



# Queensland Branch News



3 February 2014

## UNDERSTANDING THE ATTACKS THAT ARE COMING

The Branch has written to all MUA members in Griffith about the By-Election, enclosing a letter from the ALP candidate, Terri Butler.



**SUPPORT ALP  
CANDIDATE FOR  
GRIFFITH  
TERRI BUTTLER**

- So what is at stake for you and your family:
  - Loss of Medicare, commencing with \$5 co-payment
  - Privatizing the ABC; Australia Post and SBS
  - Raising the GST
  - Further job cuts
  - Commission of Audit
  - Further attacks on the Social Welfare system, Safety Net
  
- What does that mean?
  - Increased taxes
  - Higher costs for postage and medical services
  - More unemployed
  - Royal Commission into Unions
  - Erosion of civil liberties
  - Attacks on penalty rates
  - Putting on hold SGC for Super
  - Watering down the NDSS
  - Further damage to Australian manufacturing industry
  - Less apprenticeships and training opportunities
  
- What can you do:
  - Join the Queensland Branch Activists Committee and play a role – contact the Branch
  - Join the ALP and play a role – the activists have
  - Help out in the Griffith by-election; you have everything to lose if Labor loses.
  - If B. Glasson and the LNP win, it underpins everything Abbott is planning to do to you and your family
  - You can play a role and you can make a difference. The activists have already made a difference by getting out after work with leafleting and phone bank work and exposing the LNP's agenda.
  - Don't stand by and see Abbott's agenda legitimised by the LNP winning in Griffith.

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## DP WORLD

DP World negotiations commence next week with two delegates in attendance from all Australian Terminals. The initial negotiations are set for three days.

This will be the opening salvo. The Log of Claims have been established and will be forwarded to the employer prior to commencement of negotiations.

Regular updates will be delivered via report back meetings and newsletters.

Newsletters will also be delivered electronically, therefore members are urged to ensure that their email address are up to date or provided to the Branch office.

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# THE QUINELLA

If you are a betting person and placed a wager after the election that the Abbott led Coalition Government would attack the Labor movement and be joined at the hip with the right wing media in this country, you would not have received a substantial dividend. Demonising the Union Movement has been a well trodden path that the Liberal/Nationals have taken for decades.

The Leader of the Government in the Senate, Eric Abetz, has “jumped the stump” in an address to the Sydney Institute, whereby he castigated Unions, in his view, by making exorbitant wage claims, inclusive of claims made by the MUA in the Offshore. He has also taken a blindside at some employers that, in his view “caved in” to Union demands.

What is not surprising is any comparison to profit margins or “shareholder returns” being contained in his rhetoric. Then again that would not suit the agenda of his Government.

This Government has made some policy announcements regarding a review of the Fairwork Act, however that sits alongside a Commission of Audit being conducted by Tory stooges and lackies. Working people in this State have already seen the ramifications of so called Commissions of Audit which, in real terms, is merely a smokescreen to break election commitment. It is akin to young children playing cricket and breaking a window - it will always be someone else’s fault.

In the meantime, the *Financial Review* runs an article that restaurants will close if nothing is done about penalty rates in the hospitality industry. This industry has the lowest pay rates in the country with workers often on minimum award standards, often full of casual workers, with the only viable rates of pay being on weekend shifts.

Business wants to operate on a 24/7 basis in our main areas of coverage, shipping/stevedoring. That certainly is the case, however we don’t see too many managers on the night shift or at weekends.

We have also witnessed attacks of the Coastal Trading Act, introduced to seek to achieve a viable Australian shipping fleet.

Australian workers working on the Australian coast on domestic routes are no different than Australians driving trucks and trains in the other modes of transport. No different than Australian domestic airlines flying domestic routes engaging Australian workers.

The maritime area is surely an area of policy of the Coalition that is hard to understand.

If you happen to be an asylum seeker arriving on the Australian coast, you will have your boat turned around and towed back to where it came from. However if you are a foreign national and want to work on the Australian coast on board a flag of convenience vessel engaged on third world wages, you will be welcomed with open arms by the Coalition Government.

Perhaps the “new people smugglers” will become “Shipping Manning Agents”, after all, foreign seafarers do not have to go through the checks and balances that Australians do, whereby a MISC is a license to work.

Allegations of corruption in Unions are nothing new. They will be front and centre and be the subject of ongoing attacks. To attack the leadership of Unions is to demonise the whole of the Union, including the Rank and File.

Corruption is not supported by this Union.

In closing, the negotiations with employers that we have and will continue on the path of seeking to establish good conditions of employment with viable wage outcomes via our normal methods of having our Rank and File establish their Log of Claims.

If the Coalition Government want to demonise us for acting on behalf of the membership as a result of having members comprise their Log of Claims, so be it!

The policy of this Union is determined by our Rank and File at Quadrennial National Conferences and this will continue unless a valid majority of the Membership determine otherwise.

