



Speech by

**JACK PAFF**

**MEMBER FOR IPSWICH WEST**

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### **WORKPLACE RELATIONS AMENDMENT BILL**

**Mr PAFF** (Ipswich West—ONP) (2.56 p.m.): This Bill is a result of Labor Party internal politics. The union bullyboys within Labor want this Bill passed to regain influence at the workplace. It is simply just another union power grab to give the union bosses inside Labor something to do and somebody to push around again. This is the envious product of the faceless men behind Labor. If honourable members talk to anybody—business leaders or workers on the floor—they will find that all of those people feel that Queensland workplace agreements have worked pretty well. They also agree that this Bill will generate confusion and uncertainty in the workplace without gaining much for business or workers.

The Queensland Workplace Agreements have helped to build trust between employers and employees. This is particularly so in the hard rock mining industry where teamwork is necessary and danger is always lurking. The QWAs are negotiated and flexible arrangements whereby teamwork and cooperation have been maximised, including safety which is now a factor in such QWAs. It is quite obvious that safety is a factor in industry and that industry will be the big loser if this Bill is passed. Safety must suffer when Labor insists on reviving a "we verses them attitude"—the old and discredited system of class warfare which Labor so loves and admires. If this Bill is passed, there will be a very real threat to industry's ability to embrace change. The ability to embrace change will be crippled possibly irretrievably. All of the time and effort that has gone into making QWAs work will be destroyed—destroyed to curry favour with Labor's strong men: the Ludwigs and the likes.

There has been no sensible rationale for these amendments, except that Labor's ideological insensitivities demand these changes. Employers and employees have picked up options to their mutual benefit, and such options taken in good faith are now to be dashed because Labor wants to be seen as a good fellow when dealing with its faceless men. Both workers and management require stability and certainty in the labour market. This Bill is the antithesis of stability and certainty. This is a direct reflection of Labor's intention to create instability and uncertainty and to pander to its union powerbrokers. This Bill is just another power grab by Labor and is guaranteed to generate instability on a broad front.

Historically, a responsible union movement has been the bulwark behind improved working conditions and the protection of workers' rights. We want it to remain that way and not become a plaything for Labor Party powerbrokers and not to become a feeding ground for power-hungry Labor Party politicians seeking to build a career for themselves on the backs of the workers.

During the Hawke/Keating Labor Governments the union superbosses managed to obtain job security as unions were made into huge monopolies, but the workers were forgotten. Many workers have lost their jobs because of Labor Party politics. Many have left the unions. This Bill is just another extension of the Labor idea of using workers for political ends. From the viewpoint of industry and our vital export markets, this Bill is just bad business. I oppose the Bill as a betrayal of both worker and employer and I again stress that it is just bad business.

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