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| L4R newsletter - keeping you informed and up to date on our current issues and challenges. | Is this email not displaying correctly?[View it in your browser](https://mailchi.mp/f469b5575cc4/weve-been-active?e=ba8211a97d). |

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| Labor for Refugees New South Wales |

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| **19 October 2022****Next MeetingOur October online meeting takes place next Wednesday 26th at 6.30pm.****Members will receive the Zoom link.****The link to the minutes of last month's meeting is**[*L4RMinutes28Sep22*](https://facebook.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=09c48b6cba9909c3558998ce0&id=d8a7430bde&e=ba8211a97d) **Thank you****Thanks to those members who very kindly donated to Labor for Refugees NSW/ACT.  This has freed us to participate in future events and to keep making donations to refugee groups from time to time.** **If you haven't yet made a donation and are feeling generous, our bank account details follow (please submit your name):** **Labor for Refugees NSWCommonwealth Bank BSB: 062-006Acct No: 10405538.** **L4R meeting with the Immigration Minister****Representatives of L4R nationally, met with the Minister in Canberra on Monday 26 September last.The Report follows:**[*L4RmtgImmigMin26Sep22REPORT*](https://facebook.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=09c48b6cba9909c3558998ce0&id=c705d97b70&e=ba8211a97d)**Please take the time to read our detailed report of what transpired at the meeting.****Our L4R National & NSW Co-Convenor Shane Prince, was overseas at the time and unfortunately could not attend our meeting with the Minister but he is meeting with Andrew Giles in Sydney on the 16 November.** **We are patiently waiting for an announcement to be made soon re refugees/people seeking asylum, especially for those on TPVs (Temporary Protection Visas), SHEVs (Safe Haven Enterprise Visas) and possibly others.****NSW Labor ConferenceThe NSW Labor Conference took place on the weekend of 15 and 16 October.  There were no stalls offered this time and we were unaware that fringe events were available until one week prior to the conference and by then, it was too late to organise anything.** **We did however, hand out our leaflet from 7.30am onwards on Saturday morning on the steps of the Sydney Town Hall as delegates arrived.  We met some delightful supporters, especially from Regional NSW some of whom took 10 hours by coach to get to the conference (after their flight was cancelled). Thanks to those L4R members who turned up early to hand our leaflets out.The leaflet we handed out, set out our refugee motion, which was an amendment to an existing clause 2.48 in the NSW Platform "Promoting Cultural Diversity". We had drafted our amendment and taken it to the NSW  Shadow Minister for Multiculturalism Stephen Kamper some months back to lobby him for support.   We received a very positive response from him.Our amendment asked that the existing clause also apply to refugees and people seeking asylum - not just to migrants.  We also added a second paragraph, requesting that when NSW Labor forms government, it will fund a list of services for refugees/people seeking asylum in our community.** **The recommendation by the Social Justice and Legal Affairs Policy Committee was to:*"Support first paragraph of amendment, subject to the caveat that an incoming NSW Labor Government will need to carefully work through costings of any such proposal.  Note the second paragraph of the amendment."*** **Please read the leaflet with the motion and Background at**[*L4RNSW-ACTConfMotion2022*](https://facebook.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=09c48b6cba9909c3558998ce0&id=29207bf29c&e=ba8211a97d) **The Conference, not unusually, ran late and the Chapter that would have dealt with our refugee motion scheduled for the afternoon of the last day, was dropped.****The usual procedure is that the Policy Committee will now deal with the outstanding conference motions/amendments and will implement its original recommendations.** **This would be the first time that NSW Labor has accepted a refugee motion to be incorporated in its Platform so we see this as a major win.  We feel confident that the Shadow Minister will do the right thing when the time comes to consider his funding allocation.****Labor for Refugees NSW/ACT Secretary, Nizza Siano, accepted her Life Membership of the Party on Sunday afternoon, proudly wearing her Labor for Refugees t-shirt.****Offshore Processing Contract on Nauru On the 17 August last, the Secretary wrote to the Home Affairs Minister re the contract on Nauru for Canstruct which expired at the end of September. She expressed concern that the Party was looking at replacing it with a “preferred tenderer” call MTC Australia, an Australian arm of a US private prisons company.  In her letter, the Secretary reproduced the sections of the Platform which L4R believes, if this new contract goes ahead, will breach Labor’s Platform.  She also outlined the appalling reputation of this company and the exorbitant cost involved in using them.  At that stage, there were 112 immigration detainees on Nauru including 83 refugees, 17 asylum seekers with negative decisions and 12 people who were being processed.The Secretary sent a follow-up letter to the Minister on 5 September, with a copy forwarded to ACTU Secretary Sally McManus, asking Sally if the Minister had consulted with the appropriate trade union, which the Platform states should be done. The Secretary also wrote to the relevant union, the United Workers Union (UWU) after which time she received a copy of a letter that the union’s National President, Jo Schofield, sent to Clare O’Neil re this issue.  The Union letter emphasized the terrible record of MTC Australia and demanded *“that the Home affairs Dept immediately pause any negotiations with Managing and Training Corporation so that more suitable management may be found”.*** **Please see the letter from the UWU to the Home Affairs Minister Clare O'Neil at**[*UWUlettertoMinO'NeilreMTCforNauru*](https://facebook.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=09c48b6cba9909c3558998ce0&id=adf8307816&e=ba8211a97d)**We have not had any response from Clare O'Neil which is very disappointing.** **Home Affairs letter****Refugees who spent years offshore have**[received](https://facebook.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=09c48b6cba9909c3558998ce0&id=2114dc9133&e=ba8211a97d)**letters stating that settlement in Australia is not an option and that they should apply for resettlement to New Zealand or the United States.** **A letter was sent by the Dept of Home Affairs' First Assistant Secretary of the People Smuggling Policy and Implementation Taskforce on the 19 September last, to a cohort of refugees (about 200), who live in our communities. This letter caused great distress to those people receiving it.  In it, it pressured them to accept the offer made by these two countries with a promise that they will NEVER be settled in Australia.  The deadline for their response was 4 October 2022.** **These are already traumatised and vulnerable people, some of whom do not have the required english language skills, nor the legal training, to understand it.  A number of them have lived in our community for many years, some even for a decade, have forged relationships and made a life here in Australia.** **The tone and wording of this letter sent shock waves through refugee advocacy groups.** **We sent a letter to Clare O'Neil, strongly outlining our concerns and recommending a number of steps designed to assist Labor carry out its current policy, without causing such unnecessary distress.  We also recommended that the deadline for their decision be extended to the 31 December 2022.Please read the details of our letter to the Home Affairs Minister at**[*L4RletterReHomeAffairsResettlement3Oct22*](https://facebook.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=09c48b6cba9909c3558998ce0&id=f69091163a&e=ba8211a97d)**L4R has received no response from the Minister.****We understand the dire situation that Labor has inherited from the previous Coalition government and that there have been some unexpected challenges that need to be met before reforms can be implemented.  However, the Labor government just has to do better.****Regards****Nizza SianoSecretary L4R NSWemail:***contact@labor4refugees.com*

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