

Tuesday, 11 February 2020

## **Morrison threatens sick leave for shift workers & job security for permanent workers**

Today the Morrison government's industrial relations minister, Christian Porter, confirmed that he would seek to legislate away personal leave entitlements for shift workers and job security for permanent workers if the High Court finds against the Government.

In 2019 the owners of Cadbury, multi-national food conglomerate Mondelez, took a case against two 12-hour Cadbury shift workers to cut their personal leave entitlements from ten 10-hour days to ten 7.6-hour days. Effectively, workers will be out of pocket every time they take a sick day.

In a separate matter, a big labour hire company WorkPac is trying to claim someone who had been working regular shifts for years was not a permanent worker but a casual. WorkPac is doing this with the full support of Christian Porter and the Morrison government.

In both cases the Morrison Government has indicated if the workers win, they will legislate to over-ride these court decisions. This would have far reaching implications for many shift workers who would have their sick leave cut and for all permanently employed workers where employers would be legally permitted to deem them as "casuals" with the rights of casual workers, regardless whether the job is permanent and on-going.

A decision to intervene and change the law in response to decisions such as this is the opposite response taken by the Government when workers had their penalty rates cut.

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

"The Morrison Government wants to cut sick leave for shift workers and allow employers to convert permanent workers into casuals.

"They have decided they only like the umpire's decision when it favours employers. When workers had their penalty rates cut, the Liberal Coalition Government absolutely and steadfastly refused to intervene to protect low paid workers who were having their take home pay cut. In fact, they voted against changing the law to reverse the pay cuts 12 times"

"But when employers have a decision against them it's another matter. They use our money to back in multinationals in court and threaten to over-rule the court by changing the law if they don't get the decision the employers want"

"Scott Morrison and his Government are never on the side of Australian workers. When their pay is cut they cheer and the few time workers have a win, they rush to overturn it.

"Imagine prioritising increasing casualisation and cutting sick leave for factory workers. This announcement is disgraceful"

**ENDS**

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