



Speech by

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BLIGH LABOR GOVERNMENT

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.38 am): We have all heard about the Premier's 16 so-called achievements after three years in office. Some are so vague and immeasurable that the 'sweet 16', as they have been tagged, have become the subject of derision, ridicule and contempt even in the Labor Party. One 'achievement' is reducing unemployment. On the figures released last week, there are 131,000 unemployed and there were 116,000 unemployed, not three years ago but last year when the Premier made her promise to create 100,000 jobs.

Queenslanders do not think that those so-called achievements are the sweet 16, but they can come up with a list of their own. Here is Queensland's Labor's 'sour 16'. No. 1 is losing Queensland's AAA credit rating. No. 2 is record state debt—the highest in the entire country. No. 3 is massive structural deficits as Labor spends more than it earns and its spending increases consistently outpace its earning increases. No. 4 is electricity prices—Labor's privatisation has dramatically increased the power bills of Queenslanders. No. 5 is assets sales—a fire sale of \$15 billion worth of assets, despite overwhelming opposition from Queenslanders.

Government members interjected.

Mr LANGBROEK: They do not like to hear it, do they? They had their 'sweet 16' yesterday, but they have clearly proven not to be true. No. 6 of the sour 16 is literacy and numeracy. One in four or one in five students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 are achieving only the bare minimum standard or lower for literacy and numeracy. Shame on the Minister for Education. No. 7 is the Queensland Health payroll. There is \$900 million for a system that still cannot pay health workers correctly.

No. 8 is South-East Queensland water price rises. There have been massive price rises to pay for a \$2 billion water recycling plant that is idle, a \$1.2 billion desalination plant that is a lemon, \$800 million on a northern pipeline interconnector—which the member for Maroochydore is always referring to—and the scrapped \$500 million Traveston Crossing Dam.

No. 9 is Labor's fuel tax. Since June 2009, the cost of fuel has risen by 9.1c per litre thanks to Labor's fuel tax after they promised before the election that they would not touch the subsidy. No. 10 is driver's licence hikes. The cost of a five-year driver's licence is set to increase from \$73.30 to \$152.50. It is a system that is costing millions of dollars. We have 4.5 million Queenslanders in a system that is going to cost them over \$100 million for a driver's licence.

No. 11 is vehicle registration. Our vehicle registration is more expensive than any other state, making Queensland the most expensive state in which to own and run a car. No. 12 is the increase in motorway tolls, crippling some transport intensive businesses. It is only last week that the Treasurer came in here and said that we would have a cap on toll rises.

No. 13 is a health system that is grinding to a halt under the weight of massive management burdens and systems. No. 14 is Cross River Rail—a project first announced as a priority six years ago and announced almost monthly since then, every time the Premier needs a distraction from her toxic, appalling Labor government.

No. 15 is a justice system that does not deliver justice, where criminals get a slap on the wrist instead of hearing the slam of a cell door. No. 16—the most appalling one of the sour 16—is a cabinet full of underperforming, acquiescent carpet strollers with no real-world experience. They have to be sent out to get some—but only for a day.

They are the 16 things that Queenslanders will remember about the past three years—a litany of failure, an appalling record of deceit and dishonesty. Today we heard a ministerial statement from the Treasurer about privatisation in which he could not even utter the word. Under this dishonest Labor government in Queensland, privatisation has become merely a transaction—the next chapter. So divorced have they become from the truth that they can no longer utter the word ‘privatisation’.

It is no wonder, then, that the column writers have seen fit to explore the raft of weaknesses replete with this government. I noted on the weekend the column of that noted historian Ross Fitzgerald. I do not think anyone would claim that he is a great conservative supporter. I do not think people would say that he is one of ours. Let us have a look at what he had to say in the *Weekend Australian*. He said—

The Bligh government boasts the worst Queensland state ministry since the 1950s.

Mr Fraser: Is this the best you can do? What do you stand for?

Mr LANGBROEK: I think they are great words. The Treasurer clearly does not want to hear them, because he is part of this hopeless state ministry. Let me return to the quote—

The Bligh government boasts the worst Queensland state ministry since the 1950s. Deputy Premier Paul Lucas has failed as health minister, running a department that can't even pay health workers properly.

Mr Fitzgerald goes on to state—

The bureaucrats rule Treasurer Andrew Fraser—

Mr Fraser: Why don't you go and ask them what they think?

Mr LANGBROEK: That is what they say. Because he has never had a real job, he has to have people who have real-world experience who tell him what to do, except when he practises his well-rehearsed answers to questions without notice. What else does Ross Fitzgerald say? He says—

Bligh's departmental head in the Premier's Department, Ken Smith, is out of his depth and provides no leadership to the bureaucracy.

Mr Fitzgerald further states—

Bligh's ministers are generally young, inexperienced, lazy and incompetent and promoted by Bligh to ensure their support.

Then Mr Fitzgerald states what we all know—

The support of Australian Workers' Union powerbroker Bill Ludwig is crucial to Bligh's survival. He is the last person of influence standing in her corner.

Mr Fitzgerald is not alone in his scathing assessment. Steven Wardill of the *Courier-Mail* also wrote a very insightful piece about the credit of the Labor Party in this place in which a senior Labor insider is quoted as saying—

The whole reason the state caucus is in such bad condition is due to Peter Beattie, he went out of his way to attract mediocrity.

The source goes on to say—

Beattie knew he always looked better when surrounded by B-graders.

Wasn't there a minister here once who used to refer to people as B-graders? I wonder who the source was. I see that the member for Chatsworth is here in the chamber. Let us have a look back at the member who came here in 1977 to see if he is the source. Another commentator, Madonna King, also summed up—

Mr Fraser: What is the point of this?

Mr LANGBROEK: It is to point out to the Labor government, of which the Treasurer is an intrinsic part, just how hopeless they are and how they need to be held to account for what they have done when they are trying to make out that they have some sort of proud record. This is what Madonna King said when she summed up Queensland Labor in her column—

In fact, the only thing allowing Anna Bligh to remain as leader of the state's Labor Party—and the Premier for now—is the lack of any suitable replacement—

apart from the laughing clown over there. Ms King points out—

That says much about Anna Bligh's Government and the depth of talent of her ministry, but the search for a replacement has led to some bizarre scenarios being floated.

The best example this week was that MP for Brisbane Central Grace Grace could possibly replace her as leader.

Ms King goes on to say—

This is not journalists peddling a rumour, as the Government would like you to believe; this comes from Anna Bligh's own MPs.

Government members interjected.

Mr LANGBROEK: They do not like it, do they? They give it out here for an hour and they cannot even handle it for 10 minutes. Well, blow me down: the member for Brisbane Central is doing the numbers—something that I informed this House of a fortnight ago. This is what Madonna King goes on to reflect about the Premier's latest media stunt—

Thursday night at the Princess Alexandra Hospital will not be seen as a new open Premier hell-bent on learning. It's more likely to be seen by voters as a cheap political stunt, aimed at improving the Premier's public relations.

Union leaders told the Left faction Labor members yesterday that working for a day in a hospital or a hotel is an insult to their members. Of course it is an insult to Queenslanders who have seen all of these stunts before after nearly 20 years of this toxic Labor government.

Mr Ross Fitzgerald summed it up nicely at the beginning of his article on Saturday. He said—

Anna Bligh is only surviving as Queensland Premier because there is no one else willing to lead the ALP into near certain defeat at the next state election due in 2012.

I do not take victory for granted and, as leader of the LNP, I will work day and night between now and the next election to prove to Queenslanders that we can get this state back on track. We will work day and night to make Queensland No. 1 again. We will work day and night to set out a plan and a vision for Queensland that will once again lead the country.

Once again we saw this morning from the Premier and the Treasurer lots of overacting and lots of tired regurgitation that 'yes, we were upfront with Queenslanders last year in the lead-up to the election' when it was revealed that they did know what the global financial crisis had cost this state. \$12 billion is the figure the Treasurer released on the eve of the election. So the Premier did know and will not release today the cabinet document from October 2008 that says that they knew about privatisation and that they had plans about it.

Mr Fraser: Spit it out. Bring it home. Take a walk.

Mr LANGBROEK: The member for Mount Coot-tha is the typical example of the worst of this Labor government—Labor who think they can put people like that in here because they are destined to rule forever. The people of Queensland have different intentions and will prove it at the next election.