



NATIONAL MUA VETERANS NEWS

"Retired from the workforce, not the struggle"

December 2015

National Secretary's Report December 2015

Comrades,

Once again another year has flown by and we have sadly lost members. Branches are feeling the losses of their mates and we salute our comrades for their support and commitment to our great unions and our association, regardless of what sections they came from.

OVERVIEW OF LAST 12 MONTHS All branches have been involved in actives addressing governments local, state, and federal who are placing concerns on communities with ongoing pressure due to cost cutting exercise and trying to shift the burden of cost on to those that can least afford the cuts.

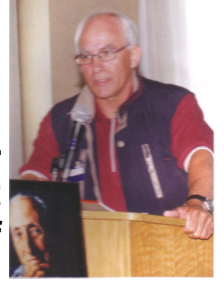
With the media only addressing the negative side of human life, the people in our society that give their time in supporting those that are finding it extremely hard never get a mention. This is due to the fact that it shows up governments inabilities to look after our most vulnerable who get lost and hurt.

We only have to look at the increase to our homeless rate and that tells the whole story. I salute those volunteers that help those unfortunate members of our society, and may we turn that negative into a positive

I call on you all to support the workers of the National Disabilities Scheme which has been bought by a private organization. NDIS workers in NSW have been given notice that they are finished in

July 2016.

Again, **Privatization shows its ugly head, profits come before services. Please support PSA Rallies in support of those workers.**



Our workload has increased on the National position due to ongoing pressures coming from the federal government's drive in trying to change the course of lifestyle and conditions that have been fought for over the last hundred years and this has placed fear and uncertainty into the retired community.

Our commitment to supporting the retired originations like Fair Go For Pensioners and Retired Trade Unionist Associations as with COTA, ACOSS, on issues of mutual benefit is ongoing and have our full support.

We need each other to combat the ongoing uncertainty that the world is facing. There have been some changes in branches caused through new legislation placed on the union movement and the retired associations.

We were part of the opening of the Merchant Navy Memorial in Canberra where our comrades who lost their lives in the wars are now recognized.

Comrades never before have we had to navigate through such turbulent political storms and attacks as this last twelve months. The government, regardless who the Prime Minister is, are determined to proceed along its path of **lies**

and deceit, it's continual attack on hard fought conditions, never once addressing the enormous wealth made in this great country of ours and with corporate and big business not even paying their share of taxes.

Like Chevron, with over a One point Two Seven billion dollars profit, their contribution to TAX was 248 million dollars or RIO TINTO going to Singapore to avoid their share of Taxes.

TAX AVODANCE IS BIG BUSINESS IN AUSTRALIA, THE LUCKY COUNTRY FOR CORPORATES AND BOARD ROOMS. And who is paying the price for the pleasure of these Tax avoidances scams? The workers, the communities, unprivileged, unemployed, single parents with increases in the GST which will have a flow on effect right through every item in our lives and changing the course of lifestyle and the class struggle being more evident every day.

MEDICARE UNDER ATTACK

The attack on Medicare by a government hell bent on destroying the universal health system, Cost Cutting to our Public Hospital by cutting Funding to States. The back door attacks on Co Payments to Doctors, by freezing the rebate for four years with the Abbott/Turnbull government trying to change the Medical system to Private coverage pushing a user pays system. The attack on Education, Universities and TAFE.

THE NEW RIGHT

We had the marches on Sunday 22- 11- 15 to Reclaim Australia (reclaim for who?) how sad with negative divisions in our Country which only benefit the ruling class. Yes we should be marching, to reclaim our Manufacturing, our Ship Building, Australian Ships for Australian Jobs and service vessels to outlying little ports. The attack on workers through Automation and Loss of skilling, we must continue to campaign for our young so they have a future.

Comrades our country is under attack from these Trans- Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreements of secrecy which right from its concept has never been in favor of any of the countries involved only the Multi- Corporates with clauses attacking governments who dare attack the corporates.

That is not on! Governments have the right to question products. One of our concerns is the threat of losing the Pharmaceutical Benefit Scheme (PBS), the threat of mining, and fracking; climate change policy. Medicines will be more expensive, new medicines to treat cancer, diabetes and more.

The corporates will have a monopoly on drugs, with people cutting down on the drugs they need for their health with demonstrations all over the world where these corporates are trying to taking over our lives; IT IS NOT TO LATE TO OPPOSE THE TPP; PLEASE SUPPORT DEMONSTRATION IN YOUR AREA AND PHONE AND WRITE TO YOUR FEDERAL MEMBER.

POLITICAL OVERVIEW OF THE WORLD;

We are living in turbulent times, with divisions created around the world and media coverage of mankind at its worst, there is no place for events of extremist movement against HUMANITY; WE MUST ASK SOME HARD QUESTIONS; WHO BENEFITS FROM THESE TERRIBLE INUMANE ATTACK ON MANKIND? WHO FUNDS THESE ATTACKS? WHO SUPPLYS THE EQUIPMENT AND WEAPONS? WE HAVE THE ABILITY TO STOP THESE ATTACK ON MANKIND REGARDLESS OF REGILON AND COLOR. WE ARE ALL PART OF THIS WORLD AND WE WANT TO LEAVE IT A BETTER PLACE THAN WE CAME INTO. I DREAM OF A WORLD OF PEACE, WHERE WORKERS DO NOT FIGHT WORKERS FOR THE RULING CLASS OR THE DESTRUCTION OF MANKIND, FOR SURLEY THAT IS WHERE WE ARE HEADING?

ATTACK ON THE UNION MOVEMENT

It is extremely difficult to understand why Australians keep putting a conservative government into power. A government that is hell bent on attacking the Trade Union Movement who are addressing what the membership require of them, which is jobs, safety, decent wages and conditions. It will never be good enough for the employer class when workers ask for decent wages and conditions. Those union officials and employees that have broken the trust of their organization were never true unionists but used the members trust and funds to put them down and deserve everything they get.

We have had royal commissions into the Unions and not finding a scrap of evidence of any wrong doing but never into the employer class that have done wrong to workers, the environment and got off light. And so the class struggle will go on, until we have a government that is for all. Both sides of politics in recent years have had their leadership struggles, the ALP must come out with good strong policies for the people. They don't need to try and please the employer class that will never support them totally, in the past the ALP has supported social change and this cannot stop. They are in opposition to the policies of the conservatives, they should never compromise, thank god for the three strong Senators who so far have supported our struggles

THE AGM

Comrades we have our **AGM** in March on the Gold Coast with the MUA Conference with two delegates from each of the branches being supported by the union. I need the resolution for the AGM by the middle of January 2016, we cannot put resolutions to the conference as we are not a division of the union, we are an independent association.

I HAVE LIVED TO STRUGGLE

United We Stand Divide We Beg

Yours in Solidarity

Current pension rates

On 20 September 2015 the pension increased by \$6.80 per fortnight for singles and \$10.20 for couples (combined). This brings the pension rates to \$867 per fortnight for singles and \$1,307 per fortnight for couples (combined).

These figures are for the full rate pension and include the supplements.

JAPANESE MILITARISM ON THE RISE

Japan's Defence Minister Nakatani Gen and the US Defence Secretary Ashton Carter held a meeting in Malaysia. They agreed to build an Alliance Coordination Mechanism and a Bilateral Planning Mechanism. The two mechanisms, together with Japan's new war bills, would integrate Japanese Self-Defence Forces (SDF) with the US military, thus putting the SDF under the US control completely. It would also provide a possibility for the SDF to join US-led global wars. At the meeting, Nakatani supported the US's actions in South China Sea and promised to send troops to the area for conducting joint military exercises

WELFARE UNDER ATTACK

Prime ministers change but policies remain the same. More than 130,000 single parents stand to lose family benefits part B once their youngest child turns 13 if the Turnbull government gets the green light from the Senate for the package. Under the package announced last Wednesday, single parents of teenagers would have their payments reduced from more than \$3,000 a year to \$1,000. Grandparent carers would also have their payments cut when their grandchild reaches 13. This measure will affect 3,900 grandparents. A further 76,000 couple families would also have their family tax benefit B cut completely when their youngest child turns 13.

NEED TO FIGHT TO RETAIN SOCIAL GAINS

Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement:

by
Lynda Forbes

My emails today brought one about the Trans Pacific Partnership from GET-UP and in the mail for Union of Australian Women, we received a copy of *The Beacon* in which the editorial is “*Free Trade Agreements = Corporate Power*”. I thought that all that could have been done to stop this agreement seeing the light of day had been done, but no, not so. TPP is still an issue. According to *The Beacon*, the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) will be foisted on us in the very near future and the Get-Up team advises they have been campaigning against the signing of this agreement since its onset and their efforts along with many others have brought the protest to the position where they only have to move just six votes out of 435 in the US Congress and the TPP will go down. However if that fails, then apparently it fails utterly as America is the linchpin of the whole deal. At the time of writing the email, they had received word that one member of congress had just back flipped on the TPP so now only 5 more are needed. Professor Naom Chomsky an American linguist, Social Scientist and Human Rights Campaigner summed it up rather well when he said, “Every word in the phrase “Free Trade Agreement” is false. The FTAs are Investor Rights Agreements negotiated mostly in secret by representatives of transnational corporations and the few powerful States that cater to their interests, with the public being largely excluded. “

We still have time to protest to our politicians and ask them not to support the Trans Pacific Partnership – but not much time.

The Global Climate Change Summit: According to an article in The Guardian in July 2015, Miguel Canete Europe’s Commissioner for Climate Action said that he was very concerned about the lack of negotiating time remaining before the conference to be held in Paris and if governments did not reach agreement at this Summit there is “no plan B – nothing to follow. This is not just ongoing UN discussions. Paris is final.” This summit begins in Paris on 30th November and will continue until the 12th or 13th December. A couple of weeks ago, a call was made for a worldwide day of action to be held. These *People’s Climate Marches* start in Sydney on 29th November 2015 and thousands have signed up to participate resulting in over 2000 events worldwide. One of the Organisers of this day of protest said, “The goal was to mobilise the largest climate change march in history with Paris being the biggest march planned, but the recent attacks on the people of Paris made that impossible when once again the actions of the few threatened the welfare of us all.”

The fight to stop calamitous climate change is serious and necessary. Governments need to listen to the Scientists who have been telling us for decades that greenhouse gases must be ambitiously cut and new measures put in place to help poor nations adapt to the onslaught and devastating effects of global warming.

