



Speech by
**Mr DENVER
BEANLAND**

MEMBER FOR INDOOROOPILLY

Hansard 11 June 1999

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Mr BEANLAND (Indooroopilly—LP) (5.08 p.m.): I rise to oppose the motion. Today we have witnessed the end of those parliamentary performance standards about which we have heard so much from the Premier. He likes to parade himself before the public and go on radio and television and appear in the print media and talk about his parliamentary standards.

Today, we have seen the gag applied in its true form—the way in which the Labor Party has traditionally applied the gag, or the guillotine, in this place. This is part of a long Labor tradition. Today, Labor has returned to that tradition. It is obvious that when it comes to a choice between the Labor Party sitting in Parliament and attending a Labor Party conference, the Labor Party conference comes first because that is why we are adjourning the House at this particular time. The House is being adjourned at 10 minutes past 5 on this Friday afternoon at a time when members expected to sit very late into the night, and perhaps into the early hours of tomorrow morning—perhaps even into the daylight hours of tomorrow morning—to debate the clauses of the Industrial Relations Bill.

Instead of that, we have seen the guillotine applied. Currently, the Government has a large number of Bills set down on the Notice Paper. Some 14 of those Bills are past their allotted 13 days and they are ready to be debated. I think that it is worth while noting something that the member for Brisbane Central said in this place some time ago. Of course, he would not like it repeated, but I think that it is most appropriate that we remind the Premier of those words. He said, "If you can't run the Parliament, you can't run Queensland." This evening, those words have come home to roost.

This adjournment motion moved by the Leader of Government Business highlights the failure of this Government. There is plenty of time to debate this Bill. As I say, members expected to be in this House to debate the Bill for quite some time. I think that the shame and the scandal is that some two weeks ago the Leader of the House warned members that this Friday would be a sitting day. It was obvious that the Government wanted to pass the Bill. Today, we expected to sit not only throughout the day but also tonight and into Saturday if need be, because members wanted to debate the Bill—members of the National/Liberal coalition, the Independent members and the members of One Nation. I am sure that even some Government members belonging to the AWU faction, from whom we have heard very little, wanted to debate the Industrial Relations Bill. So a large number of members have wanted to debate the Bill, but instead the gag was applied so that the Government members could rush off to have cocktails prior to the Labor Party conference, which starts tomorrow.

Now that he has his Bill passed, the Premier can strut the stage, even though he used the guillotine—I am sure that he will not tell his conference delegates that because in their hearts they probably want to believe that democracy has run its course. Mr Speaker, to get the Bill passed, the Premier has had to rely on your vote. Mr Speaker, in this case I think that it is unfortunate for you that he has had to do that, because the Speaker's role is to preserve the rights of the members of Parliament. Of course, Mr Speaker, you are very much aware of that long tradition. I recollect that some Speakers have actually gone to a place of execution—not quite the guillotine but something very similar to that—and lost their heads because they tried to ensure that there was debate. Mr Speaker, I notice that your head is intact and that probably over the weekend your colleagues will hail you as a hero. However, the historical record will speak for itself.

So although there is plenty of time for the Government to allow the debate to continue, for reasons best known to itself the guillotine has been used to bring about the adjournment of this Parliament at this particular time when all members would have expected that it would be quite some time yet—maybe another 12 hours or 20 hours—before the Committee stage of this debate would have concluded and the House adjourned, because a lot of members had indicated already that they wished to have a great deal of input during the Committee stage. I do not want to keep Parliament unduly, but I wanted to make that point. The Opposition is strenuously opposed to the adjournment motion that has been moved by the Leader of the House.
