



Speech by

**Mr SANTO SANTORO**

**MEMBER FOR CLAYFIELD**

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Hansard 25 August 1999

### **COALITION INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS POLICIES**

**Mr SANTORO** (Clayfield—LP) (10.18 a.m.): During the past few weeks and coinciding with various rallies against the Federal Government's workplace relations policies, several Labor members of Parliament, including Ministers, have perpetrated untruths about the efficacy of the Federal coalition's workplace relations policy. Obviously, Labor in this place and the ACTU will not tell Queensland workers the facts. The facts do not suit their form of industrial cronyism, but the facts are that the coalition policies that they rail against have produced the following benefits for Queensland and Australia—

A workplace environment based on agreement making and the choice of employers and employees—not based on class ideology or union membership.

Real safety net wage increases for Australian workers, especially for low paid and disadvantaged workers of more than 7%—compared with a decline in real wages of more than 5% under the Labor/ACTU Accord.

Real wage increases almost double the safety net for workers making agreements with their employers.

The lowest level of industrial disputes and strikes since records in Australia began in 1913.

Nearly 490,000 new jobs created since 1996.

A reduction in the unemployment rate to 7%—the lowest for 10 years—compared with Labor's 11.2%.

The lowest youth unemployment rate for more than 10 years.

Equal rights for union and non-union workers.

All of these achievements have been the product of reforms which are opposed by Labor and its union mates. These reforms have also contributed to a more secure workplace because they have been underpinned by better productivity and a stronger economy.

Australian employers and workers are getting on with the job of workplace reform. Only the Labor Party and its union ideologues are living in the past, beholden to its union mates and ideological mantra. The coalition's policies are based on the common good—on the interests of employers and employees alike, union and non-union alike, and the interests of the unemployed as well as the employed. In contrast, Labor's industrial relations laws were railroaded through the Queensland Parliament without detailed debate—a payback to union mates, backroom deals with union mates and a return to power and privilege of favoured union bosses and union members.

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