

were agreed for workers in Wellington and Auckland with 9.4% rises for workers in other areas.

The number of people unemployed or on special work reached its highest level since the Second World War, there being 7213 registered unemployed and 8221 employed on special work schemes as at 2 September, making an effective unemployment figure of 15,434 or just under 1.3% of the country's 1.2 million labour force.

Formal negotiations on the metal trades award resumed in Wellington on 15 September after having broken down on 25 August. At the time when negotiations broke down the employers had offered wage increases of about 5% and the Engineers' Union had been prepared to accept around 8.7%. On 16 September a 7.5% increase in the metal trades award, covering more than 25,000 workers, was agreed. The Prime Minister said that he saw the settlement as the key to a quieter industrial scene.

The ten man executive of the Timber Workers' Union South Auckland branch was suspended from office at the request of the union's national secretary, Mr R. C. Hamilton. A special national council meeting in Rotorua suspended the branch executive for its part in promoting a rebel movement within the union and placed the affairs of the branch in the hands of a 'national custodian committee.' The rebel group continued to express its dissatisfaction with the management of the union's affairs.

In Fiji, the leader and seven top officials of the Fiji Waterside Workers and Seamen's Union were jailed for six months after being found guilty of organising an illegal dock strike in July. In addition the Union had its registration suspended for the failure of the union treasurer, the only official not jailed, to produce the union's financial records.

©

J.D.

NEWS and VIEWS

WELLINGTON:

*Carol Fuller

WAGES AND WAGE BARGAINING

The Department of Labour announced in July that the Average Ordinary Time Weekly Earnings had increased by 7.7% in the six month period October 1976 to April 1977, bringing the April figure to \$118.16. The increase for males was slightly greater than that for females, but the timing of the survey meant that the effects of the final step of equal pay for women had not been included.

At that stage the Minister of Labour was talking to the Employers Federation and the Federation of Labour on the wage fixing provisions to be implemented with the expiry of the Wage Adjustment Regulations in August. Although a number of possibilities were canvassed, it appeared that the final decision was left to the Government in the absence of any other mutually agreed formula. The Government announced at the end of July that there was to be a return to free wage bargain-

ing. The Prime Minister indicated, however, that if things "got out of hand" full controls would be reimposed immediately. Conciliation hearings in the 'new round' commenced on a number of agreements. The 'Free Wage Bargaining' provisions almost came unstuck when there was alleged Government interference during the settlement of the Electrical Supply Authorities instrument. The threat of a national stoppage by the Electrical Supply Authorities workers prompted the Prime Minister to say that the 9.4% increase being considered was unreasonable but the 7.5% increase agreed for the Metal Trades was within the guidelines he had in mind. This was the first indication to the parties of what the Government considered to be "reasonable" under the new system. In fact the Electrical Supply Authorities 9.4% was later proceeded with since it represented a 7.4% increase plus 2% to account for a special increase to be paid to State Services tradesmen to whose rates the Electrical Power Supply Authorities employees' rates are linked.

Since the implementation of free wage bargaining, agreements reached in the new round have averaged about 7.5%.

* CAROL FULLER is on leave from the Department of Labour.

The Minister is still working on the Wage Fixing legislation which he had hoped would be ready when the Wage Adjustment Regulations expired in August. It is understood that this legislation will provide close links between Private and Public sector wage fixing, and cover General Wage Order procedures. A new organisation, the Arbitration Commission, will be set up to carry out functions in the wage-fixing area at present carried out by the Industrial Commission and State Services Commission. In a surprise decision, the Government had earlier decided not to reappoint Mr Nigel Taylor, S.M., as Chairman of the State Services Tribunal. They appointed instead, Mr J. R. P. Horn, S.M. According to the Minister of Labour, the Government had a 'valid reason' for taking this action, and this reason had been communicated to the Chairman of the CSSO, Mr Ivan Reddish. While the reason has not been made public, it has been speculated that Mr Horn is being groomed for one of the top positions in the Arbitration Commission.

STATE SERVANTS

At the moment State Servants are facing several legislative proposals which will change their relationship with their employer — the State.

The first is the proposal to provide more in the way of disputes settlement procedures, including advance notification of strikes in essential services. It is believed that earlier proposals to provide 'derecognition' sanctions to apply to state unions have been dropped, however. Protest meetings about the legislation have been held in Auckland and Christchurch, and a further meeting in Wellington was scheduled for early October.

The new wage adjustment provisions for State employees have implications for backpay arrangements and group claims. State Servants covered by the Half Yearly Employment Information Survey and Tradesmen earning over a certain scale have been offered a 3.5% Special Allowance, payable in October, to enable the State to move to an annual adjustment date of April. In the case of other Tradesmen covered by the Ruling Rates Survey the Special Allowance is 2%. The next regular State Wage Adjustment will not be until April 1978, with the amount to be determined by April 1978 Surveys retrospective to that date.

The Security Intelligence Service Amend-

ment Bill has special implications for persons employed in the Public Sector. This includes people working in the broadcasting services whose job it is to encourage public debate and keep the public informed, and those employees who could be called upon to use their professional or technical expertise in the tasks of telephone tapping, mail interception etc. Submissions against the Bill are to be made by the CSSO.

In August Mr Ivan Reddish announced his retirement as Chairman of the CSSO, saying that he could see that a more militant leadership was needed in the future to get results. He felt that his moderate brand of trade unionism was no longer effective and the virtues of honesty, sincerity and integrity were disappearing from industrial relations in New Zealand. The new Chairman of the CSSO is Mr Jim Turner, President of the Public Service Association.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS COUNCIL

The Federation of Labour have responded favourably to an invitation by the Minister of Labour to return to the Industrial Relations Council. However, the move seems to be motivated by a wish of the FOL to gain a greater understanding of employers' views on Government's legislative proposals rather than to indicate the improvement of relations between the FOL and the Government. The Council will probably have a chance to look at the legislative package on wage fixing before it is introduced into the House for its first reading.

FREEZING INDUSTRY

The Committee of Inquiry into a Travel Allowance for the Freezing Workers made its report to the Minister of Labour, who released the major recommendation at the beginning of July. The Committee recommended against a general provision. Instead, they considered that where an employer asks workers to start or finish work between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. transport should be provided at no cost to the worker. This should not apply where the worker lived within 2 km of the workplace.

The industry has also come under the scrutiny of Sir Arnold Nordmeyer, who is conducting a special inquiry into accident and industrial disease problems in the industry for the Accident Compensation Commission. This inquiry was sparked off

by the large number of accidents occurring in the industry and the claims by employers that since the Accident Compensation Act became effective there have been significantly more accidents. The Act provides that first week compensation to an injured worker shall be the responsibility of the employer. Previous legislation made no provision for first week compensation.

A Government sponsored Freezing Industry Seminar for management and Unions is to be held in Wellington on the 4-5 October. The seminar is the idea of the Minister of Labour, who wants to see more communication between management and unions in the industry. He hopes there will be plenty of frank discussion and suggestions for improving industrial relations in the industry.

The seminar is well timed coming as it does at the beginning of a meat export season for which Freezing Companies must observe stringent new slaughtering hygiene regulations. The first major strike of the new season looks like being among freezing company tradesmen. Negotiations for a productivity payment, to bring their pay into line with the seasonal rates received by the freezing workers, have broken down. Strike action, at present affecting only some works, will result in a total shut-down of the industry if it extends to all Works in the country.

BANK OF NEW ZEALAND SITE

The Bank of New Zealand Head Office building in Central Wellington, originally expected to be completed in six years from its start in 1971, is now not expected to be ready until after 1981. Industrial action on the site, including deregistration of the Wellington Boilermakers Industrial Union and the subsequent question of recognition of the Incorporated Society which now exists, has held the work up. Although the question of official recognition of the Society still remains, work has resumed on the site, and Civil and Civic recently issued a statement to the effect that they were particularly pleased with progress. Now Civil and Civic are facing claims for increased wages from carpenters, labourers and electricians working on the site. Claims are believed to approach rates of pay being enjoyed by the boilermakers. In July it was reported that boilermakers were grossing in excess of \$500 per week. Mr A. J.

Neary, Secretary of the North Island Electrical Workers Union has stated that the electricians case is based on the complex nature of the job. On 22 September carpenters walked off the site on the grounds that Civil and Civic were not treating their case seriously.

PACIFIC ISLAND WORKERS STUDY

The results of a survey of the work experiences of Pacific Island migrants in New Zealand will be released early next year by the Department of Labour. The survey, conducted in the Wellington, Porirua and Hutt Valley areas seeks to identify areas of need and concern within the field of employment. Information has been sought on the attitudes, values and employment experiences of migrant workers from the Cook Islands, Tokelau, Niue, Tonga and Western Samoa. In the report emphasis will be placed on such aspects as training, mobility, supervision and job satisfaction of Pacific Islanders working in the Wellington Region.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND REDUNDANCIES

Registered unemployed in the Central Region (lower half of the North Island) stood at 2463 in mid-September. A further 2014 were on Special Work. In the three month period July-September a number of redundancies affected employment levels in the region. These redundancies significantly affected the clothing industry. The terms of the latest NAFTA agreement, increases in freight charges, wages and depressed conditions generally in the industry have all been cited as reasons for closures.

Dawn Garments in Upper Hutt, licensed to manufacture for export only, closes at the end of October to be re-established in Victoria, Australia, in order to retain \$5 million in export orders. Over forty workers will be put out of work after the plant closes. A redundancy agreement has been negotiated.

The House of Raymonde factory in Masterton closed at the end of September after seven years of operation, putting nineteen staff out of work. Management indicated that after the centre of operations had shifted from Wellington to Auckland there had been a compounding of economic factors leading to the shutdown. Again a redundancy agreement was successfully negotiated. Employees in these two firms

may not share the good fortune of another sewing factory — this time in Petone — where publicity about the closure resulted in a flood of job offers from local businessmen almost equal to the number of staff being laid off. An agreement on redundancy payments in this case, however, was complicated by the reluctance of both the immediate employer and an Auckland firm (for which the Petone factory worked under contract) to take responsibility for the negotiations and subsequent compensation.

OTAGO-SOUTHLAND:

***Rob Crozier**

INDUSTRIAL MEDIATOR

The appointment of the South Island's only mediator, Mr W. R. Grills, who has been based in Dunedin since March, has greatly aided the settling of disputes in the region. Since Mr Grills' appointment it has become evident that the need for a mediator in this region was somewhat underestimated as the situation in Invercargill, with four major freezing works and New Zealand Aluminium Smelters plant at Tiwai Point, has not only occupied Mr Grills but also outside mediators and conciliators. On one notable day in July there were no fewer than six mediators and conciliators in Invercargill at separate disputes!

Mr Grills is currently in the process of conducting a ministerial enquiry into industrial relations at Finegard freezing works near Balclutha, while an in-depth enquiry into industrial relations at New Zealand Aluminium Smelters plant has just been completed by Mr Valentine, Chairman of the Auckland Freezing Works Disputes Committee. In addition to major disputes of rights in Southland there have been a large number of personal grievance cases in Dunedin.

OTAGO STOREMEN AND PACKERS UNION

When Commercial Travellers lost their fight to stay out of the Storemen and Packers' Union as at 1 March 1977, the local organisation of travellers (100 strong) effectively took over the Otago Union when eight travellers were voted on to the ten man executive, in addition to a traveller becoming President of the 1000 member Union. A group calling itself the Storeman

Packers and Related Awards' Working Committee has since been holding "unauthorised" meetings with a view to wresting control of the Union back from the commercial travellers. The group lodged a complaint with the Registrar of Industrial Unions alleging illegal practices during the election of officers and industrial court action subsequently failed. The group is now calling for a special meeting "to consider the removal of some members of the executive" under two clauses of the union rule book. It is seeking a better representation of the eleven different types of workers covered by the union on the executive.

Meanwhile the Union President has stated that travellers are interested in forming their own union.

COMPANY CLOSURES

A number of firms have been forced to close during recent months for a variety of economic reasons. The most recent closures involved the St George canned foods processing factory through costs involved in bring the factory up to the standard required to meet health regulations, associated with the problem of increased freight costs. The closure affected seventy-five employees and had a "domino effect" on Alex Harvey Industries' Dunedin can plant whose production was geared to St George's output of around 60,000 1 lb (454g) cans per day — a further 35 workers lost their jobs.

In early August a \$2 million bottling plant operated in Invercargill by New Zealand Breweries closed affecting approximately thirty workers. Earlier closures have involved Ferguson's Shirt Factory, Port Chalmers (thirty employees) and A.B. Consolidated, Dunedin (100 employees).

NEWS IN BRIEF — JUNE

Stop work meeting of 1500 shop assistants gives Government fourteen days to throw out Shop Trading Hours Bill. Later in month votes for 48 hour strike.

Delays in Public Service Appeal system under attack when Director of Social Welfare in Dunedin loses post seven months after transferring from Christchurch.

"Sanitary lifters" walk off job on second consecutive Friday because of lack of additional payments to compensate for extra rubbish resulting from previous stoppage over terms of employment.

* ROB CROZIER is Assistant Registrar, University of Otago.

JULY

Tramways Union and Dunedin City Council management staff to combine in future on Dunedin's public transport in what is believed to be a precedent for industrial relations in New Zealand.

Labourers' Union dissatisfied with machinery available for workers to get money owing to them when an employer goes out of business after a case in which it took workers ten months to claim \$500 owing in wages and holiday pay after a drainage contractor went into receivership.

Mataura transport company is "blackened" and unable to receive fuel supplies after refusing to deduct drivers' union dues.

AUGUST

Dispute on drilling rig at Kawau, 150 miles south of New Zealand between Hunt Petroleum Co and twenty-eight members of Labourers' Union over changes sought in terms of employment.

Four day strike involving fifty employees of the Dominion Fertiliser Company, Dunedin over extra payments for the handling of rock sulphate for Christmas Island.

SEPTEMBER

Otago Storemen and Packers Union. The seven commercial travellers on the Union Executive resigned in a surprise move at a meeting called in mid-September to arrange a second election for executive positions. The travellers now intend approaching the Registrar of Industrial Unions with a view to forming their own union as has happened in Canterbury and Auckland.

Stewart Island Ferry Dispute. Stewart Island was isolated during September because of a week-long dispute based mainly on the issue that the m.v. "Wairua" was too noisy a vessel for the seamen to sleep on. Other issues involved claims over wages and the hot-water supply. The stoppage forced the cancellation of two scheduled crossings and disrupted supplies of food and fuel to the Island's 400 residents.

AUCKLAND:

*Syd Jackson

Without doubt, the major industrial problems in the Auckland area over the last three months, have been caused by the **Government's economic policies.**

* SYD JACKSON is a Field Officer with the Auckland Clerical Union.

The National Party's economic wizard, the Prime Minister, has clearly failed to bring about his predicted economic miracle. The Government has foisted the burden of its economic policies on the workers. It has deliberately set out to cut living standards and expenditure on the fallacious assumption that if prices go up, and wages don't, company profits will go up, and they will invest more money, and create employment opportunities.

What we have, however, is a situation where prices are soaring to all-time record levels, but we are told by the Government that the economic situation will not improve. The construction industry is in a depressed state; redundancies occur daily, and even the official unemployment figures, which hide more than they show, prove that unemployment is at its highest level since the depression of the 1930's.

The Secretary of the Auckland Carpenters' Union, Peter Purdue, estimates that there is more than a million square feet of air-conditioned, carpeted office space vacant in the heart of Auckland City. The membership of the Labourers' Union has declined amazingly, according to Auckland Secretary, Len Smith.

Auckland Clerical Union Secretary, Charles Jamieson, says that membership which has increased each year for the last several years, has slumped significantly this year. Other Unions report similar trends.

Large numbers of redundancies have occurred at L. J. Fisher, and Fisher & Paykel, where more than a hundred people were laid off at each plant. Carpenters have been laid off in large groups at a time, and their employment prospects look bleak.

The Auckland Trades Council recently held a Seminar which reviewed the economic situation. As the state of the economy is the problem for Union Members, consideration was given to what Trade Unions should be doing about this in both the short-term and long-term.

Some other questions discussed were:
Do wage increases cause unemployment?
Is increased productivity the answer? How does the Government's decision to allow free bargaining fit into its policies? Would selective import control help the problem of inflation? Do we need multi-national investment in New Zealand?

Attendance at the Seminar was excellent with keen interest and involvement from both officials and rank and file membership. It was felt that there had to be greater education of workers if the Government's propaganda was to be countered and a viable alternative found. The Educational Programme of the Auckland Trades Council will continue with a seminar to be held shortly to consider "Special Forms of Organised Activity for Female Workers."

Unions in Auckland have also been active in opposing the Government's **S.I.S. Amendment Bill**. The Combined State Service Organisations held a meeting of some 2000 members to state their opposition to the Bill. This almost matched the size of a meeting held a few weeks earlier to protest at restrictions being placed on them by the Government under the State Services Remunerations and Conditions of Employ-

ment Act. The Government's proposed amendments to the Act are similar to those which they have already passed against Trade Unions in the private sphere.

Typists have also been active in the Public Service in stating their discontent at the discriminatory career prospects that are available to them in the Public Service.

Of major interest in Trade Union circles is the forthcoming elections of the Auckland Trades Council Executive. Bill Andersen, the President, has been re-elected unopposed. All other positions are being keenly contested with most interest centering on the position of Secretary. Peter Purdue is not standing for another term as Secretary, and his loss will be deeply felt. He has made a particularly outstanding contribution to the Trade Union Movement during his time as Secretary of the Council. ©

SPECIAL FEATURE:

New Zealand's Multi-Cultural Workforce

INTRODUCTION

W. F. McDONALD*

Even the most cursory examination of New Zealand's population would reveal a mixture of cultural backgrounds. Whilst the majority of the 3,100,000 people do share a general European affiliation, the newly arrived migrant is nevertheless likely to experience major differences in attitudes and beliefs between himself and indigenous New Zealanders.

Furthermore, within this population of native born New Zealanders are included 257,000 Maori people with their own unique cultural background. The other major recent cultural influence in New Zealand has been the immigration of Pacific Islanders, which has increased their population in New Zealand from 45,000 in 1966 to 76,000 in 1976. Within this pattern of cultural mix there has also occurred a rapid develop-

ment of the industrial sector and the concomitant shift of population from rural to urban areas in New Zealand, e.g. from 1951 to 1966 some 40% of the Maori population moved into the cities.

The growth of industry has increased the demand for labour, especially the demand for semi or unskilled workers. The pattern of industrial development which is supported both by movement of people from the country to the cities, and the mass immigration of people from agricultural coun-

* W. F. McDONALD is Polynesian Advisory Officer with the Vocational Training Council.