

‘the most democratic, militant and politically advanced’ he has known and pondered the lessons militant minorities in the union movement might take from the lockout.

The perspectives of historians and commentators are present in shorter conference pieces and longer essays. Pat Walsh demonstrates that as profound as the impact of the waterfront dispute has been, its historical legacy and the history of New Zealand trade unionism since 1951 are not one and the same. Redmer Yska reveals little-known features of the propaganda war fought against the militant unions in the lead up to the lockout. Anna Green argues persuasively that the lockout needs to be set in the context of a wider struggle for control of the work place in which the shipping companies played the most aggressive hand. In the first of the longer historical essays Melanie Nolan provides a framework for the contributions by Renee, Judith Fyfe and Kathryn Parsons that focus directly or indirectly upon the role and activities of women involved in the lockout. She cautions against generalizing from the activities of the few. Most married women immersed in the day-to-day reality of the lockout were simply too preoccupied with the survival of their families to step outside the domestic roles assigned them by prevailing community assumptions. One of the ironies of this struggle to put food on the table, Nolan argues, is that it helped ‘normalise married women’s paid employment’ within the watersiders’ community.

In the final chapter Jock Phillips suggests that the propaganda war that accompanied the lockout was founded upon ‘extraordinarily similar’ core values. Each side claimed to be acting in the national interest, professed loyalty to Britain and claimed to have democracy on their side. Each presented a cast of demons. To Holland the watersiders and their supporters were the dupes of a nest of traitors and little more than the puppets of the communist World Federation of Trade Unions. Conversely, to the locked-out unionists, Holland was acting as a puppet of Wall Street and, in their interests, subverting traditional British democracy in a welter of repressive and fascist legislation. Phillips accepts that the unionists’ rhetoric was founded upon the need to win over public opinion but argues that unlike the 1890 or 1913 waterfront disputes, ‘the lockout of 1951 did not leave behind the vision of a socialist dawn’. Its legacy was rather the ‘dawning of a 1950s consensus’ based around the building of a ‘sober and respectable family utopia’. In some respects this is not very far removed from the conclusion reached by Bill Pearson in his celebrated ‘Fretful Sleepers’ written in London during the heat of the battle.

The snapshots of the 1951 lockout that make up the collection thus provide close-ups of the battle, longer views of the political and industrial history of the New Zealand waterfront and reflections upon the social setting against which the action occurred. They are enhanced by the reproduction of Max Bollinger and Len Gale cartoons and illustrations, by a useful chronology of the lockout and a history of the Trade Union History Project. *The Big Blue* is an important, well-produced book and one that stands as an exemplar of that fusion of working-class experience and reflection that the Trade Union History Project supports and espouses.

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Black Prince: The Biography of Fintan Patrick Walsh. By Graeme Hunt. Penguin Books, Auckland, 2004. 288 pp. NZ price: \$45.00. ISBN 0-14301-935-X.

THIS IS A VALUABLE BIOGRAPHY of a man who dominated the Seamen’s Union from 1927 until 1963, the wider union movement from the late 1930s until 1963 and helped manage Labour’s wartime stabilization programme during the 1940s. As President of the Federation of Labour from 1952 until 1963, the year of his death, Walsh was also one of the most significant figures within New Zealand.

Graeme Hunt has been assiduous and skilful in unraveling Walsh's early life. Born Patrick Tuohy at Patutahi in Poverty Bay on 13 August 1894, one of 11 children of a successful farming couple, he was brought up as a devout Catholic, attended the local primary school and received a thorough training as a dairy farmer (a lifelong passion, as it proved to be). The biography is particularly valuable in explaining how Tuohy ended up as a revolutionary proletarian. The research which uncovers his movements and his networks in the United States, then later in Ireland, is outstanding. It is also intensely interesting. It is a mark of Tuohy's native ability that his closest friends included some of the most famous revolutionaries of his day — Jay Lovestone, Jim Larkin, Frank Little (the one-eyed part Indian whose execution by vigilantes remains one of the most gruesome murders of modern times). He was initiated into American labour politics in San Francisco, heartland of the Californian union movement, later became a Wobbly in Butte, Montana, one of the most violent mining towns of the West, and drank deeply from the varied and abundant springs of American radicalism and socialism. Later, based in Greenwich Village, he imbibed from the well springs of anarchism and bolshevism (something like half of the members of the Soviet Union's first Comintern lived in Greenwich Village until they went home to join the revolution at the end of 1917). Jim Larkin's heady mixture of revolutionary socialism and Irish nationalism made the deepest impact, according to Hunt. In 1919 Walsh visited Ireland, noting the highlights and low points in a diary which Hunt found.

When he returned to the United States later that year, the twentieth century's first Red Scare was under way. A series of mail bombs galvanized Mitchell Palmer, the Attorney General, into a massive federal campaign to identify all potential Bolsheviks and terrorists and deport them. Tuohy sensed the danger and on re-entering the States gave his name as Patrick Walsh, born in County Kerry on 12 April 1885. He also dyed his hair brown. As Palmer's agents gathered more and more alien socialists and Bolsheviks into the net and launched hundreds of deportations and prosecutions, Tuohy alias Walsh decided to head for home and arrived in February 1920. Hunt guides the reader through Walsh's renewed New Zealand life as a rip-roaring Bolshevik, secretary of the local Release James Larkin Committee, founding member of the New Zealand Communist Party and rising star in the Seamen's Union. The third chapter ends with him seizing control of the Seamen's Union by leading a mob into the office, ejecting Bill Young (the National Secretary) and taking over.

In some sense the most interesting part of the book also ends at this point. In chapter 3 it becomes clear that Hunt relied completely on Conrad Bollinger's now well-dated history of the Seamen's Union, *Against the Wind* (1968), for anything to do with the seamen. The absence of decent studies of such figures as Tom Young, Jim Roberts and Angus McLaren, not to mention the Alliance of Labour and the later Federation of Labour, undoubtedly weakens Hunt's grasp of context as the rest of the story unfolds. Nor does he mention such works as Pettit's *Wellington Watersiders* or Holt's *Compulsory Arbitration* in either the text or the bibliography (although the latter is somewhat idiosyncratic in organization and does not always include books that are mentioned in the text).

That said, however, the rest of the story is well told and Walsh's role is clearly elaborated more fully than it has been before. It is never clear why Walsh left the Communist Party in 1924, although he only broke with the party in the early 1930s. One suspects that the Alliance of Labour and the Labour Party were more important to him than the Third International. Nor is his role in the formation of the Federation of Labour made much clearer (Peter Fraser's role is ignored, as it was by Bassett and King in their biography). That he was close to Fraser by 1937 is stated, and some evidence adduced, and there may be more to the fact that Fraser was Minister of Marine than anyone has yet explained. I suspect that the two men not only found each other useful, but found themselves on the same wave lengths, whether in terms of personal style or ideology. As ex De Leonites, who had become conservative syndicalists, they created and upheld the Labour state

of the 1940s. It is hard to believe that no interviews with any of the key figures from the 1940s onwards exist, and Hunt does not explain whether he searched for any. So although the book occasionally offers glimpses of Walsh's private and business life, it fails to offer similar glimpses of Walsh the union leader and economic statesmen.

By now he was a champion of the organizations that formed the key structures of the syndicalist state, the party and the federation. Discontent was dealt with as a form of disloyalty. His ability to smell a difficulty long before anyone else, and (by New Zealand standards) his lack of scruple, made him both feared and formidable. He saw off every challenger and every threat, including that of Catholic Action (a side of his life I was unaware of before reading Hunt). In the 1950s, as he built the country's largest dairy herd, he also skilfully used all of his formidable abilities to maintain the wages and conditions of unionized workers and to smash the 1951 strikers and their organizations and played a key role in negotiating access to British markets after the war. In the 1950s he got along well with key figures in the National Party, but became estranged from Nash and Nordmeyer. By the late 1950s he was under challenge on several fronts, not least from his own health (he suffered his first heart attack in 1944). He hung on until 1963, remaining President of the Federation until the end.

Walsh never married. His only daughter, Una, was very dear and close to him. By and large labour's mission was his lifetime's commitment. It is unclear why Hunt decided not to use footnotes or endnotes; their absence weakens the usefulness of this otherwise valuable book.

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On the Left: Essays on Socialism in New Zealand. Edited by Pat Moloney and Kerry Taylor. University of Otago Press, Dunedin, 2002. 260 pp. NZ price: \$39.95. ISBN 1-8772-7619-7.

ON THE LEFT focuses on the history of socialist and left-wing ideas and organizations in New Zealand, and will appeal to the specialist reader. The authors define the 'left' in broad terms, 'as any critical response to industrial capitalism offering collectivist solutions aimed at minimizing inequalities' (p.15). The essays cover more than a century of activism, ranging from the Knights of Labour in the 1890s to Te Roopu Rawakore o Aotearoa, the national movement for the unemployed, in the 1990s. Some chapters focus upon fictional writing, including the poems of 'Billy Banjo' in the *Maoriland Worker* and a brief survey of utopian literature in New Zealand (which inexplicably leaves out a classic text, the Guild Socialist *New New Zealand*). In a complete change of pace, two interviews explore the intellectual and experiential trajectories of left-wing academics Gay Simpkin and Erik Olssen.

This is, therefore, an eclectic set of essays, not uncommon among edited collections. One of its strengths is those studies that explore the tension, still evident among contemporary activists, between socialist and Marxist theories and the perspectives of other disadvantaged groups, such as women and Māori. Kerry Taylor's interesting chapter, for example, describes the attempts by the Communist Party of New Zealand to engage with, and recruit, Māori. Serious attention to Māori issues began in 1928, with the first critical analysis of the Treaty of Waitangi. In 1935 the party issued a pamphlet in Māori, *Ki te Iwi Maori*, and intermittently discussed ideas about Māori self-determination over the next decade. As Taylor suggests, these policies, radical for their time, should have created the basis for a productive engagement with Māori. That this happened