



June 2020, Vol. 11 No. 5

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Dear Member,

NEW ZEALAND LABOUR NEWS

Earthquake Doesn't Rattle Ardern

New Zealand's Prime Minister **Jacinda Ardern**, once again found herself the center of international news as an earthquake struck near Wellington on Monday, May 25th, as she was delivering an update on the country's COVID-19 status.

The 5.8 magnitude morning earthquake, where no injuries or damages have been reported, was centered 30km north-west of Levin and felt by more than 37,000 people across the length of New Zealand.

Kiwis are accustomed to earthquakes, as New Zealand sits on the so-called *Ring of Fire*, a tectonically-active 40,000-kilometer arc which spans much of the Pacific. New Zealand experiences some 20,000 earthquakes every year, or between 50 and 80 per day, although the vast majority are too small to be felt by humans.



Ardern Unfazed (Watch)

As the camera visibly shook, a still-smiling Ardern on the *Newshub AM Show* said, "We're just having a bit of an earthquake here, quite a -- quite a decent shake here. If you see things moving behind me... the Beehive moves a little more than most," she added, referring to the New Zealand Parliament's executive wing. Asked if she was feeling safe and well enough to continue the interview, Ardern responded "Fine, I'm not under any hanging lights, I look like I'm in a structurally sound place."

COVID Update: Ardern was delivering an update on the state of the country, which went on lockdown March 26th due to the coronavirus pandemic. Under Ardern's leadership, New Zealand has suffered only 1,504 cases and 22 deaths and is now in phase two of reopening.

Fast Food Workers Demand Safety

Based on their frontline perspective, **Unite Union** members working in fast food restaurants across Aotearoa have published a list of expectations and recommendations for safe operating at Level 2 and

moving forward during the COVID-19 crisis.



(Unite Union)

"Had McDonald's, KFC, Pizza Hut, Carls Jr and Burger King listened to their crew in the first place, we would have had a compliant system from day dot meaning better safety for workers and customers. Instead we had practices that defied common sense and put everyone at an unacceptable level of risk." said **Unite Union** National Secretary Gerard Hehir.

Despite the law mandating that employers must consult with their employees on changes to health and safety practices, there has been no consultation with workers since the start of the lockdown.

Workers expressed their frustration over company policy, or lack thereof, during Level 3 with thousands of breaches occurring daily, especially social distancing inside kitchens and with customers at drive-throughs. Pointing to the recent

outbreak in Australia, where 13 McDonalds restaurants closed due to infections, they claim there is still significant risk.

The list of safe practices was submitted to the major fast food chains, and is being followed-up by an industry-wide survey in order to identify which restaurants have been compliant.

Air New Zealand Workers "Devastated"

Amid the pandemic, Air New Zealand has announced staffing cuts affecting all routes, amounting to more than 1300 lost jobs.

These include 950 long and mid-haul workers, 300 domestic crew across Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch, and 97 jobs at regional airlines Air Nelson and Mt Cook.

"It couldn't be much worse for some of Air New Zealand's loyal cabin crew," said Rachel Mackintosh, Assistant National Secretary of **E tū** union, which represents many of the employees. "Many are completely gutted - they have committed years to making Air New Zealand a world class airline, only to be out of work with huge uncertainties about ongoing careers in their industry."



(E tū)

An E tū cabin crew member said they are "absolutely devastated... Air New Zealand values its staff less than its profit and shareholders, which is so sad to see unfold. The company's process has been rushed, overbearing, heavy-handed, and uncompromising. I don't believe the feedback in the consultation process was ever truly evaluated or applied."

E tū is calling for Air New Zealand, other companies, and the Government "to rebuild better - making sure we keep and create decent jobs and have union members involved in all decisions."

30,000 Sign Petition to Counter Council Hike

Almost 30,000 people have signed a petition to stop the Teachers Council's registration fee change that will see a 200 per cent increase given to the independent organisation.

The Council, which represents more than 100,000 registered teachers from early childhood and secondary schools, is responsible for processing teaching registrations, setting code and standards expectations, and providing leadership and assistance.

Said one member of **PPTA**, the Professional association and union of New Zealand secondary teachers, "There have been a huge number, thousands of communications from teachers to the Teaching



(PPTA)

Council, but despite it all - no matter what - they have not listened..."

The change means the current three-year registration cost of \$220.80, will move to an annual fee of \$157 from February 2021, meaning a \$250 increase overall.

Temperzone Workers Picket in Protest

In the first physically-distanced community picket in the country, **E tū** and **FIRST Union** members at Auckland air conditioning and ventilation manufacturing plant Temperzone, launched a picket May 25th to let the public know how they had been "disrespected at work" during the COVID crisis.

Many workers have had to use up their leave or take leave in advance during the lockdown and, in mid-May, received letters confirming their selection scores for redundancy. They feel Temperzone is not listening to their feedback or engaging in good faith.



(E tū)

"The company used our leave and only applied for the subsidy a week ago, after they proposed to cut up to 85 of our jobs," said E tū delegate Pena Tamamasui. "We all need to do our bit so New Zealand recovers, and our community needs to know Temperzone isn't."

"Everyone should get 100 per cent of their normal pay - instead of seeing their leave used and weekly income reduced to the point of wondering how they will put food on the table for their families," said E tū Team Leader Jen Natoli. "By putting money in people's pockets, we make sure that goods and services are kept in demand in all our local communities, keeping businesses thriving - that's how our economy will recover."

Jobs Gutted at Transmission Gully Project

Workers building the delayed billion-dollar Transmission Gully project now face potential redundancies, thinning their ranks by at least 88 staff working with the joint venture CPB-HEB.



Transmission Gully roading works at Takapu Road, pre-lockdown (Stuff)

Under the public-private partnership between Gateway Partnership and the agency, signed in July 2014, Gateway would design, construct, finance, operate and maintain the 27 kilometre-long road for 25 years.

April 2020 was initially touted as the month traffic would finally flow on to four lanes connecting Linden in north Wellington to Paekakariki on the Kapiti Coast. The road will now not open until 2021 at the earliest.

Amalgamated Workers Union national secretary Maurice Davis said on May 22nd the union was contacted about the restructuring, which is due to the seasonal winter slowdown in work and impacts of Covid-19

restrictions. However, conversations were put on hold until after negotiations with the NZTA were complete.

But Davis said the 88 workers were actually the "meat in the sandwich" in negotiations over delayed payments of \$190 million additional funding the NZ Transport Agency previously agreed to pay joint venture CPB-HEB.

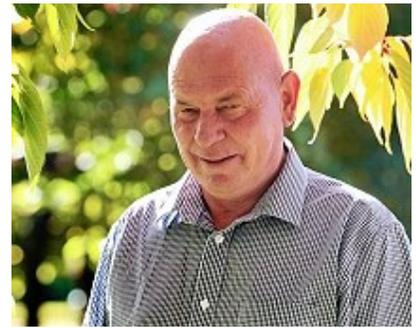
Veteran "Union Man" Takes Reins at NZ Meatworkers

After more than 40 years as a union man, Southlander Daryl Carran takes the reins as National Secretary at the **NZ Meatworkers and Related Trades Union**.

Carran started working at meatworks not long before his 16th birthday and was a union delegate by 19. "That was around 1975, in the era of Sir Robert Muldoon... There was a lot of industrial activity in those days, ratcheting up earnings and so forth. At one stage, the meatworkers were the trendsetters for any awards settlements across the country."

Carran, who had the backing of almost all meatworkers in the South Island and many more in the North Island, moved up from his role as president of the Otago-Southland branch of the union.

He told *Rural Life* he would immediately get to work on his goals for meatworkers. "I've appreciated the investment the union has put into me and it's only right that I should pay that back and do the best I can for the time that I'm around."



Daryl Carran has been involved in meatworks for 45 years (Christine O'Connor)

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR NEWS

Kiwis Join Call for Justice

Thousands of Kiwis marched in solidarity with Black Lives Matter protesters in the United States, calling for justice for George Floyd, an unarmed black man who died at the hands of Minneapolis, Minnesota police on May 25th, after being handcuffed and pleading for air as a white officer knelt on his neck.



Protestors in Auckland (Ricky Wilson/Stuff)

justice for George Floyd.

The incident, which was caught on video, has fueled protests across the United States, with some erupting into acts of violence in major cities, including in Washington, DC last night. Some of the hundreds of predominantly peaceful demonstrators picketing in front of the White House took their frustrations out on the national AFL-CIO building a few blocks away, smashing the plate glass window front of the federation headquarters and starting a fire in the lobby.

This morning, June 1st, **AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka** released the following statement on the attack on the building and larger call for

"My heart is heavy at the events of the past few days. I watched the video of George Floyd pleading for his life under the knee of a Minneapolis police officer. No person of conscience can hear Floyd's cries for help and not understand that something is deeply wrong in America.

What happened to George Floyd, what happened to Ahmaud Arbery, what happened to far too many unarmed people of color has happened for centuries. The difference is now we have cell phones. It's there for all of us to see. And we can't turn our heads and look away because we feel uncomfortable.

Racism plays an insidious role in the daily lives of all working people of color. This is a labor issue because it is a workplace issue. It is a community issue, and unions are the community. We must and will continue to fight for reforms in policing and to address issues of racial and economic inequality.

We categorically reject those on the fringes who are engaging in violence and destroying property. Attacks like the one on the AFL-CIO headquarters are senseless, disgraceful and only play into the hands of those who have oppressed workers of color for generations and detract from the peaceful, passionate protesters who are rightly bringing issues of racism to the forefront.

But in the end, the labor movement is not a building. We are a living collection of working people who will never stop fighting for economic,



social and racial justice. We are united unequivocally against the forces of hate who seek to divide this nation for their own personal and political gain at our expense.

Protestors vandalize AFL-CIO HQ in Washington, DC (Video/CNN)

We will clean up the glass, sweep away the ashes and keep doing our part to bring a better day out of this hour of darkness and despair.

Today and always, the important work of the AFL-CIO continues unabated."

Greening the Economy in the Post COVID-19 World

According to a new report from the **International Labour Organisation** (ILO), based in Geneva, and the UN Economic Commission for Europe, investment in transforming the transport sector could create millions of new jobs and help countries move to greener, healthier economies.

In *[Jobs in Green and Healthy Transport: Making the Green Shift](#)*, the authors say the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic cannot be a return to business as usual. It must be an opportunity to push the advancement of the sustainable development agenda.



(ILO News/Hans-Johnson)

A structural transformation of the transport sector will be needed if environmentally sustainable, green economies are to become a reality; one that could lead to the creation of millions of new jobs.

The report examines the employment implications of four "green transport" scenarios in 56 countries in North America, Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, which are members of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

It compares a 'business-as-usual' approach with scenario-based projections that run up to 2030. These options envisage an accelerated expansion of public transport and the electrification of private passenger and freight transport.

The study finds that 10 million additional jobs could be created worldwide - 2.9 million in the UNECE region - if 50 per cent of all vehicles manufactured were electric. In addition, almost 5 million new jobs could be created worldwide - 2.5 million in the UNECE region - if UNECE countries doubled investment in public transport.

Rebuilding Our Economy For All

As British Columbia's economy slowly reopens, the province's labour movement is encouraging its citizens to think beyond just rebuilding the economy we had before the COVID-19 outbreak.

"We have an unprecedented opportunity not just to restart the economy we had, but the economy we want," said **BC Federation of Labour** president Laird Cronk as the federation released its blueprint for BC's recovery.

Titled *[Rebuilding Our Economy for All](#)*, the wide-ranging document sets out a full range of policy recommendations for ensuring the economic restart works for all British Columbians, and reflects the new appreciation the province has for its front-line workers - many of them in low-paid, precarious jobs.

"As public respect for the value of their work has grown, so has our recognition of the many gaps this pandemic has exposed," the document says, citing workplace safety and employment standards, the need for robust public services and social supports, and addressing the continued marginalisation of vulnerable populations.

"The choices we make in the coming weeks and months are critical. We have an opportunity to create a

new economy and build a province equipped to address climate change while prospering along the way. Our choices must acknowledge and genuinely embrace reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and communities. Our choices must secure equity and shared prosperity in every community of this province."

Rebuilding Our Economy for All lists eight principles crucial for a just, successful recovery, including:

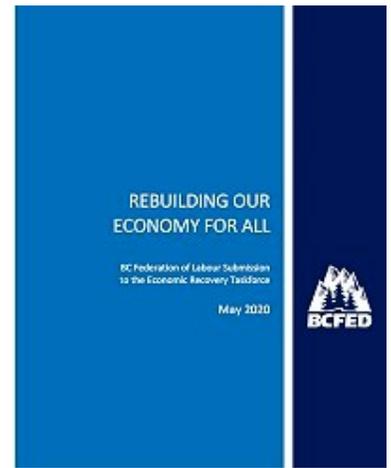
- * Focusing on the success of working people
- * Recognising the importance of undervalued work
- * Embracing the rights of Indigenous communities
- * Investing in and expanding public services
- * Strengthening employment standards
- * Speeding up the transition to a green economy
- * Using large-scale public investment to restart economic growth
- * Building long-term community resilience
- * The document charts a four-phase course for economic recovery:

In the first stage, the BCFED recommends a month of immediate action to address the ongoing emergency crises British Columbians are facing. The second stage, running through month four, offers recommendations for a safe return to work and improved supports and services.

The third stage, from month four to month eight, sees the province take the reins of recovery with measures to expand jobs, improve public services and increase community resilience; and in the fourth and final stage, the province actively lays the foundations for a durable, sustainable economy that addresses fundamental inequities and accelerates the shift to a prosperous, post-carbon future.

The BCFED also cautions against backward-looking approaches that try to spur business growth by slashing government spending and forcing concessions on working people. "We must reject calls to cut and slash our way back to what we used to know as normal - now is the time to build a better, fairer, more sustainable and more prosperous future for everyone," the document argues.

"After an unprecedented economic shutdown, we now have an unprecedented restart - and an historic opportunity," Cronk said. "It's a once-in-a-lifetime chance to ask ourselves not just how and when, but what kind of economy we want to restart."



[BCFED Report](#)



(IndustryView)

Mississippi Workers Join UFCW

In the first area labor election since the start of the pandemic, dozens of food processing workers in Byhalia, Mississippi voted in favor of joining the **United Food and Commercial Workers Union**, known as UFCW.

The vote among workers at Hearthside Food Solutions, one of the country's leading producers of cereal and baked goods, is the first to take place in the area since the coronavirus pandemic sparked a series of workplace safety concerns among food workers across the country, according to the AFL-CIO union federation, to which UFCW belongs.

"Today, I feel better than I have felt in the last 45 days," said Rose Turner, the UFCW's Memphis-based organising director. She said workers voted 62 to 47 in favor of joining the union after Hearthside hired a labor relations firm to discourage workers.

"You never know how an election is gonna go until the ballot box has been counted. I was down and out and I was weighed down, worked out," she said of the company's opposition. "But I wasn't gonna let go."

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