

# CHRONICLE

## MARCH 1988

Controversy over the State Sector Bill dominated industrial news in March. In submissions to the parliamentary select committee the Employers Federation welcomed the bill because it would bring the state and private sectors under a common industrial relations framework, but asked that chief executives have a larger role in negotiating conditions of employment. The CSU warned that the bill would generate more frequent and increasingly destructive and acrimonious industrial disputes, while groups without economic muscle would face a constant erosion in their work conditions. The Labour party executive in a written submission described compulsory arbitration as a fundamental right which would be lost under the bill; it wanted pay and conditions fixed in national awards rather than agreements, and it asked for the bill to be deferred to allow proper scrutiny, negotiation and consultation. The Council for Equal Pay and Opportunity voiced fears that the bill threatened employment chances for women and minorities and threatened gains made in equal opportunity.

The Nurses Association told the select committee that it wanted the bill withdrawn because it would lower patient care and public health standards and cause nurses to leave the service. The Association launched a protest campaign on 7 March, ranging from strikes and stopwork meetings to cuts in non-essential services, and affecting 52 hospitals and extramural units. While patients would be inconvenienced, said the Association, the campaign was designed to have the minimum possible effect on them.

The PSA executive unanimously approved a resolution asking the annual conference to rescind the life membership conferred on Mr. Rodger in 1979.

Teachers, described by the Prime Minister as "A totally misinformed disorderly rabble," continued their nationwide rolling stoppages in protest against the State Sector Bill and their stalled pay talks. Private schools were not affected, but hundreds of state schools were forced to close each day, and Mr. Lange threatened to extend the school year by the number of days lost through the strike. Secondary school teachers resumed normal work on 7 March, but the stoppages continued at primary and intermediate schools.

On 9 March the president of the CTU, Mr. K. Douglas, together with state union leaders, discussed the bill for 4 hours with cabinet ministers. No progress was made but next day, after a meeting of the Labour Caucus, the government announced significant changes to the bill, allowing state employees to negotiate awards, providing for compulsory arbitration in return for a "no strike" commitment, preserving existing employment conditions, strengthening equal employment opportunities, and transferring the power to appoint chief executives from the Prime Minister to the Executive Council. Mr. Rodger described the changes as fine-tuning, the opposition denounced them as window-dressing, while the CSU decided to go ahead with the one-day national strike on 14 March.

The strike - the biggest state sector one-day stoppage in New Zealand's history - was hailed by the PSA as a huge success, but branded as a failure by the Prime Minister because the bill would not be withdrawn. According to the PSA, 75 to 90 percent of its more than 70,000 members stayed home, but the State Services Commission said that only half of its 59,000 employees had been absent. Besides government departments, services were disrupted in hospitals, courts, broadcasting, universities and kindergartens. Technical institute teachers took a ballot which produced an overwhelming majority in favour of industrial action, and then held one-day stoppages starting in the South Island on 14 March.

The parliamentary select committee, which had considered 249 submissions on the bill, reported back on 16 March, and Parliament took urgency for the second reading debate. Wellington secondary school teachers dressed in black or wearing black armbands listened to the debate on the bill from the parliamentary public galleries. The CSU decided to cancel all further industrial action against the bill from 18 March, and to recommend a return to normal work to all affiliates. The changes, said CSU chairman Mr. Hicks, made it a less bad bill than it was but, he added, "our members will not readily forget the betrayal and dishonesty of the government on this issue."

The PPTA, in large newspaper advertisements, affirmed its continued opposition to "this bad law" which, it claimed, will damage education. CSU advertisements credited changes to the bill to the campaign of action against it, but announced a continuing campaign with further industrial action to defeat the bill in practice. Despite opposition attempts to slow its progress by forcing numerous divisions, the bill passed its third reading on 30 March, after it had been broken up into 22 separate bills. It came into force on 1 April, as planned. The National Party promised to repeal the legislation if it became the government, but Mr. Rodger forecast that the state unions which had opposed the bill so fiercely would become its sternest defenders when they saw it in practice.

A caucus committee chaired by Mr. F. Gerbic, M.P., sought submissions on the status of "dependent contractors", i.e. self-employed workers, such as owner-drivers, who rely for most of their income on work done for one company. Some companies, it was claimed, were increasingly evading the minimum provisions of the Labour Relations Act by reclassifying their staff as self-employed contractors. The Committee was to make recommendations to the government by June.

The government marked International Working Women's Day on 8 March by announcing the appointment of a working group on equal opportunities and equal pay, headed by former Labour Party president Ms. M. Wilson.

The Labour Court ruled that it had the power to grant *ex parte* injunctions but not *ex parte* compliance orders. The issue first arose last October, when the Auckland Harbour Board gained a compliance order against the Harbour Workers Union without the union's knowledge.

The Clerical Workers Union, with the support of the CTU, took a test case to the Labour Court to challenge the Arbitration Commission's refusal to register awards which incorporated the union membership clause of the old Industrial Relations Act. The old act required workers to join a union within 14 days of commencing employment, while the Labour Relations Act requires them to do so within 14 days of being asked by a union official. The court ruled on 30 March in favour of the union.

The Equal Opportunities Tribunal continued hearings into allegations that Air New Zealand had discriminated against air hostesses by denying them promotion. The company presented its case, followed by the Airline Stewards and Hostesses Union. A decision was not expected for another 5 months. Mt. Cook Airline clerical staff struck for 2 days from 2 March over a wage claim. They later won an 11 percent increase and rises of up to 32 percent in allowances.

Ancillary drivers resumed their campaign for an award rise to match the near 14 percent increases won by other drivers. Most major firms in Auckland agreed to meet the claim, but the employers refused to incorporate the increase in a national award. After stopwork

meetings and sporadic stoppages, the northern drivers' secretary, Mr. B. Andersen, proposed a separate northern award because southern unions were not taking the same strong stand as Auckland. In a separate dispute drivers struck at 3 Auckland construction firms, Fletcher, Downer and Wilkins & Davies, which had been exempted from the contractors' award. An attempt to establish a separate award covering these 3 firms failed, but work resumed on 16 March at Fletcher and Wilkins & Davies after the firms met the union claims.

Meat workers decided to hold stopwork meetings throughout the country to discuss the breakdown of their award negotiations. The unions wanted local shed agreements attached to the national award, but the employers argued that this represented two-tier bargaining, which was no longer possible under the Labour Relations Act. A new Tirau meat company, Ventec Corporation, applied to have its house agreement with some 25 employees registered under s. 152 of the Labour Relations Act, which would remove the workers from award coverage. According to the meat workers' union, the house agreement was "vastly inferior" to wages and conditions under the award. An earlier s. 152 application by Otaki Abattoirs was withdrawn after strong union opposition.

Cooked meals were again served on Ansett flights from 19 March, after settlement of a pay dispute with the contractor, Food Concepts Ltd. The Auckland Hospital Board, which includes 5 members elected from a union-sponsored Community Health Coalition ticket, decided to cancel cleaning contracts with the private firm Crothalls, and to directly employ cleaning staff as it did before 1981.

Nine site unions representing some 450 workers employed by Zublin Williamson on the Clyde dam project voted to strike on 28 February, after 5 days of unsuccessful wage negotiations. Their main demand was to raise the site allowance from \$2.30 an hour to \$4.01, which is the standard rate on North Island construction projects. An informal meeting with the employers on 28 March failed to settle the dispute.

Huntly coal miners picketed the Downer-owned Weavers and Waipuna opencast mines on 14 March, to protest at failed redundancy talks. Waikato Coal Corporation mines were also idle that day because underground officials, who belong to the PSA, took part in the national stoppage over the State Sector Bill. The Weavers and Waipuna men eventually won an improved redundancy deal.

Workers at New Zealand Forest Products' Kinleith mill in Tokoroa walked out on 17 March because the company insisted on negotiating 6 separate agreements for each of its activities, instead of one composite agreement demanded by 14 site unions. Three other unions - engineers, electricians and plumbers - were not involved in the dispute, but the strike quickly spread to staff at Whakatane Board Mills and to some NZFP operations in Auckland, affecting about 2500 workers altogether. After 2 weeks on strike the unions conceded NZFP's claim for separate deals for its subsidiary companies. In return they won the right to conclude composite agreements within that framework, a 7 percent increase in wages and allowances, and a change of ownership clause which protected wages and conditions in case a company was sold. Work resumed on 30 March. At Kawerau the Northern Pulp and Paper Workers Union, which in the past had negotiated its own agreements, decided to join with other site unions in negotiating a composite deal.

The newspaper printers' award was settled on 3 March, with an 8.5 percent increase for an 11-month term. An "extraordinarily generous" agreement, reached previously with Independent Newspapers Ltd. on the introduction of new technology, became part of the award.

Airways Corporation employees planned to strike on 10 March in a dispute over redundancy payments to laid-off staff, but the PSA called off the stoppage in response to a plea by civil defense authorities to keep airports open during the North Island flood emergency. The dispute was settled on 11 March, when the Airways Corporation agreed to a redundancy package similar to Electricorp's. Crash rescue firefighters at Wellington and Auckland airports, however, gave notice of an indefinite strike over the number of staff to be retained when the airports were corporatised on 1 April. In Wellington

agreement was reached on 19 March, but the 48 Auckland firefighters stopped work on 20 March, as announced. State-owned enterprises minister Mr. Prebble called the strike, which immobilised the airport, "totally outrageous and unnecessary" and threatened legal action, but the dispute was settled after two days, on 21 March, when both sides reached agreement on staffing and safety standards.

A survey conducted by Auckland University staff for the Distribution Workers Federation showed that 80 percent of 500 people polled in main centres opposed Sunday trading. Two-thirds of those polled believed that Sunday trading would result in greater costs. An advisory committee, which is hearing submissions on changes to shop trading hours, was due to report to the government by 31 May.

The strike of 65 storeworkers, cleaners and clerical staff continued at the Nissan plant in Auckland. The sole carpenter at the plant signed the "Nissan Way" agreement approved earlier by the Engineers Union, but some cafeteria staff complained that their union had prevented them from signing. The company gave notice of substantial damages claims against the striking unions, amounting to \$85,000 a day from 1 March, but renewed talks broke down over the reinstatement of a storeworkers delegate and other issues such as flexible work practices. On 16 March police arrested a woman striker after an incident on the picket line and her reinstatement became another issue in the dispute. The company opened a "Nissan News" telephone hotline to promote its side of the story, while the strikers distributed 30,000 copies of a 4-page printed "Picket News" tabloid. Mr. Marshall, of the Employers Federation, denounced lunatic-fringe politically motivated industrial saboteurs who employed standover tactics, but the entry of the CTU, whose Auckland president Mr. B. Andersen joined the striking unions' negotiating team, took some heat out of the dispute. In end-of-month negotiations the company withdrew the flexibility claim, which cut across demarcation lines, but it refused to guarantee the reinstatement of the two workers, and the strike continued.

An Auckland freight company manager, who lost his job in 1981 after it was discovered that he had made secret payments to two union delegates to avoid industrial disputes, claimed damages from the Mogal Corporation and the Northern Storeworkers Union for conspiracy to dismiss him. The case was heard in the Auckland High Court from 7 to 18 March, when the jury assessed damages at \$65,000. Final judgement has still to be delivered.

Talks on the passenger transport drivers' award were adjourned in Wellington early in the month, after the employers had offered a 7 percent increase and had asked to replace the award with six local documents. Regional variations in pay and conditions had existed for a long time but the Labour Relations Act now prohibited second-tier bargaining. At a stopwork on 14 March Auckland Regional Authority drivers accepted an employer proposal which gave them a 16 percent pay increase for a 2-year term. In return the union agreed to the introduction of a new category of serviceman-driver, which allowed the employment of service staff as drivers during peak periods. The new basic pay rate of 10 dollars an hour reflected the reality of living in Auckland, said the union secretary, but he did not expect employers in the five other cities to accept this rate in a national award.

Auckland bus drivers voted overwhelmingly to disaffiliate from the Labour Party. Three years earlier, said their president, support for the party had been almost unanimous. Another union to disaffiliate was the Napier Waterside Workers Union, which had joined the Labour Party soon after the party was founded in 1916.

## APRIL 1988

At the Employers Federation annual conference in Auckland merchant banker Mr. M. Fay called for urgent action to free up the labour market by abolishing centralised bargaining and national awards. He also urged employers to give employees a direct stake in the profitability of their companies. A 2-day policy meeting of unions affiliated to the

Labour Party on 28-29 April heard a keynote address by Mr. L. Carmichael, assistant general secretary of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, who was one of the architects of the accord between Australian unions and the Australian Labour government. The conference decided to seek an "incomes understanding" at the forthcoming tripartite wage talks, based on wage restraint in return for job-creating investment.

Some 1600 Databank employees voted overwhelmingly in favour of industrial action, after rejecting a redundancy offer for 58 staff who were losing their jobs through restructuring. The company had offered 5 weeks' pay for the first year of service, 3 weeks for each subsequent year up to 10 years, and 2 weeks after that up to a maximum of 20 years. The Bank Officers Union claimed 8 weeks' pay for the first year and 4 weeks for each following year. It announced an indefinite strike from 28 April, but further talks with the company brought a last-minute settlement under which the laid-off staff were to receive 8 weeks' pay for the first year, 4 weeks for the second to 15th year, 3 weeks for the 16th to 20th year, and one week for each additional year, as well as 7 weeks' notice of redundancy or 7 weeks' pay in lieu of notice.

The Clerical Workers Federation announced that it had recovered more than \$4 million from employers last year in redundancy payments, wage arrears and compensation for unjustified dismissals. In 1978, when the union first began recording recoveries, the total was \$250,000.

Ancillary drivers outside the northern district settled their award on 20 April with pay increases of between 9 and 11 percent. Northern ancillary drivers however continued to seek a pay rise of about 14 percent, in line with increases achieved by contractors' and carriers' drivers. Auckland firms which had accepted this demand signed letters urging employer negotiators to incorporate it in the northern award, but the employers' advocate claimed that these letters had been signed under duress and were worthless in negotiations.

Meat workers voted for industrial action over the employers' insistence to replace the national award with separate shed agreements. The previous award had expired at the end of 1987 and, according to the union, the delay in settling a new award saved the employers \$500,000 a week, or about \$24 per worker. In talks in Wellington on 13 April the unions lowered their pay claim to a 4.5 percent rise, but the employers held to their original position. After further negotiations broke down on 20 April, the unions announced a load-out ban on all export products from midnight of 3 May.

Seventy-five Kawerau members of the National Union of Railwaymen stopped work on 8 April, halting rail traffic between Murupara and Mt. Maunganui. The dispute was over the employment of a train examiner at Murupara "for safety reasons". The men returned to work on 18 April, after the union agreed with the Railways Corporation to set up a joint committee to investigate the issue. The Blenheim branch of the NUR passed a vote of no confidence in its national executive and called for the resignation of the national secretary, Mr. D. Goodfellow, but a motion asking for a ballot on breaking away from the national union was defeated at a Canterbury branch stopwork meeting on 30 April.

In ballots conducted by the New Zealand Workers Union under Labour Department supervision, farm workers approved compulsory union membership. Participation in the ballots was small: dairy farm workers voted 12 to 8 in favour, meat and wool workers 77 to 34, and workers on arable and pig farms 13 to 4. The opposition spokesman on agriculture called the ballots "a disgusting travesty of justice" and promised that a National government would restore voluntary unionism.

The combined unions continued their strike at the Nissan car assembly plant in Auckland, demanding the reinstatement of all dismissed workers, withdrawal of the company's damages claims, and the negotiation of a site agreement. CTU president Mr. K. Douglas took part in lengthy negotiations which brought agreement on most issues, including a wage increase of 8.5 percent over 10 months. On 21 April the suspended engineers returned to the plant but they were engaged in training sessions and not production. The combined unions insisted that the question of reinstating two dismissed

workers, who had been involved in picket line incidents, had to be settled by an independent arbitrator before any general return to work. The strike came to an end on 28 April, after nearly 10 weeks, which made it the longest dispute in the New Zealand car assembly industry. The company dropped its damages claims and accepted that members of the combined unions would not be subject to "Nissan Way" flexibility arrangements. The agreed arbitrator, Auckland University law professor Dr. W. Hodge, ordered the reinstatement of the two dismissed workers, but blamed the Distribution Workers Union for its "uncompromising intransigence."

Sixty-two storeworkers at the Daily Freightways Penrose terminal, who walked out on 5 April after a vote of no confidence in the branch manager, were dismissed when they returned to work on the following day. The company rejected a union proposal to temporarily transfer the manager, while union officials and senior management considered how harmony could be restored on the job. The company advertised for new staff to replace the dismissed men, while union members picketed the terminal and sought to dissuade other employers from using Daily Freightways transport. The company also sought \$1 million in damages from the union and a High Court injunction to end a ban on handling Daily Freightways containers.

Job losses caused by restructuring led to a dispute at UEB carpet mills in Auckland and Napier, where more than 500 workers went on strike. The company offered 10 weeks' pay for the first year of service and 2 weeks for each subsequent year, but the union demanded 12 weeks for the first year.

Some 50 staff at the Whakarewarewa Maori Arts and Crafts Institute went on strike in a dispute over wages and the right to conclude a composite agreement. The strike, which lasted a fortnight, closed the thermal reserve over Easter. Work resumed on 13 April, when the combined unions and the Institute board agreed to resume negotiations.

## MAY 1988

The 51-year-old Federation of Labour was officially wound up on 9 May, when its National Council voted itself out of existence.

The Airline Stewards and Hostesses Union claimed that Air New Zealand for the past 6 years had failed to pay the appropriate rate for an hour's overtime worked on "ultra-long haul" flights, and that members were owed backpay estimated to run into millions of dollars. The company admitted that errors had been made in computing pay, but claimed that in the final result no one was underpaid. The union decided to take the claim to the Labour Court.

The Industrial Commission awarded Education Department cleaners a 9.4 percent rise from 1 January, which was more than the union had been seeking. School cleaners had struck for two days in February over a 9.13 percent pay claim, while the Department offered a 7.5 percent increase. "The great inconvenience caused to the public and the disruption of children's education need never have occurred," commented the union secretary, Mr. P. Kelly.

Members of the Early Childhood Workers Union held 3-hour nationwide stopwork meetings in the morning of 31 May, following the second adjournment of their award talks. The union was seeking a 15 percent rise for workers currently paid between \$5.30 and \$7.87 an hour. The employers offered an 8 percent pay rise, but Otago-Southland childcare workers had gained a 12 percent rise in their regional award. The stopwork meetings voted to strike for a full or half day if renewed negotiations on 17 June failed to reach agreement.

The labour Court ruled in favour of exclusive coverage by the Engineers Union in a riggers' demarcation dispute at the Tasman paper mill in Kawerau. In previous decisions, going back almost 20 years, the court had ruled that both the Engineers and Labourers

Unions had coverage of riggers' work. The opposition labour spokesman, Mr. W. Birch, attacked the Northern Labourers Union's riggers' register as "mafia-like" and called for an inquiry by a parliamentary select committee. He did not claim that the register was illegal, but he considered it "unethical" because it took from individual workers the right to choose where they should work.

The meat workers' unions' load-out ban on export meat came into force at midnight on 3 May, but was called off 48 hours later to allow negotiations to resume. The parties had agreed to a weekly wage increase of \$24.13, but the employers refused to carry over clause 13 of the old award, which provided for further shed negotiations. The talks failed when the employers rejected union proposals for a government-appointed committee of inquiry and for moves towards regional and company awards. The load-out ban was to be reimposed from 17 May, but it was called off after South Island union branches signed separate agreements with their employers. An official of the Auckland-Tomoana union denounced the southern workers' action, which effectively removed them from the coverage of the national award, as "close to scabbing". The two meat workers' unions agreed to save the national award by offering to omit the controversial clause 13. According to union figures, meat workers' wages had risen by 32.6 percent since 1981, compared with average wage increases of 84.7 percent and a rise in inflation of 102.5 percent.

Construction unions signed a "good behaviour" agreement with the Pacific Bechtel Corporation to cover the proposed Kinleith modernisation scheme. The agreement was designed to ensure industrial harmony even before the start of the project. Operators and process technicians at the Motunui Synfuel plant struck on 11 May in a dispute over their voluntary agreement. At the Clyde dam site the strike by Zublin Williamson employees continued. At the end of May the consortium served eviction notices on workers living in the firm's camp, while Auckland unions stepped up their financial support for the strikers.

One hundred workers employed at Fletcher's Riccarton asbestos factory between 1940 and 1973 registered with the Canterbury Labourers Union, which is co-ordinating claims for compensation for health problems caused by asbestos dust. More claims were expected and the total amount claimed could run into millions of dollars. The company refused to admit legal liability.

Four hundred Wellington Telecom workers struck for two days on 16 and 17 May, in protest against proposals to cut staff and contract work out. Telecom, which had shed 2000 staff last year through natural attrition, announced further redundancies in the four main cities and in other centres.

The PSA served notice of industrial action over disagreements about the codification of terms and conditions in the health and education sectors, but called off a planned national stoppage of health workers on 31 May, because the need was "no longer apparent". Government typists, who took industrial action over wages earlier in the year, gained a minimum guaranteed pay rise of 8 percent, backdated to 10 November.

The Auckland High Court on 5 May refused to grant an injunction to Daily Freightways on the grounds that the Labour Relations Act gave exclusive jurisdiction to the Labour Court, where a strike existed or was threatened. The company then lodged a claim for injunction and a compliance order with the Labour Court. The hearing opened on 13 May, but before then some picketers were injured and two picketers arrested on 9 May, when senior management staff drove 22 newly hired workers into the terminal. In court the Distribution Workers Union argued that the issue was a redundancy dispute disguised by a massive dismissal, but the company maintained that the union bans and pickets were unlawful because they related to a personal grievance matter - the sackings. On 17 May the judge adjourned the case *sine die* to give the parties a further chance to reach a settlement. Subsequent negotiations led to an agreement under which the company dropped its legal action, while the union withdrew its bans from 20 May and removed the pickets. The dismissed storeworkers were not reinstated, but many found jobs elsewhere. Mr. B. Andersen characterised the dispute as a partial defeat for the union.

A dispute between watersiders and the New Zealand Overseas Movers Society stranded more than 70 container loads of household goods in New Zealand ports. The Society claimed that it had negotiated an agreement with the Waterside Workers Federation, which allowed Society members to unload containers filled with household goods but, according to the Federation, the agreement was a trial only and had been rejected by local waterside branches. Under the previous arrangement, watersiders had the right to unload all household containers with more than one consignment. On 23 May the Auckland High Court granted an interim injunction ordering watersiders to release the containers, but harbour workers in Auckland, Wellington and Lyttelton, who were not bound by the injunction, then refused to allow removal firms to take away containers with goods belonging to more than one owner. On 30 May the harbour workers called off their ban, pending the expiry of the interim injunction on 6 June. The trial agreement also expired that day and unloading of household containers again became the responsibility of watersiders and harbour workers.

## **JUNE 1988**

This year's tripartite wage conference opened in Wellington on 2 June. Unions and employers agreed that the preservation of jobs was the first priority, but the CTU position paper stressed that wage restraint was a "trite solution" to the problem of job security, and proposed the creation of a sector council to investigate "adjustment paths" for industries and regions. The meeting agreed to work towards the setting up of joint working parties on an active labour market policy and on low pay. Speaking to the Orewa Rotary Club on 14 June, the Associate Minister of Finance, Mr. P. Neilson, forecast a rise in inflation to October 1989 of between 4 and 6 percent, and argued that wage increases around those levels would enhance prospects for job growth. The government, he said, could not tolerate the high wage round figures of past years if its economic policies were to work.

Mr. S. Marshall of the Employers Federation rejected any suggestion that wage increases should be linked to inflation, but a few days later the Engineers Union voted to sign a 2-year agreement at the Tasman mill in Kawerau, which provided for a 7.75 percent pay increase backdated to 4 April, and tied wage rises in the second year to the consumer price index. Three other site unions, carpenters, painters, and engine-drivers, also voted to sign the agreement, which limited the right to strike, but the remaining 8 site unions, including the Northern Pulp and Paper Workers Union, refused to sign.

According to official figures, wage and salary rates paid in all sectors rose by 8.1 percent in the year ended 31 March. The increase was 7.3 percent in the private sector, 9.1 percent in the central government sector, and 10.3 percent in the local government sector. Work stoppages in 1987 were just over a quarter of the 1986 level: 366,307 person-days lost through strikes, lockouts, go-slows and overtime bans, compared with 1,329,054 days lost in 1986.

After an appeal by the Labourers Union, many of whose members work on building sites, the Labour Court ordered the Carpenters Union, which had changed its name to the Building Workers Union last October, to choose another name. The judge suggested New Zealand Building Tradespersons Union.

Early childhood workers accepted a 10 percent pay increase on 17 June, equivalent to rates of between \$5.83 and \$8.66 an hour, depending on length of service. They also won an annual sick leave entitlement of 7 days, and a 4th week of annual leave after 5 years of service.

The Northern Clerical Workers union issued a statement that its secretary, Mr. S. Jackson, had taken leave to travel to Libya and that the trip had nothing to do with the union. A group of 15 members nevertheless, in a joint letter to the New Zealand Herald,



asked the union executive to replace Mr. Jackson, whom they accused of working for the radical Maori movement in the union's time.

Clothing workers' unions, whose membership had declined significantly because of factory closures, organised a march in Auckland on 22 June jointly with their employers, to protest against the government's policy of cheap imports, particularly of Fiji-made garments. About 3000 clothing and textile workers took part.

Ancillary drivers in the northern district gained wage and allowance increases of near 14 percent on 3 June, after a campaign of sporadic strikes and industrial pressure going back to last November. This gave them the parity they had sought with carriers' and contractors' drivers.

A New Zealand Fishing Industry Union, based on the membership of the Share Fishermen's Association, gained provisional registration. It will cover all sea-going workers in the industry, from skippers to deckhands. Plans to obtain registration of another new organisation for previously non-unionised workers, to be called the Equine Workers Association, suffered a setback when the briefcase of the secretary of the Stablehands and Stud Workers Society was stolen in Auckland. The briefcase contained the signatures of about 400 Society members willing to form the new union, and these signatures will now have to be collected again.

Journalists at the National Business Review struck on 3 June, after the new owners announced 20 redundancies and plans to shift to Auckland. The paper reappeared in the following week, and the Journalists Union reached agreement with the proprietors on redundancy payments and relocation allowances.

The Court of Appeal upheld an appeal by the Labourers Union against a High Court ruling that it had jurisdiction to decide a \$10 million damages claim by Fletcher Challenge against the union. The issue is to be decided in the Labour Court.

Clyde dam workers voted on 5 June to continue their strike, but only by a majority of 171 to 112. The combined unions had organised a major relief effort on the pattern of the 1980 Kinleith strike, they had sent delegates around the country to explain their case and appeal for support, and they had published a strike journal "registered in the hearts and minds of frustrated workers and their families." Many families however were suffering considerable hardship as the strike dragged into its 17th week, and on 20 June 23 men broke rank and returned to work. Despite vigorous picketing 35 strike-breakers were at work on the following day, and this induced the unions to reopen negotiations with the Zublin Williamson consortium. Agreement was reached quickly and on 27 June normal work resumed. The terms of the agreement were not made public, but both sides made concessions.

Telecom staff around New Zealand attended 65 stopwork meetings called by the Post Office Union to discuss threatened mass redundancies. Speakers accused the corporation of putting profits before people, but warned that strikes would undermine the viability of Telecom.

Negotiations continued between state unions and the State Services Commission to codify employment conditions for some 180,000 workers in the core public service and in the health and education sectors. The deadline was 30 June and by that time most of the 70-plus transition agreements had been finalised. The major unresolved documents were in the education sector, affecting secondary and technical school teachers.

The Seamen's Union stopped the cargo ship *Fetu Moana* from leaving Auckland on 3 June, because the government had withdrawn its subsidy and this was to be the last sailing to Tahiti and the Cook Islands. The union was concerned about the future of the crew of some 40 New Zealand seamen.

The Waterside Workers Federation on 13 June threatened to boycott award talks and to strike at the container terminals of Auckland, Wellington and Dunedin, because the employers had attempted to change work practices at the terminals. The Federation withdrew the threat a day later, after the employers agreed to delay the planned changes.

Herbert Roth