



Speech by

Mr R. QUINN

MEMBER FOR MERRIMAC

Hansard 13 April 2000

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Mr QUINN (Merrimac—LP) (Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) (10.13 a.m.): Two months ago the Premier issued a media release with the headline "Trains and IR laws both on track". But today they have both run off the rails—again. Earlier this week teachers slapped a dozen or so work bans on schools, and today we wake to find the State paralysed by a crippling rail strike. This chaos is the product of the Premier's political opportunism in Opposition and political weakness in Government. Three years ago he stood on the back of a truck outside this House and said that the coalition's public sector pay offer of 4% was peanuts. Now he is offering 3%, take it or leave it. They are not taking it.

Our train stations are empty. Hundreds of thousands of commuters have been left in the lurch and our school students face similar treatment within months, if not weeks. Why? Because the Premier raised unrealistic expectations in Opposition and does not have the courage to enforce his own IR laws when in Government. No wonder the State is in such a mess. He promised the workers the earth in Opposition and he is shoving their nose in it now that he is in Government. He picked a fight with his mates at Trades Hall, and they have obliged. As far as they are concerned any excuse will do, and driver-only trials are as good a reason as any. The coalition does not condone union militancy and wildcat strikes. But we all know where the fault lies on this occasion. The remedy is clear, Premier: enforce the law. That is the remedy.
