




Speech by

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MEMBER FOR INALA

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PUBLIC SERVICE, JOBS

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.00 am): We just heard the Premier say that he wants us to talk about what the people of Queensland are interested in. I say today in this House that we know what the people of Queensland are interested in and we know that they are very concerned about their jobs. We have asked this government time and time again about the number of jobs that will be going from the Public Service and time and time again we have been refused answers. We have asked various ministers to put on the public record how many jobs in their departments are going. Basically, the only thing we have been handed is a Public Service Commission report which outlines the number of temporary and casual contracts. But today we saw the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs contradict the Premier and say that 3,500 jobs could have gone by 30 June.

Mr Elmes: That was your statement.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, the minister said 3,500 and the Premier said around 3,000. The people of Queensland have a right to know.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! I warn the minister and ask him to cease interjecting. I call the Leader of the Opposition.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The people of Queensland have a fundamental right to know how many jobs have been axed over the last three weeks. We saw that the Premier refused to answer the question in this House today. What else did we learn today? We also learned today—

Mr Crandon: The systems won't tell us—the systems you put in place.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Can you please sit down in your chair?

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Leader of the Opposition! I also warn the member for Coomera and ask him to cease interjecting.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We have also learned today that the government, through the Premier's office, has refused a right-to-information request. What did that right-to-information request seek? It sought reports, emails, letters, advice, briefing notes, file notes, memoranda and other correspondence between ministers and the Premier. Because of this letter we know that there exists two documents—two secret files—that I have called upon the Premier to release today. He went to the election talking about openness, accountability and transparency in government. If he really believes what he said during the election campaign, if he still believes that it is a fundamental tenet of this government to produce accountability in government, why will he not release today the secret files that we know exist in the Premier's office? We know that ministers have emailed the Premier stating how many jobs are going across the Public Service. Why will the Premier not release these secret files?

I call on the Premier today to release the files and to be open and transparent. He said to the people of Queensland that he would provide an open and transparent government, and we are not seeing that today in this House at all. What we have seen from this government is 100 days of disappointments. Before the election the Premier promised to govern with humility, grace and dignity, but in just 100 days the

LNP government has disappointed Queenslanders by being the very definition of mean and tricky. The Premier and the LNP have failed to keep their word on a string of commitments.

Before I go on to 'nothing to fear', I came across an article today in the *Brisbane Times*. I thought I might share it with members of the House. It talks about a former Howard minister blasting the LNP as a cult. What did this former member have to say? This was Gary Hardgrave. The article states—

Acting LNP president Gary Spence sent an email to LNP members on Friday warning them the party constitution required them not to publicly criticise the party, its office bearers, parliamentary representatives or candidates.

So we know now that the way this government operates is like a cult. They do not like dissent; they do not like division. And we have seen that.

Ms Trad interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you, member for South Brisbane. We hear the Premier talking about *Kumbaya*. The only people here talking about *Kumbaya* are a part of the LNP government. But we know that there is a party conference coming up on the weekend. We will be making sure that we listen to what happens at that conference over the weekend. In fact, Gary Hardgrave said—

The view from down south is that this is no longer a political party; it's a cult, because it's all-controlling, it's all-demanding, it's all about your obligations as a member [and] there's no room for a variety of views.

We have seen that in the debate on civil unions and we are going to see that in the debate on surrogacy. We are going to see that in this government there are no alternative views and no conscience vote; it is the cult—the cult of the celebrity.

The Premier pledged to his own employees that they would have nothing to fear from the LNP government—nothing except the loss of their job! As each day dawns, the sun sets on the jobs of more and more government workers. Recently we saw a classic example of this mean and tricky government at work when the Premier tried to divert attention from his job cuts by picking a fight with a power retailer. However, all this did was highlight the LNP's inability to deliver on its promises and its preference for a hasty political stunt over genuine and considered decision making. In fact, the Premier was able to cite the exact number of contracts that the government holds with the power company. What was that number? It was 2,529, to be precise. But then he claimed that he had no idea how many of his own workers had lost their jobs that day. We know what happened with those 2,529 government contracts. There was a backflip. That backflip meant the government could not actually leave those contracts that it had with that power company.

Then today we saw the extraordinary circumstance of the Premier standing up in this House and saying that he had now found an alternative electricity supplier which was going to save his family \$120 a year. Who is that power retailer?

A government member: It was a quarter.

Ms PALASZCZUK: It was a quarter. Who is it? The Premier should share that information with the people of Queensland, not go whispering it to me in my ear. Tell the people of Queensland who is that retailer.

Also last week we heard reports that were very clear on the number of jobs that were going to go from Queensland Rail: 2,200. We know that Mr Caltabiano, the director-general of the department of transport, and Mr Caltabiano's 'spokesperson', Mr Emerson, know very clearly the number of jobs that are going. Where are those jobs going to go from? We know where those jobs are going to go from because you cannot take 2,200 jobs from head office. Where do they have to go from? Unfortunately, they have to get those jobs from the station attendants and from rail security.

We saw eight minutes on a Channel 7 news bulletin and a news article on its website in which the 'spokesperson' for Mr Caltabiano, Mr Emerson, refused to answer the questions. We have heard from reports that these issues were discussed and canvassed at a meeting and that these figures have been confirmed: 2,200 jobs will be going from Queensland Rail. Where will that impact be? The member for Gregory will know the importance of the regions. Out of over 7,000 staff in Queensland Rail, 1,800 staff are in regional Queensland. Where will we see the cuts? The cuts are going to come from regional Queensland, not just from the south-east, and that is going to have a huge impact on the economies of those particular towns.

What we have seen is essentially 100 days of broken promises. There have been from the LNP government dozens of broken promises, backflips and bungles which have badly disappointed Queenslanders. Our document clearly lists the major disappointments in the LNP's first 100 days. The document shows that the Premier and the LNP promised the highest standards of accountability that I spoke about earlier, yet they trashed the standards of ministerial behaviour expected of any government in the post Fitzgerald era. They fail to answer questions in this House. They fail to allow RTI requests. They fail to answer questions on notice.

This is a government that is not open and accountable—far from it. We have not seen any humility, dignity or grace. We know that there are job cuts. We demand that the government and the Premier be accountable and stand up and tell the people of Queensland honestly and frankly how many jobs are going to go. We know they know these figures, as was evidenced with Queensland Rail, and now it is up to this government to be honest and upfront with the people of Queensland and with their Public Service and say which government jobs are going and which government jobs are staying.