



UNION NEWS

January 2007

NZ MEAT INDUSTRY NEWS

The Meat Industry celebrates 125 years, sadly little thought was given to the workers that did the "blood & guts" work on the production lines readying the meat to go into the holds of the ships that traveled between NZ and Britain - the first ship, the "SS Dunedin" left NZ on February 15, 1882. Unfortunately there appears to be a perception from some farmers within the Meat Board and some Meat Company Chief Executives that they do all the work preparing the lambs and that the lambs miraculously change into cuts of meat in a British supermarket chiller cabinet.

Resulting from a meeting with the Minister of Agriculture - Hon Jim Anderton and this Union's hierarchy representing the workers we have been invited to attend a number of the public functions celebrating our last 125 years.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

Brussels. A new Council of Global Unions, has been formally created at a meeting in Brussels on 9 and 10 January. The founding Agreement for the Council, signed by top leaders of each of its participating organisations, is based on a "common determination to organise, defend human and trade union rights and labour standards everywhere, and promote the growth of trade unions for the benefit of all working women and men and their families".

Each organisation involved is represented by three members on the Council. Fred van Leeuwen, General Secretary of the Education International who was elected Chair of the Council, said "This historic

step will enable us to meet the tremendous challenges facing workers more systematically and with greater impact, while retaining the autonomy of each of the Council's members. Our talks this week have revealed how much more we can do together to confront global forces that work against the interests of working people, and we will carry forward the momentum of this new accord to achieve just that".

ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder commented "the new partnership gives us a key platform for coordinated global solidarity, mobilisation, campaigning and advocacy. The Council will meet annually, with the General Secretaries of each participating organization and a coordinating committee.

Foreign Control - Who owns NZ?

- Foreign direct investment (ownership of companies) in New Zealand increased from \$9.7 billion in 1989 to \$82.7 billion at September 2006 - over 700% more.
- Foreign owners now control 41% of the share market. In 1989, the figure was 19%.
- In 2005, the OIC approved the sale of 149,473 hectares of rural land to foreigners, of which about 100,000 hectares was from one foreign investor to another. Foreign owned land covers more than one million hectares or about 7% of our commercially productive land area.
- Transnational corporations (TNCs) make massive profits out of New Zealand. These can truly be called New Zealand's biggest invisible export. In

- the decade 1997-2006, TNCs made \$50.3 billion profits. Only 32% was reinvested, and in some years more was sent overseas than was earned or the reinvestment was significantly offset by capital being taken out of the country.
- Foreign ownership does nothing to improve New Zealand's foreign debt problem. In 1984, total private and public foreign debt stood at \$16 billion. As of September 2006, it was \$182 billion, equivalent to well over 100% of New Zealand's Gross Domestic Product, despite all of the asset sales and takeovers.
- The great majority of foreign "investment" is a takeover, not creating new assets

INCOMES ARE UP

- Average weekly income from all sources was \$610, up 4.0% from the June 2005 quarter.
- Average weekly wage and salary income for people receiving income from wages and salaries was \$739 in the June 2006 quarter, an increase of \$21 (2.9%) on the June 2005 quarter.
- There was also a 4.9% increase in the number of people receiving wages and salaries income.
- The average hourly rate in the June 2006 quarter was \$20.04 and the median was \$17.00.
- The average weekly household income from all sources was \$1,321 in the June 2006 quarter, an increase of 4.8% from the June 2005 quarter average of \$1,260 whereas median weekly household income from all sources rose 8.6% (to \$1,129)

Unions grow in 2005

Victoria University of Wellington's survey of Union membership in 2005, showed an increase of 23,290 union members last year.

The survey, conducted annually by the University found there was 377,348 union members as at December 31, 2005.

Private sector union membership increased by 11,488, or 7%. *The Aotearoa Branch of the NZ Meat Workers Union is one of the fastest growing private sector Unions.*

Aotearoa Branch full time equivalent membership growth.

1998	3,711
2000	3,752
2002	5,064
2004	5,415
2005	5,506
2006	5,774