

We Can Beat Abbott's Refugee Cruelty



Coalition chest beating about 'stopping the boats', hides their lack of confidence that the public shares their never ending cruelty. They have covered up details of the attacks on Manus Island. They hide details about boat turn backs. Meanwhile refugees numbers in Indonesia increased from 8,332 last year, to 10,623 this year according to the UNHCR. Accepting all the asylum seekers currently warehoused in Indonesia and flying them here would be more humane and cheaper than offshore detention.

Abbott has sunk in the polls after a cruel and unfair budget and we can push him back on refugees. Shamefully ALP caucus voted to keep backing offshore detention, but there are growing cracks in the ALP - a tribute to the vibrant refugee rights movement outside parliament. We need to keep up efforts to shift public opinion. Below are recent cases of the human cost of refugee policy.

1. JUSTICE FOR REZA BARATI

Reza Barati, was bashed to death on Manus Island in an unprovoked attack by those responsible for his safety. At least 69 people were treated for injuries, while others are now experiencing PTSD. No-one has been charged. The attackers are still employed by new contractor Transfield.

2. JUSTICE FOR LEO SEEMANPILLAI

Leo Seemanpillai, a Tamil asylum seeker living in Geelong on a bridging visa self-immolated on 1 June. The terrifying possibility of being deported to Sri Lanka and long delays in processing his asylum claim affected his mental health. The man's family living as refugees in India, were refused visas to attend his funeral.

3. JUSTICE FOR IRAQI ASYLUM SEEKERS

The Greens have moved that Iraqi asylum seekers not be sent back to Iraq, where security has deteriorated amid the offensive by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. The Coalition has warned Australians to leave, but will not support an assurance Iraqi asylum seekers can stay here.

4. JUSTICE FOR BABY FEROUZ

Latifa, a stateless Rohingya asylum seeker, was flown to Brisbane from Nauru to give birth last year. Refugee lawyers have launched a test case arguing that the baby, Ferouz, was born in Australia and should be entitled to citizenship.

Government lawyers argued to dismiss the case and send the family back to Nauru. The judge disagreed and the full case will now be heard on Oct 14.

5. THE BUDGET IS A REFUGEE ISSUE

The Liberals will spend \$8.3 billion on offshore and onshore detention, over the next 5 years. \$957.9 million will be spent on 'border enforcement'.

It costs:

- \$400,000 a year to detain an asylum seeker in offshore detention,
- \$239,000 to hold them in detention in Australia,
- less than \$100,000 for an asylum seeker to live in community detention,
- and only \$40,000 for an asylum seeker to live in the community on a bridging visa.

Deportation

The Abbott Government has allocated \$149.9 million over 5 years for 'reforms' to compliance and removal arrangements for 30,000 asylum seekers who arrived under the "No Advantage" policy. This spells mass deportations, and the use of detention or offshore camps to coerce people into "voluntary" return.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

1. Get involved in the Refugee Action Collective. We need help to organise protests, forums, information sheets, media releases, and stalls.
2. Raise motions for your union to back the next refugee rally, and bring a delegation to come.
3. Get posters from the Refugee Action Collective, put them up in your local cafes and main streets. Set up a local Refugee Action Group.
4. Pass around a petition or info in your work or school, wear a 'Welcome Refugees' badge. Contact RAC for material or refugee speakers.
5. **Add your phone number to the emergency RAC phone tree**, if you wish to get a text about snap protests over possible removals, deportations or change in government policy. Email you mobile number to refugeeactioncollective@gmail.com

The Refugee Action Collective (RAC) meets every Mon 6.30pm at ANMF House, 540 Elizabeth St, City

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