



Media Statement

Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union

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ABCC restricts free speech

The Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC) recently flew in a top Q.C. and assistants from interstate at enormous taxpayers expense to obtain a federal court order placing a 'media gag' on the CFMEU WA.

It is our view that the media should be just as worried as we are about media gags. Is this the thin end of the wedge?

Expressing freedom of speech to inform the media to enable reporting on issues of concern to Australia's workforce and the community at large should be upheld as a democratic right.

The ABCC has coercive powers akin to ASIO. Perhaps it is time for the media to scrutinise their stealthy powers and the draconian way they enforce them.

Taking a cynical view, the Greens in the federal parliament are soon to put forward a motion to disband the ABCC- is this current action and others taken recently by the ABCC a way of justifying their existence in an attempt to give them greater validity?

There is no freedom of speech provision in the Australian Constitution, but it is accepted as a fundamental right in our Australian democracy.

We would like to comment further but can't. We are of the opinion that the real story here is not that we can't comment but the motivations behind it- and where it can lead further. As the vanguard of free speech in this country, we believe this is one issue the media should take the lead on, instead of unions.

Kevin Reynolds

Secretary CFMEU C&G WA

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