

Trade unions are about standing up for what is fair

Trade Unions have a proud history of standing up for human rights and persecuted minorities.

Our movement includes many people with experiences of forcible displacement.

When working people stand for refugee rights, we kick away the racist crutch that holds up anti-worker governments and the unfair policies that dehumanise us all.

Refugee rights are union business!

Money for health & education not Operation Sovereign Borders

The Labor Albanese Government has continued the Coalition's cruel policies of Operation Sovereign Borders (OSB).

OSB includes boat turn backs, offshore processing and mandatory offshore detention and visa limbo for thousands of refugees. These policies have been costly financially and more importantly to human lives.



Mano Yogalingam, 21 Aug 2001 - 28 Aug 2024

In 2024, the Australian Government signed new \$mil agreements with PNG and Nauru to keep detention facilities operational.

The refugees languishing on Manus and Nauru are Australia's responsibility. They could be processed quickly here in the community with work rights (the case pre-1992) for less than a tenth of the cost of 'offshore processing'.

The billions in total wasted on 'deterrence' is better spent on local hospitals, schools and social services that benefit us all.

What you can do?

1. Display solidarity

- Put this flyer on your union notice board
- Bring union flags to refugee rallies

2. Talk with your workmates

- Share your thoughts in tea-room chats
- Invite colleagues to rallies or weekly RAC meetings  Kathleen Syme Library  Mon 6:30pm
- Politely correct false assertions



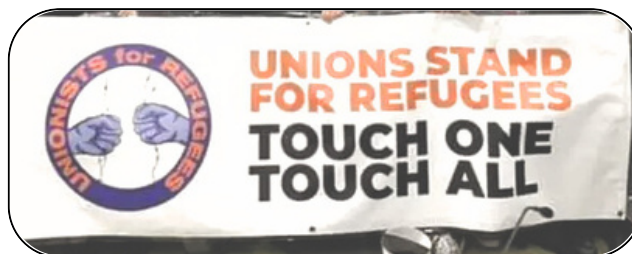
tinyurl.com/RefugeeFax

3. Pass a motion of support

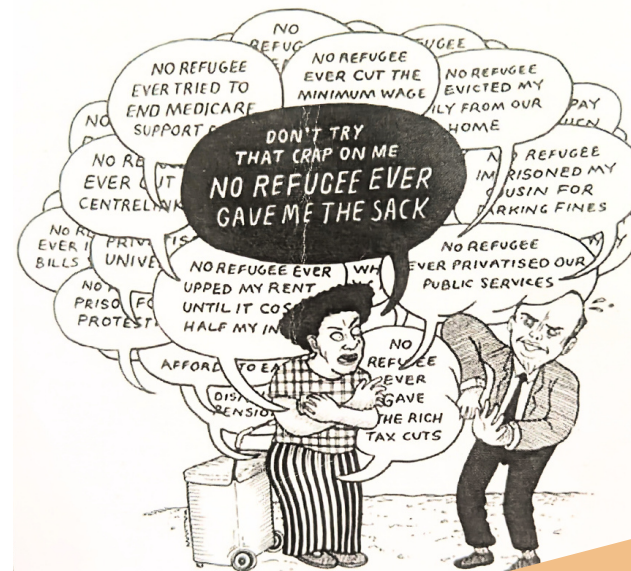


4. Have RAC arrange a speaker for your workplace or union:

- Call Tom 0415 118 496
- Email: refugeeactioncollective@gmail.com
- Or visit www.rac-vic.org for more info



Refugees are a union issue



Workers & refugees united

- a pamphlet for unionists



Refugee action collective (Victoria)
www.rac-vic.org

BUSTING THE MYTHS

Asylum seekers are not 'illegals'

The right to claim asylum by any means of travel is recognised in Australian laws and in the 1951 UN Convention on Refugees.

Yet refugees who arrived by boat since 13 August 2013 spent up to ten years detained on Nauru and Manus Island, Papua New Guinea in inhuman conditions.

While the facilities formally closed, there are still 100 refugees on Nauru and 50 on mainland PNG who are Australia's responsibility.

They suffer physical and/or mental health conditions and continue to be denied appropriate medical care.

Australia has never been 'overrun'

No more than 20,000 refugees have ever been granted protection in any one year (2014).

Pre-pandemic, total annual immigration to Australia was about 200,000, whereas Europe had 1 million migrants, including refugees, in 2016.

Australia can afford to significantly increase its humanitarian intake and offer pathways to permanent resettlement for all victims of OSB.

READ MORE tinyurl.com/RefugeeFax

The United Workers Union stands with refugees

The United Workers Union has stood with refugees many times over the years. Recently union staff defended the refugee encampment at Docklands, with the union offering protesters a safe haven, after Melbourne City Council threatened them with eviction.



Union members taking action:

Lady Cilento Children's Hospital

In 2016 nurses and doctors in Brisbane refused to discharge Baby Asha back to detention after she was treated for burns suffered on Nauru. Their action along with a mass union blockade of the hospital helped win the Let Them Stay campaign. Over 300 refugees brought to Australia for medical treatment remain as a result.

Teachers strike for detained student

Teachers at Brisbane's Yeronga State High School went on strike when an asylum seeker student, Mojgan Shamsalipoor, was ripped out of their school into detention. After a year-long campaign Mojgan was released from detention.

Health workers beat the Border Force Act

Workers forced the federal government to back down on laws banning them from publicly revealing abuse in Australia's offshore detention centres. Health professionals were made exempt from the Act after sustained protest and defiance made it a dead letter. The Act has never been used.

Teachers walk out off schools

In 2018, hundreds of teachers in Queensland and Victoria walked out of schools against offshore detention. Children on Nauru were in a comatose-like state, suffering from resignation syndrome. Teachers joined rallies across the country demanding **#Kids Off, All Off** from Prime Minister Scott Morrison.

Hannah Clarke, a primary school teacher commented at the time that, "Some media and politicians reckon we should stick to our classrooms and keep out of politics," "But the fact is these government policies are affecting our classrooms and affecting our students. It's falling on us to pick up the pieces of these young lives the government has broken."

Under pressure from the movement, Morrison was forced to evacuate all children from offshore detention.

end the cruelty, end the limbo PERMANENT VISAS!

ACTU policy on permanent visas:

"Congress welcomes the Labor Government's commitment to end the cruel and inhumane policy of temporary protection and transition over 19,000 people holding TPVs and SHEVs to a permanent visas."

"Congress notes, however, that 12,000 people have been left behind – those processed under the flawed 'fast track' refugee assessment, and asylum seekers who have arrived by boat."

"Congress supports the need to urgently review the cases of this cohort and provide them with a pathway to permanency, and to immediately abolish the fast track assessment process."

Justice for fast track refugees

Over 8500 refugees - victims of the 'fast track' process - have spent more than twelve years in Australia on short-term visas. They include nurses, factory workers, drivers, teachers, business owners, students and more. They pay taxes but are often banned from accessing Medicare or other welfare. They often have no work rights and can only access education by paying exorbitant international fees.

The Australian Education Union (AEU) Victoria branch has published a piece on them entitled *The Right to Pursue their dreams*.

You can read it here

