



Sharon Grierson MP
Federal Member for Newcastle

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LABOR'S COMMITMENT TO THE AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE

Federal Member for Newcastle Sharon Grierson says the thousands of Novocastrian workers who took to the streets today have sent a clear message to the Howard Government to back off from its hardline industrial relations stance.

"Workers in our region do not want to have to fend for themselves under individual contracts. They do not want their award conditions stripped away. They do not want the minimum wage determined by a Government-appointed committee of economists, and they do not want the fear that comes with the removal of unfair dismissal protections."

"The message has come through loud and clear that the Government's agenda must be resisted every step of the way."

"It must be resisted in the community and in the Parliament - this is what the Labor Party is doing now and this is what we will be doing when we go back to Canberra in August."

"Labor's rolled-gold commitment to the Australian people is clear:

- we will ensure that individual contracts do not undermine working conditions,
- we will ensure that Australians cannot be deprived of the right to a collective agreement,
- we will ensure that the independent umpire remains in place to allow fair bargaining,
- we will ensure the right of entry to workplaces for unions,
- we will ensure an independent genuine determination of the minimum wage, and
- we will ensure that Australian workers are protected from unfair dismissal.

"The working conditions of Australian people that have been built up over a hundred years will not be ripped away on the whim of an arrogant Government."

"The Labor party is united in its opposition to the Government's plans, and in its determination to offer a fair alternative which respects the dignity of Australian workers."

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