

# CHRONICLE

**JULY 1990**

Parliament approved the third and final reading of the Employment Equity Bill on 17 July by 40 votes to 31. The Minister of Women's Affairs hailed the measure as "the most significant achievement for women in more than a decade". Women's wages, she said, stood at 74 percent of men's and the inequality between men's and women's earnings was growing, because women's wages were rising more slowly. The director-general of the Employers Federation described Parliament's approval of the bill as "gruesome", while the National Party promised to repeal the measure if it became the government. The Coalition for Equal Pay welcomed the new law, but a critical voice came from the former Labour Party president, Margaret Wilson, who said the legislation was not what was originally proposed by women but had been watered down by negotiation. An Employment Equity Office was to start operations on 1 October and the Government appointed Elizabeth Rowe, formerly of the the State Services Commission, as the first Employment Equity Commissioner.

The Government also introduced, on 19 July, an Occupational Safety and Health Bill which required employers to "take all responsible practical steps" to ensure the safety and health of workers and of the public. The bill also proposed to merge all existing agencies into the Labour Department's Occupational Safety and Health Service.

Speaking at a CTU regional conference in Hamilton on 12 July, Ken Douglas urged unions to prepare for competition from outside the union movement for the right to represent workers in industrial bargaining. He also warned against poaching each other's members and urged unions to sign non-raiding pacts to prevent "open warfare" in a deregulated labour market. According to a PSA report to delegates, that union was already contesting several demarcation disputes in the Labour Court: with the Finance Sector Union over coverage of State Insurance, the Rural Bank and the Tower Corporation; with the printers' and other unions over coverage of Government Print staff; and with the Electrical Workers and Building Trades Unions over Electricorp staff. The Electricorp management wanted the PSA to retain the sole right of representation. The Minister of Labour, speaking in Auckland on 31 July, deplored "rigid and outdated union demarcation lines" and looked forward to a bargaining structure where "ideally" each workplace was covered by one document.

According to the Wellington Employers Association, 103 awards, constituting 62.8 percent of all private sector documents, were settled at 4.5 percent in the last wage round. Twenty-five awards were settled below and 36 above that figure (21 between 4.6 and 5 percent, 6 between 5.1 and 6 percent, and 9 above 6 percent). Public servants, according to the PSA, gained rises generally around 4.25 percent for a 13<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> month term, equivalent to an annual rise of 3.8 percent.

The Court of Appeal established an important precedent by ruling that company receivers were bound to comply with award provisions. In the case under review a receiver was fined for making workers redundant without notice.

The Labour Court upheld a ruling by the Registrar of Unions requiring the Northern Clerical Workers Union to elect its officials and executive by postal ballot and not at meetings. Chief Judge Goddard found that the union had paid "only lip-service to the sovereignty of the membership" and that the opportunity for the vast majority of members to contribute to rule making had been "nominal, illusory and unreal". The union's secretary denied that her organisation was less than fully democratic and regretted

the unnecessary drain on funds caused by holding postal ballots. The Registrar of Unions said her office did not intend upsetting the strong union tradition of making decisions at meetings. Elections of officers however were different, she said, in that even non-active union members generally had some interest in deciding who should be in charge of their affairs.

The VANZ car workers' dispute in South Auckland had a sequel when the company dismissed a member of the strike committee for concealing information on his job application, namely his possession of a bachelor of arts degree from the University of Auckland. Angry staff held a stopwork meeting on 13 July followed by a march to the company's head office. The Engineers Union lodged a personal grievance application. In the General Motors car workers' dispute in the Hutt Valley the company agreed to give laid-off workers a guarantee that they would receive redundancy pay.

Talks on the newspaper photolithographers' and printers' awards broke down in Auckland on 13 July, when the publishers offered a 3.3 percent pay rise as against the unions' 7.5 percent claim. Newspaper workers throughout New Zealand walked off their jobs, starting with the Rotorua Daily Post, with the result that, with the exception of the New Zealand Herald, no morning daily paper appeared on 14 July. The action, by members of Jagpro, the Journalists and Graphic Process Union, and the printing trades union was joined on 16 July by journalists employed by the Press Association. The dispute was settled on 17 July when the 2 unions accepted a 5 percent wage rise, together with provisions for "occupation overuse" injury.

Auckland building labourers, who had walked out in support of a strike at Fletchers' ASB project, resumed work on 2 July together with Fletchers' labourers. Their union had recommended a return to work because the company would be able to obtain compliance orders from the Labour Court, but it announced its intention to pursue the dispute with Fletchers in another forum.

Over 100 staff of the Western Bay of Plenty District Council walked off the job on 6 July in a dispute over the determination of staff gradings and salary levels. They decided not to return until Monday 9 July. About 2500 Auckland City Council employees from 12 unions held a 2-hour stopwork meeting on 24 July to discuss looming redundancies. The Council was reportedly planning to reduce its permanent staff from 2650 to 2400 by November 1991. Auckland Regional Council bus drivers voted on 18 July to accept a 4.5 percent pay rise for a 12-month term backdated to the end of April, and to operate the new electronic ticketing machines, though only for the sale of single-trip tickets. They also voted overwhelmingly to disaffiliate from the Labour Party and they approved a merger with the Northern Distribution Union.

The Association of Salaried Medical Specialists, comprising 1437 senior hospital doctors and dentists, announced on 2 July that it was seeking affiliation to the CTU. All but one of 51 delegates at the Association's recent conference had voted in favour of affiliation.

The historic United Mine Workers union had its registration cancelled on 11 July, after its 800 members decided to join the New Zealand Workers Union. The UMW had gained provisional registration for 2 years, but had failed to reach the 1000-member minimum set in the Labour Relations Act.

The Hoyts cinema chain agreed to a novel redundancy deal with the Performance and Hotel Workers Unions, which provided compensation payments for part time cinema workers if their working hours were cut by 20 percent or more.

A report by the joint union-management shipping industry task force set up last December proposed to reduce crew costs by around 24 percent through the introduction of "integrated ships" crewed by relatively small teams of multiskilled seafarers, working together with no demarcation. The first fully integrated ship was expected to be in service by the end of September.

A new composite award covering 2000 support service workers in the health sector provided for a 4 percent rise for a term of just over 12 months. The award, which affected

labourers, gardeners, laundry workers, drivers, storeworkers and hairdressers, also rationalised different conditions which previously related to these groups.

The Performance and Entertainment Workers Union moved to extend its coverage to employees in the health and fitness industry, in response to widespread complaints of poor wages and working conditions and other grievances, including sexual harassment. The Post Office Union decided to open its doors to thousands of newspaper and pamphlet deliverers, who will be charged a dollar a month to join the union, with a minimum 6-month payment. The Food and Textile Workers Union held discussions with the CTU over coverage of an estimated 3500 milk deliverers.

Picton railwaymen won an appeal against their suspension in 1988, after some other employees had refused to work voluntary overtime. The Railways Corporation held that this refusal amounted to a strike and that it was therefore entitled to suspend staff members for whom it had no work, but the Labour Court ruled that there had been no strike.

Twenty-one staff at the Whangarei department store of Arthur Barnett Ltd, which was due to close at the end of July, struck on 29 June over their level of redundancy pay. They demanded a 6+2 package, which was the payment made when Barnetts closed their Karangahape Road store in Auckland last year, but the company claimed that it now had little money available and offered a package with a maximum payment of \$2200 for full time workers. Staff at other Barnett stores held sympathy stoppages, on 13 July workers throughout the Dunedin-based 18-store retail chain voted to accept a registered redundancy agreement providing \$750 for each of the first 10 years of service.

## AUGUST 1990

Prime Minister Palmer told the Manufacturers Federation conference on 15 August that New Zealand industrial relations required a change in the culture, a change in attitude. "The work ethic is what will get us out of the economic rut and that needs to be recognised", he said. "If you want to work hard and get rewarded, you will get ahead." Figures released by the Statistics Department that same week showed that the number of full time jobs had fallen by 4 percent and of part time jobs by 2 percent in the year to mid-May, including job losses of 15,500 in retailing and 10,800 in manufacturing. Labour Department figures showed a postwar peak in the number of registered unemployed, excluding students, of 163,688 in July. The addition of people on access training and subsidised work schemes brought this total to just over 193,000, or 1 in 7 of the workforce (14.4 percent). In July 1984, when the Labour government was first elected, this total stood at 110,949, or 8.3 percent of the workforce. CTU economist, Peter Harris, anticipated further substantial redundancies: "Things are almost certain to be worse", he said. "We are not talking about a slower rate of growth. We are talking about a continuing rate of decline."

The annual tripartite wage conference opened in Wellington on 29 August. The Government's position paper opposed wage claims based on higher petrol prices arising from the Gulf crisis. The CTU proposed a wide-ranging policy review after the election, but the Employers Federation questioned the need for a tripartite conference, preferring instead direct talks "without the need for formalised procedures enshrined in legislation". The conference adjourned until after the election, but the Opposition's labour spokesman, Bill Birch, confirmed that a National government would review the future of formal tripartite structures, together with that of other institutions such as the Labour Court.

The Government increased the statutory minimum wage for workers over 20 by 4.3 percent from 17 September. The new rate was \$245 per week, or \$6.125 per hour.

Air New Zealand announced its intention to axe its Fokker Friendship planes and to cut provincial services, with the loss of about 600 jobs. The company's chief executive, on 2 August, described the redundancies as casualties of the free market, blaming the

Government's policy of opening domestic air routes to competition. The Minister of Civil Aviation, Richard Prebble, replied that competition had brought great benefits to consumers, but that Air New Zealand's failure to stand up to costly pilot demands had made its provincial services uneconomic. The real answer to the airline's problems, he said, lay in more realistic pay scales.

The staff cuts affected 308 members of the engineers' union, 139 clerical workers, at least 74 pilots and 62 cabin crew. The clerical workers' redundancy agreement provided for 6 weeks' pay for the first year of service, 2 weeks for each subsequent year, plus 2 weeks job search allowance. According to the Pilots' Association, Air New Zealand had not dismissed staff based on seniority, but had protected the jobs of pilots who had earlier signed individual contracts with the company. In a taped message to staff, moreover, Air New Zealand warned that the "safety net" had gone, that it could no longer guarantee future employment prospects, and that it had to reduce operating costs and achieve productivity gains to fund growth.

The Labour Court upheld an appeal by Air New Zealand against a mediator's decision, requiring the company to pay double time on ultra-longhaul flights after 8 hours on duty. Air Nelson announced that it planned to expand its provincial services, which would require an additional 100 staff, but this was offset by an announcement on 17 August by the Blenheim-based Air New Zealand subsidiary Safe Air, that it would end its flying operations from 30 September, with the loss of about 100 jobs.

The Labour Court ruled that because the ASB Bank was no longer a trust bank, its 900 employees currently covered by the clerical workers' union should transfer to the Finance Sector Union. (FinSec). The Northern Clerical Workers Union filed an application for a union coverage ballot. In another decision the Labour Court upheld an appeal by FinSec against a ruling by the Registrar of Unions giving the PSA continued coverage of about 400 Rural Bank staff. The PSA announced that it too would invoke the contestability provisions of the Labour Relations Act, if an informal ballot of Rural Bank staff showed that they wanted to stay with the PSA.

A fortnight-long strike by 40 process workers at Morrison Printing Inks in Auckland ended on 3 August, after the company accepted a redundancy agreement providing for 12 weeks' pay for the first year of service and 3 weeks for each subsequent year.

Award talks for harbour workers collapsed on 20 August, when the employers insisted on separate port-by-port negotiations while the union demanded a national document. The union also claimed a 7.5 percent pay increase. Secret ballots by harbour workers in 14 ports gave a 98 percent majority in favour of a national award, with about 94 percent voting in favour of industrial action. The Harbour Workers Union gave the required 14 days' notice of action.

In award talks for some 8000 public hospital domestic workers the Service Workers Federation claimed a 5.6 percent pay rise, which equalled the average increase in government funding for area health boards. The employers offered a 4 percent rise for a 49-week term (effectively 3.77 percent on a full year basis), conditional on clawbacks, such as the abolition of travel allowances for future workers. Nationwide stopwork meetings voted in favour of a week of industrial action, including a 48-hour total strike, if a second session of award talks failed to reach agreement. When these talks collapsed on 28 August, the Federation gave 14 days' notice of industrial action between 17 and 24 September.

A Fletcher Challenge subsidiary, Fletcher Development and Construction Ltd, lodged another big damages claim against the Labourers Union and 2 of its officials: \$684,184 for alleged unlawful strikes in June and early July at 5 Auckland building sites.

Local body labourers employed by the Auckland, North Shore and Waitakere councils went on strike on 24 August over the breakdown of their award talks. Their union claimed an 8 percent pay rise, while the employers offered a 3 percent increase subject to clawbacks. The strike affected street cleaning, cemeteries, swimming pools, parking buildings and the repair of burst water mains. A labourers' meeting on 28 August decided

to continue the action after learning of a confidential Auckland City document recommending extensive staff cuts, but the union lowered its pay claim to 5.5 percent if the employers dropped the clawbacks. The employers at first refused to negotiate while the strike proceeded, but they accepted a formula suggested by Auckland CTU chairman, Bill Andersen, which allowed informal talks to start on 30 August, with the union promising to recommend a return to work. The employers also waived the requirement to give another 14 days' notice of industrial action if the talks failed. A labourers' meeting on 31 August decided to suspend the strike.

A survey of 392 retired police officers found that 26 percent were totally and 46 percent almost totally dependent on their pensions. According to the Police Association's research officer, the Government's superannuation tax changes effectively cut police pensions by 10 percent and cost individual officers about \$5000. A joint police working party was considering these figures; a report on the effect of superannuation tax changes on prison staff was still under consideration by a separate prisons working party.

Seafarers demonstrated in Wellington and New Plymouth on 3 and 4 August against Petrocorp's use of the chartered Panamanian vessel "Royal Spring" to export oil to Australia. New Zealand and Australian seafarers' unions have an accord which excludes foreign ships from the Tasman trade, but the Government wanted to have this accord lifted on the grounds that it "effectively denied lawful trade in shipping services".

Delegates to the annual conferences of the PPTA and NZEI voted in favour of eventual amalgamation of the 2 teachers' unions. An agreement on pay increases for secondary school principals allowed for gradual rises of up to 16.1 percent: 4.25 percent backdated to 1 July, another 5.5 percent from 1 October and 2.5 percent from 1 February 1991, with a further 3 percent from 1 July next based on a performance assessment.

Auckland Regional Council members voted on 20 August to defer the purchase of 525 electronic ticketing machines for Council buses. Disagreement over the introduction of these machines had caused a strike in April, with Council members claiming that the machines were essential to put bus services into a "survival mode".

Watersiders at conventional ports started a 3-day national strike on 20 August over the issue of retaining their national award, which was due to expire at the end of September. The employers had filed for separate port agreements but the union failed to put up negotiators; when the union filed for national negotiations, the employers refused to nominate their representatives, and the dispute was then referred to the Arbitration Commission.

## SEPTEMBER 1990

CTU president, Douglas, gave qualified support on 4 September to the new Prime Minister, Mike Moore, saying he was capable of leading the Labour Party to an election victory, but that change of leadership would mean nothing unless it also resulted in policy changes. Pat Kelly, the chairman of the Labour Party's union affiliates council, added that unions were still on the back foot "but I think Mike can turn it around".

On 17 September the Government and the CTU concluded a one-year "Agreement for Growth", which provided for a 2 percent ceiling on wage settlements, unless justified by higher productivity; government spending cuts to reduce next year's budget deficit; a hoped-for cut in interest rates with Reserve Bank cooperation; and a promise of domestic summit talks of government, union and business leaders starting on 1 November, i.e. after the 27 October general election. The initiative for this accord had come from the Prime Minister. With inflation around 5 percent, the CTU originally asked for a 3 percent core increase, but this was rejected by the Prime Minister who demanded "adjustment to the realities of lower real incomes".

National Party spokesmen dismissed the deal as a stunt, and the leader of the New Labour Party accused the CTU of selling out working people, but the former Finance

Minister, Roger Douglas, now a director of Brierleys, described the agreement as helpful for employment. The Employers Federation, after initial hesitation, called the agreement positive.

Reaction among union officials was mixed. The secretary of the Northern Labourers Union accused the CTU of concluding the deal in secret without consulting affiliates and said his members would certainly expect more than a 2 percent pay rise. The secretary of the Auckland branch of the Timber Workers Union opposed an "ad hoc wage freeze" after his union had recently signed several site agreements with 5 percent pay rises. The national secretary of the Printing Trades Union, which is not affiliated to the CTU, described the deal as unrealistic. The Police Association, which is affiliated, refused to lower its 10 percent salaries and allowances claim, arguing that it included productivity components which would have no flow-on effects on other industry sectors. Commissioned police officers, said the Association secretary, had only recently gained pay increases of between 8 and 20 percent. The Auckland Chemical Workers Union decided on 21 September to go ahead with a 15 percent claim in the paint, varnish and printing inks award. These employers, said the union secretary, were generally affluent multinational concerns and the award, which covered 500 workers only, would not seriously affect the 2 percent guideline.

The CTU called a special conference on 21 September which endorsed the agreement by a voice vote. The majority was said to be 2 to 1, 3 to 1, and even 5 to 1. Among those voting in opposition were the distribution, clerical workers' and post office unions, while the main supporters of the deal were the engineers, service workers and meat workers unions and the PSA. The Prime Minister had told a Palmerston North meeting on 20 September that he could give no guarantee that spending cuts would not involve job losses in the public service, but the PSA gained approval at the CTU conference for a resolution which demanded prior consultation over spending cuts and no forced redundancies or reductions in the social wage. The conference also committed affiliates to a unified strategy and pledged to help all workers to achieve the 2 percent core increase.

Official figures released on 19 September showed that 80 percent of full time wage and salary earners, those earning below \$40,000 a year, were now worse off in real terms than they had been when Labour first took office in 1984. Figures released by the Statistics Department also showed that fewer working days were lost through industrial disputes in 1989 (168,743 days in 163 disputes) than in any year since 1972. The number of days lost in 1988 was 381,710.

Dominion Breweries announced on 19 September an enterprise agreement covering the entire 350 unionised staff of its 4 breweries in Auckland, Mangatainoka, Timaru and Greymouth. The company already had a composite agreement with its 6 trade groups, but the new deal added the 240 process workers belonging to the Allied Liquor Trades Union, which had been unwilling previously to split its national award. The agreement provided the same 4.5 percent pay rise as the national award, but it also included an employee benefits package with superannuation, medical and life insurance. Other clauses provided for consultation and workplace training. DB executives said the deal proved that labour market reform could be achieved without political intervention.

The northern "blacktop" award covering drivers and labourers in the roading bitumen industry was settled on 27 September with a 5 percent rise. Wage and allowance details had been agreed to on 3 August, but the unions failed in their attempt to extend the award, which covers mainly Auckland-based firms, to the entire northern district.

The Ford and Mazda motor companies announced about 100 redundancies at their 2 joint-venture VANZ plants in Auckland, affecting shop floor and office staff. The companies blamed the lack of growth in the economy and competition from imported secondhand Japanese cars, and they asked workers to take annual leave on 5 consecutive Fridays to reduce the stocks of unsold cars. Engineers Union members agreed, but stores and cleaners' union officials contended that their members were contracted to work 40

hours a week and should not have to take time off without being paid normal wages. The companies warned that a refusal to work 4-day weeks would cause a further 40 job losses.

Meat workers at the Richmond plant at Takapau were told at the start of the new season that they would need permission from their supervisors to go to the toilet and that the number of toilet visits would be monitored. The company was simply insisting that workers were on the job for the time they were being paid, explained the plant general manager. When stickers claiming that "Richmond rips off workers" appeared around the plant, in the nearby town of Waipukurau and even in Wellington, the company served a restraining order on the union and lodged a claim for defamation with the High Court.

The Harbour Workers Union turned down a last-minute offer by the employers for a \$15 a week national pay rise (equivalent to about 4 percent), conditional on agreement to settle wages and conditions next year totally on a port-by-port basis. The employers in turn rejected a counter-proposal by the union to negotiate this year under the current award, but to set up a joint working party to explore appropriate bargaining structures for 1991. A nationwide indefinite strike by 1600 harbour workers started at midnight on 9 September, but the employers won an interim injunction late on 11 September ordering a resumption of work because the union's strike notice had been defective. The union lodged a fresh notice of a total strike from 26 September to 4 October, but withdrew it to allow conciliation talks to resume on 17 September.

The harbour workers proposed a national 2 percent pay rise, in line with the CTU guidelines, to be followed by productivity-based wage bargaining at each port. When this was rejected by the employers, the union gave fresh notice on 18 September of a week-long strike starting on 4 October. The union also accused the Business Roundtable, Federated Farmers and producer boards of prolonging the dispute against the wishes of most port companies. This was denied and on 21 September the employers accepted the union proposals, including the setting up of a joint working party. The only remaining point at issue was the starting date for the 2 percent increase. The union wanted it to take effect from 1 October when the current award expired, while the employers expected the starting date to be fixed locally at the time of port-by-port productivity talks. On 28 September both sides reached full settlement, with the employers accepting the 1 October starting date.

Area health boards received a 29-page document from the Service Workers Federation setting out the work restrictions to be implemented during the week-long industrial action by 8000 hospital domestic staff. The action was to start on 17 September, but the dispute was settled on 14 September after 3 days of talks before the Arbitration Commission's chief commissioner, with a 4 percent pay rise and no clawbacks.

Auckland City Councillor, Dr B. Hucker, revealed on 3 September that a review of Council operations proposed to lay off 800 staff as a cost-cutting measure. More details of the draft proposals were leaked to the press later; they provided for 834 redundancies (707 wage workers and 127 salaried staff, all to be laid off before Christmas), the sale of Council assets, and the contracting out of works, park maintenance and other services. The local government officers' and local body labourers' unions made submissions to the Council opposing contracting out. They also sought a redundancy deal based on 4 weeks' paid job search, 14 weeks' pay for the first year of service, 3 weeks' pay for years 2 to 10, then 2 weeks up to 20 years and 1 week for each subsequent year. The Council offered an 8+2 package with a cut-off point at 20 years, and rejected a union demand for involvement in the selection of redundant workers.

The prison staff pay dispute was settled on 6 September when the Justice Department agreed to a 5.91 percent pay rise for the 1700 officers. Part of the increase, said the PSA, addressed prison officers' concerns about superannuation.

The Registrar of Unions approved a new membership rule allowing the Performance and Entertainment Workers Union to enrol previously unorganised gymnasium and fitness centre staff.

The Auckland Regional Council's Bus Transport Establishment Unit announced that it could not turn the bus services into a profitable organisation by July 1991, as required by the Government, and warned that it might be forced to sell the bus fleet and pay redundancy to the staff, unless the Government allowed it more time. A Ministry of Transport official replied that the Council should get rid of feather-bedding and pay its drivers the award wage instead of paying 25 percent above the award. The drivers, he said, should be paid redundancy and then rehired at reduced rates, but the union president warned that most drivers would take the money and leave the industry.

In Wellington, too, consultants advised the City Council to make substantial cuts to bus drivers' wages and conditions and to reduce staff by 7 percent within the next year. A Council transport workers' meeting on 21 September decided to strike if any worker was laid off before a redundancy deal had been signed. Following the example of Wellington and Christchurch, Auckland Regional Council combined unions decided on 27 September to sponsor a public transport watchdog committee to campaign for "buses for people, not for profit".

The chief commissioner of the Arbitration Commission ruled on 6 September that the Waterfront Workers Union had filed an invalid application in seeking to renegotiate its national award. When Wellington port award talks collapsed on 17 September, the union gave notice of a 2-week national strike starting on 16 October.

## OCTOBER 1990

The Employment Equity Act came into force on 1 October, and on 18 October 2 of the largest women's unions lodged claims for pay equity. The Nurses Union asked for an assessment of the remuneration of practice nurses in comparison with uniformed police and environmental health officers, who received between \$4000 and \$6000 a year more in pay. The Distribution Workers Federation lodged claims for a comparison of supermarket checkout supervisors with hospital head orderlies, and of cosmetic salespeople with autoparts salespeople. Other claims were in preparation, but the Leader of the Opposition confirmed that a National government planned to repeal the legislation.

Following the National Party's landslide election victory on 27 October, the CTU sought to interest the new administration in continuing with the growth agreement concluded with the outgoing Labour government. It was an offer by the trade union movement, said Ken Douglas, to work in a cooperative way to resolve the country's economic problems. National's labour spokesperson, Bill Birch, dismissed the agreement as an irrelevant old-style accord promoting centralised wage fixing contrary to the new government's industrial relations policy, but on 31 October the incoming Prime Minister, Jim Bolger, hinted that he might retain the growth agreement until National's projected new industrial legislation came into force in mid-1991.

Bolger also proposed to hold MP's pay rises to those of ordinary workers, i.e. 2 to 3 percent, and he urged top company executives to do likewise. It was now revealed that while the outgoing government had persuaded the CTU to accept a 2 percent rise because of the parlous state of the country's economy, MPs of both parties had applied to the Higher Salaries Commission through their "trade union", the Members Services Committee, for a basic salary rise of no less than 31 percent. It was, commented one of the new National MPs, "little more than naked greed".

The national bakers' and pastrycooks' award was renewed for a 2-year term with a 4.5 percent pay rise backdated to 1 April and a further 3 percent rise from next April. The union conceded a permissive clause making weekends, paid at penal rates, part of the working week subject to employee consent. It also agreed to negotiate separate documents for supermarket bakeries. Negotiators claimed that the settlement did not contravene the 2 percent guideline because it renewed an award which had expired in April and was therefore still part of the previous pay round.



Women made up about 70 percent of bank employees but fewer than 1 percent of bank managers, noted a spokeswoman for the Finance Sector Union; representatives for the 4 biggest banks replied that women were treated equally with male colleagues. Insurance workers settled their award, which covers some 6500 staff, with a 2 percent core increase and no productivity payment.

The chemical fertiliser award, which covers about 120 workers, was settled with a pay increase believed to be 3.5 percent for 12 months. The union concerned, the United Food and Chemical Workers Union which is not affiliated to the CTU, also claimed a 12 percent pay rise for paint, varnish and ink workers outside the northern district, against an employer offer of 2 percent. The Northern Chemical Workers Union, which is affiliated to the CTU and which covers these workers in the northern district, put in a claim for a 15 percent pay rise. It lowered this to 6 percent, but award talks broke down on 18 October, with the employers offering a 3 percent increase in pay over 12 months or 4 percent over 15 months, with a 2 percent increase in allowances. The union called an immediate one-day strike at 2 major printing ink firms, imposed an industry-wide overtime ban, and followed this up with a 48-hour strike.

Also outside the guidelines agreement was the settlement of the national childcare workers' award on 23 October. Ten months after the expiry of their previous award, childcare workers won increases of 17 percent for untrained staff, 24 percent for qualified staff and 27 percent for supervisors. The increases became applicable from the date of settlement and the document was due to expire 4 months later. The union was disappointed for it had been able to negotiate larger increases of up to 38 percent in 2 other childcare workers' awards covering 300 predominantly community-based centres.

The national security crews and couriers' award, covering some 350 workers, was settled with a 2 percent pay rise for 6 months. It was to be renegotiated next April after considering recommendations from a joint working party set up to examine productivity issues.

In negotiations for the national road carriers' award covering about 8000 workers, the employers offered a 2 percent increase but demanded an extension in the definition of ordinary working time. On 17 October the Distribution Workers Federation accepted a 2 percent pay rise over 12 months plus a \$5 weekly increase in the \$41 industry allowance which, it said, was marginally better than the metal trades award. The contractor drivers' award, covering some 7000 workers, was renewed for 6 months with a 2 percent core increase plus a further \$2 a week based on productivity gains. Unions and employers agreed to consider radical changes to the structure of the award but, if no consensus was reached, the document was to be extended for a further 6 months in its present form.

Negotiations on renewing the metal trades award, which covers some 22,000 workers, opened on 8 October and 3 days later both sides agreed to a 2 percent core increase plus 1 percent for productivity, from the award's renewal date on 8 November. The union conceded a permissive clause to vary hours and shift arrangements at workplaces with the consent of the staff concerned. Prime Minister Moore hailed the settlement as a vote of confidence not just in the growth agreement but in the future of the metal industries, but the Leader of the Opposition attacked what he called a poor deal. If industry could afford it, said Bolger, he would be happy to see wage rises keep pace with inflation.

Ford and Mazda reached agreement with car workers' unions to close their VANZ plant at Wiri for a week, in order to reduce the stockpile of about 1000 unsold cars. Six Ngati te Ata picketers, who were arrested on 16 May at the Maioro ironsand mine, appeared in the Pukekohe district court on 1 October on charges of obstructing a public way and forcibly preventing workers from working at their lawful occupations, as well as other charges. The judge found some of the defendants not guilty and discharged those found guilty without penalty.

Combined Auckland City Council unions put forward an alternative plan designed to save the \$45 million required by the Council but with the loss of only 188 jobs,

compared with the 834 redundancies proposed by Council management. The plan was endorsed at a large stopwork meeting on 1 October and distributed as a special newspaper to Auckland householders. Council workers followed this up with a meeting outside the City administration building on 9 October; they picketed the homes of leading Councillors and City executives, and they organised a march up Queen Street on 25 October. The planned dismissals, said a union spokesman, would be the biggest redundancies in Auckland since the sacking of 900 Southdown freezing workers in 1980, but on 29 October the Council voted 16 to 6 to go ahead with large-scale restructuring of the parks and works departments and with the contracting out of services. The exact number of redundancies was still undecided.

Negotiations to renew the commercial printers' award were adjourned indefinitely on 31 October, with the union claiming a 5.25 percent rise and the employers offering 2.75 percent. Talks to renew the one year-old composite packaging-printing award also collapsed, with the unions claiming a 7.25 percent rise and the employers offering 3 percent.

PSA members at the Meremere power station stopped work to discuss delays in removing asbestos insulation and imposed bans on entering certain areas of the plant. Electricorp threatened to seek a Labour Court injunction to have the bans lifted, but did not file an application pending further talks with the PSA.

The Milburn Carrier 2 became the first integrated ship in the New Zealand merchant fleet, with a crew reduced from 18 to 13. The Milburn company's other cement carrier, the Westport, was to be integrated shortly, with its crew cut from 17 to 12. Altogether 210 seafarers were to lose their jobs within 12 months, when all 34 New Zealand-crewed ships, including the inter-island ferries, were integrated.

Forty-three workers struck on 5 October at the Hydra bacon factory in Ponsonby, Auckland, when the company refused to sign a redundancy agreement. The manager claimed that the company had never made anybody redundant in 92 years of business and had no intention of doing so now, but the staff feared that the factory could close and imposed a round-the-clock picket in support of their claim. The company dismissed the strikers and took on new staff, including security guards; it rejected a union offer to refer the dispute to a mediator. The Northern Distribution Union then decided to take personal grievance cases for the dismissed workers and it also supported a campaign for a consumer boycott of Hydra products.

Talks to renew the Northern, Hawkes Bay and Canterbury stores award, which covers some 8000 workers, opened in Auckland on 1 October. The Distribution Workers Federation had reduced its claim to 2 percent, with a minimum weekly increase of \$8, but it also asked for a further 2 percent productivity increase. The employers were prepared to consider a productivity payment, but only in return for changes in award conditions. They offered a one percent productivity increase, which the union rejected on 12 October. The union then called a round of stopwork meetings. On 24 October a meeting of more than 100 Auckland stores delegates decided to approach employers individually and, if necessary, organise "short sharp stoppages and generally guerilla warfare". The national grain, hides and manure stores award was settled with a report 3.5 percent rise in wages and allowances, but the union conceded an extension of ordinary working hours.

The Waterfront Workers Union sought a 2 percent increase in its national award and offered to exempt port companies which agreed from the 2-week national strike planned to start on 16 October. The employers, who wanted to replace the national award with

separate port documents, obtained an interim injunction in the Labour Court on 15 October on the grounds that the strike notices sent by the union were defective, but the union then lodged further notices for a national stoppage starting on 31 October. The strike was called off when all port companies except Gisborne agreed to a 2 percent national pay rise in exchange for a union commitment to talks on wage bargaining and other issues.

Herbert Roth