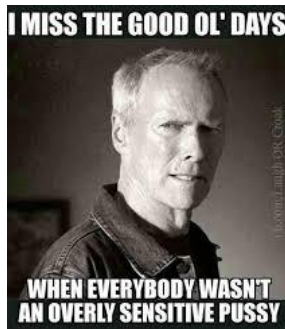


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**IN OTHER NEWS**

Thank you for your support



Another year has passed and the Federation's Chairman, Wal Gordon extends his thanks to the executive committee and all the supporters of the Federation for continuing to push for a better trained, qualified and productive industry.

Wal is lost for words to thank the executive committee for their work and all the people who respond to requests for action.

As a volunteer organisation a few carry the weight of many but they know they

**Nick Smith `happy to be caucus tea boy'**



*NZ Newswire on December 14, 2016, 2:54 pm*

**Building and Housing Minister Nick Smith says he'll be happy with whatever job Prime Minister Bill English gives him - even if it's caucus tea boy.**

There's speculation around Dr Smith's future and whether he'll

be a casualty when Mr English announces his cabinet on Sunday. Dr Smith on Wednesday said he would again contest the Nelson seat in next year's general election.

"In respect of any plans that the new prime minister has for a ministerial role, that's entirely up to the prime minister," he said.

Asked whether he was confident he would remain in the cabinet, Dr Smith replied: "I'm one of those who take a semi-military view, and that is that the prime minister decides and I will be happy to do whatever job he has for me - and if that's being the tea boy for caucus, well, I will be the tea boy for caucus."

Mr English on Tuesday appeared to rule out dumping Dr Smith.

He said anyone who questioned the minister's competence was wrong, and Dr Smith was doing a good job dealing with complex issues.

**Frustration**



So the Prime Minister stated above that anyone who questioned Nick Smith Competence was wrong and that he was doing a good job dealing with complex issues. We feel the Minister of Building and Construction would be out of his depth in a car park puddle.

The much needed change in Minister didn't happen in the Cabinet reshuffle. It seems that other issues, possibly friendships, took precedence over the needs of an industry and its practitioners. Nick Smith retains his position as Minister but with a name change to the Minister of Building and Construction. Some would say its back to the future - but it's more likely just back to the same shit, different day.

have support to do what is right. The Federation has always been up front and stated its beliefs which does upset some people but they are generally like fire alarms, loud and annoying.

This year the Federation has participated in numerous projects throughout the industry and meetings have been attended on nearly a fortnightly basis so a lot of time and effort has been put into achieving good results for the industry – and this has been done at no cost to members – volunteers have funded their own time and travel – and for this we thank them.

A lot of what the Federation does is about accountability. It's about ensuring the industry and practitioners are put before others self interest. We are not a bunch of malcontent assholes. We are actually some of the nicest people you will ever meet but others generally get pissed because we can see through their bullshit.

The committee and supporters have done an excellent job this year of working on relationships and in saying that it has all been with a view of making progress and not making excuses. The Federation is not about membership or money, it's about progress, fairness and equality so we don't have to wait until we reach our goal to be proud as every bit of change we make is a step in the right direction.

This year has gotten better for the industry but there is

Another instance where the needs of the industry have been ignored by the Government. The three strokes and you are out methodology might be difficult to apply as the new Prime Minister was the Deputy Prime Minister when the Government voted against the recommendations of the Regulation Review Committee. He was the Finance Minister who didn't have sufficient funds to refund the industry when the Government appointed Board unlawfully took money from the industry. He voted for retrospective legislation which affected our industry and now he has left the industry with a non responsive Minister.

We noted this week one of the residents of Kaikora had a run in with the Prime Minister and Gerry Brownlee. Some angry locals let Prime Minister Bill English know what they thought about the state of their roads and the time it's taking to fix them.

It was a similar situation to what we as an industry have endured for decades where we have a meeting with the government and are left full of hope that something is going to happen but nothing ever does. One resident summed up their situation by saying "It's shocking, it's the absolute pits."

Mr Brownlee told the resident that he resented the comments and went on to say "Sorry you're frustrated, but I'm pissed off that you took that attitude quite frankly." WE find attitudes are generally a response to some form of wrong doing.

The Prime Minister moved to take the heat out of the discussion. "The question around this is getting the right amount of communication with you guys because you're on the road, you're going to be watching this every day and I think it's quite important you know what's going to happen," he said.

Sighting better communication must be the fob off line for Prime Ministers as John Key said something similar at Upper Hutt last election where he said they would listen to the industry as the industry knows what's best for it and we all know that didn't happen.

AT THE END OF THE DAY we know the Minister doesn't like communicating with those who do not agree with him and excludes them. The Federation is on this list because we say it as it is and can see through all the Governments bullshit. Dr Smith has done our industry NO favours; in fact he seems to avoid communicating with us at all costs.

## Regulation is the catch phrase



Time is more valuable than money so why waste more time with a Government that isn't helping or listening. We need to progress our industry now with or without help from the Government.

We still don't see how the stupidity of unauthorised (unlicensed) people doing their own plumbing,

still a long way to go.

The relationship with the Board has helped progress issues in the industry but it has also highlighted others that need addressing. We still have a splintered industry and the Board is doing its utmost to help push for unity, but the real push needs to come from the industry. We are the ones that need to push for a united voice.

Time is quickly passing us by and with the possibility of heavy handed regulation we need to be prepared to stick up for our rights. We have sat back long enough taking what was dished out to us.

One thing the Federation has done very well is stick to its guns on issues it feels strongly about, which is nearly all of them.

When the Federation says it's going to do something then it does it.

- Protest at the Beehive, done that.
- Protest at Government house when Prince Charles was here, done that.
- Push for accountability from the Regulation Review Committee, done that.
- Take protest action at licensing time, done that.
- Protest outside the Board's Office on The Terrace, done that.
- Tell the Minister what we think,

gasfitting and drainlaying can simultaneously be 0% not our business while being 100% our financial responsibility. All we can do for some people is hope that the stupidity isn't passed down to their children.

For those in the industry that listened to the Prime Minister fielding questions about his Cabinet reshuffle and would have heard him mention Dr Nick Smith's regulatory role - even though he lost the title of Housing off his portfolio. Regulation and planning seemed to be the focus of the Prime Minister's comments about Nick Smith's role. This is very concerning for the Federation.

Does this focus on Regulation mean regulated industries are in for another beating?

Will change be made to justify positions?

If the regulation of industries is put under the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment for administration that will place our industry in the position of funding the extravagance of MBIE.

What advantage will there be for the industry or the Public? In short NONE! We must fight against being swallowed up in to huge "do nothing" government department which is bursting with policy makers and career bureaucrats who want to make a name for themselves.

Perhaps it's time for arguing with the Government to stop and our resistance to start without warning. Enough time has been spent fighting incompetence and heavy handed regulation. What role does the Government, Minister and MBIE play in the operation of our industry? Simply administrative regulation.

All other work is done by the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board, industry groups and practitioners. As it is at the moment you could take away the Government, the Minister and MBIE and we as an industry could still operate under the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board for governance and regulation.

Perhaps it is time to turn our backs on Government regulation and go it alone. No more warning shots, no more paying for others protection, let's just fund progress for the industry.

### **Special Thanks From the Executive Committee and Federation Members.**

*We've hijacked the editor so that we can pay special tribute to our Chairman Wal Gordon. Wal, along with Allan Day Snr were responsible for founding this organisation. They amassed a few like minded people and started the first executive committee, from that the membership grew and grew, all with no funds – just passion, determination and integrity.*

*Wal Gordon deserves special mention because he is just one man trying to run a plumbing business, be a husband, dad and grandad – and yet he finds hours and hours and hours in his day to help run the Federation. This is a feat of absolute selflessness. No doubt Wal's family have suffered due to the time he gives to the Federation – so we acknowledge their contribution as well.*

- done that.
- Come up with solutions, done that.

*Wal – thank you for your time, your effort and your dedication to this organisation during 2016 – you are a gentleman and a scholar!*

Our end of year comment is that if we say we will walk away then we will. It's not an idle threat but a fact the Government should start working on.

Thank you to everyone for your time and efforts. Be safe over the festive season and we'll see you all in the New Year.

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