



Speech by

Miss FIONA SIMPSON

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

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QUEENSLAND HEALTH

Miss SIMPSON (Maroochydore—NPA) (10.03 a.m.): This is an arrogant Labor Government. It believes that it can spin doctor its way out of its secret plans to privatise Queensland hospitals and to flog off nursing homes. The Government has lied, but it has not fooled the people or the union movement and it certainly has not fooled Queensland Health staff, who are absolutely outraged that a Labor Government has poured resources into plans to privatise the State's public hospitals and aged care facilities. Staff association meetings are being urgently called around the State and health workers are very angry with this Government's dishonesty.

At first the Premier and Minister Edmond said that the Queensland Health Strategy Advisory Project and its 26 strategic recommendations, which went to Cabinet under Premier Beattie's signature on 28 June this year, had been only noted. Recommendations, of course, included selling off State nursing homes, winding back capital works to reduce bed capacity in State hospitals, entering into talks with private hospital groups and setting up a zonal management structure. They said in the media two days ago that they had only noted it, but those recommendations had been acted on. They have set up the zonal management system. They have put in two top Health Department officials to look at implementing the aged care recommendations. They have set up a task force to wind back capital works projects.

This Government has clearly been caught out. Its slash and burn health strategy project was born in Treasury. A steering committee of the State's three top bureaucrats—the Director-General of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the Under Treasurer and the Director-General of Health—was in charge of the project. The resulting consultant's report was signed off by those top bureaucrats. It was also signed off by the Premier, Health Minister Edmond and the former Treasurer.

Where there is smoke, there is fire. I agree with the Queensland Nurses Union and the other unions, which have seen the actions of this radical plan and the cut and burn that is happening at the Royal Brisbane Hospital. They are not doing—

Time expired.
