

Thursday 16 March, 2017

Statement from Australian Council of Trade Unions Secretary Sally McManus

Australia has been built by working people who have had the courage to stand up to unfair and unjust rules and demand something better.

Every single Australian benefits from superannuation, Medicare, the weekend and minimum wages –these were all won by our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents taking non-violent so-called illegal industrial action.

Working people only take these measures when the issue is one of justice, like ensuring workers safety on worksites, a fair day's pay for a fair day's work or to uphold and improve rights for working people.

Without the Australian union movement our country would look like the US, where these types of rights are inadequate or don't exist.

There is rampant lawlessness in the workplaces of Australia and this is occurring in the form of chronic underpayments of workers, exploitation of visa workers and workplace practices that put the safety and lives of people at risk. Unfortunately this is no longer on the fringes of our economy; it is now a business model for some corporations. This is what our Government should be focusing on.

Australian Unions are committed to changing the laws at work because they are no longer strong enough to guarantee and protect workers' rights. We will do so through advocating changes to the laws and rules that govern the workplace.

ENDS

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