



Australian Citizens Party

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Were Christine Holgate and Australia Post victims of a medicated prime minister?

Was Scott Morrison medicated on 22 October 2020 when he screamed: “She can go!”?

That is the question the Australian Citizens Party (ACP) is demanding be answered, following claims reported 26 April in *The Australian* that Morrison took medication for “debilitating and agonising” anxiety when he was prime minister.

Among the stressful issues Morrison was dealing with, according to Cameron Stewart’s article, were long hours dealing with the pandemic, and doing the USA’s dirty work against China.

Notably, however, Stewart and Morrison didn’t cite the burden of juggling the five ministerial portfolios Morrison had secretly sworn himself into—giving himself the most power of any prime minister in history.

That omission perhaps hints at the self-serving nature of the claims, observed ACP Research Director Robert Barwick.

Christine Holgate

But the ACP is demanding accountability for the consequences of having a medicated PM making decisions with far-reaching repercussions for the whole country.

Robert Barwick cited some of the impactful decisions Morrison personally took, including his:

- trashing of the trade relationship with China;
- unilateral decisions in the pandemic, including overriding health advice on vaccines and establishing secrecy around the National Cabinet;
- secret, personal negotiations with Boris Johnson and Mike Pompeo to form AUKUS and commit Australia to \$368 billion for nuclear submarines; and
- enraged attack on Christine Holgate, which bullied her out of her job as CEO of Australia Post.

“Morrison’s unhinged attack on Christine Holgate massively destabilised Australia Post and put it back on the path to ruin,” Barwick said.

“If you want to know how bad it is, ask the post office licensees who run two-thirds of post offices as small businesses.

“They called Christine Holgate ‘the best CEO Australia Post has ever had’, because they were going bankrupt before she became CEO, but she turned around their fortunes and Australia Post’s profitability through her banking initiatives.

“However, because she opposed privatisation, and was looking at Australia Post starting a postal bank to take on the Big Four, she made enemies in the banks and among the Liberal and Labor parties.

“That’s the reason why a full two years after she awarded AP executives with relatively cheap Cartier watches for all the extra work they did to land the best deal in AP’s history—getting the big banks to pay \$22 million a year for Bank@Post—a Labor Senator ambushed her in Senate Estimates, and then Morrison had his screaming fit in Question Time: ‘She can go!’

“The consequences have been devastating.

“The new management that replaced Holgate has gone back to running AP into the ground, looking for excuses to cut services.

“The big banks have squeezed AP on what they pay for Bank@Post, even though they are dumping many more customers onto post offices through their mass-branch closures.

“And the licensees are back to fearing for their futures.”

Unfit

The Australian quotes Morrison describing his anxiety in these terms: “You dread the future and you can’t get out of bed. It can shut you down mentally and physically.”

Barwick asked: “How do Morrison’s colleagues feel about their leader not wanting to get out of bed? Shouldn’t such a person have been honest with his colleagues and handed the job over to someone who was up to it?”

For his part, former Liberal MP John Alexander simply commented to the ACP: “To be prime minister you’ve got to be fit for the job—mentally, physically, emotionally, and integrity-fit.”

“It’s clear Morrison wasn’t fit for the job”, Barwick said. “*All* of his decisions should be re-examined in light of this news, and the government should make restitution accordingly.”

[Click here to sign the Citizens Party’s petition for a post office people’s bank.](#)