

THE ACTIVIST



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THE LAST SPIKE

The National President Jim Kelly, General Secretary Wayne Butson, NMC members Alby Barr, Wally Wallbutton and Wellington Branch secretary Howard Phillips represented the Union at the last spike ceremony at Pokaka on Saturday 15 November 2008. Trains left Wellington and Auckland on the day with dignitaries and invited guests to meet at Pokaka for the re-enactment of the driving of the last spike by James Bolger Chair of the KiwiRail (NZRC) board. There is a story and pictures in the December *Transport Worker*.

Congratulations to all members involved in the day – your contribution to the success of the event was much appreciated and noted by all who attended.

KIWI RAIL – VEOLIA MECA – UPDATE

KIWI RAIL - The KiwiRail ratification ballot for the renewal of the KiwiRail-Veolia-RMTU MECA is now in the hands of NZ Post. The ballot closes on **5 DECEMBER 2008 AND WILL BE COUNTED ON 8 DECEMBER 2008.**

If members employed by KiwiRail who fall within the coverage of the MECA have not received their ballot paper in their mailbox by Friday 21 November 2008 please contact the National Office immediately on 04 4992066 so we can get a ballot paper to you. This is why it is essential to ensure that the Union has your correct address information at all times.

There are 24 members who we are unable to send their ballot papers to as we have no

address or location information on file. We are endeavoring to track you down.

Should the ballot be successful then KiwiRail has advised that the back pay can be paid to members prior to Christmas.

VEOLIA - The Terms of settlement wording between RMTU and Veolia should be finalised this week and so we are hopeful that meetings can be held shortly thereafter with members.

A postal ratification ballot will be held. We will need to canvas members about shortening the ratification ballot timeframe if there is a desire for the backpay to be paid before Christmas in the event that the settlement is ratified.

The Terms of Settlement and the MOU are available from Branch Secretaries and the Union website.

CHAMPION MEMBERS

The Champion Flour Mill is situated on the Mt Maunganui wharf and is owned by Goodman Fielder New Zealand Ltd. The mill has been in existence for approximately 30 years. Our RMTU members are employed in the Warehouse, the Mill itself and the Store. The designations include millers, packers, store persons and Mill Operatives.

We initiated bargaining on 9 June 2008 as the current Agreement expired on 31 July. We tabled member claims and agreed a Bargaining Process agreement.

Our 2 union delegates Gary Cluitt, Corey Power and RMTU Organiser Phil Spanswick met with the Company and agreed to changes to a number of clauses. Members rejected the employer offer of 4% plus 4% for a two year term backdated to 31st July. As per the Bargaining Process agreement we went to Mediation and it was agreed to set



This is for the information and guidance of RMTU members only!

up a Working Party to meet during the term of the agreement to look at cost savings which could be converted to additional income for the members.

On 13 November the 4% plus 4% and Working Party deal was successfully ratified by a unanimous vote of the members.

KIC LOCO REPS GO TO CHINA

Wally Wallbutton, Bernie Snook and Murray Dunlop are part of a KiwiRail delegation going to China to look at Chinese built locomotives. The RMTU understands that the KiwiRail Board has approved the purchase of up to 20 locomotives. Money has also been set aside for the conducting of a study for locomotives to be built here in NZ. The China visit is part of a fact finding process to identify the options for the KiwiRail Board to consider.

The RMTU strongly supports as much work as possible being done within NZ by our Railway Workshops. Rail tradespersons have clearly demonstrated their expertise with locomotive upgrades and the S series passenger car refurbishments.

We all will await with interest the study tour groups report.

UNIONS CONTRIBUTE TO G20 DEBATE

A crisis summit of the G20 this weekend must begin work on a more inclusive, just and democratic system for the governance of the global economy, say Australian unions.

Workers, represented by trade unions, must be given a seat at the table to negotiate a new world economic order following settlement of the global financial crisis.

ACTU President Sharan Burrow will lead a delegation of international unions in meetings with the heads of the International Monetary Fund, World Bank

and members of President-elect Obama's transition team in Washington DC tomorrow.

Ms Burrow, who is also president of the International Trade Union Confederation, said the message from unions to the G20 was there could not be a continuation of business as usual.

The ITUC, along with the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD, has drawn up The Global Unions "Washington Declaration" which seeks to set out a path towards a new approach to the global economy.

The Washington Declaration proposes a co-ordinated recovery plan for the real economy, re-regulation of global financial markets, and a new international system of economic governance.

It also declares that priority must be given to combating the crisis of distributive justice.

"Working families are suffering enormously as a result of the cavalier, unregulated behaviour of corporate cowboys over the past decade," Ms Burrow said.

"They are the ones who are losing homes, jobs and pensions because of a financial crisis they did not cause.

"As taxpayers, they are being called on to bail-out those who are responsible.

"This can't be allowed to happen again. We need a new global financial and economic architecture, and working people require a seat at the table in these meetings and institutions.

"How else can they have confidence that bankers and governments meeting behind closed doors are acting in the interests of workers and will get it right this time?"

The Washington Declaration calls for an end to the ideology of unfettered financial markets, "where self-regulation has been exposed as a fraud and greed has overridden rational judgement to the detriment of the real economy".



It also calls for governments to bring forward infrastructure programs to stimulate demand in the short term, and for a "Green New Deal" to create jobs through alternative energy development and conservation.

Tax and expenditure measures should be introduced to support the purchasing power of middle and low income earners.

Beyond the immediate crisis, we must ensure that it never happens again.

We need greater accountability of central banks, regulation of hedge funds and private equity, reform and control of executive compensation and corporate profits, and proper consumer protection against predatory lending.

There must be a new structure of economic governance for the global economy, and efforts must be made to tackle the inequality in income distribution that lies behind this crisis.

Global Unions have issued a ten-page "Washington Declaration".

Download here
<http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/0811t_gf_G20.pdf>

100 Years Last spike

On Saturday 15
November 2008 special trains left

RAIL AND MARITIME TRANSPORT UNION KEEN TO ESTABLISH DIALOGUE WITH NEW TRANSPORT

Rail and Maritime Transport Union media release FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Monday 17 November 2008

The country's largest specialist transport Union, The Rail and Maritime Transport Union, congratulates Steven Joyce on his appointment as Minister of Transport and hopes the new National Government will continue the funding and other support necessary for the restoration and rejuvenation of KiwiRail.

Additionally we look forward to the Minister continuing the strong commitment of his

predecessor for the retention of New Zealand's ports in New Zealand ownership and the implementation of the New Zealand Transport Strategy and the Seachange programme.

RMTU represents more than 4000 members employed within the Rail and Port industries.

The RMTU is committed to being a strong participant in the rejuvenation and growth of the Rail and Coastal Shipping sectors so as to ensure that New Zealand has an environmentally sustainable transport industry which is able to meet the ever growing transport needs of the country into the future.

RMTU General Secretary Wayne Butson said that "the RMTU recently celebrated its 100 year history as a transport Union and so is well placed to assist with the passing on of valuable practical knowledge that the new Minister may need in getting to grips with all aspects of his portfolio".

"The RMTU hopes that the Minister will quickly move to acquaint himself with all aspects of his portfolio and so will be very keen to meet with transport sector stakeholders and to visit KiwiRail and Port worksites to see firsthand the needs of the sector."

RMTU is also keen to meet with the Hon Bill English, the Minister for Infrastructure, and the Minister of State Owned Enterprises Simon Power as they will have important roles to play in maintaining the rebuild commitment to KiwiRail.

"Whilst the current economic situation means short term low fuel prices we all know that they will rise as the world economy recovers and so this Government must maintain the momentum of building fuel efficient sustainable transport modes for the country."

"We know that the vast majority of New Zealander's supported the renationalisation and restoration of the rail industry and so if the previously promised funding is curtailed by this Government the industry will surely collapse against the wishes of voters."



UGL WORKING PARTY – TRADE RATES

As a component part of the UGL-RMTU CA settlement the parties agreed the following;

“Relativity of Trades Rates:

It was agreed that during the first two months subsequent to ratification, the parties shall meet and review the relativities of Pay Scale 3 pay rates for Levels 3, 4, 5 & 6 with other relevant industry groups. Subsequently UGL Rail may amend the rates provided for in the Collective Agreement”

The CA was ratified on 21 October 2008. This means that the parties must meet together before 21 December 2008. The Union advised UGL of the RMTU participants to the working party on 24 October 2008. They are; Terry Duffy, Martin Greener, Ken Cherry (Hutt), Rudi Bren (Westfield) and Lauri Hall (Linwood) supported by an RMTU staff member. UGL HR Manager Jenny Kuttel advises that she is hopeful of the working party meeting in Wellington during the week commencing 24 November or alternatively 1 December 2008.

It is of note that a term of the recent KiwiRail proposed settlement is for KiwiRail to join the UGL working party but UGL report that no contact has yet been made with them by KiwiRail to join.

AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY PROTEST

Unionists will be gathering outside the Australian High Commission here in Wellington to protest the jail threat for construction unionists on Tuesday 2nd December from noon – 1:00 p.m. The Australian building & construction commission [a hangover from the Howard “work choices” era] is hearing a case against CFMEU official, Noel Washington, and who, if found guilty, could be jailed for six months. The Australian High Commission is situated at 72 Hobson Street, Thorndon.

See you there!

“SAMUEL PARNELL: A LEGACY”

A new book by our own Life member Paul Corliss published in association with unions Canterbury & Purple Grouse press. It is an ideal resource for Union Organisers, Industrial Officers, Senior Delegates, etc

Copies available at cost [\$10] plus actual postage

From the Foreword by Helen Kelly, President, NZ Council of Trade Unions... *“...He has produced a delightful record of Samuel Parnell’s contribution to the working lives of New Zealanders, both through his own analysis and then by providing an extensive listing of reference material. Its colourful description of Labour days past and the recording of industrial disputes make this book great reading.*

This book documents Samuel Parnell’s legacy not just as the “father” of the eight hour day, but also puts Parnell’s deeds into an international and historical context. Probably few people really know just how far ahead Parnell’s New Zealand was of other industrialising countries, although many of us appreciate how precious those gains were for working people and how easily they can be lost when they are not protected and

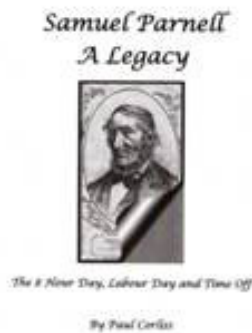
nurtured, as shown in the 1990’s.

This book contains a wonderful array of photographs, newspaper clippings and interesting memorabilia, along with other historical accounts and such things as internet links to other archival material. It is truly a comprehensive account of a man who left an indelible mark on New Zealand’s history.”

Email order to pcorliss@paradise.net.nz or to Purple Grouse Press, 38 Bellevue Terrace, Mt Pleasant, Christchurch.

BITS AND BOBS

- The \$6million in funding announced for the Wiri Inland Port siding upgrades will ease congestion.



- The NZ Transport Agency domestic sea freight development fund has received 19 Applications totalling almost \$18m. This is \$12m more than the 2008-09 funding available of \$6m.
- Next RMTU National Management Committee meeting in Wellington 4 December 2008.
- RMTU National Office and Regional Offices will close on 19 December 2008 and reopen on 5 January 2009. An on-call roster will be developed and distributed to branches.
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Let's Be Safe Out There &
Remember.....

**“WE’RE
STRONGER
TOGETHER”!**

