

# Major parties complicit in the aged care crisis

THE latest desperate situation in Aged Care due to an urgent need for adequate staffing levels can be traced back to the John Howard Liberal government of 1997. Since 1997 "The Age Care Act of that year defined anything that related to the affairs of an approved nursing home provider as "protected information". Anybody disclosing protected information about a nursing home could go to jail for two years, including revealing under staffing in a particular nursing home.

It has been said ever since John Howard was prime minister in the late nineties that the quality of aged care has spiralled down. This act of John Howard's clearly showed that the Liberal government at the time put the profits of nursing home owners over the quality of the lives of the residents. Nothing has changed! We need to remember that since John Howard's prime ministership there have been several Federal Labor governments as well as Liberal National Coalition governments that could have, and should

have repaired the problems, but didn't.

Both major parties have displayed and continue to display a lack of care and respect towards the residents and workers in aged care. This is while caring for the pockets of the extremely rich and the corporate sector. Labor Federal leader Anthony Albanese can call for the sacking of the Aged Care Minister for the lack of COVID vaccinations for Aged Care, but he agreed with the Liberals to the huge tax cuts of \$16 billion to the wealthy which is about how much the Royal Commission into Aged Care and Safety estimated would be needed to fix Aged Care.

Now with the huge problem of finding aged care staff the Federal government is offering two cash payments just before an election, but no wage increase. A wage increase will impact the profit margin of the multinational corporations and the Federal government can't have that.

**Bob Patrech, President, Seniors United Party of Australia**

## **An objective approach on China**

My interest in China began during the second war when they were our ally. I have continued to follow it's history including the contribution's of Bradley Perrott to this paper.

Perrott following the Morrison government writes of the negative features of China. It was surprising then to read his positive accounts of China in last Saturday's *Mercury*.

He could have written of actions that have lifted 700 million people out of poverty. And Xi Jinping's elimination of corruption in the government that confirmed his leadership.

And a system that produced a spectacular opening to the Olympic winter games. An opening that expressed John Lennon's *Imagine* a sharing world without greed and hunger.

It's time for an objective approach to China that is not dominated by nuclear submarines and shirt-fronting politicians.

**Reg Wilding, Wollongong**