



The Port Worker

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Branch Secretary's Report

The most divisive, vicious and anti worker Government in Australia's history devastatingly defeated, John Howard losing his seat, the Liberal Party in disarray and what is left of it's leadership poised to tear each other part. Happy Christmas!!!!!!!

The Labor Party was swept into Government on the back of an incredibly long and challenging union instigated campaign the likes of which has never been seen before in this country, it was a great example of what a united union movement can achieve. The YR@W campaign however would not have succeeded without the general public and community groups engaging with us and forming YR@W groups all around this great country. These groups were the backbone of this campaign and we congratulate them all.

The Branch has received letters and phone calls of appreciation from Mike Kelly in Eden Monaro, Neil Reilly in Gilmore, Jenny George in Throsby and Sharon Bird in Cunningham thanking all the SNSW Branch members who manned polling booth from Eden to West Wollongong. We all know what was in store for the workers in this country had Howard won this election and our members responded brilliantly. Congratulations to all the guys that took the time to do letterbox drops or stand on the polling booths.

United Mineworkers

I recently had the honour of attending the South Western Mineworkers Board of Management in Lithgow. It was a real experience for me and gave me the opportunity to get an insight into the various issues that miners have to deal with and highlighted to me that regardless of the great differences in our working environments the basic issue workers care about extend across all industry. All workers want to know that at the end of their shift they will be going home as fit and healthy as when they started, that they have the ability to make a decent living and be treated with dignity while they are at work.

I look forward to forging closer ties with the CFMEU Mining Division, closer associations with like minded progressive unions such as the miners can only benefit members of all unions as we face the challenges ahead. I would like to thank Bob Mitchell and Spotty White for the opportunity to attend their Board meeting.

Port of Napier Dispute

As this newsletter is being prepared a major dispute with

possible international repercussions is underway in the Port of Napier in New Zealand where a picket line has been established in an attempt to save 85 MUNZ union members jobs.

Basically the Port of Napier is contracting out the stevedoring operation currently performed by Maritime Union of New Zealand members to cheaper under skilled and under trained non-union company.

Following on from the Patrick dispute in Australia, the ILWU Lockout in the USA and the Ports of Convenience push in Europe this is the next attack by international Capital on Maritime Unions. As in the previous disputes if they succeed in breaking Maritime Unions anywhere they will eventually spread that attack to our shores. Melbourne Deputy Branch Secretary, David Schliebs is attending the picket line set up in the Port of Napier presenting pledges of support from ports around Australia. Members are urged to go to the MUA website and follow the prompts to send an automatic email the Port of Napier CEO. Members will be kept updated.

Garry Keane, Branch Secretary

Hon Deputy Branch Secretary Report

Esselte Picket Line

Recently the Branch, through the initiative of the Patrick Consultative Committee and the Special Purpose Fund along with the MUA members involved in the port dredging operations resolved to financially and morally support members of the National Union of Workers (NUW) who had set up a picket line outside the warehouse of stationary giant Esselte near Campbell town NSW. These workers were sacked for having the audacity to request their employer engage in negotiations with their union to renew a collective bargaining agreement with the intent of protecting their current conditions with an additional \$12 a week pay increase. Our delegation to the picket line was told of the intimidation, harassment and dirty tactics the workers had endured over the past twelve weeks on the picket line, from having their cars vandalised and threatening phone calls to having private investigators film and photograph them on a daily basis. The strain was definitely starting to show with stories of financial hardship and the mental fatigue these workers had endured in defense of the most basic of trade union rights, the right to bargain collectively, was

there for all to see. These tactics had but one aim and that was to break the solidarity of the workers. They were unsuccessful. We presented two cheques to the picketers of \$1000.00 each from the respective committees to help ease the hardship. The picketers could not believe that a bunch of waterside workers from Port Kembla would take the time to come along and support them let alone give them financial support as well, this astounded them. It is a credit to both committees and the members for showing the solidarity, commitment and compassion in support of fellow trade unionists. A couple weeks after our visit the workers were back in the gate and the NUW was in negotiations toward securing a collective agreement and with it a future for the workers. It just goes to show once again that "In unity is strength" stay on course comrades.

Federal Elections

Could the demise of John Howard and the Coalition Government have been any sweeter? I don't think so. Not only did we see the fall of the most anti-worker Government in history, but to see little Johnny lose his own seat will resonate in my memory for the rest of my life. For me though the most satisfying thing about the defeat of Howard will be his place in history, I feel history will not be very kind to him. He will be remembered as a war mongering, bigoted, fear campaigning ultra-conservative who tried but failed to destroy the Maritime Union of Australia and along with it the rest of the trade union movement. The fact that we are still here is testament to the leadership and commitment of our elected officials and members in strategically and passionately defending our right to organise workers on the waterfront. You have to admit we are not as strong as we once were. But no one should ever forget that we have endured an adversary of virtually limitless funds who, through a well orchestrated propaganda, ideological and legislative campaign that was decades in the making, was hell bent on seeing the demise of this proud union and yet we came out the other side still standing. Make no mistake if he was successful in getting rid of us then the rest would have fallen like dominoes.

Howard's role in the invasion and consequent occupation of Iraq had nothing to do with weapons of mass destruction, as we were told at the time, but was essentially a grab for that precious of all resources, oil and the power that comes with supporting the biggest tyrant of them all George W Bush. Howard's hands will forever be stained with the blood of innocent Iraqis and an ever increasing number of Australian soldiers. This was nothing short of the greatest con job in history and the sooner Rudd gets us out of there the better. So comrades let us celebrate long and hard the fall of little Johnny and enjoy our time in the sun as now the hard work begins in holding Labor to its word and ensuring that they repay the efforts and commitment shown by everyone who contributed to getting them over the line so convincingly. Congratulations to all members who participated in the election campaign and gave their time to assist the Branch in organising such a successful effort on behalf of the fighting MUA.

National Council

In October this year I attended my first National Council of the union held at National Office in Sydney. I have to say that I was very impressed at the way the business of the union is conducted on behalf of the membership and the level of transparency was even more impressive with vigorous and sometimes heated debate around every policy, recommendation and report put before the council always with the interests of the members first. Over the four days we addressed by Julia Gillard, Bill Shorten, Martin Ferguson, Tony Maher, Paul Hawse as well as other leading political and trade union identities both national and international. The recommendations and decisions of National Council are available in detail in the special AGM copy of the Maritime Workers Journal.

Merry Christmas

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all MUA members and their families a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year. Hopefully we will all be enjoying more prosperous times under a Labor Government.

Glen Williams, Hon Deputy Branch Secretary

Seafaring Section

Comrades, now that the elections are over and we can contemplate dealing with a government for the first time in 12 years that isn't hell bent on destroying us at every opportunity, I would like to remind people that just because Labor got up doesn't mean that we have done our bit, quite the opposite in fact because we must make the most of our opportunities whilst we can. By this I mean we as a union must continue to educate and inform our members of our past struggles particularly as there will be a lot of members out there who weren't in our industry during the Patrick's dispute and its significance might not be as important as it should be. I would encourage all members to get involved with the union and not just see the union rooms as somewhere you can do your banking. People must understand that they are the union and the more people get involved, the better it is for all of us. It remains to be seen what Labor does with work choices but having the industrial system or something similar to what was in place before Howard got to it gives us the ability to hang on to and improve on our conditions which would have been impossible had Howard got back in. Not only do we need Labor to deliver on its promises we also need our members to get involved and achieve what we are all about - having a go and defending our rights and conditions as we have for over a century.

John Madge McGartland

Patrick Stevedoring

Enterprise Agreement Update

Pt A (Common to Patrick Terminals and Patrick Bulk and General)

Pt B (Common to all Patrick Bulk and General)

Negotiations in Patrick A and B are continuing and are close to finalisation. Meanwhile Patrick C discussions are continuing around the various B and G Ports. Pt Kembla's Patrick C negotiations will probably commence sometime in January. In the meantime the Committee will circulate a list of Patrick C items to be discussed and seek feedback from the members before meeting with the Company.

After recent discussions with the Company we have been successful in getting 5 additional TIPE positions. However the selection process has raised concern within the workforce and the Committee will be seeking discussions with the Company to come up with a fair and transparent selection process.

Congratulations are in order to the workforce and the Company in achieving 3 years LTI free. This is a huge effort in the Stevedoring industry and hopefully one that can be continued everywhere with the implementation of a National Safety Code of Practice.

Thanks to all members who contributed to the election of the ALP and their support of the very successful YR@W campaign. Lets keep the campaign going as the struggle never stops.

Bluescope's adoption of a just in time stevedoring service and a poor cargo delivery service is having an adverse impact on our members. For our casuals it impacts upon their earning potential while for permanent it impacts upon the regularity of their rostered time off. It is not a good image for a stevedoring company and a customer to have ships at berth and no cargo available to load and cannot be very economical. Merry Xmas and a Safe and Happy New Year to all our members.

Brian Smith, Patrick Consultative Committee member

PKPC

Our current Enterprise Agreement expires 30th June 2008. The parties will commence negotiations on a new Agreement no later than three months prior to the nominal expiry date (30 June 2008) of this Agreement. It appears that negotiations had started a long time before the due date as the Premiers department has released a Memorandum on NSW Public Sector Wages Policy. It is intended to maintain real wages by allowing for increases of 2.5 per cent per annum. Additional increases are available where employee cost savings are achieved. In other words if we want to keep up with the CPI Inflation rate we need to trade something off.

We have been through constant reform over the years and just about anything you can think of has been taken away. So this 2.5% a year wage adjustment is a big set back for all employees with the PKPC, when you have interest rates on the move and inflation could break 3%, if it has not already.

I know the feeling of all employees covered by this Enterprise Agreement and you can be assured that come the 1ST of July 2008, it will be different to past negotiations as all are aware of the cost of living and most are starting to feel it in the hip pocket.

On another note, in the year 2001 we went through our last restructure which seen our numbers reduced to a total of 14 to cover 3 work areas. Because of the 4 shifts required to cover the Port 24/7 we have 4 Ship Port Officers, 4 Port Officer, 4 Vessel Traffic Information Officers and 2 reliefs' to cover annual leave.

When one gets sick in your designated position the other 3 within there work area, have to cover that short fall on additional hours which is part of our agreement. When two get sick we have a problem. Lately the PKPC has asked Officers to cover long term sick leave in return for additional pay at the single rate.

Tony Fenech, PKPC

Monthly Meetings

All members are welcomed at the Monthly meeting held at Port Kembla Leagues Club on the last Tuesday of the month at 9am. This is a forum for members to discuss issues effecting their industry and their employment.

Books and DVDs 4 sale at Union rooms

“**Unchartered Waters**” by Greg Mallory \$30.00

“**Cuba beyond our dreams**” by Silvia Martinez Puentes \$25.00

“**Fighting Films**” by Lisa Milner \$20.00—members \$10.00

“**For and Aft**” (mostly sea stories) by Tas Bull \$30.00

DVD “**Witness to Invasion**” by Rosemary Guillepie (Iraq Invasion) \$25.00

MUSAA

Comrades, we are now nearing the end of 2007 the election results saw the end of the Howard Government

but of course not the end of neo—liberalism which seems to effect both parties.

“ Neo—Liberalism claims that we are best served by the maximum markets freedom and minimum intervention by the state. The role of government should be confined to creating and defending markets, protecting private property and defending the realm. All other functions are better discharged by private enterprise, which will be prompted by the profit motive to supply essential services.”

George Monbiot

These ideas are nothing more than an elaborate attempt to cover up the intentions of the corporates in order for them to make the maximum profit. The shameful intentions of the lemma Labor Government to privatize the electricity once again presents us with a need to mobiles the greatest number of people to oppose this sell off .

Privatization is against the interests of the people where ever privatization has taken place it has meant a loss of jobs and a decrease in services, the inner logic of capitalism is to make profit.

We need to mobilize our forces where ever we have influence to keep public assets out of the hands of the privateers. The new year will prove very interesting. All the best to you and your families for the festive season.

May the New Year bring further victories for our people

Yours in Solidarity
T A Curphey
Newcastle Convener

MUA Database - EAS

This database is available to all members of the MUA who finds themselves unemployed or wish to change jobs. You must be currently unemployed and a financial members of the Union.

You will need to contact your Branch who will provide you with a password and information on how to access EAS through the MUA website.

Picnic Day at Jamberoo

Looking forward to seeing everyone who has registered their families through the Branch for the fun day at Jamberoo Recreation Park on the 14th January, 2008. Tickets will be available at the gate on the day from 10am.

Credit Union

Hours are Mon-Fri 10am—3.00pm

Phone No. 02 42745722

Fax No. 02 42745733

BSB No 802884

Head Office 1300 362 000

Appointments need to be made when making application for loans.

The SNSW Branch of the MUA hopes all members and their families had a wonderful Christmas and have a happy, healthy and safe New Year.

