

CHRONICLE

JULY 1984

The Leader of the Opposition told an election meeting of Kinleith paper mill workers on 4 July that "open-slather" free wage bargaining would not be allowed under a Labour Government, because it would be utterly irresponsible. The Government, he said, would not surrender to naked demands from businessmen or unions, and would regulate wages and prices if the planned social accord failed, but such regulation would be a last resort and would not amount to a wage and price freeze.

Mr Knox, who started a whistle-stop tour of industrial sites, told Gisborne workers that same day that he supported Mr Lange's call for a consensus conference. In a speech in Auckland on 10 July he called for an end to confrontation, but Mr Knox and other union leaders warned that industrial strife would resume if the National Government was returned to office. The Prime Minister in his election speeches stressed the "sinister links" between the Labour Party and the trade unions with, as he claimed, three "Moscow-aligned coms" sitting on the Joint Council of Labour. He also drew attention to the large amount of union propaganda spread around workplaces in opposition to his Government. Indeed, as Mr Knox pointed out after the elections, he had never seen the trade union movement work so hard and give so much money to the Labour Party to ensure they became the Government. This "magnificent support" was acknowledged in generous tributes to the FOL and to Mr Knox personally from the leader and the president of the Labour Party.

The Labour Party won the election on 14 July, gaining 56 seats to National's 37 and Social Credit's 2. The new Minister of Labour was Mr S Rodger, a former president of the PSA, with Mr E Isbey as under-secretary. These appointments were well received by the FOL and CSU.

Employers' and union representatives now called for a resumption of talks to arrive at a new wage fixing system, which would allow a resumption to wage bargaining. The acting executive director of the Employers Federation, Mr R Taylor, told Paraparaumu Rotarians however, that employers could not afford a "wage blowout", and claimed that existing industrial laws favoured the unions. The president of the Auckland Trades Council, Mr G H Andersen, on the other hand, commented on 22 July that he believed unions would do less brawling with the Government when Labour was in power, but he stressed that unions would continue to argue with the employers — "they did not vanish on July 14."

Unions and employers accepted the new Government's plea for a three-months' "breathing space", during which the freeze would continue. Limited wage bargaining might commence in October, following the economic summit and the presentation of the budget, Mr Lange, the new Prime Minister, told the biennial conference of the Engineers Union in Christchurch on 31 July. Mr R Campbell, the secretary of the Shop Employees Union, who spoke in Timaru that same day, urged immediate relief for the very low earner, either through tax adjustments or through a general wage order, with resumed wage bargaining flowing on from that point.

The Electrical Workers Union on 17 July announced the result of its ballot on FOL affiliation. About half the total membership had taken part in the poll, with 4 011 voting in favour of disaffiliation and 1 220 against. The union's secretary, Mr T Neary, said he had received approaches to form a group of unions in opposition to the FOL; he had not so far treated these approaches seriously, but now he would naturally do so. The secretary of the union's Auckland branch, Mr J Taylor, commented that he did not see any good resulting from withdrawal from the FOL, which would continue to be the body which talked to the Government. Three branches of the Printing Trades Union — Auck-

land, Wellington and Nelson — called for a ballot on FOL affiliation in their union.

The first case under the voluntary unionism legislation was heard in the Arbitration Court on 10 July. Mr D W Hodge, the Timaru reporter of the Christchurch Press who had resigned from the Journalists Union in February and whose copy had been blacklisted by his colleagues, claimed \$6 000 damages from the union and from 2 of its officials. After Mr Hodge had given evidence, counsel for the defence submitted that there was no case to answer since no undue influence had been exerted by the defendants. The judge adjourned the case, and on 19 July he upheld the defence submissions and dismissed the claims. The president of the Journalists Union called on the Government to give some urgency to a review of the voluntary unionism legislation.

When speaking in Whangarei on 1 July, the Leader of the Opposition announced that, if Labour won the election, the Government would appoint a commission of inquiry into industrial relations at Marsden Point, and that Labour Department officials would be permanently stationed on the site. He also promised an inquiry into what he called "a quite staggering management shambles" and the "horrendous escalation of costs." The project construction manager announced on 11 July that production at the refinery expansion site had risen by 25 percent since the return to work on 13 June, and that absenteeism was down by half. After the election, the new Minister of Energy said that Government was likely to demand compensation from Marsden Point contractors for cost over-runs for which they were responsible.

N.Z. Steel Development Ltd, the company responsible for the Glenbrook steel mill extensions, wrote to the combined site unions listing 114 industrial actions between 2 April and 4 July, which ranged from site meetings to strikes, and which resulted in the loss of almost 100 000 man-hours. On 10 July all 1 500 construction workers walked out at Glenbrook when noxious fumes from the nearby mill wafted across the site. They returned 2 days later, after monitoring equipment had been installed and a joint committee set up to investigate the problem.

Some longstanding disputes were settled in the fortnight before the election: workers returned at Donaghys Industries in Auckland on 3 July, after a 5-week strike over internal job classifications, and the 82-day dispute at the Super Liquorman store in Auckland was settled on 7 July. The Storepersons Union lifted all bans and pickets, and the company agreed to re-employ the dismissed workers.

The Court of Appeal on 24 July upheld a decision by the Arbitration Court that Foodtown supermarkets had breached an industrial award by opening late on more than 2 nights a week. Foodtown had challenged the decision on the grounds that the award was not in harmony with the Shop Trading Hours Act, which allowed late opening on any day except Sundays and public holidays, but the Court of Appeal ruled that the Act had nothing to do with the terms of employment of shop staff, and that the interpretation of awards was exclusively a matter for the Arbitration Court.

The Railways Corporation on 6 July cancelled all inter-island ferry services indefinitely on the grounds that Picton railwaymen had adopted "go-slow" tactics. The shunting gangs were laid off without pay until they promised to work "in a responsible manner". The National Union of Railwaymen claimed that this was a deliberate political move a week before the elections. This was denied by the corporation and by the Minister of Railways, who expressed the hope that "commonsense" railwaymen, many of whom, he claimed, opposed their local union leaders, would insist that the union co-operate with management. The Labour Party's transport spokesman, Mr R Prebble, helped to resolve the dispute in all-night talks with the union, which gave the necessary undertakings, and ferry services resumed the following day. On 9 July the High Court dismissed a union application which had challenged a staff regulation requiring railwaymen to work overtime as required by "the exigencies of the Corporation". The union announced that it would seek a review of this decision in the Court of Appeal. After the election, the union asked Mr Prebble, now Minister of Transport, to set up proper negotiating procedures to handle disputes with the corporation, and on 26 July 4 wives of Picton railwaymen came to Wellington to tell the Minister and the general manager of the corporation how the new

rosters affected their family lives. On 30 July Mr Prebble announced that a former Attorney-General, Mr M Finlay, Q C, would conduct a ministerial inquiry into the Picton roster dispute.

AUGUST 1984

As long as the Labour Government looked after wage and salary earners and there were jobs for people to go to, there would be no split between the Government and the trade unions, Mr Knox told the annual conference of the Post Office Union. In their first formal meeting with the new Minister of Labour on 1 August, FOL leaders discussed what they called immediate "pressure points" in the industrial scene and presented him with a "shopping list" of their requirements. The announcement of a steep rise in the price of petrol on 7 August, and the permission given to companies to pass on higher transport costs and increases in tariffs and sales tax, placed a serious strain on the unions' co-operation in Government economic policies. "Workers cannot be expected to bear the full burden of rising prices that come out of this devaluation," said the CSU chairman, Mr R Burgess, while FOL secretary Douglas told the PSA conference on 8 August that the FOL's pledge to work with the Labour Government did not mean that it would tighten its belt while the capital sector's stomach stuck out.

On 8 August the FOL and CSU sent a letter to Mr Rodger seeking an immediate general wage increase of \$15 per week from 1 October 1984, indexation of wages on a quarterly basis from the same date pending a resumption to wage bargaining, and the immediate right to negotiate on outstanding anomalies. Mr Rodger, whose speech to the PSA conference was his first major policy pronouncement, did not mention this letter, but he pledged that the voice of wage and salary earners would be given equal status with other community sectors and expressed his support for the proposed Council of Trade Unions.

Mr Rodger showed his backing for the FOL and CSU a few days later, on 15 August, when he refused to meet Mr Neary of the Electrical Workers Union on the grounds that the wage fixing issues Mr Neary wished to discuss could only be negotiated with the central organisations. Mr Neary next day announced that officials of 10 organisations outside the FOL had agreed to form a new body, to be known as the Administrative, Technical, Professional, Semi-Professional and Other Workers' Organisation. Its members, he said, were the Northern and Wellington Local Government Officers Unions, the Airline Pilots Association, the Merchant Service Guild, the Institute of Marine and Power Engineers, the Police Association, the Nurses Union (as distinct from the Nurses Association, which forms part of the FOL), the Storeperson's Federation, and the Society of Technicians, Administrators, Managers and Supervisors, as well as his own union. Their combined membership was about 65 000. Mr Neary told the New Zealand Herald that the FOL was likely to burst asunder and die within 5 years, but Mr Tuxford, of the Northern Local Government Officers Union, said on 18 August that the new union group was not a formal organisation. It had no chairman, no officials, and no finance and its only purpose was to make submissions on economic issues. "We've no axe to grind with the FOL," he said, "and I can't stress that too highly."

In continuing negotiations with cabinet ministers, FOL and CSU leaders sought assurances (which they obtained), that the Government still stood by the economic policy which it had put before the electors in July. The Prime Minister however, told them on 17 August that no general wage adjustment or bargaining round could take place until agreement had been reached on a new long-term wage fixing system, and that such an agreement had to be reached before the economic summit conference due to start on 12 September. Tripartite talks on long-term wage fixing opened on 23 August, but several unions expressed concern that the voluntary membership legislation had affected their financial strength to such an extent that they would be in a weak position once direct

bargaining resumed. They pressed the Government therefore, to restore the unqualified preference clause as a matter of urgency in this year's parliamentary session.

The announcement by the 4 trading banks on 12 July, that they planned to extend their opening hours by 1½ hours each day, met strong opposition from the Bank Officers Union which had not been consulted on the matter. The union wanted opening hours to be subject to negotiation, including compensation for additional pressures of work, but the banks maintained that this was a purely business decision. The union held 30 well-attended stopwork meetings throughout New Zealand in the second half of August, which called on the banks to negotiate, failing which the union was authorised to call further stopwork meetings.

Coachworkers at the General Motors plant in Trentham went on strike in protest against the company's refusal to reappoint a union delegate as inspector. The dispute was settled on 28 August, and the delegate was reappointed 3 days later.

Criticism of the "pugnacious" leadership style of the FOL was voiced at the biennial conference of the Engineers Union in Christchurch, which decided to conduct a random survey of members' opinions on the subject. Delegates wanted the FOL "to develop new policies and direction in conjunction with the new Labour Government." The conference was still in session when the Arbitration Court on 3 August declared invalid an agreement between Liguigas and the Engineers Union to load the LPG tanker *Tarihiko*, on the grounds that the rules of the union did not cover the manufacture, compression and distribution of LPG. Several other unions — watersiders, harbour board employees, drivers, labourers, and storepersons — had opposed the agreement.

1 100 workers walked out at the Glenbrook steel mill extensions site on 20 August, in protest at being asked to work in early morning fog. The company responded by refusing to re-employ the workers unless they gave a written assurance that they would in future observe their employer's instructions. Some 300 workers — mostly electricians and carpenters — did not join the walkout. When the men refused to sign any undertaking, the company asked union delegates to sign on their behalf, but they too refused. Attempts at mediation failed, but the company eventually laid down a set of conditions which, by returning to work, the workers were deemed to have accepted. Under this face-saving device work resumed on 27 August. A spokesman for the combined unions said the workers had returned under the conditions of the collective site agreement.

MRC, the Marsden Refinery Contractors consortium, on 24 August dismissed 2 union officials — the chairman of the combined site committee and the riggers' delegate — because they had called an unauthorised stopwork meeting to consider the consortium's failure to evacuate the site the previous day, following a bomb scare at the refinery. MRC also announced that they planned to instigate legal proceedings against the 2 officials under the Whangarei Refinery Expansion Project Disputes Act, and were considering legal action against other officials who had helped to organise the meeting, and against about 2 000 workers who had attended it. FOL secretary Douglas advised Marsden Point workers to stay at work and not to be provoked by the consortium which, he claimed, was trying to escalate problems. The Acting Prime Minister announced that the Government was moving as rapidly as possible to set up a commission of inquiry into industrial relations at Marsden Point, including a review of the controversial Disputes Act. MRC later dropped the idea of prosecuting hundreds of workers but served them with a written warning instead. The site unions gave 14 days' notice of a further stopwork meeting to discuss the dismissals and safety procedures.

The secretary of the Police Association, Dr R Moodie, said on 26 August that his members were considering industrial action because civilians were taking over jobs which could be filled by unfit and unwell policemen. Dr Moodie also claimed that Ministry of Transport traffic officers had voted strongly in favour of breaking away from the PSA and were forming a separate union with his assistance. The PSA replied that of just over 1 000 traffic officers, 92 percent were members of the PSA, which was a voluntary organisation, and that the group of officers working with Dr Moodie to promote a new union were

mainly non-PSA members. The Minister of Labour commented that his personal objective was to facilitate union amalgamation rather than division.

The ministerial inquiry into the Picton rail roster dispute by Dr Finlay opened in Wellington on 6 August and later moved to take evidence in Picton. The inquiry came close to collapse on 11 August, when the National Union of Railwaymen resumed its work-to-rule tactics at Picton, while the Railways Corporation announced its intention to proceed with a \$40 million claim against the union. After studying Dr Finlay's report, the Minister of Transport referred the dispute back to the parties, with the hope that they would be able to reach a suitable solution in the light of the report's findings. Meanwhile, about 100 railway shunters in Dunedin went on strike on 2 August, because they refused to work with a supervisor for "safety and other reasons". Work resumed on 9 August, when the parties agreed to submit the dispute to mediation.

SEPTEMBER 1984

The tripartite talks on long-term wage fixing, which had continued for more than 3 years, finally reached agreement on 6 September. Details of the accord were kept confidential however, to await a formal announcement at the economic summit meeting the following week. Also on 6 September, the FOL and CSU released a 30-page document entitled "Opening the Books", which detailed the large profits made by private companies, while wage and salary earners had carried the burden of wage freeze and devaluation.

The Minister of Labour announced the appointment of a task force on trade union education, chaired by Mr M Law of Waikato University, which is to put forward proposals for new Government policy by 31 January. Mr Rodger also told cheering Labour Party conference delegates on 9 September that the "dark days of union bashing" had ended, and that the Government would repeal the voluntary unionism legislation before the end of the year. Pressure for such a move came from the Labour Party's Industrial Affiliates Council, which reported that the abolition of the unqualified preference clause had been a direct threat to unions' capacity to bargain, had encouraged "free-loaders", and had given a bargaining tool to employers. Mr Knox, who received 3 standing ovations from conference delegates, pledged union support for a long-term Labour Government, but warned that orthodox economic policies would lead to higher unemployment and to a further reduction of living standards.

Trade union leaders were well represented at the economic summit which opened on 12 September. In their contributions they stressed what they called "the human side of economic development" and rejected the notion that economic recovery could be achieved by a lowering of real wages, as had been the strategy of the previous Government. The FOL and CSU did however, make a major concession by announcing that they would not seek an immediate catch-up on wages lost since 1981, but would base their upcoming claims on price rises since the change of Government in July. Mr G Tait, of the Employers Federation, in his opening address failed to enter into the spirit of harmony and consensus by calling for the continuation of voluntary unionism, the setting up of enterprise unions, removal of protection on hours of work, and reductions in redundancy payments, but other employer speakers adopted a more conciliatory tone.

Full details of the long-term wage fixing accord were revealed on 13 September. The agreement provides for tripartite consultations before each annual wage round, to identify broad constraints on settlements and possibly draw up wage guidelines. These talks would also consider protection for lower income groups by reviewing the statutory minimum wage as well as taxation and welfare assistance. In an attempt to break down rigid wage relativities, the Arbitration Court is to put greater weight on supply and demand conditions for specific skills and on technological changes, and incentives are to be introduced to stimulate composite or enterprise bargaining. There is no provision for a Government veto on settlements it considers excessive, and the accord also omits the

previous Government's proposals for plant-based unions.

The union representatives were satisfied with the final communique of the summit conference, which they saw as a further step towards the implementation of Labour's economic election programme, but later in September the FOL and CSU repeated their request for an immediate \$15 wage increase and quarterly wage indexation. "We want it immediately. We would take it tonight," said Mr Knox on 26 September, but cabinet ministers merely agreed to study the request along with other options for moving out of the wage freeze.

Air New Zealand decided to withdraw its writ for \$150 000 damages and costs against the Airline Stewards and Hostesses Union, which had been lodged in April during the dispute over crew fatigue and new overseas rosters.

Following the refusal of the Bankers Association to negotiate on the proposed new opening hours, the Bank Officers Union called a further series of stopwork meetings for the morning of 11 September, the day when banks were due to open an hour earlier, at 9 am. A group of Auckland bank employees complained that the union was offering only token resistance and announced the setting up of an alternative, more aggressive organisation, called the NZ Society of Bank Officers, but in many centres outside Auckland the Union's action was seen as too militant. Several stopwork meetings, including Wellington, Hamilton and Dunedin, voted against strike action and for a return to work under the new hours, but a majority of meetings voted in favour of continuing the protest by staff not reporting for work each day until 10 am. The stoppage was thus only partly successful, and the action ceased on 13 September when the banks offered to negotiate. On 18 September the banks signed an agreement with the union which accepted the new opening hours without financial compensation, but stipulated that future extensions of hours would not be brought in without union approval. Later that week the 4 trading banks released their proposals for improved promotion opportunities for women employees, in response to an adverse report by the Human Rights Commission.

The Minister of State Services announced that non-academic staff at universities will have a further opportunity to vote on union representation. The previous ballot had restricted their choice to the Clerical Workers Union and a new university body.

Electricians at the Petralgas Chemicals plant at Waitara negotiated an 18.5 percent increase, which was approved by the Wage Freeze Authority. It brought their hourly core rate to \$7.50, compared with the Taranaki ruling rate of \$6.33. Engineers at the plant went on strike on 18 September to press their demand for an equivalent increase. Fitters at the Nestle factory in Wiri struck in support of a 29 percent wage increase; they returned to work on 10 September, but the terms of settlement were not revealed.

Work stopped at the Takapau freezing works on 12 September, following the discovery of a row of peepholes between a passageway and the women's showers. The union claimed that the company management had been aware of the peepholes for about 5 weeks, and insisted that they be blocked and the interior of the showers relined.

The Clyde dam contractors Zublin-Williamson dismissed 2 carpenters, following a brawl in a Cromwell hotel on 19 August between New Zealanders and German supervisory staff. A personal grievance hearing failed to resolve the issue and 200 workers walked out on 12 September. The NZ Workers Union voted not to support the combined unions, but its members refused to cross the unions' picket line. On 24 September, the Minister of Labour announced that he would call a compulsory conference on the issue, and normal work resumed the following day.

The MRC consortium decided to seek a High Court injunction to prevent a stopwork meeting called by the combined Marsden Point site unions for 9 October. They withdrew their application when the unions decided to move their meeting to 10 October, which was the date of a regular, authorised stopwork meeting. Meanwhile, a further bomb hoax — the eighth since April — caused an evacuation of the site on 11 and 12 September. In a joint statement Marsden Point union officials appealed to whoever was responsible for the bomb threats to end the disruption and cease jeopardising work safety. On 24 September

the Acting Prime Minister announced the personnel and terms of reference of the commission of inquiry, which is to investigate industrial relations at Marsden Point and report by 17 December. Its chairman is Mr I M Mackay, a company director and former chairman of the Waterfront Industry Commission; the other two members are Mr E J Batt, former PSA president and former member of the State Services Commission, and Mr J R Fittes, a retired industrial relations manager.

OCTOBER 1984

The FOL renewed its call for an immediate \$15 general wage increase on 2 October, when Mr Douglas told a conference of 200 delegates of the Northern Storepersons Union in Auckland: "We want a wage rise right now." "The freeze," he said, "and the denial of a wage increase are just as unacceptable under a Labour Government as they were under a National Government," and he warned that unless there was immediate relief, the FOL would probably have to call on unions to make demands on employers. That same day the acting chairman of the CSU attacked the wage freeze as "totally one-sided and inequitable" while food and petrol prices and mortgage interest rates were rising. Sector leaders, he said, had agreed to a 3 months' extension of the wage and price freeze from 18 July, but the price freeze had not been applied in the spirit of the agreement.

Key cabinet ministers, including the Minister of Finance, opposed an immediate general rise as inflationary, and on 7 October the Prime Minister rejected the demand, saying unions should lodge their claims after they had seen the budget, which would provide relief for the lower paid. At a meeting of the Joint Council of Labour on 9 October cabinet ministers confirmed the rejection of the union claims, but agreement was reached next day at the tripartite wage fixing talks. The Government offered an immediate pre-budget start to preparations for a round of direct wage bargaining, and on this basis the unions withdrew their \$15 demand. Details of the agreement were not revealed until 17 October, after they had been approved by the national executive of the FOL and by a special meeting of delegates from FOL affiliates.

The tripartite agreement provided for a compressed bargaining round from December to next March, with filing of claims to begin immediately after the presentation of the budget on 8 November. Consultations to set wage guidelines for these award negotiations were to begin even before then, but would not conclude until after the presentation of the budget. Awards will apply for 9 months only, to be replaced by 1-year awards when traditional annual bargaining resumes in the middle of next year. The awards will take effect from 1 December, or 38 months from the date of the last settlement, but in no case later than 1 March 1985. Mr Neary, whose Electrical Workers had walked out of the FOL, described the agreement as "a complete and utter sell-out" and announced that he would not be bound by any tripartite guidelines and would lodge a claim for increases of up to 20 percent, but this was dismissed by other spokesmen as posturing. Under the agreement, unions with claims outside the guidelines will have to prove exceptional circumstances, and the Arbitration Court will be given "a particular mandate" in new legislation to have regard to the guidelines. Unions or employers who took industrial action in the middle of the wage bargaining process, said Mr Lange, would see their claims drop back to the bottom of the queue.

Employers waived their right to be given a period of notice of claims, and the Government undertook to appoint additional industrial conciliators and extra staff for the Arbitration Court to expedite award negotiations. State servants were promised a pay adjustment based on the pattern of movement in major private sector awards, to take effect from 10 January 1985. Necessary legislation setting up new wage fixing machinery was to be introduced early in November, and the Opposition undertook not to obstruct its passage. Later in October a working party of employer, union and Labour Department officials drew up a "pecking order" in which the more than 400 awards will be negotiated,

starting with metal trades, drivers and freezing workers on 3 December and ending with boarding schools' domestic workers on 21 March 1985.

The Minister of Labour announced in Rotorua on 24 October that the Government planned to set up an Industrial Advisory Council next year, to act as a clearing house for all industrial legislation. The Council will be chaired by the Minister and will comprise representatives of Government, unions and employers. The only industrial legislation to be introduced this year, he said, apart from measures on long-term wage fixing, will deal with union membership by repealing the voluntary unionism provisions. Speaking in Christchurch on 28 October, Mr Rodger said the union membership law will have a "fairly liberal" conscience clause for those seeking exemption, but the Prime Minister explained next day that those who opt out will be required by law to pay a levy to the Labour Department equivalent to the appropriate union membership fee. The Opposition announced that changes to the voluntary unionism law would be hotly contested in Parliament.

The president of the Auckland branch of the Resident Medical Officers Association said on 31 October that junior hospital doctors were considering hiring a professional advocate, "probably someone with trade union experience", to negotiate a reduction in their working hours from 120 a week to 60. Their traditional negotiators who came from the Medical Association had not been very successful, he explained.

The Timaru reporter of the Christchurch Press, Mr D W Hodge, who had resigned, from the Journalists Union and had unsuccessfully sought damages from the union when his copy was blacked, accepted an offer of early retirement from the company.

Mr K Douglas addressed a stopwork meeting at the Marsden Point expansions site on 10 October. Only 6 workers out of about 3 000 opposed a motion in support of FOL policy of avoiding confrontation and settling outstanding disputes by negotiation. The Commission of Inquiry into industrial relations at Marsden Point held a preliminary meeting in Wellington on 11 October. The hearings proper were due to start in Auckland on 29 October, but were delayed when the MRC consortium applied for an interim order in the High Court to overturn a Commission ruling that there would be no cross-examination of witnesses. The judge reserved his decision on the application.

A series of false bomb alarms — 5 within 3 weeks — disrupted work at the Glenbrook steel mill extensions. The company offered a \$10 000 reward for information leading to the conviction of those responsible.

The 1 100-strong Canterbury Local Bodies Officers Union advised the FOL that its members had voted in favour of disaffiliation. A National Council meeting of the Printing Trades Union decided by a narrow margin to hold a members' ballot on continued FOL affiliation.

The Picton rail roster dispute was settled on 1 October in direct negotiations between the Railways Corporation and the National Union of Railwaymen. Four days later Dr Finlay's report on the dispute was released to the press. In it he blamed the Corporation for setting its sights on the pursuit of profit, while paying less attention to the needs of its workforce, and charged that it had adopted a "master and servant" stance in its dealings with the union. The 1976 staff regulations, reported Dr Finlay, were more autocratic and dictatorial than those which applied in 1922.

The biennial conference of the Waterside Workers Federation decided to place a ban on French ships carrying nuclear test materials to Mururoa Atoll.

Herbert Roth