

**91003R**

NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY  
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

QUALIFY FOR THE FUTURE WORLD  
KIA NOHO TAKATŪ KI TŌ ĀMUA AO!

## Level 1 History 2021

### **91003 Interpret sources of an historical event of significance to New Zealanders**

Credits: Four

## RESOURCE BOOKLET

Refer to this booklet to answer the questions for History 91003.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–12 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

**YOU MAY KEEP THIS BOOKLET AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.**

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## INTRODUCTION: The “Angry Autumn” Riots of 1932

During the first half of the 1930s, the world was hit by an economic depression, often referred to by historians as the “Great Depression”. In 1932, a string of riots broke out throughout New Zealand, and the phrase “Angry Autumn” was coined to describe this period in the country’s history.



Thousands of unemployed people assembled at the Auckland Town Hall to present their demands to the mayor.

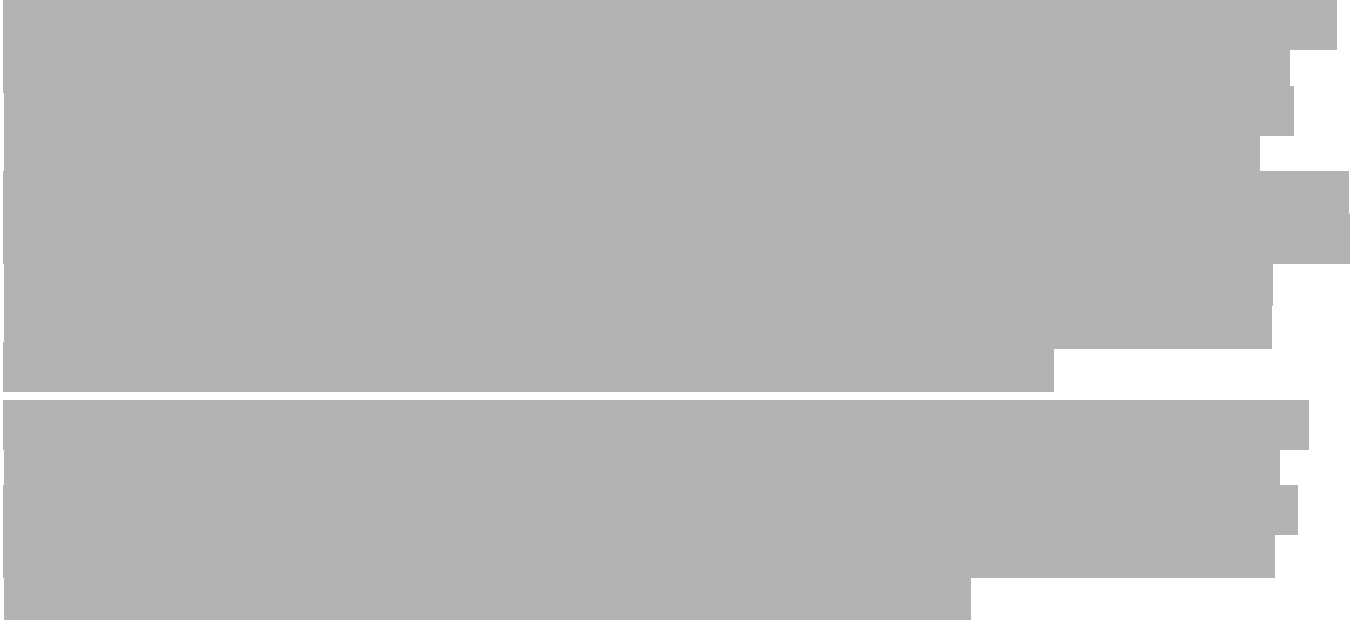


Montage showing the results of the riot on Queen Street, Auckland.

Images: Auckland Weekly News. (1932, April 20). [Photographs of the 1932 Queen Street unemployment riot]. Auckland Libraries Heritage Collections, AWNS-19320420-46-1 and AWNS-19320420-43-1 from Admin. (2018, July 16). The 1932 Queen Street Unemployment Riot. *Heritage et AL*. <http://heritageetal.blogspot.com/2018/07/the-1932-queen-street-unemployment-riot.html>

## SOURCE A: The Depression riots, 1932

A series of riots in New Zealand occurred early in 1932, during the worldwide economic depression. On Saturday, 9 January, a procession of unemployed people, many of them women, marched to the offices of the Otago Hospital Board in Dunedin to demand relief\*. When the Board's officials refused assistance, the enraged crowd rushed to Wardell Brothers' grocery store nearby, where they were met by a cordon of police. The store's windows were smashed but the police stood their ground. The situation remained tense, with large crowds milling through the streets and occasional fights breaking out, but the excitement calmed after a special distribution of 800 food parcels had been arranged for the weekend. ...



The Government hastily introduced a repressive Public Safety Conservation Bill, but it failed to prevent yet another serious riot, this time in Wellington, on 10 May. Following a demonstration outside Parliament Buildings and an unsuccessful deputation† to the Government, the unemployed rushed through Lambton Quay, Willis, and Manners Streets. Many shop windows were smashed and again some looting took place. There were many prosecutions arising out of these disturbances and sentences were heavy. Christchurch alone, of the four main centres, saw no unemployed riots during the Depression, thanks largely to the efficiency of its relief services.

\* relief                financial or practical assistance given to those in need or difficulty

\*\*specials            a group of ordinary men who were temporarily given the rights of police officers

† deputation        a group of people appointed to speak on behalf of a larger group

Source (adapted): McLintock A. H. (Ed.). (1966). *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand 1966*. Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand. <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/1966/riots/page-6>

## SOURCE B: Scenes from the Wellington riot



### AN UGLY PHASE OF THE DEPRESSION IN NEW ZEALAND: SCENES IN CONNECTION WITH LAST WEEK'S RIOTS IN WELLINGTON

For a space of about 20 minutes on Tuesday evening of last week, three of the main city streets in Wellington were at the mercy of a small window-wrecking band of men and youths. About 150 valuable plate-glass windows were wantonly smashed before the police, aided by a large band of special constables, regained control. This orgy of destruction was a sequel to a mass demonstration by relief workers outside Parliament Buildings earlier in the day.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. A general view of the mass gathering of unemployed people and relief workers outside Parliament gates on the Tuesday.  | 5. A gaping hole in the plate-glass window of a furnishing establishment in Lambton Quay.     |
| 2. Replacing a plate-glass window on Manners Street.  | 6. Another damaged window typical of many in Lambton Quay, Willis Street, and Manners Street. |
| 3. Special police on patrol in Cuba Street.   | 7. Erecting barricades over broken windows in Lambton Quay.                                   |
| 4. Mr P. Fraser, M.P. (Labour), addressing the gathering at Parliament gates. The cordon of police guarding Parliament House grounds is seen in the foreground. |   |

Image: Auckland Weekly News. (1932). [Photographs of the 1932 Wellington riot] from Barnett, S. (1987). *Those were the days: a nostalgic look at the 1930s from the pages of the Weekly News*. Weekly News. p. 67

**SOURCE C: Were communist agitators behind 1932 Depression riot?**

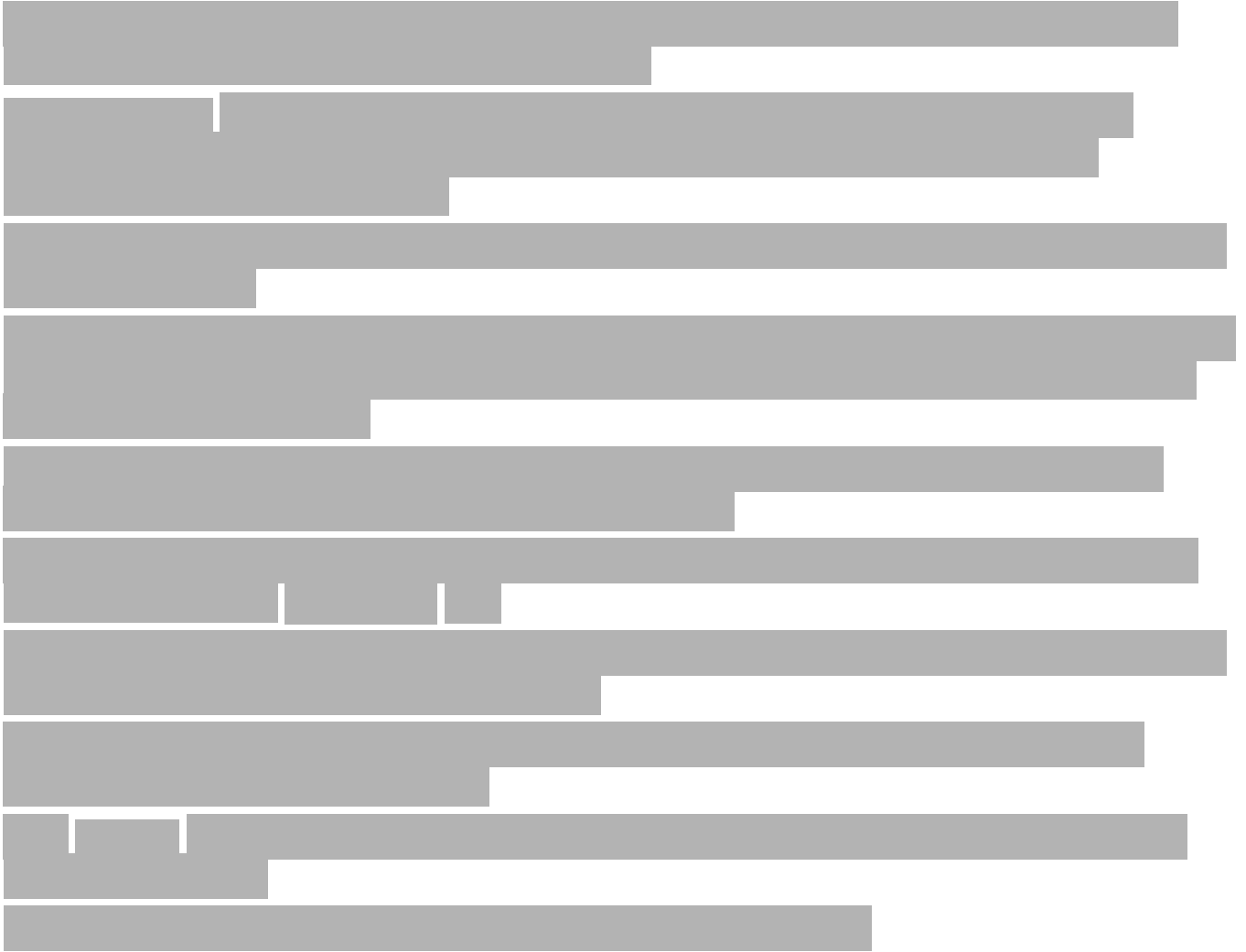
As the Depression hit Wellington in the 1930s, volunteers set up soup kitchens to serve unemployed men, as seen here in 1932.

Soup kitchens, starving children, angry unemployed, and desperation became common sights in Wellington during the 1930s.



On 11 May 1932, a demonstration outside Parliament turned into a full-scale riot down Lambton Quay, Manners Street, and Willis Street.

“Bands of lawless youths and men set off smashing plate-glass windows,” *The Post* reported.



The stage was set for the Labour Party, and its leader Michael Joseph Savage, to take office in 1935, promising sweeping reforms.

- <sup>1</sup>. astronomical      a huge amount
- <sup>2</sup>. doom-monger      predict the worst outcome
- <sup>3</sup>. rebuke              criticism
- <sup>4</sup>. prejudice          to injure or damage by some judgment or action
- <sup>5</sup>. ratcheted up      cause a thing to increase quickly

Image: Unknown photographer (c.1932). Soup Kitchen, Wellington [Photograph]. Evening Post (Newspaper. 1865–2002): Photographic negatives and prints of the Evening Post and Dominion newspapers. Ref: EP-8645B-1/2-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. /records/22839295. <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/22839295>  
 Source (adapted): Fensome, A. (2014, December 31). *Were Communist Agitators behind 1932 Depression Riot?* Stuff. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/64583322/were-communist-agitators-behind-1932-depression-riot>

**SOURCE D: Depression and recovery**

As events would prove, in May 1930, when George Forbes became Prime Minister on the retirement of Sir Joseph Ward, he was the wrong man in the wrong place at the wrong time.



While Forbes was out of the country for the 1930 Imperial Conference in London, Parliament passed the Unemployment Act, which promised relief payments for those who registered. When he returned in January 1931, Forbes announced that there would be no pay without work. This meant that, in order to receive payments, the unemployed, regardless of their skills or former occupations, would chip weeds, make roads, work on farms, join forestry projects, or participate in other 'make-work' schemes, many of them operating far away from towns and cities.

Source (adapted): King, M. (2003). *The Penguin History of New Zealand Illustrated*. Penguin Books Auckland. pp. 301 and 305.  
[https://books.google.co.nz/books?id=9\\_GcDwAAQBAJ&pg=PT303&lpg=PT303&dq](https://books.google.co.nz/books?id=9_GcDwAAQBAJ&pg=PT303&lpg=PT303&dq)



## SOURCE E: Harsh conditions



Men on an unemployment relief scheme dig a drainage ditch in the winter of 1932. One wears a sack while another uses a sack as a cloak. The government introduced new taxes in the 1930s to fund work schemes for the unemployed. In 1931 an 'Emergency Unemployment Charge' at a flat rate of 1.25% on all income was put on top of a £1 poll tax.

The economic depression of the 1930s did much to improve the state of New Zealand's roads. From 1929 to 1934, some 100,000 men were unemployed. The government put many to work on road building and maintenance. Men lived in camps by the sides of the roads they were building. There was little in the way of mechanisation, and most found themselves at the end of a pick, shovel, or wheelbarrow.



Image (top): Unknown photographer (1932). *Depression workers digging ditch*. [Photograph]. Ref: 1/2-027086-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. /records/23195868

Image (bottom): Unknown photographer. *Traffic on the roads*. [Photograph]. Ref: AAQT 6401 A82. Archives New Zealand. Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/photograph/23310/depression-road-works>

## SOURCE F: The role of Jim Edwards

*James Henry Edwards (Jim) was a New Zealand socialist, communist, and political activist.*

In April [1932], he [Edwards] was summoned to return to Auckland, where the Unemployed Workers Movement (UWM) was planning a relief workers' strike. During a demonstration on 13 April, Edwards used his influence to rescue a police sergeant attacked by the crowd. The following evening, post and telegraph workers marched on the Auckland Town Hall to protest against wage reductions. Joined by large numbers of unemployed, the crowd was estimated at 15,000. Outside the hall, as Edwards urged the unemployed to fight for their rights, the mood turned ugly.

Police evidence at his first trial in June suggested that Edwards had encouraged violence and taken an active part in attacking police. Sentenced to three months' gaol\* for inciting lawlessness, he was released on bail pending a Supreme Court hearing into the charge of taking part in a riot. At the first trial on 28 and 29 July, the jury failed to agree. At the second on 1 August, he was found guilty and sentenced to two years in prison with hard labour. In gaol, he was kept segregated from other prisoners.

\* gaol                      jail




Sources (adapted): Simpson, T. (1998). *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*. Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand. <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/4e4/edwards-james-henry>

Jim Edwards (2021, May 5). In *Wikipedia*. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jim\\_Edwards\\_\(political\\_activist\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jim_Edwards_(political_activist))

**SOURCE G: The unemployed riot in Queen Street**

*The author of this extract, C. G. Scrimgeour, was a Methodist minister, socialist, and Auckland city missionary. As “Uncle Scrim”, he hosted The Man in the Street, a very popular Sunday night national radio show.*

From across the road, and the elevation of the Mission in Airedale Street, I had a grandstand view. The shabby little cottage at No. 2 was my home, and from my front door I could look directly into the door of the town hall.



The scalp wound needed more than thirty stitches. In the following twelve months, I never knew where the patient was.

Source (adapted): Scrimgeour, C. (1998). The unemployed riot in Queen Street. In Brockie, B. (Ed.). *The Penguin Eyewitness History of New Zealand*. Penguin Books Auckland. (pp. 161–162).

**SOURCE H: 1932 Auckland riot baton located at the New Zealand Police Museum**

The 1932 Depression Riots, a series of riots relating to unemployment throughout the country, took place in Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington, and Auckland. The Queen Street riot that began on the afternoon of 14 April 1932 remains one of the most violent incidents in Auckland's history.



Auckland riot baton 1932.

When the riot was finally over, there were 200 injuries, 250 glass windows smashed, and 85 arrests – 83 of which resulted in convictions.

Source (adapted): Campbell, D. *1932 Auckland Riot Baton*. New Zealand Police. <https://www.police.govt.nz/about-us/history-and-museum/museum/exhibitions/curators-casefile/1932-auckland-riot-baton>