

Thursday 2 December 2021

Another year gone, still no federal anti-corruption commission

Parliament is set to close for the year of 2021, without the Morrison Government taking a step closer to establishing the federal anti-corruption commission that it announced in 2018.

With the toothless model proposed by this Government falling well short of community expectations, rather than doing the work to fix it, the Prime Minister chose to blame opposition parties for not offering sufficient assistance.

Instead of delivering on this election promise, the Morrison Government has chosen to use their time in office to erode workers' rights and job security. They've chosen to make life harder for working Australians even in the wake of a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic, by pushing through legislation that makes it easier for employers to keep workers casual.

They have also made a choice to undermine opportunities for workers in regional areas – areas with above average unemployment – by opening borders to easily exploited migrant workers.

The Morrison Government's Ag Visa will make it easy for employers to hire an unlimited number of historically mistreated visa workers, instead of helping create meaningful and secure jobs for local workers.

The Coalition Government rushed to create the Registered Organisations Commission in 2016 which imposes regulations and standards on unions and union officials which are higher than applied to any other people or organisations. These standards they refuse to apply to themselves.

Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Sally McManus:

"The Liberal Government fell over themselves in a rush to impose regulations, whistle blower protections and standards on unions and union officials that well exceed those that apply to any other organisation, including politicians. These have now been operating for five years. They will not even hold themselves to the same standards they bought in for unions.

"The minimum this Government should do is apply the same standards of accountability to themselves that they have applied to union leaders. The double standards and total lack of urgency when it comes to a National ICAC shows that they only act when it suits them politically.

"The sudden concern regarding "show trials" is completely disingenuous when they ran a two-year show trial Royal Commission into unions which was a total waste of public money. They have one standard for themselves and another for their fellow Australians.

"The Federal Government has immense power to improve our country and the lives of Australian workers – not just addressing corruption but addressing insecure work and low wages – it is disappointing that the Morrison Government refuses to do so.

"The Australian people will rightly be asking themselves if the Morrison Government is moving so slowly in an effort to protect those in its own ranks who have been caught up in corruption scandals."

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