


Speech by
Jackie Trad

MEMBER FOR SOUTH BRISBANE

Hansard Thursday, 23 August 2012

LABOUR DAY

 **Ms TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (9.27 pm): Without the labour movement, Queenslanders—indeed Australians—would not enjoy the lifestyle that we all value. For years, unions have fought for and won rights for working Queenslanders—rights that many of us now take for granted. These rights include a minimum wage, workplace health and safety protection, the eight-hour working day, compensation for injured workers, superannuation, weekends, four weeks paid annual leave, paid maternity leave, bereavement leave and a whole range of other rights and entitlements, including employment security in the Public Service, which we have seen trashed here tonight without any consultation with the people of Queensland.

Labour Day has significant historical importance for this state. The first Labour Day took place in Brisbane on 16 March 1861. The celebrations were limited to building workers who had already secured an eight-hour workday, with the majority of workers excluded from the celebrations. However, the example set by Brisbane workers sparked similar international actions, with workers in the United States declaring 1 May to be the day of universal work stoppage.

Historically, Labour Day and May Day in Queensland have gone hand in hand, recognising the international and local significance of the day and celebrating in solidarity with workers around the world. The Newman government's recent decision to move Labour Day—

Madam SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane, this is a bill before the House and, therefore, you are in anticipation of a bill before the House, which is against standing orders. I would ask you not to refer to a bill before the House.

Ms TRAD: Labour Day is an important day for working Queenslanders in this state. It is important for a whole range of reasons. Indeed, it has been described to me as a day that is union Christmas. They call it 'labour Christmas'. They call it that for a reason. It has significance; it has meaning; it is emblematic of their faith. People are talking now about the next Labour Day in Queensland and what will happen to it.

What we have seen here tonight has been unprecedented in the history of this state, I would suggest. Organised labour in Queensland has been at the forefront of securing rights for Queenslanders, in particular, as I said earlier, workplace security and work entitlements for public sector workers. What we have seen here tonight is a complete trashing of these achievements, a complete trashing of this commitment to workplace security and permanency within the Public Service which the people of Queensland will know about through the Labor Party and the labour movement if not through their government of the day.