

Songs for Union Women

Step by Step

Step by step the longest march
Can be won, can be won.
Many stones can form an arch,
Singly none, singly none.
And by union what we will,
Can be accomplished still.
Drops of water turn a mill,
Singly none, singly none.

Don't be too polite girls

Don't be too polite girls, don't be too polite
Show a little fight, girls, show a little fight
Don't be fearful of offending in case you get the sack
Just recognise your value and we won't look back

[CHORUS]

I sew up shirts and trousers in the clothing trade
Since men don't do the job, I can't ask for higher pay
The people at the top seldom offer something more
Unless the people underneath are walking out the door

[CHORUS]

They say a man needs more to feed his children and his wife
Well, what are the needs of a woman who leads a double working life?
When the whistle blows for knock-off, it's not her time for fun
She goes home to start the job that's never paid and never done

[CHORUS]

We can't afford to pay you, say the masters in their wrath
But women say just cut your coat according to your cloth
If the economy can't stand it, then here's your answers boy
Cut out the wild extravagance on the new war toys!

[CHORUS]

All among the bull girls, all among the bull
Keep you hearts full girls, keep your hearts full
What good is a man as a doormat or following at heel?
It's not their balls we're after, it's a fair square deal!

Whakarongo / Tautoko

Nga iwi e, nga iwi e

People, people

Kia kotahi ra

Let's be joined as one

Te Moana-Nui-Akiwa

People of the Pacific

[repeat]

E I A I E

Whakarongo tautoko

Listen, support

E I A I E

Kia mau ra, kia mau ra

Hold on to

Ki te manu-motu-hake

What you believe in

Me te aroha

And love

E I A I E

Whakarongo tautoko

Listen, support

E I A I E

Wahine ma, wahine ma

Women, women

Maranga mai, maranga mai

Wake up (be more assertive)

Kia kaha!

Be strong

E I A I E

Whakarongo tautoko

Listen, support

E I A I E

Tane ma, tane ma

Men, men

Whakarongo tautoko

Listen, support

Kia kaha!

Be strong

E I A I E

Whakarongo tautoko

Listen, support

E I A I E

Union Maid

There once was a union maid who never was afraid
Of the goons and the ginks and the company finks
And the deputy sheriffs who made the raid.
She went to the union hall when a meeting it was called
And when the company boys came round
She always stood her ground

[CHORUS]

*Oh you can't scare me, I'm sticking to the union
I'm sticking to the union, I'm sticking to the union
Oh you can't scare me, I'm sticking to the union
I'm sticking to the union, till the day I die*

This union maid was wise to the tricks of company spies
She couldn't be fooled by company stools, she'd always organise the guys
She always got her way when she struck for higher pay
She'd show her card to the National Guard
And this is what she'd say

[CHORUS]

A woman's life is hard even with a union card
She's got to stand on her own two feet, not be a servant of the male elite
It's time to make a stand, keep working hand in hand
For there's a job that's got to be done
And a fight that's got to be won

[CHORUS]

Bread and Roses

As we go marching, marching in the beauty of the day
A million darkened kitchens, a thousand mill lofts grey
Are touched with all the radiance that a sudden sun discloses
For the people hear us singing: "Bread and roses, bread and roses"

As we go marching, marching, we battle too for men
For they are women's children, and we mother them again.
Our lives shall not be sweated from birth until life closes
Hearts starve as well as bodies
Give us bread and give us roses.

As we go marching, marching, unnumbered women dead
Go crying through our singing their ancient songs of bread.
Small art and love and beauty, their drudging spirits knew
Yes it is bread we fight for, but we fight for roses too.