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## Millions in tax payer dollars ploughed into political inquiry while health, education, childcare and pensions remain in firing line

With health, education, childcare and pensions still in the Budget firing line, the Abbott Government's multimillion dollar tax payer funded political inquiry returned today with further proof that it's nothing more than a witch hunt.

The Royal Commission has reportedly so far spent more than \$50 million including lawyers' fees in excess of \$17 million.

This Royal Commission was established as, and remains a fundamentally political exercise and nothing Counsel Assisting said today can dissuade any sensible person from this view.

The Abbott Government claims there is a budget emergency but is happy to waste millions of dollars pursuing its own political agenda.

Instead of announcing a jobs plan or addressing gross tax avoidance by large multinationals that rob the Federal Budget of billions of dollars every year, the Abbott Government is ploughing money into a multitude of inquiries looking into laws that govern Unions and workplaces – when comprehensive and recently strengthened laws are already in place.

This Royal Commission has not investigated how major construction companies, including major publicly-listed companies have subcontracted to dubious individuals nor has it investigated how regulators such as ASIC do not have the resources to pursue unscrupulous employers who have been shown to have exploited 457 visa workers – it has just focused on trade unions.

### Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Dave Oliver

"The Abbott Royal Commission is a fundamentally political exercise.

Every Liberal Prime Minister since Billy McMahon has had at least one Royal Commission into trade unions – it's their attack of choice against their political enemies.

Our consistent view is that this Royal Commission is about attacking the ability of unions to deliver outcomes for working people – jobs, wages, conditions and safety.

The trade union movement is committed to strong, democratic and accountable unions and without effective unions, employment conditions in Australia would go backwards."

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