



# QUEENSLAND BRANCH NEWS

NEWSLETTER of the QLD Branch of the MARITIME UNION of AUSTRALIA

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*To be truly radical is to make hope possible, rather than despair convincing* - Raymond Williams No. 109 – 1 December 2017

## ICTSI – Lord Atkin - Queensland State Election – Fake Housing Shortage Thanks from Ciaran - Support Al-Sharif

### ICTSI A Global Scourge We Don't Need in Australia

THE MARITIME UNION of Australia (MUA) says an ongoing dispute at Webb Dock at the Port of Melbourne is indicative of labour rights abuses regularly adopted by notorious global stevedoring giant International Container Terminal Services (ICTSI).

A community protest has been underway outside the Victoria International Container Terminal (VICT) for some days after a casual employee was denied shifts after taking action against management over workplace bullying and harassment.

"Community members are angry that a worker is being unfairly targeted by VICT and that worker happens to be a member of the MUA," MUA Deputy National Secretary Will Tracey said.

"22 workers on site have been identified as not having a Maritime Security Identification Card (MSIC) to work in the restricted landside zone and are currently awaiting processing.

"21 workers have been treated fairly by VICT but one has been punished, most likely because he has taken court action against a manager on site who has been bullying and victimising workers.

"The company's assertion in the AFR today that this worker "had lost an appeal against the regulator's refusal" to grant an MSIC is categorically false.

"So it's no surprise that the tight-knit Port Melbourne community has decided to stand up and defend this worker, as have other members of the broader community and other unions."

VICT is continuing a disturbing recent trend by employers who want to engage in a race to the bottom by accepting a workplace agreement voted on by five staff chosen by the company that slashes penalty rates and casual loading.

The MUA has been seeking to establish minimum standards for wages and conditions, but the company has refused to negotiate with the union.

"Workers everywhere are fed up with their wages flat lining while corporate profits continue to spiral upwards," Tracey said.

"The Port Melbourne community has decided to take a stand against a company with an atrocious labour record around the globe that should not be allowed to operate in this country."

"We even have ICTSI global chief executive Enrique K Razon on the record saying: '*The countries with the best infrastructure in the world are dictatorships*' – a statement that speaks volumes about this company's leadership and its regard for unions and workers."

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) last month launched a global report into ICTSI which showed a pattern of severe safety deficiencies across the Philippine-based company's network of terminals.

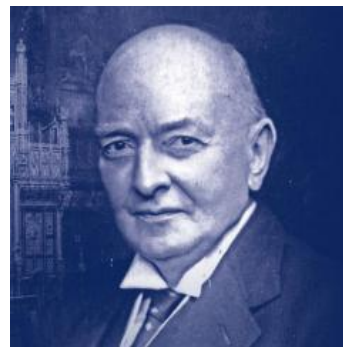
"The ITF, and our union affiliates, have observed an emerging pattern of labour violations in the ICTSI network: a failure to respect the right to freedom of association; poor safety standards; and illegal outsourcing of labour," the report says.

"Many of these violations are in breach of domestic law in the countries where ICTSI operates and contravene international labour conventions.

"They also contravene ICTSI's own policies and statements, and call into question the company's ability to effectively manage their global business and ensure the same standards and performance across all of their terminals."

### Lord Atkin *by Bob Carnegie*

THIS WEEK, PERHAPS the most important Queensland



Jurist, Lord Atkin was born 28 November 1867. In 1932, as a member of the House of Lords, he delivered the leading judgment in the landmark case of *Donoghue v Stevenson* (aka Paisley's snail).

This case established the modern law of negligence

in the UK and inadvertently, in most of the common law

Authorised by Bob Carnegie, Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) Queensland Branch Secretary

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world, except for the USA.

For working people this judgement created the provision of “duty of care” relating to negligence and opened the door for working people to seek some type of justice through the common law for injuries received at work due to employer’s negligence. Lord Atkin, truly a Brisbane boy done good.

## **The Outcome of the Queensland State Election**

*By David Greene*



WITH VOTES STILL being counted as at writing, the final results of the 2017 Queensland State Election remain

unresolved. However, what is certain is that the ALP is on

track to form majority Government, with ABC election analyst Antony Green projecting 48 seats (a majority of 2).

What is also clear is that the LNP has had a catastrophic election, with a massive swing against it in almost all seats. This election was also a rejection of One Nation, and Trump style populism here in Australia.

However, the election does highlight a growing dissatisfaction with the major parties in this Nation. The ALP also lost some of its primary vote, and indeed lost seats, albeit not as severely as the LNP.

The success of the ALP’s campaign was in linking the LNP and One Nation, which proved toxic to the LNP in South East Queensland. It also helped, however, that the ALP was a credible alternative for dis-affected liberal voters. Anastacia Palaszczuk was seen to be a good Premier, and came across universally as a good and decent person. It also helped that her Government had a good record to run on – almost 140,000 new jobs created, frontline services restored, and big investment in infrastructure across the State.

We lost the seat of Everton for a couple of reasons.

First, there were only three candidates which ran in the seat, being ALP, LNP and Green. This limited the places where any anti-LNP protest vote could go, and limited preference flows which might have otherwise flowed to the ALP.

A good example of where this worked in the ALP’s favour was in the neighbouring seat of Aspley (an even more traditionally Liberal seat than Everton). 7 candidates ran in Aspley, including a One Nation candidate. The LNP vote dropped significantly, and One Nation were the primary beneficiary of that. However, in preference flows, some of those preferences found their way to the ALP candidate. The ALP also picked up preferences from other candidates. The net result was an overall swing to the ALP on a two-party preferred basis, and it looks like Bart Mellish will pick up that seat.

If we had a One Nation or an independent running in Everton, the result would likely have been very similar to Aspley.

Everton was also targeted by the Christian Lobby, because the LNP candidate Tim Mander is a former pastor and CEO of The Scripture Union. The Christian Lobby robo-called the seat on an anti-abortion line in the 48 hours before election day, warning voters to ‘Put Labor Last’, alleging falsely that the ALP supported ‘abortion until birth’. This campaign was also supported by leaflet dropping on both an anti-abortion agenda and anti-safe school’s agenda.

There has also been a demographic shift in some parts of the electorate, with the LNP’s primary vote increasing very slightly around Mitchelton (5% in one booth and 8% in the other booth).

Notwithstanding the disappointing result in Everton, it is a relief to many that we are on track for another term of a Palaszczuk Labor Government. People can breathe a sigh of relief that we have seen off the ideology of cut, sack and sell under an LNP/One Nation coalition.

We also ran a fantastic campaign in Everton. We doorknocked on over 7,000 doors, and phone called almost 13,000 people during the campaign. We took the fight up to Tim Mander and the LNP, and challenged him on his own turf and on his toxic legacy and beliefs.

This campaign was a proud moment for the MUA, with the MUA taking a lead role in driving the campaign for change in Everton. And the success of the campaign is due in no small part to the MUA Queensland Branch.

MUA members were heavily involved on the ground and played a significant role in our campaign. I particularly want to acknowledge Anthony Crookwell who worked tirelessly on doorknocking and phone calls, but also Ciaran McLennan, Kerryn Loose Jones, Ron Culliney, Barney Sanders, Guy Parker, Shane Bowman, Joe Johnston, Dave Thorne, Paul Petersen, and Damien McGarry. There were also others who helped along the way and their contribution was very important.

What is clear is that the MUA Queensland Branch now has more influence within the ALP. We are seen as being able to credibly run and resource a successful campaign, despite our relatively small size. We can compete with bigger unions within the ALP through our relationships and networks, and use our influence to achieve results in Government. This will include, importantly, dealing with the scourge of partnerships, and getting a Parliamentary inquiry into intra-state shipping.

### **Words of Thanks from Ciaran**

I WOULD LIKE to extend my deepest thanks to the workers at Hutchisons and to all the team in the Queensland Branch office that supported my family both financially and emotionally while my partner Verity underwent treatment for breast cancer.

We were deeply touched and humbled by the love and generosity afforded us and made strong by the working class principles of mutual aid and solidarity. These principles are the bedrock of a strong trade union movement and more broadly the only hope we have of

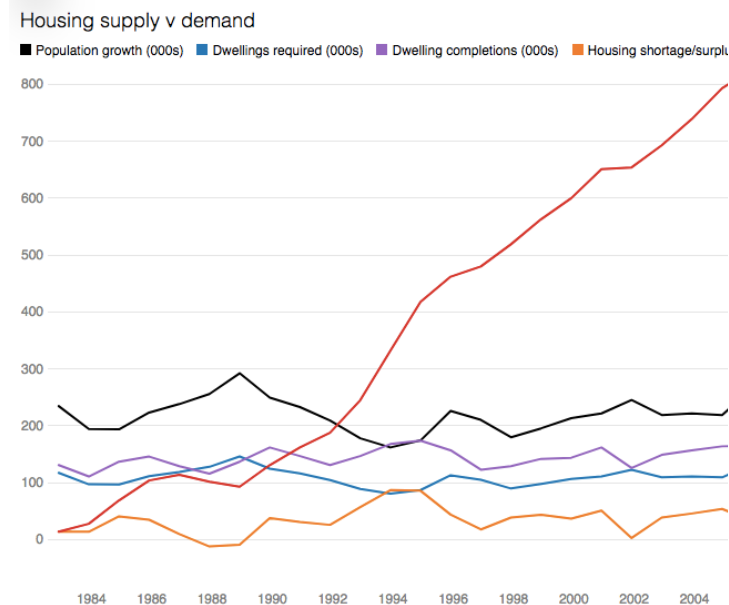
realising a decent and just society for all.

*In Unity – Ciaran MacLennan*

## Fake housing shortage: homes not investments

*By Janet Burstall*

IF YOU COUNT growth in population and dwellings since 1982, there is a cumulative surplus of around 579,000 dwellings in Australia, shown by the red line in this graph.



Dwellings required equals population growth divided by 2.5 (avg household size), with the result multiplied by 1.25 to acc

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

When prices go up, construction increases too, and when housing prices are falling, there is less home construction. When housing is on an investment market, it isn't built to meet the need for homes, it's built in expectation of making a profit. Capital demand for housing doesn't equal people in need, nor does it deliver housing to those who need it. Increasing housing supply is not the answer to housing affordability or homelessness.

ABC journalist Michael Janda says the reasons behind unaffordable housing are "the level of speculative demand and ability to pay more for properties facilitated by record low interest rates, financial deregulation and investor subsidies such as negative gearing and the capital gains tax discount."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-07-03/housing-surplus-raises-price-crash-risks/8663860>

The 2011 census counted 0.5% of the population, over 105,000 people as homeless. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare more recently reported that 280,000 people or 1 in 85 people used special homeless services in 2017. The number of people homeless on one night when the census is taken is a lot lower than the number of people who may experience a period of homelessness in their lifetime. But the number of dwellings needed to end homelessness is far less than the extra dwellings that have been constructed over the last 30 years. Many of those dwellings could be homes instead of unoccupied

investments. People also need a lot more off the market housing – i.e. publicly owned housing. Extended tenants' rights, rent controls, penalties on owners for leaving dwellings vacant, as well as an end to investor subsidies, would all help to get affordable accommodation to people who need it.

## Nermin Al-Sharif Needs Our Help Today

IT IS VERY important that many more of us act now. Nermin's bravery is an inspiration to me and I'm sure it will be to you as well. Please read on, support the campaign, and encourage other members of your union to do so as well. Over 5,000 of us have already sent messages, but we need many more to make an impact.

I met Nermin Al-Sharif, the leader of the Dockers' and Seafarers' Union of Libya, last year in Norway. I knew of her because in the past, following an assassination attempt, LabourStart was asked to run a campaign in her defence.



Meeting her face to face, I could see why some powerful forces might fear this woman, as she is a very strong, determined, and fearless leader of workers.

Nermin is well known for her tireless work in support of human, workers' and women's rights in Libya, in the Arab region, and globally.

Because of this work, she has been subject to ongoing attacks on her freedom and personal safety including several attempts on her life. In the latest incident Nermin was detained for a number of days and has had her passport confiscated subject to "an investigation".

The International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) is calling upon the UN representative in Libya to help end this campaign of intimidation and violence against Nermin.

Please join us by signing up to the campaign here -- it will just take a moment:

[CLICK HERE](#)

In addition, the European Transport Workers Federation has asked us to share their new online petition defending the right to strike for air traffic controllers in Europe - a right which is now under threat. [Read more and sign up here.](#) Please share this message with your friends, family and fellow union members.

Eric Lee – Labour Start

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