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A 100 Years of Industrial Fairness To Be Destroyed

In 1904 employers, unions and government joined together to create a fair and stable industrial system which has served Australia well for the last 100 years. They did so because they all accepted that the individual contracts that had existed prior to then caused inequity and hardship for Australian workers.

“Today the Howard government has determined to radically turn back the clock and once again make individual contracts the pre-eminent mode of unfair employment in our country” stated Mr Malone, Secretary UnionsACT.

As a result of these changes 99% of companies across the country will be able to sack employees without giving any reason. In the ACT about 95% of employees in the private sector will have no where to go to argue an unfair dismissal by their boss. This effects up to roughly 105,000 local workers.

“These changes are being made despite no evidence given or able to be given that scrapping unfair dismissal requirements will increase employment” stated Mr Malone. “In the last comprehensive Federal government survey only 0.9% of small businesses gave unfair dismissal laws as a reason for not hiring staff.”

The lowest paid workers in our community who have relied solely on the minimum wage cases to gain any salary increase will no longer be able to do so.

“The Federal government has repeatedly lost its arguments in the Industrial Relations Commission so now it will create its own commission to ensure it gets the lower outcome that it and business wants. If the government had had its way since 1996 the lowest paid workers would already be over \$2000 a year worse off.” explained Mr Malone.

Other attacks on workers and their families include:

- The independent Industrial Relations Commission is to be gutted.
- The safety net of award salaries and conditions is to be effectively abolished
- Workers will be able to be forced onto individual contracts
- Attempts to collectively bargain in the workplace will be undermined.

The Union movement both locally and nationally will join with our fellow community members in fighting these unjust and unnecessary changes.

“The government today has shown it wishes to divide our nation as no government before it has ever done. Its actions against workers is symptomatic of its intolerance against any group in our society who does not hold the same ideological perspective at it does.” stated Mr Malone.

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