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Turnbull Govt has questions to answer after CFMMEU charges withdrawn

The Turnbull Government has serious questions to answer over their knowledge of events that led to blackmail charges against working people's elected representatives John Setka and Shaun Reardon, who were charged after taking action on safety.

The DPP discontinued the prosecution yesterday after the committal heard evidence that representatives from the Turnbull/Abbott Government were liaising with Boral executives before any allegations against the pair were formally raised.

The two were undergoing a committal hearing related to actions they took to protect the lives and safety of people working in the construction industry and the public.

They have been staunch advocates for safety, women in the construction industry and the rights of working people across all of society.

Under the duo's leadership CFMMEU members in the construction business had negotiated pay rises well above the national average, with 30,000 Victorian construction workers locking in annual five percent rises until 2022 last year during a time of sluggish wages growth elsewhere.

Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Sally McManus:

"I welcome the withdrawal of these charges – they should never have been laid.

"The possibility that members of the Abbott/Turnbull Government were closely consulting with Boral over events that led to these discredited charges is deeply disturbing. This possibility should be fully investigated.

"This is the same Government that orchestrated the ROC raid, wasted \$80 million on a union witchhunt, and is the successor of the coalition government that conspired to ruin the lives of waterfront workers 20 years ago.

"It is not acceptable for any government to attack the elected representatives of working people in order to advance their political agenda.

"John Setka and Shaun Reardon have stood up for working people in the Victorian construction industry. They stood up for safety in an extremely dangerous industry.

"And for doing that they have faced unwarranted and discredited criminal charges. Working people deserve answers about how this happened.

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