



We Need A Full Public Inquiry Into Labor And The Pen-Pushers' CPAC Outrage

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As revealed in [The Australian today](#), a Freedom of Information request submitted by the Institute of Public Affairs has revealed that former prime minister Tony Abbott and president of LibertyWorks and organiser of the 2019 Conservative Political Action Conference, CPAC, Andrew Cooper were investigated by the Attorney-General's Department at the instigation of Shadow Attorney-General Mark Dreyfus.

The FOI reveals that on 22 July 2019, eight days before Senator Kristina Keneally's speech to the Senate condemning CPAC, opposition legal affairs spokesman and former and former attorney general, Mark Dreyfus QC, met with senior representatives from the Integrity and Security Division of the Attorney-General's Department for a briefing on the Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme, and "specifically raised the upcoming CPAC conference to be held in Sydney on 9-11 August 2019 and asked what the Department planned to do about it."

This is a shocking development. Using the power of the state to target political opponents is something that occurs in the authoritarian regimes, not a liberal democracy like Australia.

Here is part of the FOI:

Background

Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) Australia 2019

- On 22 July 2019, senior representatives of the Integrity and Security Division, Shadow Attorney-General, the Hon Mark Dreyfus QC MP, with a brief on the implementation of the Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme (the FITS) at a meeting, Mr Dreyfus queried the application of the scheme to foreign organisations holding events in Australia. He specifically raised the upcoming Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) to be held in Sydney on 9-11 August as an example of an event that may trigger registration obligations under the FITS and what the Department planned to do about it.

Senior bureaucrats have been caught conspiring in secret with the ALP to intimidate and harass Labor's political opponents.

This conspiracy between Dreyfus and powerful public officials has threatened Australia's democracy and national security.

Andrew Cooper put it well when he told The Australian, "Mr Dreyfus has deliberately and methodically sought to use the state to censor the free speech of his political opponents at CPAC."

"It is a contemptible and cowardly act."

Too right.

But the fact the Attorney-General's Department were able to do this and its worrying powers were foreseeable.

The IPA's Legal Rights Audit 2018 [warned](#) that the Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Act 2018 was found to remove procedural fairness, the right to silence and the privilege against self-incrimination.

There must be an independent and public inquiry into this scandal to establish how far and deep this conspiracy has spread.

This absolutely disgraceful scandal shows why this law needs to be completely recast so this can never happen again.



The full FOI is available for [download here](#).

Original Link:

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