

Tuesday 31 October, 2017

## **ACTU Executive condemns the political interference in unions and demands the government withdraws bills giving ROC more power**

The ACTU Executive, meeting today has demanded that the Turnbull government immediately withdraw the two bills it has before the parliament that will give the Registered Organisations Commission and Minister Cash more power to intervene in unions.

The Minister should not be given more power to politicise the actions of government agencies and attack working people, and these bills must be withdrawn.

### **Quotes attributable to Sally McManus, ACTU Secretary:**

“The Australian government is obsessed with attacking working people. They have no agenda to lift wages and make jobs more secure - in fact they are making life worse for working people by attacking the only people who can stand up for these issues, their unions.

“The government has passed laws that make basic union activities that help working people illegal. The ROC and the ABCC are given extraordinary and undemocratic powers to pursue working people, making unions the most overly regulated organisations in the country. As we have now seen, the ROC will raid union offices on the basis of an anonymous phone call.

“These laws are only designed to make the job of unions much harder. They do nothing to make big businesses pay tax, stop stealing workers wages, or even prevent money laundering for terrorism and drug dealing by big banks.

“The government needs to end its unhealthy obsession with unions and work on lifting wages while providing good steady jobs. If you attack unions, you drive down wages and conditions.

“The government has now more anti worker laws before the Parliament which will give ROC even more power. One will make it illegal for working people to put in place extra protections for workers job and financial security, such as redundancy pay and sickness benefits. The other will give big business or the Minister the power to sack union leaders, deregister unions and block union mergers. Both these bills give the ROC more power.

These bills are anti-democratic and will drive down wages and put more workers in casual work. They will make the work of unions harder.

“Should the Turnbull government push ahead with their dangerous obsession, the senate should refuse to pass the Turnbull government’s new bills.

“Recent events, from the behaviour of Nigel Hadgkiss the head of the ABCC, to the police raids by the ROC, show that this Government will politicise every organisation it establishes or controls to pursue its union bashing agenda.

“Only a truly independent corruption fighting body, like a federal ICAC, will be able to restore the Australian people’s faith in the commonwealth government and end the politicization of government agencies.”

**ENDS**

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