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## Abbott Government tears apart Australian way of life

Tony Abbott's Budget signals the end of the Aussie fair go, Unions said tonight.

"The Abbott Government's assault on welfare, Medicare, education and the public sector represents the end of the fair go and the biggest attack on the social wage this country has ever seen," ACTU President Ged Kearney said.

"This is a savage attack on the standard of living that Australians have worked hard for," Ms Kearney said.

"The Liberal Government vision is of a harsher, less equal Australia.

"Universal healthcare is over with the introduction of a Medicare co-payment which will put pressure on low income families who for going to the doctor will now become a financial decision.

"They are cutting the real value of all pensions – including the age and disability support pensions, and single parents payment – which in today's terms, will be a cut of about \$200 a fortnight by 2030 to those people that can least afford it.

"In a disgraceful move young job seekers will need to participate in job search and employment services for six months before they can begin receiving Newstart or youth allowance that will leave these people in poverty.

"Young people who are training to learn a trade will lose direct financial support and instead be saddled with debt well into their working lives.

"The Government is making it harder for Australians to save for a decent retirement by freezing the increase to the Superannuation Guarantee for four years as well as lifting the retirement age to 70.

"Fees for university will go through the roof and students will start paying real interest on their debts and pay them back from a lower income."

Ms Kearney said the Government has failed to invest in industry, innovation or outline a plan for the jobs of the future.

"Mr Abbott said he would create one million new jobs instead today he has flagged cutting 16,500 public servants and has ripped hundreds of millions out of skills and innovation.

"This budget cuts over half a billion in support for skills including apprentices and it cuts around \$360 million in support for innovation.

"This leaves workers and communities impacted by recent closures without sufficient support and it provides no new vision or support for jobs or industry of the future."

Ms Kearney said Tony Abbott was only too happy to campaign in a high vis vest and a hard hat at worksites across the country but has not delivered for workers but has delivered in spades for big business.

“Tony Abbott has delivered a Budget tonight that puts the interests of big business before those of hardworking Australians.

“They’ve delivered for big business in the form of a 1.5% company tax cut, they’re still giving over \$4 billion worth of subsidies to the big miners.

Ms Kearney said the Budget will make life harder for Australian workers and their families.

“A decent retirement, health care for all and decent wages are the hallmark of a civilised society – the Liberal Government has turned its back on this.

“By commoditising healthcare, the Government has stopped it from being a right.

“The Commission of Audit report gave Australians a glimpse of what the Liberals have planned for Australia. This budget is a down payment on that plan.

“Australians did not vote for what the Government has delivered in this budget.”

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