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**IN OTHER NEWS**

**The Flip Flop List**

Last week we saw the Bill permitting gay marriages passed in Parliament and congratulations to those it affects, and well done to those who have worked tirelessly to get the Bill passed.

This was about people's rights and the following list of people voted for the rights of those concerned, but in saying that, the SAME list voted for the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Amendment Bill, which takes AWAY our rights.

We have been found to be justified in our actions and to be correct in our legal analysis by every authority we have taken our issues to.

**From The Federation Chair**



This is a Memorial Cross sent to the families of those brave men and women who died fighting for democracy.

There are approximately 30,000 New Zealand military personnel buried on foreign soil – 30,000 people who fought so we could live free.

I have a Memorial Cross sent to my family for my uncle who lost his life in Egypt in 1942. In March 2008 I travelled the 16,554 km to visit Column 103 at

the Alamein Memorial. There is no grave for my uncle, only his name etched into marble on the memorial scroll, his body being lost to the desert.

Yesterday I reflected on that emotional visit and the sacrifices people have made so that we can live as we do. Their sacrifice makes our battles look minuscule, but at the end of the day the battles have been for the same reasons - our rights, the right to justice, the right to make choices and the right to democracy.

For me the decision is simple – I will not back down from holding the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board and Government accountable for their actions. To do so would be denigrating the memory of those who have made sacrifices for us so that we can live in a democratic, just society. Our actions won't bring them back but will allow their memory to live on with integrity and dignity.

Those who made the ultimate sacrifice can't fight any more but we can continue to fight for what is right and for the democracy they laid down their lives for.

I will not support the Board morally or financially any more until there is monumental change.

**The Amendment Bill isn't about the Money**

The Board and Minister (Flip Flop Williamson) have made this Bill about the "money" and that displays the way they think. Anything we say is like water off a duck's back, particularly for the Registrar whose sole purpose seems to be to keep the Board afloat and hide behind bureaucracy and locked security doors.

The following is the Flip Flop list – One week they vote FOR people's rights and the next week they vote to TAKE OTHERS RIGHTS AWAY.

Amy Adams (Nat)  
Chris Auchinvole (Nat)  
John Banks (ACT)  
Maggie Barry (Nat)  
David Bennett (Nat)  
Paula Bennett (Nat)  
Jackie Blue (Nat)  
Cam Calder (Nat)  
David Carter (Nat)  
Judith Collins (Nat)  
Jacqui Dean (Nat)  
Peter Dunne (United Future)  
Craig Foss (Nat)  
Aaron Gilmore (Nat)  
Paul Goldsmith (Nat)  
Jo Goodhew (Nat)  
Tim Groser (Nat)  
Tau Henare (Nat)  
Paul Hutchison (Nat)  
Steven Joyce (Nat)  
Nikki Kaye (Nat)  
John Key (Nat)  
Hekia Parata (Nat)  
Jami-Lee Ross (Nat)  
Scott Simpson (Nat)  
Chris Tremain (Nat)  
Nicky Wagner (Nat)  
Kate Wilkinson (Nat)  
Maurice Williamson (Nat)

### **Are they part of Rotary?**

We also wonder how many of these people are members of Rotary – that group that do such an excellent job globally and operate on a simple four way test;

1. Is it the Truth?
2. Is it fair to all concerned?
3. Will it build Goodwill and Better Friendships?
4. Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

Unfortunately we know Flip Flop Williamson is a member and John Banks has been a

What is right doesn't seem to enter into the equation and they use the health and safety of the public as their excuse to flout the law. So think of this; if we take away the trades people what protection does the Board afford the public – absolutely NONE.

Tradespeople are the key to protecting the public so think of this; take away the Board and what protection does the industry afford the public, everything that it does now. Tradespeople seem to think the Board has the power but it is only because we let them away with it. Laws can be changed and people can be changed.

The last two weeks we have heard people go on in Parliament about the Intent of the Act but not one of them has stopped and looked at Section 134 of the Act – Membership of the Board. Was it the intent of the Act to have all Board Members “appointed” to represent the interests of the consumer which is what we have now?

Look at Section 134; it says two Plumbers, two gasfitters, two drainlayers and four others, including two to represent the interests of the consumer. It states it quite clearly what constitutes membership - so why have all these tradespeople on the Board, if they are not there for the interests of the industry?

The industry has let the Ministers and Board members hi-jack the Board and turn it into an industry funded consumer protection organisation. Most tradespeople appointed to the Board of late have followed like lost sheep and achieved nothing. Flip Flop even had to call in retreads to make up the numbers.

The list of skills is simply amazing, we have a Justice of the Peace, a Lawyer, a Fellow of the Arbitrators' and Mediators' Institute of New Zealand, members of the Institute of Directors, a Director of Arbitration New Zealand Ltd, an Accredited Director of the Institute of Directors and the list goes on, but what do we get from them?

The Ombudsman told them they should negotiate with the industry to resolve the current issue but instead all these astute people decided to go crying to Flip Flop Williamson and we end up with what we have now. You would think that this “brains trust” could have worked their way through this – and seen fit to sit with industry and talk it through.

### **Don't tell us what to do as we know best.**

We have heard all types of comments made about the Federation from Flip Flop, the Board and Master Plumber's executive and it all points to a perception that they don't like listening to others, especially those who are working in the industry.

Had they listened, the situation we are in now wouldn't have occurred. Their perception of working “constructively” is keeping your mouth shut and doing it their way.

Look at these comments:

#### **16 March 2011 Williamson to the Federation**

“Regarding your email of 18 February 2011 and your request to meet I can confirm that I am prepared to meet with the Federation if it demonstrates that it is both willing and able to work constructively with the Board.....For my part I will be asking the Board and its staff to continue to provide the Federation with the opportunity to help

member for over twenty years.

It's a real pity the two of them didn't take more notice of the four way test. The Government would probably be wise to have a close look at it as well.

### You got it from Flip Flop

Last week we heard Maurice Williamson go on in the House about the Civil Aviation Authority and how they regulate pilots and have the right to go after licensed practitioners and non licensed people. He went on to say how stupid it would be if they could only discipline someone who had a pilot's license but couldn't touch someone without a license flying around in a 747.

Great story but he forgot to state that pilots don't fund 100% the CAA and they don't get charged a Prosecutions Levy for prosecuting the people flying around without a license.

It seems the CAA gets funding from levies imposed on aircraft, levies imposed on passengers (members of the Public) and the list goes on.

It's putting up a strong argument for us to hand on the levy charge to the public.

It's also another example where Flip Flop engages his mouth long before his brain has had the massage he's going to make a point.

shape the way forward"

Four months later:

### 27 July 2011 Max Pedersen to the Federation

"It is disappointing that there is no constructive working relationship with you and your organisation at the present time. Accordingly, our monthly meetings appear redundant and I will not be continuing with them"

Had they listened to what we were saying they would have avoided the unlawful activities they have been found guilty of, and those that are still pending, which we are also sure they will be found guilty of as well.

There may have even been a good working relationship – we know we could have saved them a lot of grief and money – but then they thought they knew best.

### You Are Pardoned



The Government calls it validation but in effect they are pardoning the actions of a Statutory Board established under section 133 of the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Act 2006.

It takes away the rights of any individual who feels they may wish to hold the Board accountable for their actions. Some of the Government Administration Committee believed that the Board has already been held to account, but in what way?

No one has been fired, no one has been fined and there has

been no public condemnation of their actions by the Government. In fact all that has happened is the Government is bailing them out. Has anyone even looked at the competence of those involved? The joke is that the Federation has received more criticism from the Government than the Board did. It really does make you wonder what happened to natural justice.

To quote from the Select Committee report:

*"To reach the end of this process and be vindicated, only to have the law changed by Parliament, seems unfair and inappropriate"*

The pardoning of the Board for their actions will create new grievances and will do nothing to enhance the standing of the Minister or the Board.

### Credibility

Does the loss of credibility rub off? – Yes it does. If you make statements and back an organisation that has failed to comply with relevant legislation, it places into question all that you say and do. It's

## Dentists

Two people will appear in the Manukau District Court following the discovery of a bogus dental practice. It followed a joint operation between police and the Social Development Ministry. The practice is alleged to have fraudulently obtained up to \$375,000 worth of welfare payments.

We see that Dentists pay \$34.00 disciplinary fee. We wonder if the Medical Practitioners Discipline Tribunal will be paying for the police and Social Development Ministry investigations to prosecute these non registered people.

## Flip Flop to Master Plumbers 25 March 2011

In his closing speech to the Master Plumbers conference Flip Flop stated:

***It also means that those that govern the sector will need to step up, be accountable, and take responsibility.***

He must have forgotten he said this as we don't see this happening at all and don't forget the Board stated they don't govern the industry so who does.

An industry without governance or representation will only flounder.

a bit like guilt by association.

So if you backed the Board's Fees proposal in 2010, and their following Gazette notices, then you are as guilty as them. If they backed your CPD Scheme and it's found to be wanting, then we say that is guilt by association again.

If you backed a \$45.00 trainee fee that registered people end up paying - then guilty again, and if you supported the licensing fee when it contains a cross subsidization that is no longer required then guilty again as well.

Be careful of the alliances you make.

## The Impact of the Amendment Bill



The Impact of the Amendment Bill, if passed, will affect all of New Zealand. There will be a flood of people in the industry that will turn their back on the regulatory environment. Others will increase prices to cover the

increased burden of regulatory costs and yet another group will stay quiet.

We ask you all this question:

## How can you sit back and be too weak to make a stand but you are strong enough to sit there bearing the pain?

Numbers are what it will take for change. The cost to the Board to prosecute 1,000 -2,000 or even 3,000 practitioners will be too great. Based on their current average dollar spend it would be around \$26,300,000 for every 1,000 tradespeople.

The Federation Executive has had enough and hereby put the Government and Board on notice that we will not play their stupid game anymore. It is up to them if there are sufficient tradespeople to meet the needs of the country and to protect the health and safety of the public.

## Read These

A string of three letters was published on the Plumbers Forum. Very interesting reading from a person who has had enough.

<http://www.plumbers.co.nz/forum/index.php?topic=1430.msg6650#msg6650>