

The Jobs Letter

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Essential Information on an Essential Issue

SPECIAL

OVERWORKED.
OVERSCHEDULED.
OVERWHELMED.



THE STRUGGLE
FOR
WORK-LIFE
BALANCE

“The cutting edge policy for the future will be centred round the work-life balance area, looking at how people are balancing the demands of work and their life outside work.”

— Helen Clark, Prime Minister

“People with skills can work anywhere in the world. If they do not like the working conditions, they can leave. If we want to attract skilled talent from overseas and retain staff in New Zealand we need to seriously look at work-life balance issues.”

— Margaret Wilson, Minister of Labour

Take Back Your Time

- How was your Labour Weekend? Did it feel like the break was long overdue? Could you afford to take the time off work? Did you really find space for rest and recreation, or time with your friends and families? Did you find yourself slipping back into the office to “catch-up”?

Labour Day was created to celebrate the introduction of the 40-hour working week — a social achievement of the mid 19th century — and one which New Zealand workers were among the first in the world to attain. But Labour Day in this new century is starting to take on a new message: it is becoming a focus for debate on the “time poverty” of our modern life and work styles. And it is becoming a day for us to reconsider the “work-life balance” that was once characteristic of a New Zealand way of life.

Despite the optimistic predictions in the 1960s and 70s that the new century would be a golden age of leisure, many New Zealanders say that they are working harder and longer than ever. Whether it is a low-wage worker holding down two jobs to make ends meet, or a professional working late nights and weekends, or a student burdened by part-time work and student debts, or parents rushing to keep up with the weekly timetables of their children ... we are hearing more and more stories of people being overworked, overscheduled and overwhelmed.

The fight for a “work-life balance” is once again becoming an important cultural and political issue for New Zealanders. In this special issue, *The Jobs Letter* looks at local issues and international trends which are shaping this debate over “taking back” our time.

- Last Friday, October 24th, over a hundred communities in the United States marked the first Take Back Your Time Day, as part of a non-partisan grassroots effort to start a national conversation on “work-life balance”. From next year, the Take Back Your Time Day will be celebrated every fourth Friday in October. This date falls nine weeks before year’s end, and symbolises the amount of additional time — 350 hours, or nine weeks every year — that the average American works compared to the average Western European.

“Medieval peasants worked less than we do,” says John de Graaf, Time Day national coordinator. “Don't get me wrong, Take Back Your Time Day is not anti-work ... but the fact is that life has gotten way out of balance. We are working harder than ever as we are forced to sacrifice the things that really matter like good health and clean environment, active citizenship and social justice and time for nature and the soul ...”

The United States figures:

— According to the International Labour Organization, Americans now work 1,978 hours annually, a full 350 hours more than Western Europeans. The average American actually worked 199 hours more in 2000 than he or she did in 1973, a period during which worker productivity per hour nearly doubled.

OVERWORK HURTS ALL OF US

— Overwork threatens our health. It leads to fatigue, accidents and injuries. It reduces the time we can set aside for exercise and encourages people to consume calorie-laden fast foods.

— Overwork threatens our marriages, families and relationships. We find ourselves with less time for each other, less time to personally care for our children and elders and less time to just relax.

— Overwork weakens our communities. We find ourselves with less time, energy and interest to get to know our neighbours, supervise our young people, and volunteer.

•— Overwork reduces employment. Fewer people working longer hours reduces the number of workers businesses need.

— Overwork threatens our productivity. Job stress and burnout carries a significant cost to the economy (estimated in America to be \$200 billion a year, in the UK £370 million a year).

— Overwork leaves many of us with little time to be informed, active citizens.

— Overwork leaves us little time for ourselves, for our self-development, or for our spiritual growth.

— Overwork leads to the growing neglect and abuse of pets.

— Overwork even contributes to the destruction of our environment. Studies show that lack of time encourages people to use more “convenience” and throwaway goods, and reduces recycling.

Source — edited from *Take Back Time* campaign 2003
www.timeday.org

— Time magazine reports that 80% American men and 62% of women put in more than 40 hours a week on the job.

— An August 2003 poll for the Centre for a New American Dream, an organisation that focuses on quality of life issues, revealed that although 60% of Americans felt pressure to work too much, more than 80% wished they had more family time and 52% of them would take less money to get it.

- The Take Back Your Time Day is being supported by labour and community organisations with everything from coffee shop chats to academic symposiums. Many of the Time Day activists draw a connection between busy lives and the American lifestyle of wasteful consumption. And they readily admit that the organisers themselves can financially afford to make the choice to work less ... compared to the many people who must work long hours or do multiple jobs for low pay just to make ends meet. Because of this, the Time Day campaign is also arguing for minimum vacation standards, better wages and universal health benefits.

Organisers of Time Day say it is modeled on the first Earth Day, which brought a new environmental awareness to America, and quickly led to the passage of some of the most significant ecological legislation in US history. Organisers hope that the Time Day will have an equally significant and lasting effect on the lives of overworked and stressed-out people.

- On September 8th, the US Senate unanimously passed Resolution 210 (submitted by Senators Hatch and Alexander (R) and Kennedy and Dodd (D)), declaring the month of October National Work and Family Month, with the goal of “reducing the conflict between work and family.” The Take Back Your Time Day organisers see this Resolution as opening the door to cooperation with elected officials on all levels in promoting Time Day activities.

— *Take Back Your Time: Fighting Overwork and Time Poverty in America*, edited by John De Graaf, with contributions from Vicki Robin, Camilla Fox, Anna Lappe, David Korten, Cecile Andrews and many others (Berrett-Koehler, 2003) ISBN 1-576-75245-3

— The *Take Back Your Time Day* website can be found at www.timeday.org

(continued on page four)

“So long as there is one man who seeks employment and cannot obtain it, the hours of work are too long.”

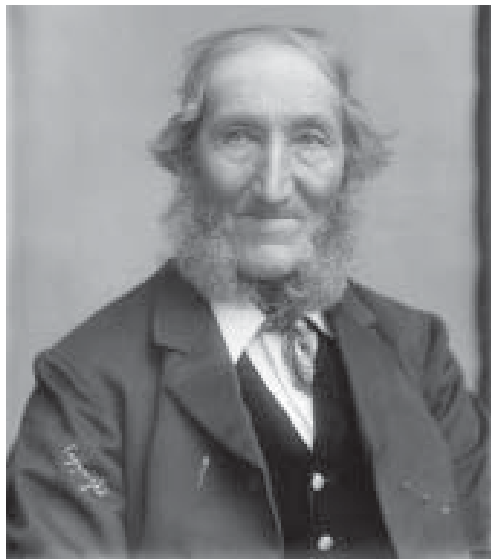
— Samuel Gompers,
American Federation of
Labour President, 1887

“I heard on the radio the other day that our productivity had gone up 4 percent. I hear that and think, Why aren't I working 4 percent less?”

— Gabe Sinclair, author of
The Four Hour Day
(www.fourfourday.org)

LABOUR DAY

SAMUEL PARNELL TAKES BACK HIS TIME



“Taking Back Time” was once one of the central issues of the international labour movement, as workers struggled to find time with their families, and also time to educate themselves and be active in recreations and civic life.

In the late 1700s, American carpenters struck for the ten-hour day, challenging employers who paid flat daily wages during the long summer shifts and then switched to piecework during the shorter winter days. A movement to make this a universal standard grew throughout the nineteenth century, in response to the 70-hour weeks often worked in the new industrial enterprises.

New Zealand was the first country in the world to introduce the eight-hour working day, thanks in part to a shortage of skilled labour in the new colony, and to the stand taken by carpenter Samuel Parnell in Wellington in 1840.

According to Herbert Roth in the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, Parnell’s interest in a shorter working day dated back to 1834, when he was working in a large joinery establishment in London. London carpenters then worked 12 and even 14 hours a day, and wages and working conditions were bad. A union had been formed but, because it failed to agitate for reduced working hours, Parnell refused to join and left to start in business on his own account. He later emigrated to New Zealand, settling in Wellington. Roth writes:

“ Among Parnell’s fellow passengers was a shipping agent, George Hunter, who, soon after their arrival, asked Parnell to erect a store for him. “I will do my best,” replied Parnell, “but I must make this condition, Mr. Hunter, that on the job the hours shall only be eight for the day.” Hunter

demurred, this was preposterous; but Parnell insisted. “There are,” he argued, “twenty-four hours per day given us; eight of these should be for work, eight for sleep, and the remaining eight for recreation and in which for men to do what little things they want for themselves. I am ready to start tomorrow morning at eight o’clock, but it must be on these terms or none at all.” “You know Mr. Parnell,” Hunter persisted, “that in London the bell rang at six o’clock, and if a man was not there ready to turn to he lost a quarter of a day.” “We’re not in London”, replied Parnell. He turned to go but the agent called him back. There were very few tradesmen in the young settlement and Hunter was forced to agree to Parnell’s terms. And so, Parnell wrote later, “the first strike for eight hours a-day the world has ever seen, was settled on the spot.”

“ Other employers tried to impose the traditional long hours, but Parnell met incoming ships, talked to the workmen and enlisted their support. A workers’ meeting in October 1840, held outside German Brown’s (later Barrett’s) Hotel on Lambton Quay, is said to have resolved to work eight hours a day, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., anyone offending to be ducked into the harbour. The eight hour working day thus became established in the Wellington settlement. “I arrived here in June, 1841,” a settler told the *Evening Post* in 1885, “found employment on my landing, and also to my surprise was informed that eight hours was a day’s work, and it has been ever since.” The last resistance was broken, according to Parnell, when labourers who were building the road along the harbour to the Hutt Valley in 1841 downed tools because they were ordered to work longer hours. They did not resume work until the eight hour day was conceded.

- By the 1860s, the international labour movement made the eight-hour day its central focus, with marches, rallies, and related political campaigns. Wellington workers staged their first annual Labour Day celebration on 28th October 1890 and the march to Newtown Park was headed by Samuel Parnell. At the park, amid prolonged cheers, Parnell was presented with an illuminated address which paid tribute to his “noble efforts” as “the father of the eight hours movement”. As Roth records:

“I feel happy to-day,” the old man replied, ‘because the seed sown so many years ago is bearing such abundant fruit and the chord struck at Petone fifty years ago is vibrating round the world, and I hope I shall live to see eight hours a day as a day’s work universally acknowledged and become the law of every nation of the world.”

Only a few weeks later Parnell fell ill and died on 17 December 1890.

- In the 1890s the Liberal Government in New Zealand passed laws to encourage the formation of unions, and Labour Day was made a public holiday in 1899. But it was not until the 1940s that the first Labour Government introduced the 8-hour day and 40-hour week as standard conditions for most workers.

After the Second World War, the international debate over the pace and speed of working life quietly died ... until the 1990s when changing work styles again brought attention to long working hours and the balance of our work and lifestyles.

Sources – “Parnell, Samuel Duncan 1810-1890 Carpenter, farmer, labour reformer” by Herbert Roth; “Labour Day: A History” www.nzhistory.net.nz/Gallery/Labour/index.html; “Time to Act” by Paul Loeb 1 October 2003

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"It's not just our workplaces. Our lives in general seem faster, more complicated, more at the mercy of distant powers and principalities. We have less time for our families, and less room to ask where we want to go as a society and as a planet. The very pace of environmental crises, global economic shifts and the threats of war and terrorism make it harder to address them. If we're to act effectively as engaged citizens, we're going to have to slow down our lives, our culture, and a world that seems to be careening out of control ..."

— Paul Loeb, author of
The Soul of a Citizen

"For the last half century, our tendency has been to consume more, rather than work less. This propensity to work is central to why the United States is among the world's wealthiest nations as well as the unrivaled leader in resource depletion, carbon-dioxide emissions and environmental impact. By next Labor Day, perhaps, the message will be that we're slowing down, sharing the work and consuming a little less ..."

— Juliet Schor, author of
The Overworked American

- How bad is overwork in New Zealand and what are the trends? The recently published *Work Trends* report by the Department of Labour (see *The Jobs Letter* No. 193) says that the proportion of employed people who work the standard 40-hour week has fallen from 35% to 30% in the past 15 years. Over the same time period, the share of people working part-time (0–29 hours) has jumped from 17% to 23%. And the proportion of people who work 60-plus hours per week has edged up from 8% to 9%.

However, *Work Trends* says there has been very little change in this pattern in the past six years. Practically all of the change in working hours took place between 1987 and 1996, especially during the recession years of the early 1990s.

Work Trends says that the changes in working hours may be a good thing for many people — e.g. part-timers who want flexibility in their working lives. It also argues that a rising share of people putting in over 40 hours at work "... may be an indication of a vibrant, growing economy".

But the report does concede that these trends reflect problems for some people — part-time work may be a poor substitute for a full-time job, more flexibility can mean more stress, and long hours may lead to burn-out. It says that the challenge for labour market regulators is to ensure that protections exist for vulnerable groups of workers, while "... not hindering the lifestyle improvements for others."

- Australia is one of only a few countries (along with the USA and UK) whose working hours continue to trend upwards, not down. The *Australian Bulletin of Labour* says that economic reforms in Australia have made many workers feel insecure in their jobs, and this has prompted them to work harder in order to prove their value, loyalty and commitment. The *Bulletin*: "Indeed, the feeling of precariousness is so widespread that "weekends" have become a cruel misnomer for significant pockets of the workforce."

In a lead article in the latest *Bulletin*, David Peetz looks closely at who is working these long hours, and why. Using survey and case study data from Queensland, he concludes that:

— Extended hours are mostly driven by employers, though in a minority of cases they are jointly driven by employees who benefit from overtime pay;

— Allowing workers greater control over their working time, but not their workload, results in most working longer (rather than shorter hours) as pressures to work more are internalised;

— Despite widespread support for upper limits on working hours, restrictions fail in practice without enforcement mechanisms (as some workers continue trying to "get ahead" by putting in more hours);

— The best way to restrain long hours is not to increase individual "say", but to provide for collective regulation of working time.

- The *Bulletin* notes that there are some positive signs that the workload tide may be turning. After increasing in the 1990s, as with New Zealand, the average working hours for full-time employees levelled out, and have even declined slightly in the past two years. In 2001, the average number of weekly working hours declined, even as the Australian GDP continued to rise.

The *Bulletin* argues that these trends indicate that longer working

“Mum, Dad and the kids are all hard at it. 24x7 is the name of the game these days. When and how are families and friends meant to interact when they are expected to fit leisure, education and family around increasingly bizarre work patterns? Lack of time is the greatest impediment to balance and any moves towards saner lifestyles. We desperately need to work fewer hours and more regular hours but all the signals suggest that the opposite is happening ...”

— Mike Ward, Green Party MP

hours are not the only, and certainly not a long-term, means of achieving economic growth. It also concludes that workers may be reaching their own limits and are beginning to “claw back” their time.

— “Race Against Time: Extended Hours in Australia”, by David Peetz and colleagues, Australian Bulletin of Labour June 2003, order from the National Institute of Labour Studies at www.ssn.flinders.edu.au/nils/publications/abl.php

- When working hours started to increase throughout most Western economies in the 1990s, corporations and governments knew they had a new challenge on their hands. As recognition of this problem became widespread, “work-life” consultants began to spring up everywhere to counsel businesses and the public service on how to achieve greater “balance”. Most larger companies put more flexible work options into place, and took advantage of new information and communications technologies to organise work differently. Columnists and websites started proclaiming fundamental changes to the “nature of work”. The academic literature mushroomed.

But, a decade later, the jury is still out as to whether these work-life initiatives have made anything more than a dent in the problems of overwork.

- Juliet Schor, author of *The Overworked American* (pub Basic Books 1992) says the main reason overwork has been so persistent is that it is generally more profitable for firms to employ a small work force for long hours. Writing in the *New York Times*, Schor observes that employees who dislike the long hours have typically had to change jobs, or even occupations, in order to re-gain their free time. Schor: “During the 1990s, robust consumer demand intensified these incentives. The consumer boom also created great opportunity for individuals, which spurred work effort. While workers made significant gains in employment and income, they paid for it with their time. Indeed, by the end of the decade, it had begun to feel like Industrial Revolution redux, with a massive outpouring of work effort. Overtime hours, already at record highs, rose further. The first Industrial Revolution paradox — labour-saving technologies resulting in more, rather than less work — was repeating itself.”

“ These developments created a blowback effect. Rising hours led to rising incomes, which in turn raised the consumer norms that households adhere to. Prosperity turned more luxuries into necessities and raised aspirations for consumer electronics, larger homes, travel, larger vehicles. But because the gains in income and wealth went disproportionately to upper-income households, most families could only realize higher spending norms by putting in additional hours and taking on debt...”

- Here in New Zealand, the government, unions and groups such as the Equal Opportunities Trust have all undertaken work-life campaigns.

In August this year, Labour Minister Margaret Wilson announced that the government will establish a work-life programme “to develop policies and practices promoting a better balance between paid work and life outside of work” (see *The Jobs Letter* No.193). Wilson: “The government believes that work is only one dimension of living and should not crowd out and distort family life, recreation and personal development.”

The consultation phase of this project begins next month. This will initially be with key stakeholder and community organisations but will be followed by discussions with the wider public (from February next year). People will be invited to say what work-life balance means to them and to give their ideas about what things work well at the moment and what could work better.

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The most recent issue of the UK union magazine *Hazards* has focussed on the growing danger of overwork.

The issue is accompanied by a website of resources which is endorsed by the NZ Council of Trade Unions.

It can be found at www.hazards.org/workedtodeath

The government will then consider policy options based on the material gathered and the themes of the consultation. Wilson: “We want to accurately reflect the different realities people face and to get feedback on factors that help people achieve some measure of work-life balance. We want people to identify examples of good practice that could be of use to others and to tell us about it...”

- Most businesses in New Zealand are small enterprises. This gives us some special challenges when trying to change the way we work and balance our lives. The government says it recognises it needs to be innovative in its solutions which can support and develop work-life balance in smaller firms. Provision of work-life policies and incentives is more likely to be done informally, rather than through regulation.

Some of the Department of Labour’s policy suggestions for how companies can introduce flexible work arrangements include: time banking, whereby staff can put in more hours at one time which will allow them to take time off later; career break schemes, whereby staff can leave their job for a certain length of time and return to their own job; childcare and eldercare facilities; home working arrangements; school term time working and nine-day fortnights.

- The government’s work-balance website can be found at www.dol.govt.nz/worklifebalance.asp

- The NZ Council of Trade Unions (CTU) is also running a campaign for work-life balance called “*Get a Life!*”. In 2002, the CTU commissioned the *Thirty Families* project which was based on a series of interviews with working families research, and revealed the consequences of overwork for ordinary New Zealanders. While almost everyone in the survey thought that balancing work and home lives was important, one in eight employees reported working on both Saturdays and Sundays, and one in five employees work for companies that are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Last week the CTU issued a follow-up discussion paper on work-life balance at their annual conference in Wellington. CTU Secretary Carol Beaumont says that discussion about the meaning of work-life balance has often focussed on such things as free gym memberships and coffee machines at work. But, for unions, the “fundamentals” of decent work are at the centre of this debate. This includes such issues as secure employment, decent pay, leave and working conditions, supported by quality and affordable care arrangements for worker’s families.

TAKE BACK YOUR TIME

Interested in taking back your time? The Take Back Time Day promoters offer some tips on how you can join in this movement:

- Cancel something.
- Sleep late.
- Cut one activity from your child’s schedule.
- Schedule family meals each week and make a commitment to share them.
- Keep track of your expenses on such “time savers” as fast food and convenience items and calculate how much work time it takes you to buy them.

- Cut TV viewing to one hour per day or eliminate the TV for a week.

- Cut out junk mail.

- Have a meeting in which everyone brings one item they bought but never used. Tell stories about the items. This can be very revealing and get people to think about their spending habits.

- Visit your elderly relatives.

- Talk five friends into participating in the Take Back Your Time Day next year and ask them to do the same.

Source — “Take Back Time” *The Plain Dealer*, Cleveland, 19 October 2003

“Once we get clear that economic life should be about making a living for everyone rather than making a killing for lucky winners, we begin to see how much of the world’s labour, energy, and material resources are being expropriated by the suicide economy for uses that are profitable for corporations, but harmful to life.

“This suggests a startling possibility. We could, if we chose, redirect the life energy reclaimed from harmful work to beneficial work. At the same time, everyone’s working hours could be reduced to share both leisure and paid employment equitably. It’s all a question of how we choose, individually and collectively, to allocate our life energies.

“We could all have more time for recreation, quiet solitude, community service, political involvement, family life, and the disciplines and hobbies that keep us physically, mentally, psychologically and spiritually healthy. Our paid work would be more fulfilling. Our lives, communities, and natural environment would be healthier.”

— David Korten, from
“What’s an Economy For?” (in the *Take Back Your Time* handbook)

Beaumont: “The Government must make sure that laws which set out the minimum code for workers’ pay and conditions take into account the need for balance between work and life. And state sector employers must also recognise and support work-life balance, and ensure it is a basic consideration in policy-making.”

— the CTU “*Get a Life!*” campaign website can be found at www.union.org.nz/campaigns/getalife.html

- One way that most workers in New Zealand could get more of “a life” ... would be to see an increase in their statutory holidays. It has been 30 years since minimum annual leave for all workers was increased to three weeks. A lot has changed in the labour market in that time ... and Australia, with whom we compete for skilled labour, has had a minimum of four weeks for a number of years.

Prime Minister Helen Clark spoke to the CTU conference last week and gave her strongest signal yet that workers might indeed get an extra week’s annual holiday — but not until after the 2005 elections. She told the CTU that it was never Labour’s policy to introduce the fourth week in the present term of government “... because we have given higher priority to other initiatives benefiting workers and their families.”

Clark: “But of course we acknowledge the importance of adequate annual leave in ensuring that workers get proper rest and time for their families and communities, and we acknowledge the increased productivity and social benefit which can flow from enhanced annual leave.”

- CTU president Ross Wilson says that the fourth week of holiday should come sooner as workers were exhausted from a “huge intensification of work” in recent years. Labour Minister Margaret Wilson however says that there has to be enough time to “phase in the economic consequences”.

Business New Zealand has estimated that an extra week off will add 2% — or more than \$800 million — to the country’s wages bill. But it is impossible from available statistics to tell how many of our 1.54 million wage and salary earners already get more than the statutory minimum leave.

The *Dominion Post* reports that the government may phase in the extra week’s paid leave from 2005, in an effort to lessen employer hostility by giving them more time to adjust. Two extra days could be added in 2005, and one extra day in each of the following three years, giving the full extra week by 2008. Another option the government is looking into is to require a qualifying period of service for workers.

- The “time poverty” of modern family life isn’t just from long hours at the workplace. The pressure on family time also stems from the recent trends in “supersizing kids’ activities”, according to William Doherty, professor of family social science at the University of Minnesota and co-author of *Putting Family First*. Doherty has spoken out for several years on the full-to-bursting schedules of children. He traces the phenomenon to the early 1980s, when concerns over latchkey children and juvenile delinquency led to a wealth of programs designed to keep children busy. It has gotten out of control, he says, noting that there are now soccer programs for 2-year-olds.

His message struck a chord with folks in the Twin Cities suburb of Wayzata about four years ago. Parents have formed a group called Putting Family First, and asked coaches, instructors and youth leaders

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“ He worked with head - with
heart and hand,
From early youth to age,
And in a new, unfettered land
He taught this precept sage,
'Eight hours for work, eight
hours for play
And eight for sleep excel.'
This was the charter for each
day
Of our wise king, Parnell! “
— Alexander Stuart, from his
In Memoriam tribute to
Samuel Parnell 1890

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Research sources for the main
items in *The Jobs Letter* are
available in our internet edition at
www.jobsletter.org.nz

to cut back practices, rehearsals and meetings. The group also launched a website (www.puttingfamilyfirst.us) and published a *Consumer Magazine*-style guide to local after-school activities, calculating the time and travel demands involved in pursuing each undertaking.

- *Time* magazine last week featured an initiative in Ridgewood, New Jersey where parents say they have been worn out from dragging their kids through the frenzied after-school ritual of dinners-on-the-go and cross-town SUV shuttle runs to practices, competitions, private lessons and club meetings.

Two years ago, the parents in this affluent community launched *Ready, Set, Relax!*, a citywide initiative that encouraged frazzled families to put down some speed bumps in their fast-paced lives. The concept was straightforward: on one day throughout the city, the schools would not assign homework. Youth sports teams would cancel practice. Clubs and tutors would schedule no meetings or lessons. And parents would come home from work in time to have dinner with their kids and focus on family matters. The *Ready, Set, Relax!* day sent a message to parents, schools and sport and recreational clubs to consider slowing down ... producing, as one local businessman put it, a “city-wide sanity check”.

- Deep amidst the wide-ranging debates on work-life balance, and the changing “nature of work”, one American labour activist is quietly promoting his own proposal for change: adopt a four-hour working day. Gabe Sinclair is a state-employed machinist who works more hours than he wants to at a hospital in Towson, near Baltimore in Maryland. Three years ago he self-published a novel set in the future about a four-hour working day. He also set up a foundation and a website to promote his concept, which he describes as “a time whose idea has come...”

Sinclair: “Go to work tomorrow and then go home four hours later. What would life be like if you could do that every day? What would life be like if work were a five-minute walk away? What would you really do with all that free time? Is the prospect exhilarating or terrifying?”

“ While the whole idea might be absurd, I personally believe that certain subterranean forces now stir beneath us. Even a slave-owning Thomas Jefferson could say of slavery, “I tremble when I reflect that God is just.” He could anticipate the impending social reversal and sense that his days were numbered. We can take one look at a whole generation of children coming home to houses empty of everything but television and games, and we can see the handwriting on the wall. Certain critical decisions will be made over the next few centuries, and human success will depend upon the depth and courage of our first, tentative meditations...”

- The *Baltimore Sun* describes Sinclair’s book as a “proletarian, futuristic novel/ polemic with politics sometimes redolent of patchouli and hemp...” But don’t let that put you off. It might be just the sort of light reading you’ll be looking for next Labour Weekend.

— *A Four Hour Day*, by Gabe Sinclair, (self-published 2000) can be downloaded (PDF 264pg, 768kb) from www.fourhourday.org