to meet with the money men from Hollywood and threw around some taxpayer handouts to subsidize their profits.

Worse still, the crawling gutlessness of our so-called leaders extended to shoving anti-worker labour laws through Parliament overnight for the benefit of the same crew. So Australian unions equals bad, Hollywood corporations equals good. Go figure.

Most of our young people owe mortgages to Australian banks, collectively paying millions of dollars interest every week.

You would think this was a far more serious situation than a tiny number of unionized actors working with their Australian counterparts to improve their conditions of employment.

Yet we don't see John Key rushing to change any laws in that matter. Perhaps it's just a case of knowing who your friends are.

I wish all members and friends of the Union a Happy Christmas and New Year, and a good 2011.



Maritime Union of New Zealand General Secretary Joe Fleetwood, National Vice President Garry Parsloe and Lyttelton Branch executive member Mike Will, Labour Party MPs Trevor Mallard and Carol Beaumont, amongst the thousands who attended the Greymouth memorial service to the Pike River miners, December 2010

## Pike River Miners Family Support Trust

The Engineering, Printing & Manufacturing Union (EPMU) is setting up a fund for the 29 families affected by the Pike River mine tragedy.

The Maritime Union and its branches have already contributed to the fund.

"Eleven of the 16 miners killed were our comrades in the union, including EPMU delegate Blair Sims," says EPMU national secretary Andrew Little.

"The cause of the disaster is not known and is unlikely to be known for many months, and the families will face hardship."

"Now is the time to give practical support to the families."

"The EPMU is assisting by setting up the 'EPMU Pike River Miners Family Support Trust' to collect donations to support the 29 families."

"Half of the funds donated will be contributed to the community fund being administered by the Grey District Council and half will be used to establish a dedicated fund for the education of the children of those killed. The trustees will be local union members."

Donations can be made at any Kiwibank branch or direct to bank account:

Kiwibank 38-9011-0165987-00

Cheques made out to "EPMU Pike River Family Support Trust" can also be sent by post, care of EPMU, PO Box 14-277, Kilbirnie, Wellington 6241.

# 29 workers not coming home

## Calls for inquiry as West Coast suffers devastating loss

New Zealand mourned the loss of 29 West Coast mine workers following a series of explosions in the underground tunnels of the Pike River mine last month.

There was no chance to stage a rescue attempt after the first explosion on 19 November due to high gas levels in the mine.

A second massive explosion on 24 November resulted in Police and mine rescue officials giving the terrible news that no one could have survived this second blast.

The worst industrial disaster in New Zealand in a generation shattered the small West Coast community.

At least 13 children have been left fatherless by the disaster.

The youngest victim was 17 year old Joseph Ray Dunbar. The day of the explosion was his first day working underground.

Many of the miners were union members in the EPMU, including Blair Sims who was an EPMU delegate at the mine.

The EPMU is calling on the government to establish an independent inquiry to investigate the circumstances of the explosion, including a public hearing in front of a senior judge and leading technical experts.

The mine is 46 kilometers north of Greymouth, and is the second-largest coal export mine and the largest underground coal mine in the country.

The mine is around 160 metres (520 ft) below ground, but is primarily accessed horizontally as it lies under the rugged Paparoa Range, bordering the Paparoa National Park.

The last major mine disaster in New Zealand occurred over 40 years ago when 19 miners were killed in an explosion in the Strongman mine near Greymouth on 19 January, 1967.

# Methyl bromide decision concerns Union

The Maritime Union has spoken out against the recent decision by environment agency ERMA to allow the continued use of methyl bromide as a fumigant.

New regulations will require methyl bromide fumigations to be recaptured within 10 years, and more research into alternatives and recapture be undertaken. The approvals for methyl bromide used to fumigate soil have been revoked, but use for quarantine and pre-shipment treatment of goods such as logs will still be allowed. Maritime Union General Secretary Joe Fleetwood says the union wants the toxic gas phased out very quickly in all commercial settings.

He says ERMA claims that it has introduced strict controls, but the strict control the union wanted to see was the end of methyl bromide use in New Zealand ports.

"It seems the logic is that methyl bromide is toxic, bad for the environment and bad for people, but is financially good for some exporters."

Mr Fleetwood says a few barrels of methyl bromide rolled into shareholder meetings would no doubt be considered unacceptable by those present, but maritime workers on the waterfront were expected to carry on and hope for the best. "The question must be asked, if in ten years time further research shows that the risks of methyl bromide have been greater than expected, who is responsible for any illness or deaths, and will the Government, port companies and commercial users of methyl bromide be held responsible in this event?"

There was some question as to why it was felt necessary to end use of methyl bromide for agricultural purposes, but allow its use to be continued in ports, he says.

"It's either bad for people and the environment, or not. If it is a hazard, why are we allowing its use to continue?"

The Maritime Union had been in contact with toxicology experts who were researching possible links between methyl bromide and health problems.

He says a number of incidents with the gas over the years, added to the continuing debate about whether methyl bromide may have been a factor in the cases of motor neuron disease in Nelson port workers.

The Union also had concerns about the influence of industry groups in past years on decision making about methyl bromide. The Maritime Union would continue to press for methyl bromide to be phased out as quickly as possible.



Heavy seas:

This dramatic photo shows the Pacifica Shipping container vessel Spirit of Resolution crossing the Manukau Bar on 18 September 2010. The ship was towed to Port Taranaki after suffering rudder damage in heavy seas, battling swells of over five metres for two days (photo by Duncan Montgomery MUNZ 831)

## Maritime workers back student campaign

The Maritime Union is supporting the Save Our Services campaign by New Zealand students to stop voluntary student membership (VSM) of student associations.

Maritime Union General Secretary Joe Fleetwood says that student associations have served students well.

Heather Roy's Education (Freedom of Association) Amendment Bill would make life worse for most students if passed.

"It is obvious that the result of the VSM bill will be to reduce the services and advocacy that student associations currently provide to tertiary students, as has been seen in Australia." Collective strength was important for any group such as students and workers who would otherwise have little influence over large institutions.

Poll research carried out shows that the majority of New Zealanders think that students should make the choice about how they operate their student associations.

The fact the Bill was the offspring of the ACT Party was a major concern, says Mr Fleetwood.

"This bill is being pushed by a political party that has no credibility whatsoever, due to their hypocrisy on every issue they supposedly stand for, from perk busting to getting tough on crime."

The John Key Government should drop the bill before it went any further, he says.

## Government ports report "narrow and biased"

The Maritime Union has attacked what it describes as the "narrowness of vision" in yet another report into the state of New Zealand's ports.

Maritime Union General Secretary Joe Fleetwood says the Ministry of Transport commissioned Freight Futures report travelled down well worn paths and added little to the debate.

He says the latest report promotes a free market agenda that was now globally discredited and driven only by corporate self-interest.

Possibly the intent of the report was to provide justification for the continuing "avoidance" approach of the National Government to ports policy – which could be summed up by the words of the song "What ever will be, will be."

The report was biased against workers in the industry who it portrays as a problem, was hostile to public ownership and had a thinly veiled contempt for democratic institutions like local Government.

Claims that New Zealand port performance had been harmed by the Employment Relations Act were not accurate or backed with any substantive evidence.

Mr Fleetwood says he is concerned that the reality of reduced pay and conditions, continuing health and safety issues, and the destruction of career paths and secure jobs for young workers in the ports industry, were not covered by the report.



Mining and Maritime international committee meeting, Auckland, 10 November 2010, front row from left, Jason Poynter (Secretary, Buller District Miners, EPMU - New Zealand), Ray Urquhart (National Mining Advocate, EPMU), Garry Parsloe (National Vice President, MUNZ), Jo White (Mining and Maritime Secretary, MUA), Paul Tolich (National Industrial Organizer, EPMU), Mick Doleman (National Deputy Secretary, MUA), Ged O'Connell (Assistant National Secretary, EPMU), Keri Magee (Underground Convenor, North Island NZ, EPMU), Norrie McVicar (ITF FOC co-ordinator UK and Ireland). Back row from left, Andrew Vickers (General Secretary, Mining and Energy, CFMEU – Australia), Ray Familathe (Vice President Mainland ILWU), Joe Fleetwood (General Secretary MUNZ), Rob Johnston (Director of Steel IMF), Steve Hunt (Director District 3 and North American, USW), Willie Adams (International Vice President ILWU) (photo by Victor Billot MUNZ)

# Mining and Maritime

## 10 November 2010, Auckland

by **Garry Parsloe**  
National Vice President

On the 10 November 2010 Maritime Union General Secretary Joe Fleetwood, Communications Officer Victor Billot and I attended the Mining and Maritime international committee meeting in Auckland.

Chairman Mick Doleman (MUA) opened the meeting by welcoming all the Internationals to Auckland. He then gave an overview of the Grupo Mexico dispute. Joe Fleetwood thanked all the International Delegates for attending this most important meeting.

At this point of the meeting Joe Fleetwood and I were invited to report on MUNZ dispute with the Ports of Auckland.

As there was dialogue going on between MUNZ and the Ports of Auckland a brief report was given with a fuller report to be given later in the meeting once a decision was reached between the parties.

Ray Familathe and Willie Adams from the ILWU both gave reports on the Boron dispute victory. It was a magnificent victory.

Next we had a phone link up with Joe Drexler (ICEM) regarding the GRUPO Mexico dispute.

After the International phone link up we had a report on the Los Mineros dispute and a report from Steve Hunt (United Steel Workers) on the Grupo Mexico campaign and the way forward.

In the lunch hour Joe Fleetwood and I along with most of the Executive addressed Local 13 members in their mess room.

We were able to inform our members that we have achieved a way forward in our dispute with the Ports of Auckland.

We had an agreement to reintroduce two of the shuttles and were going into further discussions on getting more shuttles onto the Wharf which in turn gets rid of the contract trucks off our Wharfs. This returns all this work to ITF Affiliated Dockers.

Later in the afternoon the meeting continued discussing all the disputes that the Mining and Maritime Unions are involved in.

The meeting concluded with Delegates agreeing on a way forward to promote the interest of all the Mining and Maritime Unions.

# Building the Union

## Maritime Union of New Zealand National Executive Meeting 1–2 November 2010



Labour Party leader Phil Goff addresses the national executive of the Maritime Union

### by Joe Fleetwood, General Secretary

The national executive of the Maritime Union meets every six months at the national office, and it attended by national official and representatives of each branch, including observers and veterans' representative.

The meeting was opened by Chair, National President Phil Adams, and the usual formalities were observed including previous minutes, correspondence, obituaries, apologies and speaking rights.

### Union structure review

There was a presentation on progress with the review of our Union structure by General Secretary Joe Fleetwood. Good progress had been made since the last executive meeting.

This included key issues such as being one union inside the wharf gates as a long term goal, rationalizing bargaining and bringing national agreements into line, operating in a financially sound way, growing membership, improving health and safety, building our organizing and campaigning capability, being internationally organized, and being politically active.

This also required a work plan to achieve our goals.

### Ian Bray (MUA)

The executive was given an informative update on the activities of the Maritime Union of Australia by MUA deputy national secretary Ian Bray. Ian noted some of the main areas of common interest including the growth in the Australian offshore and the massive investment in the sector.

### NZCTU

CTU President Helen Kelly and CTU Secretary Peter Conway spoke to the executive.

They spoke about some of the current important issues facing the workers' movement in New Zealand. This included the Fairness at work campaign in opposition to attacks on workers' rights by the National Government.

In addition they briefed the executive on the background to the "Hobbit" dispute and the implications this had for issues like the contracting law that had been rammed through Parliament.

### Mapping Projects

The Maritime Union has been running a number of "mapping projects." This basically means gathering full and up to date information on key aspects of our industry.

Once we have the information, this then allows us to plan and roll out effective strategies.

This includes areas such as union membership, health and safety, and nationally based employment agreements.

### Finance Report

Bill Connolly presented a report from the finance committee.

This included update on paying of affiliation fees, casual levies, investments, tax liabilities, trusts and a budget for the future.

The committee noted the financial loss for the previous year, which in large part was the result of one off costs such as the Triennial Conference.

### Campaign and communications report

Communications Officer Victor Billot gave a report focussed on the current Fairness at work campaign which he has been involved in through the CTU.

He stated with the history of MUNZ, we should be working with the active and militant side of the union movement to provide leadership.

### Paul Tolich (EPMU)

EPMU National industrial officer Paul Tolich gave a presentation on areas of mutual interest such as the offshore alliance.

He also updated the executive on progress with the Labour Party.

### MUNZ Rules Review

Submissions have been received from some branches on the review of the MUNZ rules. In addition the national office has noted areas of the rules that require clarification.

After some discussion about the way forward with the rules' review, it was decided to circulate the submissions received and national office clarifications to branches for their perusal. Decisions on any changes will take place at a future meeting.

### RMTU MUNZ Strategic Alliance

An update on the strategic alliance was received from Joe Fleetwood and Garry Parsloe.

The meeting was then addressed by RMTU National Secretary Wayne Butson and Vice President Aubrey Wilkinson who answered questions from the floor.

### Branch Reports

Branch reports were received by the meeting.

### Industrial Reports

#### Conlinxx –

Local 13 gave a report on the Conlinxx dispute in Auckland, and the progress that was being made. The role of the international in the dispute was also noted. This dispute has since been resolved.

#### Port Chalmers –

Ian Quarrell and Graeme Wall spoke on the Port Chalmers negotiations which had despite some difficulties, resulted in a successful outcome given the current environment.

The General Secretary was thanked for his attendance and input into negotiations.

### Superannuation

Paul Martin (WISF) and David Scott (SRF) gave reports of the performance of the Super funds and answered questions from the branches.

### International Reports

ITF Mexico – The national and branch officers who attended the ITF Congress in Mexico City reported back.

A high point was the election of Paddy Crumlin to ITF Global President which would have spin offs for us and also would create a more active ITF leadership it was hoped.



At the November 2010 national executive meeting, from left, Maritime Union of New Zealand General Secretary Joe Fleetwood, Maritime Union of Australia Assistant National Secretary Ian Bray, and Maritime Union of New Zealand Bluff Branch President Harry Holland

The support of MUNZ for Mexican workers in dispute was noted and appreciated. The importance of the international in mutual support for industrial and political struggles was emphasized.

MUNZ continued to have a high profile for its size.

Mining and Maritime – the international leadership of Mining and Maritime unions would be meeting in Auckland later in the month, hosted by MUNZ. This grouping brought together some of the leading unions in the world including MUA, CFMEU, USW and complemented our ITF activities.

MUA council – Garry Parsloe reported back on his attendance at the MUA Council.

### Political Reports

Garry Parsloe reported back on the Labour Party Conference where a remit on cabotage had been passed with great support from the floor, this policy to be implemented immediately on the re election of a Labour Government.

### Phil Goff – Labour Party

The meeting was addressed by the leader of the Labour Party Phil Goff. Phil spoke on key issues including workers' rights and transport and answered questions from the executive. He was presented with a donation for the Labour Party from the Maritime Union.

### ITF

ITF inspector Grahame MacLaren gave a report on the various ITF campaigns including ship inspections and the piracy campaign.

### Veterans

Veterans' Association secretary Terry Ryan gave a report on the activities of the Veterans' Association which was continuing to grow and evolve into a more national organization.



Cartoon reproduced courtesy of Mike Moreu

# Free trade agreement threat to jobs and sovereignty

by Jane Kelsey

On December 6, 2010 New Zealand will host the fourth meeting of negotiators trying to strike a free trade deal known as the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement.

This proposed mega free-trade treaty currently spans nine countries: Australia, Brunei, Chile, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, Vietnam and the US. Its champions have dubbed it "an agreement for the 21st century". But a trade deal that equips New Zealand for the future needs to address the major challenges that will confront us – financial instability, climate change, energy scarcity, food sovereignty, natural resource wars. That is not what they mean.

Instead, their TPPA would impose the most far-reaching obligations on New Zealand since the Closer Economic Relations agreement with Australia, deepening our commitment to free market policies that affect our jobs, our social and cultural well-

being, and ultimately the sovereignty to make decisions as a nation.

The Government has two main rationales for negotiations.

The first is to secure significant new access for Fonterra to the US markets. That has been dismissed as a pipe dream by informed commentators, including Joseph Stiglitz, because the US agricultural lobby would never allow it.

President Barack Obama's trade representative has insisted that negotiations are structured in a way that keeps dairy access off the table, in line with US dairy industry demands. Second, the Government believes the TPPA can create a platform that the huge economies of Asia - China, Japan, Korea and maybe India - might join.

The aim of an Apec-wide free trade agreement is a holy grail that New Zealand, Australia and the US have promoted for years.

That remote prospect some time in the distant future is used to justify the lack of evidence that the TPPA itself will have any concrete benefits and their failure to examine its downsides.

What a New Zealand government signs now will bind future governments for the next century. Yet very few people have the slightest idea what is at stake.

The problem is not just what we might have to do now, but what we might be prevented from doing in the future.

The TPPA would lock us into a model where markets and big businesses rule, ignoring the reality that it has failed.

We are still trying to sort out the mess in leaky buildings, shady finance firms, Telecom's milking of its private monopoly and many other examples of market-based regulation.

The people of New Zealand paid dearly for that, and we will pay again under a TPPA, but this time the price will be higher.

Expect more Warner-style assaults on our labour and environment laws; Australian pension funds enforcing a right to buy our strategic assets; the government having to consult bailed-out financial institutions about regulations designed to rein them in; or big pharmaceuticals dictating drug prices to Pharmac. Labelling requirements for genetically modified foods and countries of origin could become impossible. So could parallel importing of books and DVDs or requirements for New Zealand content on broadcasting to balance the dominance of US and Australian programmes and advertisements. The US is likely to demand more punitive actions against internet users to protect its entertainment industry's products.

Ironically, the government may also guarantee rights to foreign firms that it refuses to recognise for Maori under the Treaty of Waitangi.

US firms are demanding even easier foreign investment rules that would be locked in for all time, when opinion polls show New Zealanders want to stop more land falling into foreign hands.

Likewise, the idea of stemming currency speculation by introducing a financial transactions tax may be prevented by these "trade" rules.

The agreement could guarantee foreign investors from the US, Australia or Singapore the right to comment on proposed new laws that affect their operations, giving foreign companies more say over our regulations than New Zealand voters.

Worse, foreign corporations could take the government to international arbitration, claiming compensation for new regulations they say have reduced the value of their investment.

Even if New Zealand had a solid defence, the threat of a dispute and a manufactured "crisis of investor confidence" could have a chilling effect so that government backs off - the Hobbit saga and bailouts to unguaranteed investors in South Canterbury Finance writ large.

National clearly plans to sell state assets in its next term. Reversing failed privatisations, as occurred with the Railways, Air New Zealand and Accident Compensation, or establishing another Kiwibank, could become legally difficult, or even impossible, under a TPPA.

Above all, this proposed agreement has constitutional importance for New Zealand because it ties the hands of future governments in ways that no domestic law can do. Yet the Cabinet can negotiate and sign the treaty in secret without first conducting an informed public debate or exposing draft texts to detailed scrutiny.

The Government needs to step back from the current TPPA process and provide the information and space for a rigorous public analysis of its implications. Professor Jane Kelsey teaches at the University of Auckland School of Law. She is the editor of *No Ordinary Deal: Unmasking the Trans-Pacific Partnership Free Trade Agreement*, published recently.

# 15 good reasons to challenge the Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade agreement



**Martin Henderson, Actor.** Spending time away has made me understand how fortunate we are to have everything that makes being a Kiwi so unique and special. A Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement would put at risk the best of New Zealand to give more power to foreign corporations. We have so much to lose with this shonky deal: control of our land and natural resources, affordable medicine, cultural diversity. Never heard of TPPA? Find out before our sovereignty and democracy gets signed away.



**Jeanette Fitzsimmons, former Green Party Co-leader.** A TPPA could give transnational companies the right to sue future governments if they legislated to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or restrict the use of Genetic Engineering technology. It would give away the freedom of our children and grandchildren to determine their own future. Please help us stop it.



**Bryan Gould, economic commentator, former Vice-Chancellor & MP.** Why should we cede yet more control over our economy - allowing foreign corporations to enforce rights against our government that are not available to our own firms - in pursuit of much greater access to the American market for our dairy products that the US dairy industry will never allow?



**Moana Maniapoto, Musician.** Intellectual property laws meant I couldn't use my own name to sing in Germany! Then I discovered that Ford, Sony and other US companies had exclusive rights over Maori language, cultural icons and other taonga that were guaranteed in our own Treaty. A TPPA will make that ten times worse. We need to protect our unique culture, environment and land for the next generation. It's in all our interests to say *Taihoa*.



**Hone Harawira, Maori Party MP.** NZ governments fall over themselves to sign free trade agreements where foreign multi-billion dollar corporates come first and indigenous peoples and the Treaty of Waitangi come last. We all remember the savage impact of trade liberalization on workers, particularly Maori in manufacturing jobs; now a TPPA threatens open season on assets, plunder of intellectual and cultural heritage, and health care only the rich can afford. Is this the Aotearoa we want?



**Dr Gay Keating, National Executive Officer, Public Health Association of New Zealand.** Health starts, long before illness, in our homes, schools and jobs. Laws - such as food quality, smokefree laws, alcohol control - are our decisions on how to keep our neighbourhoods and homes safer. We should not be told what to do by other countries in a TPPA, just as we should not be letting smaller Pacific states be bullied into bad laws that make bad health, either.



**Tony Simpson, President, Society of Authors.** We fear that the proposed TPPA has serious negative potential consequences for the expression of our culture both in literature and more broadly, as well as our intellectual property protections. That unique culture must not be sacrificed for illusory or minor economic advantages.



**Cathy Casey, Auckland Councillor.** We recently elected a new Auckland Council that wants to build resilient communities across the region, support local business and retain our public assets. I believe a TPPA would pose a barrier to those three laudable roles and give foreign investors too much power in New Zealand.



**John Roberts, President-elect Methodist Church of NZ.** The world needs just trade, not free trade. Unlimited economic growth and wealth accumulation are the pillars of free trade. These violate gospel values. Free trade contributes to global inequality and injustice. Justice for the poorest members of society will always be the test of any trade agreement.



**Andrew Campbell, finsec Campaigns Director.** The Global Financial Crisis has highlighted the enormous risk of an under-regulated financial services sector. While most countries are strengthening rules around how banks operate, a TPPA could straightjacket New Zealand with the weak rules that saw us labelled the 'wild west' in the 1990s and, if Washington's financial lobbyists have their way, will allow Wall Street to bring down the US economy again.



**Murray Horton, Secretary/Organiser, CAFCA.** A free trade agreement with the US (via the TPPA) aims to remove any remaining "restrictions" on foreign investment by US transnational corporations under NZ's (token) oversight regime. The government groveling to Warner Brothers over *The Hobbit* is a textbook example of corporate welfare and feudal forelock tugging, and shows what bullyboy brinkmanship by US Big Business holds for the future.



**Professor Jane Kelsey, editor No Ordinary Deal.** The TPPA is billed as an agreement for the 21st century. But it will do nothing to address the challenges of financial instability, climate change, energy scarcity, job insecurity, structural poverty and inequality. Instead, it will lock future governments into a failed regime where markets rule for the next 100 years.



**Joe Fleetwood, General Secretary, Maritime Union of New Zealand.** Working people should be demanding to be told the truth about TPPA and free trade agreements. Our jobs, rights and conditions as workers are under threat from the hidden dangers of free trade. So is our democracy. We are walking into a free trade trap. We don't want to be the guinea pigs in another failed experiment.



**Robert Reid, General Secretary, National Distribution Union.** First they came for the car plants, then they came for the clothing and textile sector jobs but the country was silent. Now they are coming for our affordable medicines, our land, our environment, our work rights, the rest of our economy, our sovereignty. We can remain silent no longer.



**Are you the 15th good reason to challenge the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement?**

# The Great Maritime Strike of 1890

## Introduction

by Victor Billot, Editor

This is the second and concluding instalment of the Maritime's coverage of the Great Maritime Strike of 1890, commemorating the 120th anniversary of that event in our union's history.

The previous instalment was published in the Spring 2010 edition of the Maritimes (and is available also on our online version of the magazine at our website [www.munz.org.nz](http://www.munz.org.nz))

The first instalment explained the development of the Maritime Council, and the surge in class consciousness and militancy of New Zealand workers in the period leading up to the 1890 strike. This strike is widely considered to be one of the three major industrial conflicts of New Zealand history, along with the strike of 1913 and the waterfront lockout of 1951. This serialized account is an edited adaptation taken from 'Jagged Seas', the forthcoming official history of the New Zealand Seafarers' Union, by David Grant. We thank the author for his kind permission to use this material.

## Part 2: The Great Strike

by David Grant

During the initial period of the Strike, General Secretary of the Seaman's Union John Millar told the Union Company that when it paid its officers the wages that the Australian Marine Officers' Association wanted, both Maritime Councils would call the strike off.

With the backing of the Australasian Steam Ship Owners Association (SSOA), the company was of no such mind and had plenty of financial reserves to withstand a long siege, which the unionists did not. The company and the SSOA saw they could win by starving the unionists into submission.

The New Zealand Maritime Council was wary at the prospect of a long-drawn dispute but refused to back down. On 27 August, Millar issued a manifesto in which he exclaimed that the public could not expect their seamen to be tools of any employers trying to crush the labour organisations of Australasia.

'The seamen may regret that their action may cause a paralysis of trade', he wrote, 'but their action has only been taken in self defence'.

In solidarity, the New Zealand Marine Officers' Association ordered its members off any ship 'the moment a blackleg goes aboard' as did members of the Cooks and

Stewards Union who on 29 August, voted 3 to 1 to strike in support of their seafaring colleagues.

At a mass meeting of striking unionists in the Dunedin Town Hall on 1 September, Millar received a rousing reception when he hollered 'Labour is one, and an injustice to one is an injustice to all!'

He put the blame for the strike and its escalation firmly at the feet of the Union Company's failure to recognize that united labour needed to be recognized and called on its leaders such as James Mills to 'meet us and discuss matters'.

On 2 September 1890, the Auckland Star reported that 500 seamen and watersiders were on strike in Wellington, and a further 800 in Lyttelton and Port Chalmers.

At first, the spirit of the strikers was indomitable.

Union members met weekly reaffirming their resolution and arranged a series of pickets of Union ships when they berthed in all of the main ports. But time was not on the Council's side.

With the employers' greater ability to see out the siege, and with unskilled unemployment still high in New Zealand towns, the Union Company and other ship-owners were easily able to organise scab labour to work the wharves and their ships.

Interestingly not many of these men were, it was later ascertained, drawn from the ranks of the jobless but rather as one 'volunteer' noted, were bank clerks, school teachers, farm hands, and men 'from athletic clubs and those of 'independent means'.

The Railway Commissioners weighed in behind the Union Company.

At Lyttelton where non-union labour was in short supply they indulged in a nasty bit of 'scab-herding' whereby 200 railwaymen were ordered to work on the wharves as blackleg labour.

The men refused and were instantly dismissed. This incident, and the fact that the Union Company ships were now seen to be in danger through being sailed by inexperienced non-union officers and crew, stimulated a bitter debate in parliament.

The Atkinson Government professed neutrality in the dispute but the Liberal opposition led by a fiery Richard John Seddon accused it of 'union-bashing'.

Seddon charged the Railway Commissioners with provocation in trying to enforce their workers to scab on the Lyttelton waterfront and denounced the Union Company for jeopardising the safety of its passengers for the sake of its own selfish interests.

At the same time, the Maritime Council and unions held a series of public meetings in the main centres receiving wide public support.

Leaders revived memories of the Jubilee Shipping Company by suggesting the establishment of a co-operative shipping company worked by union labour.

Invariably, much of the rhetoric became political with strikers and their supporters in the audience calling for a strictly Labour platform of compulsory industrial arbitration, work preference for unionists, extensions to the free education system and most pertinently, a universal 8-hour working day.

## The founding of Labour Day

During the previous year, at its initial gathering in Paris, the Labour and Socialist International, the Second International, issued an appeal to all countries to celebrate one day in the year as an International Labour Day, to be marked by demonstrations agitating for the introduction of a compulsory 8-hour day. In the northern hemisphere, the date had been fixed on 1 May (May Day) but the call came to late to introduce this day in the New Zealand calendar so the local Maritime Council suggested 28 October instead.

This date had already become a milestone in New Zealand working class history, being not only the anniversary of the founding of the Council itself but also commemorated the day when Wellington working men had gathered in front of Barretts Hotel on Lambton Quay in 1840 to resolve 'that eight hours shall be the working day and anyone offending will be ducked in the harbour!'

Thus Labour Day was born, first celebrated in October 1890 with celebrations organized by unions, Trades and Labour Councils and the Maritime Council itself.

In Wellington, most businesses closed and an orderly procession of some 1,200 workers marched alongside decorated horse floats and colourful union banners between Government Buildings to Newtown.

More importantly, Labour Day and its attendant celebration served as a rallying call for all striking workers in desperate battle with the ship-owners.

Such merriment was but a fleeting glimpse.

Council and unions funds were nearly exhausted. Strike pay had been reduced to next to nothing leaving unionists and their families facing poverty.

Interestingly, the strikers still commanded much public and some press support arguing that the Union Company was acting selfishly and that their ships sailing with non-union labour and often undermanned was a real threat to the safety of those on board.

Concerned passengers, particularly on trans-Tasman crossings, were postponing trips until the dispute was resolved and the ships properly manned.

The employers sat tight, refusing to even talk. The longer the strike went on the more advantageous it was for them.

Levels of trade were increasing as both the New Zealand and Australian economies began to bounce back after the depression of the 1880s.

Local and trans-Tasman shipping trade was crucial for economic growth and when by, early October, the impasse was showing no signs of breaking, the government commanded both sides to confer in Wellington. Facing defeat, union leaders were keen.

The Union Company sent its chairman of directors, George McLean who moved not a muscle towards compromise, refusing any union demands despite staring into the faces of 26 union and council representatives sitting across the table for four days.

McLean was an influential politician, wealthy Dunedin banker and Otago runholder and pulled no punches as what he wanted, the unconditional surrender of the Maritime Council.

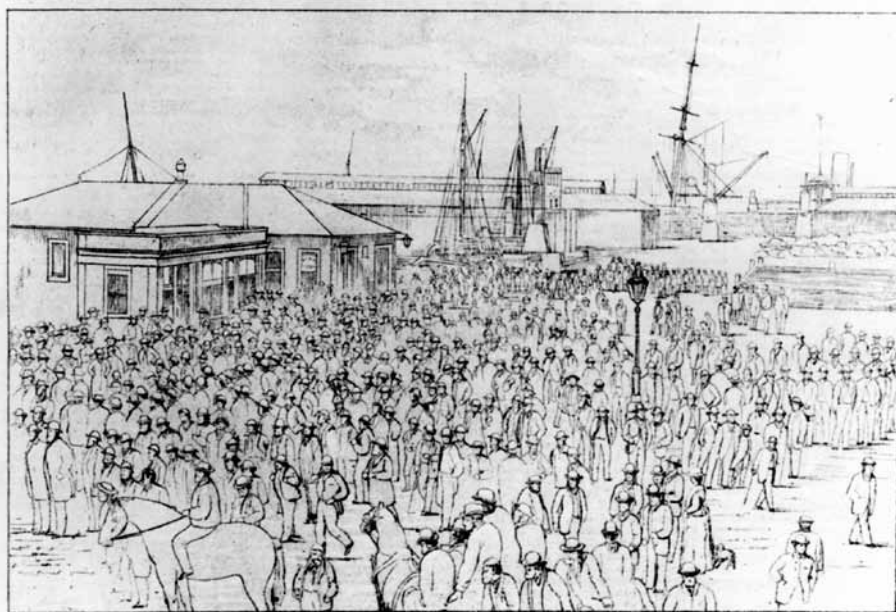
Events moved to an inevitable climax. Despite the acknowledged incompetence of many non-union crews, 34 of the Union Company's 43 steamers were in service, and most of the others were only laid up for maintenance.

What began as a trickle became a torrent by the end of October. A similar scenario was playing out in Australia. By the end of October, its Maritime Council was advising its affiliates to get their men back to work before their organizations were completely smashed.

Under relentless pressure, other support began falling away as well. The Maritime Council suffered a blow late in October when the Christchurch Bootmakers' Union refused to carry on paying its strike levy and accused its fellow unions for 'striking for they knew not what'.

After the failure of the Wellington conference, the Council called on all affiliated unionists except for seamen, wharf labourers and miners to return to work. This was the beginning of the end. On 1 November, wharf labourers seeing no future in staying out, returned to work as well.

By this time, their union shattered, impecunious wharfies had left the waterfront and found work elsewhere.



The Queen's Wharf—Free Labourers escorted home, Sept. 12th.

On 6 November, the strike was declared officially over in Sydney. In Wellington, on 11 November, the New Zealand Maritime Council told members of the Seamen's Union, the first body to go on strike and the last to hold out, that their men were free to rejoin their vessels.

Worse was to follow. Wage rates were slashed and the Union Company pursued a ruthless policy of victimization. Blacklists were drawn up and the Company forced returning seamen to declare that they no longer belonged to the union.

The Union Company instead, as we shall see, set up its own 'union' a compulsory 'Mutual Benefit Society' scathingly referred to by steadfast unionists as the 'Deaf and Dumb Society'.

This in-house organisation was explicitly designed to undermine genuine trade unionism by absorbing the portion of an employee's wages previously earmarked for union fees.

The failure of the maritime strike was a shattering defeat for incipient New Zealand unionism and it would take many years to recover. Some unions survived in diminished form; some disappeared altogether.

Wharf carters were one to vanish. Wharf labourers emerged chastened in another form later, and miners retreated into a backwoods only to re-emerge with some gusto in the late 1890s.

The biggest casualty was the Maritime Council itself. It was ill-prepared, despite its earlier successes and the organizing capabilities of John Millar, to survive the hammer-blows of the cash-rich employing class as it sought to destroy these unions. Union leaders were devastated.

Long-time seafarer and union activist William 'Big Bill' Belcher who, early in 1893, would succeed his friend John Millar as secretary of the Seamen's Union based in Dunedin, and as general secretary soon afterwards, recalled later that history recorded that the strikers were beaten—"but," he continued. "the phrase inadequately describes the rout. We were licked and licked, and it must be added that we were kicked and kicked very hard...."

The shattering blow, as Belcher described it, meant that for the time being unionism lay prostrate and helpless. Then began, what he called, was a reign of terror – 'the ship owners bringing in every conceivable device to try to retard the growth of unionism. The employers contended it was their duty to stand by the 'loyalists' (scabs) and the strikers got little or no chance of work. Thus the flower of New Zealand unionism scattered to the four corners of the earth...."

Despite this, Millar and Belcher managed to hold together the framework of the Union.

Not all was doom and gloom. Unionists and their supporters, as they would do for decades afterwards in times of strife, penned verse.

On 27 December 1890, for example, just six weeks after the end of the strike, Auckland's Weekly Herald printed a 'Christmas Carol' composed by 'J K'. The last stanza went.

*"Cheer up my hearty union boys, the time is drawing near  
When you will have your places back and drink your glass of beer  
They're sick of those who replaced you, and they've found out what to do,  
With blacklegs all will vanish and we'll have a union crew."*



Hundreds of workers turned out in Timaru in the biggest protest for years. Maritime Union members Peter Dixon (with sign), Tony Townshend (partly obscured in background) and Kevin Forde (reflective jacket) were amongst them (photo by Rachel Fahey)

The Maritime Union of New Zealand has vowed to go on the offensive against employment law changes pushed through by the National Government.

The passing of the Employment Relations Act and Holidays Act Amendment Bills in Parliament in November spells the beginning of the end for the John Key Government.

Maritime Union of New Zealand General Secretary Joe Fleetwood says the law changes are about one thing – making life harder and sucking more profit out of hard pressed working people.

"On top of the GST hike on workers, unemployment, low wages, rewriting laws overnight for multinationals, and the continued attacks on the education system, the rot has set in for a National Government that has turned against the people."

"These laws are an attack on workers. The National Government is against working people. John Key is a multi millionaire from the finance speculation sector and he represents multi millionaires. He has no interest in the wellbeing of the majority of New Zealanders."

Mr Fleetwood says the Maritime Union will be on the front line in fighting any laws that threaten the wellbeing of working people. That would mean ramping up an ongoing campaign against the National Government and employers who used the new laws against workers.

Mr Fleetwood says the reality of what the law changes means may take some time to sink in for many people.

"As workers see their workmates sacked for stupid reasons or no reasons under the 90 day fire at will law, then disquiet and concern will turn to anger."

He says the key issues for workers in New Zealand at the moment are low pay, unemployment and insecurity of jobs by contracting out and casualization.

"On all these issues the National Government has failed workers completely."

"Workers in unions have better wages, conditions and representation. If you are a worker get in a union now, because this National Government is working against your interests."

# The workers united

**On Wednesday 20 October 2010, thousands of workers rallied in cities and towns throughout New Zealand against the National Government's changes to employment laws that disadvantage workers. Here are some pictures from the day.**



Some of the thousands of workers who packed the TelstraClear stadium in Auckland on Wednesday 20 October 2010 (photo by John Darroch)



Unions united in the Octagon, Dunedin, Wednesday 20 October 2010 (photo by Victor Billot)

# Auckland Local 13

By Russell Mayn

Now that we are approaching Christmas it is not such a bad time to sit back and reflect on some of the events during the year, good, bad, political, industrial and some that are just plain old run of the mill.

First of all congratulations to the Kiwis on the win against the Kangaroos in the final of the Four Nations Rugby League.

This was backed up with a clinical performance by the All Blacks against Scotland and the Black Caps showing they can still play a bit. My point is that without the support players you cannot play the full eighty minutes and come out on the right side on the scoreboard.

So a big thanks to all those who have supported the Executive and Officials during the year.

Local 13 has had to defend its line through a number of second phases but to date the line has not been breached.

A number of the attacks have been when the referee has been blindsided and there has been many a time I wished we could have gone upstairs but in the end I am just as proud of our Union as I am of our sporting heritage.

## 1890 symposium

Last week I was fortunate to attend the Symposium re-evaluating the 1890 Maritime Strike organised by the Auckland Labour History Group. Academia from New Zealand and Australia tackled the subject from different angles and I will be the first to admit that I learnt quite a bit on the day.

Presentations covered a wide spectrum, from the effect on radical cartooning to the formation of the Labour Party in New Zealand and Australia after the strike.

Local 13 was represented by Graham McKean (Coach) who really did us proud. His depth of knowledge and understanding of the subject was obvious but what also shone out was his commitment to the union principles that are no different today than they were in the 1890's.

*Editor's note – a copy of Coach's presentation is available on our website [www.munz.org.nz](http://www.munz.org.nz)*

## Coastal shipping

The news earlier this year that Pacifica Shipping will be picking up extra cargo volumes on the coastal run is heartening. We all hope that this may be the beginning of coastal cargo returning to New Zealand coastal carriers.

For too long our Coastal Shipping Companies have been competing on an uneven playing field and a change to legislation is long overdue.

The reintroduction of Cabotage would allow Companies like Pacifica Shipping to grow and support employment for New Zealanders whilst providing a viable and reliable service to the New Zealand market.

Coastal shipping has many advantages and is a sustainable long term alternative to long distance road transport, yet it is the only transport sector that receives no help by way of subsidies and has to compete directly with overseas companies who are able to operate outside of New Zealand labour laws.

## Political update

The National Government continues to excel itself in prosecuting its right wing agenda. I think that perhaps they really believe that they are the "all seeing eye" that patrols New Zealand ready to dispatch winged riders to destroy any New Zealand workers who dare to seek fairness in the workplace.

I am not going to spend too much time on the Hobbit but enough to say that thank God this National Party was not around when we fought against American nuclear powered vessels entering our ports.

When we rush through changes to employment legislation to appease multi nationals and corporate heavy weights we have lost the plot and our dignity as free thinkers.

The National Party may as well sign us back up to the Old Country and ask to be colonised again as it seems the PM is more than happy to be dictated to by overseas interests.

This may be a prelude to the future under Pacific Free Trade, everything becomes free for grabs in New Zealand.

## Free Trade or Fair Trade?

Looking at a snapshot of our export industry, it is clear that Agriculture, Dairy, Food and Forestry are going to play a significant role in our future economic development.

I believe that the future for New Zealand is rosy, we have all the natural resources that tick the boxes, and properly managed, we can look forward to the boom years we experienced in the 1960's.

As world demand grows for the essentials, we will prosper and I struggle to understand why we are willing to jump up and roll over for a film, yet stand by with ambivalence whilst overseas companies prepare to acquire our farmland and key infrastructure assets.

Organisations like CAFCA have fought to gain traction with their campaign against foreign control.

There's a "Warning Here Brothers".

The same applies to the obsessive drive to privatise water, as every country in the world that has been unfortunate enough to experiment with privatising its water supply and infrastructure wrestle to return water supplies to public control.

## Super City

None of this is exclusive to national politics. Local politics is taking on a new face as Rodney Hide and his supporters thrust Auckland into the same experiment that failed in every other country where it has been introduced.

Undoubtedly it will have the same disastrous results for the people of Auckland as the French have experienced.

I do not envy the job that Len Brown has in front of him in the coming months but thankfully we have a left leaning Council to protect the family jewels.

There must have been some suicidal Nat's after the Local Body Elections. All that work to get Super City to the ballot box and the plans made to carve the assets up only to be foiled by the democratic process they fought so hard to bypass.

I would like to have a peak in Santa's in tray. Rodney's would have gone something like this, "Please Santa I have been a good little Act member.

Can I please have a Water Company for Christmas without the hassle".

I wonder who would have written in asking for a train set to play with. A few years back Santa got a wrong address from the Canadians and boy did that cost us.

There would have been plenty of letters asking for a Wharf and a Monopoly set, you have somewhere to put your hotels!

The moral of the story is that you have to be a good boy to get something for Christmas. Bad luck fellas perhaps next year.

## Branch functions

Now onto the really important stuff: the Local 13 Christmas BBQ and the Seafarers Old-Timers function.

The Old-Timers is on 17 December at the Maritime Club, kick off at midday.

Local 13 Christmas BBQ is again at the Maritime Club on the 18 December starting at 2pm.

Don't forget to block out 24 January 2011 for Picnic Day, Golf, Bowls and family day at the pools.

Also Interport Sports this year is in Dunedin on 13 – 18 February where Local 10 is the host. Hope to see you at one or all of the events to celebrate our Working Class heritage.

On behalf of the Executive and Officials of Local 13, I would like to take this opportunity in wishing you and your family a Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year.

"An Injury to One is an Injury to All"



Auckland Local 13 at TelstraClear stadium in Auckland on Wednesday 20 October 2010, from left, Chris Savage, Eric MacAllister, Dave Phillipps and Carl Findlay (photo by John Darroch)



Maritime Union of New Zealand Whangarei Branch members at the Whangarei Fairness at Work rally, Wednesday 20 October 2010

# ITF 42nd Congress, Mexico City

by Garry Parsloe  
National Vice President

In early August General Secretary Joe Fleetwood, Wellington Seafarers Branch Secretary Mike Clark, Wellington Seafarers Branch Executive member Marion Leslie, and I attended the ITF 42nd Congress in Mexico City.

The first day was for the opening speeches with the ITF President Randall Howard stating that "defending public services and rolling back climate change are directly related to securing clean air and environmentally friendly modes of transport in which collective transport modes take precedence over individual modes, in addition to using air transport which minimises fuel consumption."

Randall Howard said the Congress must emerge with a clear resolution that calls for stricter regulations of the global financial markets and its institutions to stop greed and exorbitant executive salaries.

General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation Sharan Burrow gave a presentation by video. Sharan stated that "Corporate greed has no place in global justice. Oppression of workers and their unions has no place in national or global governance. Indeed, the right to work, decent work, is a fundamental human right and freedom of association, organising and collective bargaining are the rights and tools to drive a fairer globalisation".

ITF General Secretary David Cockroft stated that "we have geared up to organise globally across the ITF as a whole. We have included young workers, prioritised women transport workers and highlighted the issues of the precarious and unprotected."

"Focussing on the global organising successes of the ITF and its Affiliates – including fighting the plague of piracy, organising along key transport corridors and furthering union objectives in global airline alliances"

On the second day we attended the Seafarers Section Conference.

The Secretariat gave a report on organising globally before we entered into a Flag of Convenience (FOC) Campaign review.

The above was followed by a presentation on the Congress theme document "Strong Unions – Sustainable Transport." This was followed by the four year work programme.

The second day concluded by addressing the motions that were remitted to Conference and the election of Officers. On Sunday 8 August we attended the Fair Practices Committee meeting which is the joint meeting between the Dockers Section Committee and the Seafarers Section Committee.

There was a long discussion around the FOC Campaign.

In the debate was the question of cabotage and how the coastal trade must be retained for the national flag and the seafarers in that country.

National cabotage is an absolute must in the way forward in protecting Seafarers' work.

The above was followed by the Work Programme 2011 – 2014.

Priorities:

1-1 Develop and implement revised inspectorate working and operational processes and procedures in accordance with FOC Campaign review recommendations.

2-1 Increase in real terms the percentage of the total FOC Fleet covered by ITF approved agreements.

3-1 Establish and develop a network of FOC crew willing to engage in a range of FOC Campaign activities and ensure it grows year on year to 2014.

4-1 Establish National FOC-POC coordinating committees in those countries where POC (Port of Convenience) and/or joint Maritime initiatives are taking place.

5-2 Carry out capacity building amongst Maritime Affiliates to support implementation of organising and campaigning strategies.

Prior to closing there was another debate around the issue of Seafarers being directed to do Dockers' work.

The Seafarer is not at fault here. The employer is the criminal for forcing the Seafarer to do this work.

We must be active in preventing Seafarers from doing Dockers' Work.

As I had to return to New Zealand before the end of the Congress because of developments in our dispute with the Ports of Auckland, I missed the last couple of days.

Whilst missing the end of Congress, I would conclude that the Congress was productive and delivered policy on the way forward.

## Teal Bay Merchant Navy Day Annual Service

by Garry Parsloe  
National Vice President

On Sunday 29 August 2010 we gathered at Teal Bay Memorial to pay our respects and to remember those who served their country during the Second World War and since.

The weather was sunny and warm for the duration of the service but deteriorated rapidly ten minutes after it finished.

We then had a most enjoyable lunch in the Marine Rescue Centre afterwards.

This turn-out was the most since we have had our memorial installed there some 8 years ago.

Great to see and participate in.

Many of our members were unable to be there for whatever reason.

It is worth giving a thought to what we missed. Those that were there missed those who were not.

Those who were not there missed a good time of sharing and comradeship.

The Merchant Navy played a critical role during wartime, transporting troops, military equipment and vital cargo around the world, under constant threat of enemy raids.

No other group of New Zealand civilians faced such risks during wartime.

Recognising this day acknowledges the contribution and sacrifice made during wartime by a remarkable group of men. Their work was so essential to the war effort that the Merchant Navy became regarded as the fourth service, alongside the Army, Navy and the Air Force.

# Maritime Union of Australia National Council 19–22 October 2010, Fremantle, Western Australia

by Garry Parsloe  
National Vice President

The Assistant General Secretary Ray Fife and I attended the MUA National Council meeting in October in Fremantle, Western Australia.

MUA National Secretary Paddy Crumlin opened the meeting by introducing the Hon Jon Ford MLC Western Australian Shadow Minister for Mines and Petroleum, and Fisheries.

Jon Ford in his opening address spoke on Mining disasters around the World before speaking on the loss of lives in the pursuit of profit in Australia.

He spoke at length on Mining and Maritime accidents and on the lack of action in ensuring that there are no repeats of these actions whilst also ensuring that every worker works in a safe work place.

The next session was headed "The National and International Environment for Trade Unionism" and was delivered by Paddy Crumlin.

Paddy gave an overview on how a union should operate and conduct itself.

Paddy went on to talk about the importance of being part of the International. The next speaker was National Secretary of the Australian Workers Union Paul Howes. Paul spoke under the heading of "The 2010 Election Campaign and prospects for the union movements agenda in the 2nd term."

Paul spoke on the importance of the Global Trade Union Movement and on harnessing Global labour.

MUA Deputy National Secretary Mick Doleman spoke next under the heading of "The Unions 2010 Election Campaign – A reflection."

Mick reported on the MUA Campaign to re-elect a Labour Government.

Paddy Crumlin addressed the Council next under the heading "MUA strategy priorities for the next 12 months."

Contained in this address was a full Financial Report.

After lunch Mick Doleman gave a lengthy report on manning issues on the Australian Coast. He expanded on the Data Base and how it is operated.

Chris Cain joined in the discussion by giving a full report on manning issues in the offshore.

Paddy Crumlin also joined in the discussion with ideas of how best to operate a Data Base.

Next Session was headed "Union action to improve Maritime safety."

Warren Smith, Ian Bray and Mick Doleman presented this session. There was a good discussion from a range of Delegates who all were firm on what an important issue that safety is and how we must work hard at making sure that every Maritime worker has a safe work place to work in.

The above session was followed by the Western Branch report which was delivered by the Branch Secretary Chris Cain. Chris gave a full report on the growth of the Western Australian Branch. There is so much work coming on stream and the Branch will need a big influx of Seafarers and the MUA will call on New Zealand seafarers first through our Union.

Late in the afternoon on the first day we had a report from the Northern Territory Branch, a Women's report and concluded the day with a Veterans report.

Day two opened with Paddy Crumlin talking about the Unions international strategy and implementing ITF Congress decisions in Australia and the Asia Pacific Region.

We then had a panel discussion where I was able to report on our dispute with the Port of Tauranga and the Port of Auckland and Ray was able to report on the alliance between MUNZ and the RMTU.

The panel discussion was followed by a report from Mick Dolman headed "Building a strong well resourced union structure – securing decent work."

A lot of this dealt with payment of union dues etc.

After lunch day two.

There was a presentation from Ian Bray under the heading "Organising and Campaigning – are we growing the union and where will the new members come from."

Ian expanded on growth in the union, union coverage, union density and union dues etc.

Next session was presented by Warren Smith under the heading "Adopting better organising methodology and strengthening union power- case studies".

Warren spoke about safety in the Stevedoring industry and how there should be a register of Stevedores that are approved to work on the Waterfront.

The last session in day two was "ILO Maritime Labour Convention AMSA presentation."

The session was presented by Paddy Crumlin and Alan Schwartz from AMSA. Speakers addressed Maritime legislative issues, ship inspections and Seafarers rights.

Day three opened under the heading "National shipping policy reform – the next steps."

This session was presented by Paddy Crumlin he spoke on the importance of cabotage and on all the benefits that cabotage brings.

The next session was headed "The Fair Work Act 2009 – MUA strategy to maximize industrial opportunities."

There was a lengthy report on Coastal shipping, single voyage permits and continuous voyage permits.

The rest of the morning was taken up under the heading "Building alliances and federations – the next steps."

The panel in this session was made up with Tony Sheldon (TWU), Phil Woodcock (RTBU), Tony Maher (CFMEU) and Andrew Vickers (CFMEU).

All the speakers spoke about unions working together and other issues of Solidarity.

After lunch on day three we had the Queensland Branch report followed by the South Australia (Adelaide) Branch report, the Northern NSW Branch report, the Victorian Branch report, the Tasmanian Branch report and the Southern NSW Branch report.

The Branch reports were followed by a MUA communications – new strategic approach presentation then a report on the union's election for 2011 brought the meeting to a finish.

As always the MUA National Council was full of information and productive.

Maritime Union  
photos online at  
[www.flickr.com/  
maritimeunion](http://www.flickr.com/maritimeunion)

# 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!

Mail  
PO Box 27004,  
Wellington,  
New Zealand

Email  
victor.billot@munz.org.nz

Fax (09) 9251125



Bluff Branch members attending the Invercargill Fairness at Work rally, 20 October 2010, from left (standing) Harry Holland, Phil Robb, Duncan Ryan, Arthur Leaf, from left (sitting) Brent Diamond and Ray Crown

## Bluff

by Ray Fife

### ExxonMobil

Exploration giant ExxonMobil has aborted its hunt for oil and gas in the Great South Basin off the Southland Coast.

The decision by ExxonMobil and partner Todd energy to pull out of the basin had not come as a surprise, while two other exploration companies continued to explore in the area.

ExxonMobil was one of three companies granted a five year permit in 2007 to explore for oil and gas in the Great South Basin.

The other two were the OMV-led consortium and Greymouth Petroleum, both of whom have until July to decide whether to drill.

The joint ventures interpretation of the data indicates the acreage has a high technical risk, and this is further amplified by the remote location and the harsh operating environment.

The Gulf of Mexico oil spill has probably played a part in their decision as well.

### Around the port

At the time of writing we have still not settled on agreements for our members who work for Southport NZ Ltd and Southland Stevedoring Services. We are hopeful that they are finalised by Christmas.

The port has experienced a busy period since the last issue of the Maritimes. There has been a vast increase of logs going to China as well as fertiliser imports and MSC container ships where there have been 400 to 500 movements per visit. The SE Shipping Company made its first visit to Bluff to exchange containers from the RioTinto/ Alcan Aluminium Smelter. We believe that this shipping line will be a monthly service.

Most of our Seafarer members are employed at the moment. With the oil and gas boom in Australia, we are likely to see everyone picked up over the next couple of months.

### Fairness at Work Campaign

Our Branch was fully involved in gearing up to the campaign for the 20th October. The rally was to be held outdoors in Invercargill but had to be shifted indoors because of the bad weather.

This still did not stop a good crowd attending and our Branch President Harry Holland spoke on the 90 day bill which was well received by the audience.

I would like to thank all those members who attended the rally.

On behalf of our Branch, I would like to wish everyone a very merry Christmas and happy new year.

# Veterans' Corner

by Terry Ryan

Sadly it is our sorry duty to convey that the Veterans' Association has seen several members pass-over since the last issue. They being Lloyd Jenkins (ex Timaru), Dick Fleetwood (ex Wellington), Billy Angell, Tony Martin, Win Wolfe, and Darren Thompson, all ex Auckland. In spite of these sad losses, the Association continues to grow, and currently boasts 374 members.

In answer to a recent enquiry as to membership eligibility for membership, we will take this opportunity to advise of clause 5 in the constitution of rules for the MUNZ Veteran's Association.

The rule states that membership of the Association shall be open to all retired of MUNZ, their wives, husbands, partners, and widows/widowers who are otherwise considered to be eligible by the executive for membership of the Association, including all those made redundant, their wives, widows and widowers and any ex employees of MUNZ.

So as can be seen, we are virtually open to all bona fide union members and supporters who worked in the industry or went to sea.

So don't hold back. If you know someone who would be proud to belong to an organisation that keeps its members informed and in touch, just e-mail [terry@munz.org.nz](mailto:terry@munz.org.nz) or ring Fay at (09) 3034652 to have a membership form sent out to you anywhere in New Zealand.

The Veterans applaud and thank those branches who have complied with the unanimous conference resolution regarding veteran support. namely, Auckland, Lyttelton, Wellington Seafarers, Timaru, Bluff, and Napier.

As the year draws to a close, we can advise that the Veterans' executive will meet on 10 December to assess its strategy and procedures for 2011.

In the meantime we wish all members and readers of the Maritimes all the very best for the festive season along with a prosperous and healthy New Year.



Maritime Union of New Zealand Tauranga Mt Maunganui Branch executive members Eddie Cook (left), Peter Harvey (third from left) and Leroy Tipene (right) discuss the Fairness at Work campaign with CTU President Helen Kelly



International and national guests at the Mining and Maritime meeting enjoy some Auckland nightlife, November 2010



From the archives: John Broughton sent in this photo taken at the 1992 Seafarers' Union Conference  
Back row, from left, are D. Carter, Stu McCarthy, A. Martin, B. Prisk, Joe Fleetwood, Garry Parsloe, and John Broughton  
Front row, from left, Cliff Hurley, Peter Harvey, and D. Cowley



Port Chalmers Dunedin Branch stopwork meeting, 29 September 2010

# Port Chalmers Dunedin

by Phil Adams

Greetings from Port Chalmers, seasons greeting's and hopefully a prosperous New Year.

As Christmas beckons the Terminal and conventional side of things are really picking up. That can only be a good thing with the opportunity to employ more permanent workers in our industry.

## Port Otago

Recently the Port Company picked up 4 new "B" register workers, all whom have joined our Union and Port Chalmers Cargo Services are to pick up five new 24/7 permanents.

A new Terminal Supervisor will be added to the supervisors and although this has been advertised internally and externally, it is hoped that one of the lads currently relieving in that position will get the job. The Collective Agreement for the Terminal has just been signed and the back pay should be paid out shortly.

The MUNZ negotiating team did an excellent job under sometimes difficult conditions to achieve what we believe is one of the better results around New Zealand.

## Ports of Auckland

Our branch has watched the Ports of Auckland situation with interest, especially the issues around contracting out. We have offered our support although it appears the situation may now have been resolved.

## Brian Cronin

Our branch offers its deepest sympathy to the family of RMTU Lyttelton-based organizer Brian Cronin. Brian died suddenly in October, shortly after he was involved in successfully wrapping up the collective agreement for Port Otago. Brian contributed well to our negotiations and his wit and smile will be missed by all. As a mark of our respect for Brian, our three officials travelled to Christchurch for his funeral.

## Queenstown Unit

Our Queenstown Unit is available to Maritime Union members, please ring Ian Quarrell on 021472021 or Alan Middleditch on 03 4728753 to book. We are currently working through a problem with the surveying of the property at 22 Malaghan Street along with other tenants, and hoping for a successful outcome.

## Interport Sports Tourney

The annual Interport sports tourney will be hosted by the Port Chalmers Dunedin Branch and we hope to see a good number of visitors here in February 2011.

## Branch Events

The annual retired members and union shout will be held at 1600 on Tuesday 14 December. The annual Christmas social was held on Saturday 20 November at Zingari RFC and a good night was had by all who attended.

The Kids' Party will be held at the Harbour RFC starting at 1300 on 18 December, always a good day for the kids.

## Veterans

The MUNZ Veterans is a growing organization and it is hoped that recently retired members will join up. Forms are available from the Secretary (Phil Adams).

## Cyril McWilliams

The branch notes one of our members has recently achieved 40 years on the waterfront. Cyril McWilliams arrived from Bluff in 1978 and has been with us ever since. Congratulations Cyril.

### Visitors in port

Recently we have had transfers into the port with Southern Cross, including Dein Ferris from Gisborne, although at the time the Secretary was in Europe. If any officials from other ports are in our port, please contact me.

### ITF

I recently visited a gas vessel where there were some concerns with food on board. After having problems getting aboard I finally met with the Captain who did not allow the crew to speak with me. With pressure from the ITF, sufficient food was delivered that morning, but what I did get out of it was that the crew was not wanting to stand up for itself. The work for the ITF is interesting and any branch member who wishes to do these inspections should contact me.

### Sky Jupiter

This vessel has been the subject of many safety problems, the last was lashing of three high boxes. Three people were injured in Australia, so before it arrived our members determined not to lash three high boxes until fitted with new safety bars.

This was a good exercise in the ports where MUNZ members work, staying united for the safety of all.

### The Future

As our numbers climb to nearly 200 permanent members, it is now time for the branch to look at how these members are represented given we now have members all the way from Mosgiel to Port Chalmers, including Fonterra (Mosgiel), Southfreight, Holcim, Port Chalmers Cargo Services as well as Port Otago Terminal and the sheds. This needs to be discussed at our annual meeting in December as members outside of Port Chalmers are not seeing their union rep often enough.

Given our size now, we need to be seen as representing everyone who pays their fees. There are various options but the number one priority is giving everyone equal representation and addressing issues whether they be in Mosgiel or Port Chalmers.

MUNZ prides itself on representing members and it is now time to look at ourselves and deliver, so all members can be proud to be part of our Union.

Our branch would like to wish all MUNZ members and their families all the best for the festive season and a happy New Year.



Former President of the New Zealand Waterside Workers Federation and Port Chalmers identity Bruce Malcolm sent this photo in after reading about the celebrations of the first official Merchant Navy Day this year in New Zealand. Bruce noted how the Port Chalmers Dunedin Branch of the Union had forged the way as it had acknowledged the service of Merchant Seamen for many years with an annual service since the late 1980s, following an approach by local seamen. The plaque above was donated on a joint basis by the Port Chalmers Branch of the the then Waterside Workers Union and Port Otago Limited.



Long serving Maritime Union Port Chalmers Dunedin branch member Cyril McWilliams (right) receives his long service presentation from Port Otago CEO Geoff Plunket

# Tauranga protests employment law changes

by **Genevieve Halliwell**

Downtown Tauranga was bustling with activity on Wednesday 20 October as hundreds of people protested the Government's proposed changes to employment legislation.

A group of people walked from 3rd Ave, down Devonport Rd to Mid City Mall and met with about 200 people in Mid City Mall to peacefully protest.

Event organiser Eddie Cook said the protest was a chance for union workers to voice their concerns about the proposed employment changes.

"It's absolute rubbish what [the Government is] saying, National is against the workers.

"It's totally unfair and I think the unions should all get together and vote National out," said Mr Cook.

Mr Cook's main concerns with the legislation were the 90-day bill and providing a medical certificate after a one-day absence from work.

Angela Neil, 54, from the New Zealand Nurses Organisation union, was worried about the proposed change to forbid union representatives in the workplace.

"If they don't allow the union rep to come on to the site and speak with you, the workers will have no advice. You know we're not Saudi Arabia, why should we go back to the archaic days?"

Mrs Neil said the proposed changes would have a "huge impact on the workplace".

"I think it's unfair and I hope the Government will listen to this."

Deano Shilling, 43, from the Rail and Maritime Transport Union, was at the protest for the sake of his family.

"I'm here for my kids' future.

Some of the changes I don't think are right so I'm here to support the union."

Mr Cook was overwhelmed with the number of participants in the protest.

"It's absolutely brilliant, I didn't think that this many people would come out here today but I'm absolutely relieved."

The protest was part of a nationwide day of action, where more than 15,000 people nationwide took part in protests around the country.

Workers from a range of unions took part in the protest, including the National Distribution Union, the Public Service Union, the Rail and Maritime Transport Union, the NZ Nurses Organisation, the Service and Food Workers and the Engineering, Print and Manufacturing Union.

Reproduced courtesy of the Bay of Plenty Times

## Nelson

By **Bill Lewis**

A group of Nelson seafarers joined the 20 October march up the main street of Nelson with other trade union supporters to show solidarity with workers in other cities around New Zealand.

The theme was our opposition to the 90 day hire and fire law and associated legislation which is anti-worker. It is being forced on the working people of this country by the Tory Government which is hell bent on stripping away workers hard won conditions and rights.

It can't be denied we have an anti-worker Government and all effort must be made to replace them at the next election.

Nelson saw at least 800 workers take to the streets which was the biggest show for many years, since the Tories introduced the Employment Contract Act in the early 1990s.

All that people are demanding is fairness in the workplace and not to be treated as a disposable commodity.

## Gisborne

By **Dein Ferris**

For us the Port is going through the traditional quiet period prior to Christmas and the start of our seasonal product squash, followed by kiwifruit.

The timber product we load is a bit unpredictable with only two shipments forecast leading to Christmas.

Logs, which we don't handle and ISO does, on the other hand, are flying over the wharf with somewhere around two million tones per year predicted.

It's pleasing to note that Stevedores have broken back into this operation in some Ports.

In line with this predicted tonnage Eastland Port says they are going to spend millions upgrading the Port and yards. They need to as the Port is either a dust bowl a a mud bath.

Other than a couple of out of port transfers to Bluff and Wellington, along with the last National Executive meeting, which will be reported on in the magazine no doubt, we do not have any further news.

We would however wish all the best for the coming festive season and look forward to a more prosperous New Year.

## Timaru

By **Kevin Forde**

The Branch held its AGM at the end of November with the same officers elected, President Kevin Forde, Secretary Tony Townshend, and executive Laurie Barnes, Graham Thin and Wayne Hanson.

We have also gone to 1% fees.

Work has been flat out with fertilizer for the last six or seven weeks with some out of port transfers coming in.

We have made a donation to the Pike River miners fund.



Maritime Union of New Zealand Wellington Seafarers Branch members at the Fairness at Work Rally, Parliament Buildings, Wellington, 20 October 2010 (photo by Grahame MacLaren)



At the Hawkes' Bay Fairness at Work Rally, 21 August 2010, from left, Garth Malpas (EPMU), Bill Connelly (MUNZ), CTU President Helen Kelly and Hans Christiaans (SFwu) (photograph reproduced with permission of Hawkes Bay Today)



At the November 2010 Maritime Union national executive meeting, Wellington waterfront branch observers (from left) Tracey Foster, Bradley Clifford and Jason Simi, and Wellington Waterfront Branch Secretary John Whiting

# The Employment Contracts Act 1991

By Hector Thorpe  
MUNZ 3111

Twenty years ago, the National Party introduced the Employment Contracts Act (ECA).

National's labour relations policies have always been anti-union, however the introduction of the ECA had lowered the bar to disturbing new levels.

Overnight it had reduced union density levels from 51% to 21%.

The Labour-led Coalition Government elected in 1999 was able to achieve some labour law claw-backs by its introduction of the Employment Relations Act 2000, with 'good faith' as its central principle. A modest increase in union density was achieved, however the Trade Union movement never recovered sufficiently to enforce a position at the top negotiating table alongside government and business associations.

Such a position would have enabled an equal tripartite group working towards a balanced economic and industrial relations partnership.

Far from allowing any balanced approach, National today are attempting to reintroduce their biggest labour reform policies since their ECA introduction twenty years prior. National's goal is to finish what they failed to achieve in the past, to smash and eradicate all remaining unions.

The wharfies and seafarers have shored up their position through amalgamation and are bracing themselves for the upcoming onslaught.

However, many other ECA survivors need our support.

The Council of Trade Unions (CTU), to which we are affiliated, has begun the 'Fairness at Work' fight-back campaign. This campaign will continue until the proposed law changes are withdrawn or repealed.

We can least afford any further weakening of our Trade Unions or indeed a second term National government.

Therefore, upon hearing the occasional comment at past union rallies "Hey, have you noticed it's the same old heads turning up", is exactly what is not needed while fighting this important battle.

Rather, we need to adopt the standard tried and true union motto which has served us well over the years, that being 'United we stand, divided we fall'.

United we must all be proactive and support the CTU workers' fight-back campaign!

# Lyttelton

by Les Wells

Lyttelton has started to settle down after the problems of the past few months. Now the repairs start.

In some areas I believe the work will be massive. LPC has brought a RTG Gantry Crane. The main purpose of this is to service the Rail and also to take the pressure off road transport.

## C3 Limited

They have picked up three trial shipments of MDF board of which two have gone really well. They have also been using Cross hires in the Port plus quite a number of out of Port transfers.

## Pacifica

The conventional vessel Spirit Of Resolution is back on track after a small hiccup.

## LSS

Continue working Bulk Vessels and scrap.

## SGS

At the time of writing I have a meeting with SGS members to discuss talks and get remits for early next year. As always Lyttelton keep it short and sweet to leave room for P. Adams' nine pages and Garry's photos.

## Update of our new Executive

President: Clinton Norris  
 Vice President: Tristin Ornsby  
 Union Organizer: Les Wells  
 LSS: Paul St John  
 Foremen: Les Thurlow  
 C3: Bruce McLaughlin, Trevor Wong.  
 LPC: Steve Thompson, Glenn Arthurs.  
 Casuals: Mick Norris  
 Seamen: George Clark, Mike Will, proxy Trevor Guthrie.  
 Office Manager: Yvonne Woods

## Lyttelton Branch Local 43 Meeting Dates for 2011

Executive Thursday January 2011  
 Executive Thursday 3 February 2011  
 Stop work Monday 14 February 2011  
 Executive Thursday 4 March 2011  
 Executive Thursday 7 April 2011  
 Stop work Monday 11 April 2011  
 Executive Thursday 5 May 2011  
 Executive Thursday 2 June 2011  
 Stop work Monday 13 June 2011  
 Executive Thursday 7 July 2011  
 Executive Thursday 4 August 2011  
 Stop work Monday 15 August 2011  
 Executive Thursday 1 September 2011  
 Executive Thursday 6 October 2011  
 Stop work Monday 10 October 2011  
 Executive Thursday 3 November 2011  
 Executive Thursday 1 December 2011  
 Stop work Monday 12 December 2011

We would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and prosperous New Year.



## Join or Transfer to Your Union's KiwiSaver Scheme We understand the needs of our members!

### The benefits of joining the SRF KiwiSaver scheme

You will have the benefit of having all your retirement savings in the one place, i.e.

- your regular contributions will be in the SRF; and
- your KiwiSaver contributions will be in SRF KiwiSaver including any Crown contributions you are entitled to.

SRF understands the needs of their members. The SRF has existed for over 30 years and the present Trustees are currently working or have worked in the seafaring industry.

### Can I join and transfer if I am already in an another KiwiSaver scheme?

Yes, you can still join SRF KiwiSaver and have your existing KiwiSaver savings transferred to SRF KiwiSaver. All you need to do is complete the Member Registration Form in the Investment Statement. It's that easy.

The Scheme Administrator, Aon, will take care of the rest by arranging the transfer of your savings to SRF KiwiSaver as well as having future contributions directed to SRF KiwiSaver.

### How can I obtain a copy of the Investment Statement?

A copy of the SRF KiwiSaver Investment Statement is available from Mike Clark, John Jeffery, or Garry Parsloe. This includes the Member Registration Form to join SRF KiwiSaver.

Complete the Member Registration Form and send to:  
 Scheme Administrator, Aon New Zealand, P O Box 3167, AUCKLAND 1140

by Craig Harrison  
Local 13

What's in a number? It's a short question but if asked in the right context it can produce some alarming responses. Recently the media has featured the failure of South Canterbury Finance and the cost incurred by the Government (the public) over its bail out.

In the UK, the Government has announced cuts to the military and public services. In both cases the numbers involved are staggering. Sometimes when you try to picture the numbers involved, it becomes surreal. You start to wonder if the people have become accustomed to the large numbers involved and start to become desensitized to the reports.

When you start to look at these things in a little detail and get past the headlines, you realize the cost the working class is expected to carry for the benefit of the few. An article in The Wall Street Journal on the 21 August 2010 said it all to me. "Number of the Week: Bankers Keep Getting Richer" read the headline.

The number of the week was \$11,759. This figure was the average weekly wage of newly hired bankers at the low point of the recession in the second quarter of 2009. The income of this group had gone up 23% compared to the year before.

As I read this I started to try and think was there anyone I knew who got a 23% increase in wages last year.

Unfortunately the answer to the question as you would expect is none.

Yet everyone I talk to feels that we are paying for the excess of the few.

I wonder if the workers in France are feeling charitable for the leaders of Government and the banking sector in such tough economic times.

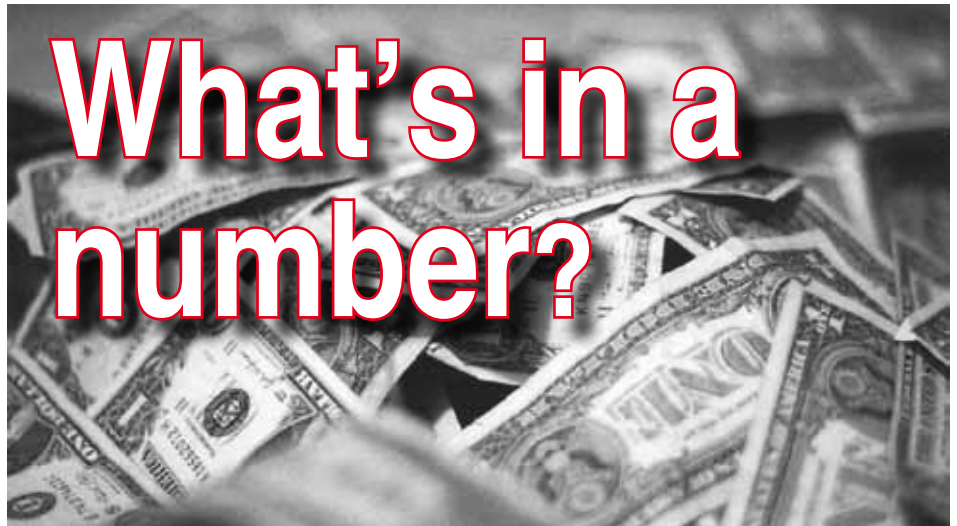
Another article in the New York Times on the 21 August 2010 was "Income Inequality and Financial Crises" by Louise Story. This looked at the work being done by scholars on possible links between economic inequality and the financial crises.

David A Moss, an economic and policy historian at the Harvard Business School was surprised by the results of his research. "Income disparities between rich and poor widened as government regulations eased and bank failures rose," he said.

Researchers had only one event of the magnitude of the latest banking crisis in the United States and that is the 1929 stock market crash.

Disparities in income before the 1929 stock market crash and the latest banking collapse were the greatest in the last 100 years.

"In 1928 the top 10 percent of earners received 49.29 percent of the total income. In 2007 the top 10 percent earned a similar percentage of 49.74. In 1928 the top 1 percent received 23.94 percent of income.



In 2007, those earners received 23.5 percent."

The question researchers are asking is: do huge gaps in income create perverse incentives that put the financial system at risk?

"If so, their findings could be the argument for tax and social policies aimed at closing the income gap and for greater regulation of Wall Street."

You can imagine the response from the conservative economists, all trying to explain the current situation away with buzz words and catch phrases.

What can't be denied is that so few have laid claim to the greatest proportion of the wealth, and yet so many are required to contribute to the making of it.

With all these facts and figures coming out of the finance sector, we sometimes omit the human element in such equations.

Another article in The New York Times on 9 August 2010 by Bob Herbert was entitled "The Horror Show."

He writes how the true impact on people can only just start to be imagined.

"With 14.6 million people officially jobless, and 5.9 million who stopped looking but say they want a job, and 8.5 million who are working part time but would like to work full time, you end up with nearly 30 million Americans who cannot find the work they want and desperately need."

It's hard to imagine the numbers involved, and get some sort of perspective. The entire population of Australia is only around 22 million, in comparison.

When a problem becomes this large you start to wonder how a government can curtail such numbers involved.

At the outset, President Obama called for change, saying that the deregulated excesses of the right wing are partly to blame for the situation that America is in.

The New York Times on 21 October 2010 published an article "Top Companies Aid Chamber of Commerce in Policy Fights" that describes the amount of campaign money that big business has paid to promote its own agenda.

"An organization that in 2003 had an overall budget of about \$130 million, it is spending \$200 million this year."

So what are they spending it on. It's not on the public good but more for the balance sheet.

Health insurance providers funnelled at least \$10 million of anonymous money to the chamber last year to oppose President Obama's health care legislation.

It becomes obvious just how hard it is for the working class to be heard with such forces in action.

So what does all this mean and what can the average worker hope to do?

If there is anyone in a workforce who thinks they compete against big business on their own, they only have to look at the example of an employer on the Auckland waterfront who spent \$60,000 in getting rid of one worker. Not to mention the effort that went into suggestions to the government on amendments to employment law and the Holidays Act.

When you read through the suggestions by the employer it's all to do with maximising the profit at the expense of the conditions of the worker.

I struggle to see that company values and respects its workforce if they feel the need to drastically change employment law and the Holidays Act to make things worse for the worker.

Just like the American example, New Zealand companies will use their money and power to influence Government.

So in the end nothing has changed over the years, the old fight between capital and labour goes on.

The only course of action available to workers is to unionise and politicise the fight so in the end we can advance social justice and claim our fair share of the efforts of our labour.

So in ending this little comment comrades, brothers and sisters, I wish you all a Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

# Rex Powley

Past President of Bluff Branch Rex Powley passed away after a long illness in September of this year.

Rex was the Bluff Waterfront Workers Union President from 1956 to 1987, National Executive Member, National Negotiator and a Life Member of the Union.

Rex was also a Justice of the Peace, had roles as Chairman of Southport NZ Ltd and Chairman of the Bluff Ward.

He was involved in many other activities within the community which was evident by the very large gathering at his funeral. Rex's favourite saying was "Once a wharfie always a wharfie."

Our condolences to Rex's family, may he rest in peace.

Contributed by Ray Fife, Bluff Branch

# Lloyd Jenkins

Lloyd Jenkins of Timaru passed away recently.

Lloyd began working as a wharfie in the late 1950s and in 1964 took over from Bill Keenan as President of the Timaru Branch, he also became the Timaru representative on the Waterfront Workers Union National Executive. Both of these positions he held until 1983, shortly after retiring.

As he was my predecessor as President of the Timaru Branch, we formed a close working relationship. I can honestly say that Lloyd was a true socialist with firm views on equality for all.

He was a person whom I never saw ruffled, and all those who dealt with him in his industrial capacity very quickly knew that his first interest was always the people that he represented.

Lloyd was extremely well read and self educated all of his working life.

He devoted a large share of his time to the betterment of not only workers, but the community as a whole, serving a lengthy time as a Timaru City Councillor and also as a member of the South Canterbury Regional Council, and never holding back if he perceived any wrongs being committed.

Lloyd was extremely devoted to his wife and family as they were to him. I used to always visit Lloyd when I went down to Timaru and as the years rolled by he remained exactly aware of the workers' situation of today.

He was at pains to tell me that everything goes in circles and equality for workers and their families would return, because workers always rebel when they are handed too much pain.

Contributed by Trevor Hanson, former General Secretary, Maritime Union of New Zealand and New Zealand Waterfront Workers Union

# Brian Cronin

Editor's note: The Maritimes occasionally prints obituaries for those from outside our Union, for those who have given exceptional service to the Union movement. RMTU Industrial Officer Brian Cronin was well known and respected in the South Island ports where he worked alongside MUNZ and thus we reprint his obituary from the RMTU.

The smiling face smiles no more, except in the memories and hearts of his family, comrades and members. Brian Cronin, long-time RMTU Industrial Officer, unexpectedly passed away on the 13th of October, leaving in his wake his bereft wife Mandy, and their delightful daughters Amelia and Bridget.

Born to an Irish working class family of seven children, raised in a Council house in Stillorgan on the outskirts of Dublin, Brian joined his two older brothers as an electrical apprentice with Irish Rail. It was here, and later with London Transport and then (after his marriage to Mandy Gill) New Zealand Railways, that the lessons of workplace solidarity and organisation were hard learnt.

Rather than tracking the detailed chronology of his path in the union movement, just noting the organisations to which he gave his commitment and energy to (over some three decades) exposes his true value to his adopted country: the Railway Trademen's Association, The Federation of Labour, the Combined Union of Railway Employees, NZ Railways Staff Welfare Trust, the Council of Trade Unions, and the Rail & Maritime Transport Union since it was formed in 1995. And at all stages of these and their organisational development and amalgamations Brian applied his 'Unity is Strength' principles. That scarcest of peer recognitions, RMTU Life Membership, was unanimously and posthumously bestowed on Brian during the Union's 16th Annual Delegates Conference, which was when Brian's death occurred. The presentation of this to Mandy at Brian's funeral felt particularly appropriate and heart-warming.

The 13th of October 2010 will be remembered as the day our RMTU family lost an irreplaceable workmate, friend and leader.

Brian's trademark smile and laughter belied his passion when aroused. If you thought it reflected other than his warm nature you were to be mistaken. He was probably at his best when angered, when representations on behalf of workers were not taken seriously or treated too lightly, then there was no holding back and his words flowed hard-hitting, emotionally and with intelligence.

When Brian talked of the political tragedies of Thatcherism and the subsequent right-wing takeover of New Zealand by Roger Douglas, Richard Prebble, Max Bradford and Bill Birch in the late 1980s and 1990s, he fairly burned with

fury at the damage wrought to workers and their families, to society, by the excesses of monetarism. There was a depth of knowledge and intelligence which Brian concealed behind his innate modesty, a working-class honesty that had no fear in challenging bosses and politicians, at any level.

It was these beliefs that saw Brian establish strong fraternal and personal friendships not just with workers in New Zealand, but with unionists throughout the world. Supporting Brian's family at his service were Members of Parliament, past and present senior Council of Trade Union comrades, and, of course, all the RMTU and other union officials from around the country. Even more pleasing was to see the rank-and-file delegates from the South and North islands, reflective of the contribution Brian had made to their lives and representing the membership he had devoted his life fighting for, and alongside. From a cheeky wee freckle-faced Irish lad with a sparky's inheritance to a highly respected Kiwi activist for social justice and an ardent advocate for workers - Brian Thomas Cronin not only left his mark, he gouged it proud and deep. There is no doubt that he has left the world a better place for his having walked among us. Thank you Mandy, Amelia and Bridget, both for your loyal support of Brian, and for loaning him to the working class for as long as you did.

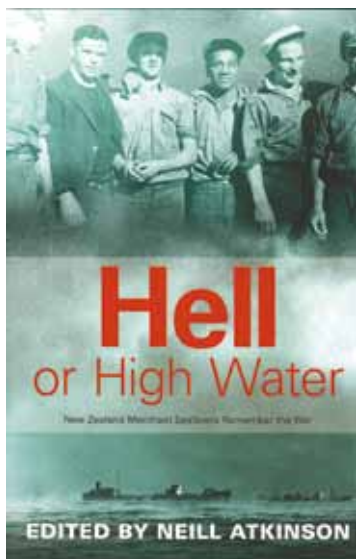
He was "Proud to be Union" and Brian, we are proud to have been workmates and comrades.

# Book: Commo Bill "People's Poet"

The Maritimes has received a copy of "Commo Bill: People's Poet" the biography of William Daniel O'Reilly (1898-1959), written by Pauline O'Reilly Leverton.

"Commo Bill" was a wellknown figure in Depression era Wellington, an activist for the unemployed, Communist, member of the Waterside Workers' Union and people's poet whose writings tackled subjects large and small.

The book will be launched at Waterfront House on Thursday 16 December (5.30pm) hosted by the Wellington Waterfront Branch of the Maritime Union. Copies available through the publisher One Off Press at 1offpress@gmail.com We will print a full review of this new book in the New Year.



## Book Review

### **Hell or High Water: New Zealand merchant seafarers remember the War** Edited by Neill Atkinson (published by Harper Collins)

This collection of interviews with merchant seafarers who served in the New Zealand Merchant Navy during World War Two is highly recommended to all union members.

It will be of special interest to veteran members, but any maritime worker would find it a powerful read.

Because of the format, the stories are told by the seafarers themselves, in a direct way. Their stories speak for themselves. This is working class history, from the direct experience of those who were at the sharp end of things.

120 New Zealand merchant seamen were killed during the war. This includes the two youngest who were only 15 years of age. Civilian seamen were allowed to serve in the Merchant Navy at a younger age than enlisted servicemen were sent overseas.

Their experiences include the hardcase humour of larger than life characters and situations, that is still a feature of the maritime industry.

However less familiar to younger generations, are the frightening accounts of enemy attacks at sea, abandoning sinking or burning vessels, and even life in Japanese prisoner of war camps. The loss of friends and shipmates and the destruction of war obviously had a deep impact on many.

New Zealand seafarers served in many different theaters of the war, in the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian oceans, as well as the Mediterranean, the North Sea convoys to Russia and the English Channel during D Day operations.

After the war, many continued to work in the maritime industry, while others adjusted to life ashore.

(One of the seafarers interviewed, Allan Wyllie, is the father of Wellington Seafarers Branch member Glenn Wyllie.)

Originally published in 2005, a new edition of this book came out in 2009.

There are a number of very high quality black and white photographs printed in the centerpiece.

The editor, Neill Atkinson, is a Government historian. He has done a good job in providing a context for the stories of these seafarers in his informative introduction, as well as his interviews which provide the basis of the book. He says he'd be delighted if his book has in a small way helped raise the profile of the merchant navy during wartime. With the celebration of Merchant Navy day and the recent publication of a number of books about the role of civilian seafarers during the war, the "Forgotten Service", the sacrifice of maritime workers has finally been remembered and acknowledged. –VB

## Letters

### Long overdue recognition

Congratulations to the seamen for the long overdue recognition of their wartime service.

This neglect is proof that the aged old adage below still applies:

"When kings make war 'tis the poor that die"

Now we can add:

"When the rich make money, 'tis the poor that pay."

Kelly Thomson  
 (Matapouri)

### 1951 Lockout

Was your family involved in the 1951 waterfront dispute? Grace Millar is doing an oral history project on families and the 1951 waterfront dispute.

She is interested in talking to people about their family life, as well as memories of the dispute.

If you, or someone you know, was part of a family that was involved in the dispute, and might be interested in being interviewed, then contact Grace for more information:

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Fairness at work Rally, TelstraClear Stadium, Manukau, Auckland,  
Wednesday 20 October 2010

