




Speech By
Jarrold Bleijie

MEMBER FOR KAWANA

Record of Proceedings, 23 March 2017

MOTION: UNIONS

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (5.03 pm): I move—

That this House:

1. condemns the comments by ACTU Secretary Sally McManus threatening the rule of law; and
2. supports the federal government's move to implement the trade unions royal commission's recommendations for criminal penalties for corrupting payments between unions and companies.

This is an important motion for the state of Queensland. As jurisdictions right around the world are introducing legislation dealing with governance and anti-corruption measures, the Attorney-General mentioned yesterday that she attended some integrity, transparency and accountability forum. Then members opposite come in here, and we have seen over the last couple of years all the issues associated with the dodgy relationship with the CFMEU and other unions and the Labor government. It is a dangerous relationship. It is a relationship on a slippery slope in terms of integrity, accountability and transparency.

We know that the federal government have reintroduced the ABCC to deal with union corruption on worksites. We know that this Labor government have got rid of the BCCB in Queensland. They have got rid of the guidelines. The Minister for Industrial Relations stood up yesterday and said, 'This is not an issue. No-one cares about it. I have consulted with everybody.' However, there is an editorial in the *Courier-Mail* today. She was then forced to rise during ministerial statements this morning to explain herself a little more. She said that everyone knew about it and people were consulted. Apparently not everyone was consulted as NECA have tweeted that they did not know about it, and they are a pretty big stakeholder on this issue. They have tweeted in direct contradiction to what the minister said yesterday; they did not know about it. The minister should explain herself. Who knew about it? Who knew the guidelines were going and who knew that the BCCB was being abolished?

Let's deal with Sally McManus. We know what Sally McManus said on ABC TV the other day. She looked directly down the barrel of the camera and said essentially that she does not care what the law is because if the union does not believe in the law they ought not follow the law. Colleagues in this place might want to do 120 kilometres per hour on the Bruce Highway but they do not because they know what the law is. They might want to do other things that the law prevents them from doing—

Mr Krause interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: Exactly. I take that interjection from the member for Beaudesert. The law is the law. Just because someone is in the CFMEU or the ACTU president does not mean that they do not have to abide by the law and that just because they do not believe in it they ought not follow it. We know this government is in a dangerous relationship with the union movement. Honourable members should look at the history over the past two years of what this government has done for the union movement. These are the questions that need to be asked because we know millions of dollars are put into the pockets of the Queensland Labor Party and the serious question has to be asked: why? I will tell honourable members why. They moved Labour Day back to May. Then they brought in the Industrial Relations

(Restoring Fairness) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, which changed the IR act, undoing amendments moved by the LNP government. They made it easier for union bosses to access new Public Service recruits. Do honourable members remember that? They put in place those policies. It removed privacy of workers in the new union encouragement policy whereby unions can access public servants' details.

Then there was the mandatory requirement for water meters to be checked by licensed plumbers. That was payback to the Plumbers Union. Then we saw the Plumbers Union president do some work in the industrial relations department for the minister. We also saw the workers compensation rehabilitation amendments which rolled back reforms and let the unions back on site. It gave all unions representation on the review panel—the AWU et cetera. Then we saw the work health and safety bill, which rolled back the right-of-entry reforms that were previously put in place. It let unions have complete access to construction sites. Then we saw the whole IR bill repealed a few weeks ago based on union hacks in the review panel. Now we see Easter Sunday is a public holiday; that was given away for the shoppies union because they made \$70,000 in donations to the Labor Party. Now we see that credit card expenses have gone; they are not disclosed anymore. Then we see the police are no longer on the Australian Federal Police task force for union corruption. They are gone. Then this week we see that the guidelines have gone and the BCCB was abolished. This is because the Labor Party receives donations from the union movement.

If honourable members put all of that together they would find that that is the making of a royal commission. That is what royal commissions are held for: to get to the bottom of what discussions are had with the Minister for Industrial Relations and what dodgy deals are done with the union movement in relation to this type of legislation. It is about time the Labor Party started disclosing these dodgy relationships and supported the federal government in its moves to get rid of corruption in Australia. I suspect that we have not seen anything yet in terms of corruption between the Queensland Labor division and the union movement.