

Well, it seems to me we have a new political force in Australia, the Tony Abbott Julia Gillard coalition versus the Australian people.

Just a few days ago Tony abbot was on the TV saying "We are in opposition to the government and it is our job to oppose and offer a viable alternative".

Perhaps there should have been an add on to that, "Except when comrade Gillard and Comrade Abbott are about to get a 30% pay increase, in which case we will stand shoulder to shoulder offering no opposition whatsoever".

Now, we all know Tony Abbott is an educated man and, personally, I consider him to be intelligent and I wonder why he considers the rest of the Australian population to be stupid. How can he possibly say, "There is never a good time for a politician to get a pay rise" when he knows very well it is not the pay rise but the amount of the pay rise that is the question.

The pensioners were graciously given a few lousy dollars. Some of these pensioners would have fought for our government in Vietnam, some in Korea and there would still be a few around who were in WWII.

When our teachers want a few extra bucks in their pay packet, government is kicking and screaming that they couldn't afford it and they have been forced to to fight for a rise of 2.5% which is less than the CPI so is effectively a pay cut.

When our nurses wanted 3%, same deal, and more recently our police force wanted 5% and had to fight tooth and nail for it but when it comes to our politicians who sit around in parliament bickering like children all day and dreaming up ways to tax us all into oblivion, 25% sounds like a good number, and 67% sounds even better, let's do that. And this is, apparently, going to be funded by business tax? Mr Abbott is a potential Liberal PM, he, of all people, knows the principles of free enterprise, he, of all people, knows that business is the major employer of people in Australia. (Apart from the public lack of service) Why is he happy to slug business?

Let's face it, politicians don't produce anything, they don't go out on the street getting shot at, they don't heal the sick, they don't teach our kids, they don't dig the holes, they don't put the nuts and bolts of Australia's industry together. It seems to me all they do is skim as much off the top as they can possibly get away with, as much as we let them get away with. In my opinion they are effectively con men, comrade Gillard included.

If comrade Gillard were serious about improving health services and education, things that would genuinely benefit Australians, then they would address this as a priority long before this inappropriately timed pay increase that will only benefit a few politicians.

I think comrade Gillard has bought out Tony Abbott. I actually thought he had better ethics than this - but then I've been wrong once or twice before.

It's no secret, the Rudd/Gillard team squandered the surplus inherited from the Howard government, they have gotten Australia into huge, record debt, as fast as humanly possible, they are taxing the one industry, mining, that has kept Australia afloat through this whole GFC debacle, (all the while claiming that it was Rudd's stimulus package that saved us all). On the one hand they don't want to give anyone a pension and on the other hand they have reduced the amount you or I can put into our own superannuation fund to provide for ourselves by 50% and now Comrade Gillard is making mutterings about telling us we can't access "our" money when we retire in a way "we" see fit. She wants to trickle feed "our" money back to us as "she" sees fit.

Bollocks! When I retire I will access my superannuation as "I" see fit and Julia Gillard can F\*\*K Off.

The "Worlds best treasurer", Wayne Swan, and comrade Gillard have promised to have us back in the green in 2012. I think we all know and have known all along that this is not possible and is not going to happen. I am not the world's best treasurer but I could work this out on my little pocket calculator. They are lying to us.

I put these specific questions to both Tony Abbott Julia Gillard.

1. Why is it that politicians and certain public servants are allowed to retire with a full, not means tested, life time pension, plus other perks, even when they have another well paid job?
2. Why does a boiler maker not get a pension because he owns his house and has managed to accumulate a couple of hundred thousand for his retirement after having worked 50 years of his life in some grotty factory and paid his tax all the way?
3. Why do you consider that you politicians and public servants so bloody special that you deserve all this special treatment?
4. Comrade Gillard has stated that there is pain ahead for everyone, why does this pain not include politicians and high up public servants?
5. Given that government have forced people down the self-funded retirement path by way of superannuation. What right does government have to dictate how that money is removed from the superannuation fund on retirement?
6. Why is it that a politician, by governments own admission, can go on a trip that is little more than a paid holiday, (but at the expense of tax payer), when if I do the same through my company it becomes taxable under the FBT? Why

is that?

7. Why is it that in 2011 there is such a huge inequity with pay, superannuation, pensions and perks between the public service and the non-public service and do you think this is fair and just? If the answer to the last part is yes then exactly why do you think it is fair and just?

8. Why is it that politicians can have their cake and eat it too when nobody else can?

I think these are very reasonable questions and just in case you wondered what the response was – I didn't get one. Our PM will not respond to that one – I wonder why.

The last time I saw the situation that is fast arising in this country, a situation where we have the government elite and the working plebs, was in USSR back in 1968. Am I correct, are we really so close to being the "us and them" communist dictatorship I witnessed back then but under the guise of a legitimate elected government. A place where the wealthy were frowned upon, penalised, and literally dragged down and sometimes murdered, a place where everyone was equal in the gutter because government controlled all the funds and trickled it out to the people they chose to trickle it out to while the politicians were living high on the hog in luxury mansions. Really, are we heading down that path? Slowly but surely, I think we are – and we know where it got them Ruskies.

A quick reminder here, Julia Gillard was not elected, she is there by grace of a back room deal with Bob Brown of the Greens. She is not our elected prime minister just a remotely controlled puppet of Bob Brown.

Personally, I have worked all my life, I have never taken one red cent of welfare, I have cost government nothing, I can't get a pension because I have worked hard, in effect I am being penalised because I have worked hard. In addition to this, I now have comrade Gillard muttering about dictating how I can access "my" hard earned money while, in the same breath, giving herself a huge pay rise. Not going to happen Comrade Gillard, I will choose how I spend my superannuation, I earned it and I will say how I spend it.

I do believe these politicians should start walking the walk instead of just talking the talk. Right now they are lining your own nest while everyone else is suffering and I believe Tony Abbott should venomously oppose this huge pay increase but he's not going to do that because he has been bought out and at the end of the day "Everyone has their price".

I know a lot of people in small business in many different fields, I don't know of one who is doing really well. All are down on numbers. My own business is

down 60%, inquiries are down, sales are down and margins are down. It seems to me to be the height of arrogance that Comrade Gillard would be getting us into all sorts of debt, not keeping her promises to health and education while at the same time giving herself and her coalition members, Tony Abbott and co, a huge pay rise.

I did not Gillard's comment to the effect that "We could change this situation but it would take legislation". Come on Comrade Gillard, you are a politician, this is what you do, you legislate every day of the week, this is a part of your job. Go on, fix it, legislate.

What I don't get is this. When someone goes into a job they are well aware of the pay and conditions. If they are not happy with the pay and conditions then they should go do something else that will make them happy. So we have a teacher who is on – say - \$75,000.00 PA. (I don't know what they earn) and a PM who was on \$350,000.00 PA. If the teacher gets 3.5%, they will get an extra \$2625.00 PA while the PM will get an extra \$12250.00 based on the same percentage. I don't have a problem with that, it's equitable. But how can 67% possibly be justified or justifiable? They were already in a job where they were, apparently, satisfied with the remuneration. Why 67%? Why not the CPI – 3.5%? - which would be more than the teachers are being offered.

Some people are saying that we should pay them more to get better people. I don't buy that. An American friend said to me one day. "Hey, Marty, do you know the difference between an American politician and an Australian politician"? "No, what is the difference". He said. "In the States you need to be rich to become a politician, in Australia you become a politician to get rich". I reckon he's dead right.

Some people say that politicians get nowhere near the pay of a CEO in a large corporation. I don't buy that one either.

A CEO of a large corporation has shareholders to think about. The company has to make money, it has to perform, it has to spend less than it earns and, if it borrows money, it has to do so effectively and sustainably. If you, as a shareholder, are not happy with the performance of the company you have the option to sell your shares and invest someplace else. A good CEO will ensure that the company operates profitably and will make money for the shareholders. That is a big responsibility. I don't necessarily agree with some of the numbers they get but you'll see where I'm going with this.

Government get their income from the shareholders, that's you and me, by way of taxes. They squander money left right and centre and when they need

more they just add another tax and call it good management. We, as Australian working people do not have the option to sell our shares and invest in something else, we're stuck with it. Income tax, GST, FBT, mining tax, carbon tax, capital gains tax, the list goes on. And, let's face it, the people in government are not experts in their field. I'd put money down that if you were to give Julia Gillard and Wayne Swan the job of running a company in free enterprise where they are not able to simply impose another tax to increase cash flow, it would go broke. If I were to put my prices up even 10%, I would not make a sale and my business would close down. I don't think the PM or "The Worlds Best Treasurer" has the first clue, in fact I reckon I could do a better job than them.

Am I on my own with this one? Have I got this all radically wrong? Really, I am so disillusioned by all this that I am seriously considering dumping my business, go off sailing and work around the traps for cash and no longer pay tax. Really, I could do a better job of running this country than Gillard. I have been in business for 33 years, I know what it's like in the "real" world, something the Tony Abbott Julia Gillard coalition obviously don't.

When Comrade Gillard became PM, (I won't say when she won the election) what was it she said to Tony Abbott – "Game on" – that was it. But I now know the game isn't between Abbott and her it is between the Abbott/Gillard alliance and the Australian people. It took a while for the penny to drop – but it has.

I now have to rethink my own strategy now that Abbott has joined forces with Gillard. I reckon Pauline Hansen should come back, I'll vote for her.

2252 words written by a very disillusioned Marty Still on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2011.