

# Motion moved in defence of Julian Assange at Illawarra Teachers Association Meeting in Wollongong, Australia

The movement of rank and file teachers in Australia organising defence of Julian Assange continued to grow when teacher Pietro Mascetti moved a motion at the Illawarra Teachers Association Meeting on February 24th. The meeting was held in Wollongong, in the region of Illawarra, which is a coastal region to the south of Sydney. The Association is part of the NSW Teachers Federation (NSWTF) which covers both Primary and Secondary Teachers. The motion was passed unanimously by the approximately thirty teachers present.

The motion was [identical to the motion](#) recently moved by Erika Laslett of the SEP and passed by the Hills Association of the NSWTF. Teachers at Footscray Secondary College in Melbourne [have also passed motions](#).

The Illawarra Teachers Association motion read:

*“That this meeting of teachers opposes the ongoing persecution of journalist publisher and founder of WikiLeaks, Julian Assange and courageous whistleblower, Chelsea Manning. The UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, Nils Melzer, warns specifically that “Assange’s continued exposure to arbitrariness and abuse may soon end up costing his life.”*

*We insist that the federal Morrison government uses its diplomatic powers to organise the safe return of Assange to Australia. We resolve to send this resolution to other schools and workplaces.”*

Before the motion was moved, Pietro made the following introductory comments to the union members in attendance:

*I am moved to raise critical discussion and the resolution above because a great travesty of justice is being committed which has extremely serious consequences for teachers, for our children and for the world. We are in the business of educating; of informing our students and developing critical thinking attitudes, all of which are being attacked in the persecution of Julian Assange, whose trial for extradition to the United States has begun today in London.*

*These are but some of the many reasons why Julian Assange needs our active support and why he is being cruelly and inhumanely persecuted:*

*1. Julian Assange created WikiLeaks that published war crimes atrocities, sent to him by currently imprisoned former US soldier, Chelsea Manning, committed by US soldiers in Iraq, particularly the video entitled Collateral Murder that reveals wanton murder by US forces on Iraqi civilians, including children and journalists. The murderers are free. Julian Assange and Chelsea Manning are not.*

*2. JA and WikiLeaks revealed the extent of the subversion of due process in the Guantanamo Bay Camp Delta Standard Procedure files in which the US government knew that many*

*prisoners there were innocent and yet still held them incommunicado (unknown to anyone else) including the Red Cross.*

*3. Julian Assange and WikiLeaks revealed, through the DNC Podesta emails, the extent of the corruption in the Democratic Party primaries of the 2016 Presidential election cycle in which the criminal and corrupt process of rigging an election was exposed through the murdered Seth Rich and Julian Assange. Seth is dead and Julian Assange is in prison. Hilary Clinton is both free and rich.*

*Julian Assange was awarded Australian journalism's highest honour, the Walkley Prize for his publications. He has committed no crime but has exposed crimes of the rich and powerful.*

*If he were to be extradited to the United States, he would not receive a fair trial simply because some have called for his murder, including Hilary Clinton. Also, since his persecution, many other journalists have been murdered, arrested, charged and their sources, including the amazingly principled Chelsea Manning, persecuted or killed. Annieka Smethurst, Dan Oakes, Sam Clark, Glenn Greenwald, Max Blumenthal, Daphne Caruana Galizia, have all been arrested, investigated and persecuted for revealing crimes of governments. The task of journalism, which is a source for us as educators, is to tell the truth. The truth is powerful but it is being criminalised. Honest journalism is being destroyed and the precedent set in this period is the persecution of Julian Assange.*

*After the passing of the motion the Association Treasurer suggested that the motion be forwarded to Federation News and*

other channels in the NSWTF.

This important initiative must be built on, not just by other educators but by workers in other sectors of the working class. Julian Assange himself encouraged workers to form blocs in their unions. (The letter can be seen in the top image in article).

[Read the full call out for "Workers for Assange" on Independent Australia here.](#)

Join the [Facebook Page "Workers of Assange"](#) and help build the international working class movement that will Free Julian Assange!

**Pass a motion within your unionised or non-unionised workplace!**



**Just as teachers have done in Australia, move a motion in your workplace or union branch to defend Assange.**

**These motions are stepping stones to action - such as the calling of stop-work meetings, mobilising workers for protests and ultimately political general strikes across borders.**

**WORKERS FOR ASSANGE**



WORKERS FOR ASSANGE

Picture of Teachers at Hills Association of the NSWTF passing a motion in defence of Assange