

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia has welcomed Prime Minister Julia Gillard's attempt to tone down the unwarranted political frenzy which has surrounded asylum seekers in recent weeks.

"Julia Gillard's overt rejection of 'inflammatory politics' is to be commended," said FECCA Senior Deputy Chair, Dr Sundram Sivamalai. "The government's new border security policy (released 6/7/10) is also commendable in its clear recognition that asylum

seekers are people who deserve to be treated with decency and humanity.

"The government's decision to lift the suspension on the processing of Sri Lankan asylum seekers' visa applications is also to be applauded."

"However, FECCA has some reservations about the government's announcement that it will return asylum seekers who come by boat to 'regional processing centres', in locations such as East Timor."

COOPER SUPER ENQUIRY

5 July 2010

A Federal inquiry recommends a new superannuation structure that will lower fees by 40 per cent for workers, on average.

The reduction in fees would add about \$40,000 to the final balance of an average member, or 7 per cent, after 37 years in the workforce.

The new architecture for the \$1.3 trillion superannuation sector is recommended in the Super System Review.

Headed by former Australian Securities & Investments Commission chairman Jeremy Cooper, the review has proposed a four-part structure that recognises members based on their level of involvement with the management of their super.

The majority of Australian workers are expected to fall into the MySuper component, a simple, cost effective product with a single, diversified portfolio of investments.

MUA: Keep Australia Afloat

July 2010



In just 10 years, Australia's merchant shipping fleet has shrunk by half. Our seafarers jobs are being lost as overseas

flagged ships, many of them ships of shame, take more of our coastal trade.

A strong shipping fleet is vital to our economy, environment and security - and yet there are no incentives to invest in Australian shipping.

We need your support to keep Australian shipping afloat

Support the MUA Campaign online at:

<http://www.mua.org.au/campaigns/>

BLUE MOUNTAINS HOSPITALITY WORKERS

July 2010

Amid concerns that hundreds of young hospitality workers in the Blue Mountains are unaware of their basic rights at work a campaign is being launched to gauge the depth of the problem, raise awareness and improve conditions.

The joint initiative of the Liquor and Hospitality Division of the Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Union and Blue Mountains Union Council will start by surveying workers in the industry throughout the mountains - from Lapstone to Mount Victoria.

"Whether they're serving in the pubs, clubs, hotels, restaurants or cafes of the Blue Mountains they're the front line of the biggest industries in the area. They deserve a fair go," said Tara Moriarty, NSW secretary of the Liquor and Hospitality Division of the LHMU.

"Hospitality employees are among the most exploited in the region. Some turn up to work to find their shift cancelled and if they make a complaint they are seen as trouble makers. Bosses sometimes deal with such employees by reducing their shifts."

"What is particularly alarming is that many young people don't know their rights," said Ms Moriarty.

"They know that Workchoices is supposed to have gone, but they are confused about what's replaced it - whether it's an award, a collective agreement or something else. They know there's been changes to the unfair dismissal laws, but are unsure about exactly what's happened," said BMUC President Kerry Cooke.

"This means that they're open to exploitation. While there are many decent employers in the Blue Mountains prepared to give young workers a fair go, we're also getting reports of rogue bosses taking advantage of the situation.

"In the worst instances - there are cases of young workers being taken 'on trial' - working for a week - and then not receiving any pay.

After the survey, the union will offer free workshops where hospitality workers can learn more about the current industrial laws and seek advice about individual problems at work.

Copies of the survey can be obtained at the Liquor and Hospitality Division of the LHMU by ringing 1800 801 594 or emailing LHMU - lhmu@lhmu.org - or you can complete the survey online at the BMUC website - <http://bmucinc.com/>

"SUITS INSTEAD OF BALACLAVAS"

3 July 2010

The ACT Labor Party has fiercely criticised some of the Federal Government's building industry laws and refugee policies.

The party's annual conference has voted unanimously to call on the Commonwealth

to dismantle building industry watchdog, the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC), as well as its planned successor, the Building Industry Inspectorate.

ACT Labor MLA John Hargreaves says the ABCC is an abomination because it can send workers to jail if they refuse to testify.

"I can't see any difference between this watchdog and the watchdogs Peter Reith used on the waterfront," he said.

"The difference is they're wearing suits instead of balaclavas."

<http://rightsonsite.org.au/>



NATIONAL BROADBAND

20 June, 2010

The Heads of Agreement signed between Telstra and the National Broadband Network Company is good news for jobs in Australia's communications industry and good news for our national infrastructure say unions.

The deal will ensure NBN Co, the government-owned company rolling out the network, will have access to Telstra's infrastructure.

ACTU Secretary Jeff Lawrence said unions welcomed the deal, a key element of which is the provision of \$100 million for training and skills development for Telstra staff to assist with the broadband network roll-out.

"This deal helps resolve major barriers with the project and is a major step forward.

"It means everyone working in our communications industry and particularly Telstra employees can have greater confidence and job security.

"The National Broadband Network is a massive infrastructure project that will be important to the future of Australia's economy, driving productivity and growth.

"It provides direct job opportunities for thousands of people who will be involved in building and operating the network. And it will have an impact on thousands more throughout the economy once it is up and running." said Mr Lawrence.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

25 June 2010

ITUC World Congress delegates adopted a resolution that reconfirms the ITUC's commitment to achieving a peaceful, democratic, secure and stable world, where people from all countries coexist in mutual respect and tolerance, free from the threat of armed conflict, terrorism or other forms of violence or occupation.

ITUC president Sharan Burrow announced that the ITUC will undertake a mission to the Middle East to urge that the peace process continues there. She emphasised the urgent need to address "the illegal occupation of the West Bank, and the need to end the blockade of Gaza that deprives people of their fundamental needs and entitlements."

ITUC affiliates from Turkey and Greece took the stage together with the resounding cry "long live peace!" They presented a joint initiative for "cooperation and solidarity for a dividend of peace for workers" founded on the belief that "working people have nothing that divides us across the two shores of Aegean Sea."

MINIMUM PAY: \$15 per hour

3 June 2010

Fair Work Australia increased the minimum wage by \$26 a week, lifting the minimum weekly pay to \$569.90.

The union movement had been pushing a \$27 a week increase, using the profits Australia's mining magnates to argue the case for a wage rise for low-paid worker

ACTU Secretary Jeff Lawrence said the minimum wage claim was reasonable and economically responsible.

"It's a question of a fair share and minimum wage workers deserve that fair share," he said.

"All our evidence shows that it would not have a negative impact on the economy.

"In fact as Government stimulus is actually withdrawn from the economy it's important that there continues to be that purchasing power from workers."

PAID PARENTAL LEAVE

The new national paid maternity leave scheme is a big win for Australian women and their families. After 30 years of campaigning women will now have support to keep their jobs and financial security when they have a baby.

The 18 week scheme, announced in the May federal budget, will start from 2011 and is an important social reform giving assistance to families to adjust to a major life event - the birth of a baby.

Measures to allow mothers time to bond with their babies without financial stress forcing them back to work too early benefits the entire community and would not have been achieved without the tireless efforts of union and community activists.

What we have won

Eighteen weeks leave for the primary care giver – whether a full-time, part-time or casual worker. Eligible women will get payments via their employer at the Federal Minimum wage (currently \$543.78). An income test of \$150,000 will apply based on the primary carer's adjusted taxable income in the previous financial year.

To be eligible for the government scheme the primary carer must be in paid work and have:

Been engaged in work continuously for at least 10 of the 13 months prior to the expected birth or adoption of a child

Undertaken at least 330 hours paid work in the 10 month period (an average of around one day of paid work a week)

Australian Unions



Working for a better life.

JOIN BMUC

Blue Mountains residents can become BMUC members if they support our Aims and Objects. Membership is open to union members, to retired unionists and to those who are unemployed or unwaged.

Membership Fees
Waged \$15.00 pa
Unwaged \$5.00 pa

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