

The Northern News

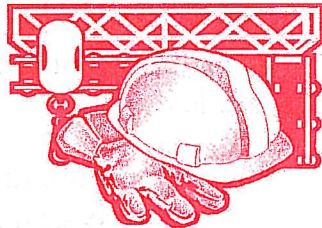
CONFIDENTIAL INTERNAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN AMALGAMATED WORKERS UNION

"It's Time for a Change"

This is what John Key said to get elected. He should have said, "We the National Coalition Government WILL CHANGE NZ so you won't recognise it". With the assistance of ACT and the Maori Party, the Coalition Government has certainly made or intends to make changes that will affect all workers. We list some below;

ACC:

ACC is not broke, but the scheme is under constant attack. This means less protection for workers. There have been cuts to physiotherapy support, cuts to counselling programs for sexual abuse victims, reduced entitlements for vulnerable workers injured at work such as seasonal workers, requirements to use your holiday pay up before receiving full weekly compensation and there is also the threat of privatisation.



FOUR WEEKS ANNUAL LEAVE:

We have only just got this entitlement but there are plans for the fourth week to be able to be exchanged for cash. Other changes could reduce holiday payments for some workers eg Relevant Daily pay.

APPEAL AGAINST UNFAIR DISMISSAL & UNFAIR TREATMENT AT WORK:

This right has been removed for workers in their first 3 months in an Enterprise of fewer than 20 workers. Now there are plans to extend this to other workplaces and to weaken appeal rights for all workers against unfair dismissal and unfair treatment at work.

REST & MEAL BREAKS:

A new Bill would make the length and timing of rest and meal breaks negotiable.

CUTS IN PUBLIC SERVICES:

As well as the cuts in Public Services, there has been an increasing number of layoffs of Public Service workers, and attempts to limit any pay increases.

TAX CHANGES:

A 2.5% increase in GST is on the cards. This will impact badly on those making ends meet on low incomes. Even if there is some compensation for the rise in GST, it is unfair if the tax cuts – once again – benefit those on high incomes while low income workers miss out.

FAIR PAY FOR WOMEN:

Fair pay for women is off the agenda – the Pay Equity Unit which audits the pay gap and makes recommendations, has been axed.

MINIMUM WAGE:

The latest increase in the minimum wage was just 25 cents to take it to \$12.75. Yet the cost of living is rising and we are falling even further behind Australian pay rates.

FUNDING for NIGHT CLASSES:

The Government axed most of the funding for night classes. This deprives workers of affordable opportunities outside work hours to lift their skills.

BENEFIT CHANGES

Recently we heard that this Government is heading an attack on benefits to reduce costs. This attack will affect people on the Dole, Sickness and Domestic Purposes Benefits unless they get part-time jobs. How stupid, when you consider the lines of the unemployed who are currently trying to get jobs. It just doesn't make sense. Maybe John Key and Paula Bennett will try another failed Job Summit to find the thousands of part time jobs needed to employ these people. The problem NZ has can be helped by slashing immigration of unskilled, semi-skilled and qualified workers whose qualifications are not recognised in NZ. Those people take jobs off the unskilled and semi-skilled NZ workers. Secondly wage rates must be substantially better than the Benefit Payments so people can pay the added costs of getting to work.

GST & The Union Fee

I have recently been asked if we would automatically increase your Union Fee by any increase in GST. The answer is "NO". As promised in 2007, the agreed fee at that time would remain in place until at least 2010, when if necessary, we would discuss future fees. That position has not changed.

'MAY' DAY

Come & Celebrate
International Workers Day
by participating in our 'May Day' March.

Invite your Friends & Family
Everyone is Welcome!!!

MARCH DETAILS:
Saturday 1st May 2010
1.45pm - Meet at Britomart
March from Britomart to the Maritime Club

2.30pm onwards - Celebration
Maritime Club, 68 Anzac Avenue.
Food will be provided. Cash Bar Available

AWUNZ Caravans

We have a Caravan in Whangamata and Whangateau available for AWUNZ members. The Caravans are ideal for a weekend break away from home and especially for a family holiday.

For more information, queries or
to request a Caravan booking:

Visit our Website: www.awunz.org.nz

Or Phone: Maara on (09) 378 6170

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