



Southern Queensland Branch News

26th August 2010

FEDERAL ELECTION

The Election has been held and the likely results will not be known for a period of time. The ALP faced a severe backlash in the State of Queensland and I guess the letter to the Editor by former SQ Deputy Branch Secretary Col Davies and Gary Anderson in the *Courier Mail* of Wednesday 25th August puts the Queensland vote into perspective.

Anna Bligh is not Teflon-coated and must take her share of the blame for the massive swing against federal Labor. If her Government through her privatisation of public assets policy can alienate a couple of old lefties like us who worked tirelessly on the "Your Rights At Work" campaign during the 2007 election, it stands to reason that Bligh and her Government had a major role to play in Saturday's result. Furthermore, it will have a major role in the next State election unless she comes to her senses.

The Branch has always maintained that privatisation of Queensland's public assets is a bad policy, there is still opportunity for the Bligh Government to change its mind.

The *Wynnum Herald* on Wednesday 11th August contained a State Government advert. promoting the benefits of an upgraded port of Brisbane motorway indicating it would be a lifeblood to the Nation's third largest container Port. With the appropriate management, the Port of Brisbane could be the busiest Port in two to three decades, particularly when global trends in shipping have been viably analysed.

The Branch Executive met with the Member for Lytton and Deputy Premier Paul Lucas on 30th July after the successful protest outside his office. We relayed the concerns of our membership regarding privatisation inclusive of a potential new owner; the possible increase in Port related charges to leaseholders; and shipping in a manner that could mean that shipping bypasses Brisbane.

The Deputy Premier stated that he would revert if there is a caveat on the increase of charges by a potential new owner. At the time of writing, the Branch still awaits that response.

The Branch would like to thank those members who volunteered their time and effort in seeking the re-election of the ALP on a national level.

LASHING

An incident arose in Brisbane last week whereby the sailing time was set for the vessel "Florence" with containers that were loaded, remaining unlashed. The Branch has sent correspondence to the stevedoring company highlighting that lashing is the work of stevedores in Australia. Lashing remains a significant area of work for many of our members.

Lately we have had many issues with vessels arriving on the Australian coast that are not compliant with Marine Orders Part 32.

Lashing needs to be performed in a safe manner in accordance with the best practice; further if the work is not safe for stevedores, then it is not safe for seafarers. Too often as a result of unsafe vessels, ship's crew are being forced to perform lashing.

Members this practice will continue unless we are all pro-active. Non-compliant vessels should be reported and the Aust. Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) should be insisting on their compliance.

INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT FEDERATION 42ND CONGRESS

MUA Youth Report-back by Walter J Crookall, SQ Branch MUA Delegate, Australian Amalgamated Terminals

I was immensely proud to have been given the opportunity to represent the youth for the Queensland Branch at the 42nd ITF Congress. I quickly found out that I wasn't only representing a Branch or a State but I was representing a Country.

As we arrived in Mexico after nearly 18 hours of continuous flying, we were happy to have finally reached our destination in one piece. We slowly grew in numbers as we met other rank & file members and delegates along the way. We knew that this was going to be the largest delegation of MUA members to have ever been assembled outside Australia and an important page in history for the international union movement as a whole. Being so far away from home, it was good to be amongst familiar faces. Mexico was a realistic experience of how some parts of the world work. We found that within such a modern and developed city that poverty was around every corner. We learnt that the average wage in Mexico was about 60 pesos a day which equates to AUD\$6.

Most of the big international companies in Mexico were controlled by yellow unions and many workers were being exploited and wages were not being paid on a regular basis. We met workers that were part of the Mexican Electrical Union, who had been locked out of their jobs for the past 10 months for being in a 'real' union the SME. Not only had they been locked out for the past 10 months, their employer also had all the electrical trade licenses revoked. They couldn't work for their own employer or be hired by any other employer. So, while at the Congress, the MUA took up the cause and started a collection for our comrades in struggle and raised 40,000 pesos (AUD\$4000). We committed the ITF to helping these workers to get their jobs back, but most importantly fight for their rights!

It was great to be proactive in union activities while in our host nation during our stay. I also attended the ITF Youth Conference. We covered issues on climate change, precarious work, growing networks within the ITF and how the ITF impacts on your workplace. On the second day of Congress I reported the youth's resolution on climate change to a delegation of 1000 members. It was the first time the youth had ever been involved in an ITF Congress and I had the great privilege of delivering it to the fellow workers of the world.

To read the full report – go to the MUA website – www:mua.org.au/Branches/Queensland

THANK YOU

The Branch wishes to take the opportunity to thank Michael McLennan for providing additional resources in the Branch over the last 3 weeks and acting in a diligent manner.

Fellow Branch Committee member Bruce Doleman will continue as a relief official up to and including Sunday 5th September, whilst the Branch Secretary is on long service leave.

PATRICK ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT

Terminal Part A discussions will commence in Sydney on Wednesday 1st September with the SQ Branch being represented by Assistant Branch Secretary T. Austin, Stephen Elliott, Paul Williams, Peter Thomsen and Peter Thomassen.

Bulk and General Part A discussions will resume in Melbourne on 10th September. Initial discussions on a local level have commenced for Enterprise Agreements in the Ports of Brisbane and Gladstone. Dates for further discussions are to be confirmed; which will include the Townsville operations. The Queensland areas will be represented at a national level by Deputy Branch Secretary T. Munday and Brisbane Delegate Brett Membrey.

Authorised by Trevor Munday, Deputy Branch Secretary, Maritime Union of Aust.

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