




Speech By
Mark Boothman

MEMBER FOR ALBERT

Record of Proceedings, 30 November 2016

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS BILL

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (8.54 pm): I rise tonight to make a contribution to the Industrial Relations Bill 2016. From the outset I state that I agree with what the shadow minister has been talking about today and I echo the words of the member for Noosa. I understand that there are links between the union movement and the Labor Party. The Labor Party was founded on the union movement and so I can certainly understand their closeness.

I have stood many times in this place and spoken about education and setting examples for children in schools. I have said that our behaviour in public can be seen as an example of what we are instilling in our younger generations. I now wish to quote a federal circuit court judge, Judge Vasta, who recently made a ruling in relation to a workplace bullying case. On 9 March there was an article about it in the *Gold Coast Bulletin*. It certainly does have a lot of merit in terms of what we are talking about tonight. The judge stated—

Such thuggery has no place in the Australian workplace.

The article goes on to report the recorded exchange that was obtained by the federal government's Fair Work Building and Construction department, which included comments like—and I quote from the *Gold Coast Bulletin*—

“Get out of the shed you scab”, “You’re a—
unparliamentary language—

piece of—

unparliamentary language—

mate, that’s what you are”, “What did I just say mate? Get this—

unparliamentary language—

out of the—

unparliamentary language.

A government member interjected.

Mr BOOTHMAN: This is what is transpiring. I am highlighting that this is typical of some of the people who are supporting the Labor Party. We are trying to instil in the younger generation respect for each other. We are trying to introduce antibullying programs in our schools and this is nothing more than workplace bullying.

Mr BLEIJIE: I rise to a point of order. I say sorry to my honourable colleague, but the education minister is continually interjecting from that seat, which is not her seat and it is disorderly to the House.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! A couple of points about that: yes, it is inappropriate to interject from other than your chair. However, on the matter of interjecting in general, I do not think that the Minister for Education is interjecting any more than anyone else has been. I do advise the minister that if you are going to interject, please do so from your seat.

Mr BOOTHMAN: The article in the *Gold Coast Bulletin* highlights the thuggery that these individuals perpetrate on worksites. A safe workplace is no place for abuse or swearing. If honourable members read the Queensland government's own website they will see—and there is a link—that it talks about unreasonable behaviour on worksites. This includes behaviour that victimises, humiliates, intimidates or threatens. This highlights the behaviour that these individuals are condoning on worksites, and I personally feel it is absolutely disgusting.

One of the main issues that I see in my electorate regarding this bill is in relation to Easter Sunday. I have a lot of small businesses, I have a lot of small cafes and lovely little corner stores in my electorate—

Mr McEachan: No. 1 employer in Queensland!

Mr BOOTHMAN: Yes, the No. 1 employer in Queensland. These individuals work extremely hard, they work long hours and they hire people—

Mr Costigan: They work their guts out.

Mr BOOTHMAN: They work their guts out and they give people a chance. One of my local business people said recently that it is already extremely difficult to make ends meet on a Sunday, and a lot of the time it is not even worth opening. When you speak to young school leavers, who are desperately trying to earn a quid, they say, 'If I can work on that Sunday I am more than happy to,' and they are glad to earn a bit of money that day.

Another issue that was brought up by my western colleagues—and I certainly understand their concern—relates to the limited consultation and the concerns of the Local Government Association of Queensland. These local councils employ 40,000 people; they are a crucial employer. There was no consultation. This is going to force rates up, and this will result in people losing their jobs. In these small—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): I would like to confirm that members in the gallery are aware they are not allowed to take photographs from the gallery.

Mr BOOTHMAN: These small country towns rely on the councils, and if councils are forced to lay off people because of the cost of hiring, it will crucify a lot of these small country towns. I reiterate the words of the members for Gregory and Condamine because this is their lifeblood. We do not want to inflict any more hardship on local towns and farmers out there, because this will force rates up and push prices up. They are doing it tough as it is out there. This is why the Labor Party does not have any seats in Western Queensland, because they do not represent the farming communities out there. They do not give two hoots about farming communities.

Mr McEachan: Or small business.

Mr BOOTHMAN: And they do not care about small business. I am going to leave my contribution at that, but I would ask the crossbenchers to seriously consider what the Labor Party is doing here tonight. This is self-interest and this is caring about their union mates. I understand that the Labor Party has close links to the unions and I do not hold that against them, but when it comes at the expense of people in Western Queensland, small business operators and the little guy out there, I totally disagree with it.