



Speech by


**Anastacia Palaszczuk**

**MEMBER FOR INALA**

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## **NEWMAN GOVERNMENT, PERFORMANCE**

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.02 am): Today we have had the 100th question to the government, and once again we have simply had no answers. What has been extraordinary from this question time—absolutely extraordinary—is the Premier’s confirmation today that jobs will go from QBuild. We are hearing that up to 600 jobs from QBuild, including apprenticeships, will be slashed under this Newman government. However, the most extraordinary announcement today has come from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. And what was that announcement? That some 1,970 jobs will be slashed from the Department of Transport and Main Roads and TransLink. Let me be very clear: 1,970 jobs going, going, gone!

The government has an obligation to be upfront and to tell the people of Queensland how many jobs are going from the Public Service. What did the Premier say before the election? The Premier said very clearly that the Public Service had nothing to fear. But I know that the Public Service has everything to fear. We know how upset the teachers are. The teachers will be here at Parliament House this afternoon. We know that there is fear and there is uncertainty in every one of the 200,000 government employees right across this state. How are they feeling? They have knots in their stomachs. They cannot sleep at night. I have heard reports of people crying on buses going to and from work—crying on buses because they do not know whether or not they will have a job to go to tomorrow. This fear of uncertainty—the climate that this government is creating—is simply not acceptable.

There is the possibility of 1,970 jobs going. Shame on this government! Shame for the cuts—the cuts to public transport, the cuts to the department, the cuts to RoadTek. We are hearing that approximately 600 jobs are going from RoadTek. How are these people going to meet their cost of living? How are they going to make their mortgage repayments? How are they going to send their children to school? How would you feel if this was happening to your friend or neighbour? How would you feel? This is not a compassionate government. This is not a government that cares about people. Let me make it very clear: Labor cares about people. We will always put people first. We have very clearly seen that this government does not care. It does not care about telling people from one day to the next if they will have a job, whether or not they are going to have a job.

The Premier’s performance on various issues last week resulted in some commentators dubbing it the week from hell. But I disagree. I do not believe it was the week from hell, because this is just a normal week under this government—fear and uncertainty, people not knowing what is going to happen, and we know today that over 2,000 jobs are definitely going. We have also seen what has happened in the public housing sector. We know the fear and uncertainty out there generated by this government and the Minister for Housing and Public Works—the fear and uncertainty of people not knowing if they are going to have to pay increased rents or if they are going to have to move. We have also heard that if they do downsize from a three-bedroom house to a two-bedroom house or a one-bedroom house they will have to go on a new contract—a new contract for three years. This is the government not telling people what is happening.

I know that there are a lot of new backbenchers in this House, and people will be coming through your doors saying, ‘What is going on? Why are these cuts happening?’ We have seen cuts to the taxi subsidy scheme—the taxi subsidy scheme! This is about transporting people with a disability—gone,

slashed! Unbelievable! Absolutely unbelievable! Between the last sitting of parliament and this sitting of parliament we have seen the cutting of one of the most valuable projects in this state—Skilling Queenslanders for Work. That has actually been a very worthwhile project right across the state. I have personally met with the CEO of BoysTown, Mr John Perry, and I discussed this issue with him at length. He said that this means that 21 staff from BoysTown will lose their jobs. And what do these people do? They find other people jobs. In many of your electorates there are people who are children at risk, long-term unemployed and adults who come from disadvantaged backgrounds and low socioeconomic areas. These people live and work in your communities. What we are saying—

**Mr Johnson:** You should've thought of that before!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** If the member wants to interject, he is allowed to do so from his seat but not from the back of the chamber.

**Government members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** No, I am just making the point that the—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Miss Barton): Order! If members wish to interject, they should do so from their seat.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am merely pointing out the standing orders. The Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative does valuable work—it looks for jobs for other people. This is one of the most important programs. In my electorate I know that BoysTown has assisted the RSPCA, helped do work on the new police academy and the Inala rugby club. It does this work right across Queensland. When I was in Townsville recently I met with Mayor Jenny Hill and she said that that now meant that she had to find an extra \$400,000 in her budget because it was having a direct impact on apprenticeships. What does this government have against apprenticeships? What does this government have against finding people from disadvantaged backgrounds a job for the future? What does this government have against security of a job, the dignity of a job? How can this government continually wake up in the morning and not tell people whether or not they will have a job the next day?

We have heard the Premier say, 'Wait until the budget,' but we know they have had these discussions at their CBRC meetings and their cabinet meetings. Do we hear anything coming out of those cabinet or CBRC meetings? No. We hear the sound of silence. I will tell the House that the uncertainty that people are facing at the moment is exactly what it is: uncertainty.

**Mr Johnson:** They want to hear the dribble falling out of you!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I ask the member to withdraw that comment.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Would the member for Gregory please withdraw?

**Mr JOHNSON:** I withdraw and I apologise.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Gregory very much and I accept his apology. We have seen that this government does not care about the people who are the most vulnerable. Who am I talking about? People with a disability. I am not going to foreshadow the motion tonight, but the failure of this government to provide a trial site for the National Disability Insurance Scheme is a complete and utter disgrace. Every single one of the members opposite should hang their head in shame. People with a disability have been waiting for years. They are crushing their hopes.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! There is too much noise. I cannot hear the Leader of the Opposition. I would remind the opposition that notice of a motion has been given. I ask her to be wary in her comments.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Over the last couple of weeks our team has been out listening to Queenslanders. We have been listening as we have been travelling from Cairns to Bowen. Do members know what people are saying to me? I am happy to repeat it. When I was in Bowen people said, 'Before the election we saw the LNP members each and every day. They were here all the time. But since they've been in government, they don't care.' Those people have not seen them at all since the election.

We have also seen the slashing of the Family Support Program for people with a disability. People are coming up to me and they are coming into our electorate offices asking, 'What is this government doing? They are cutting things like medical equipment, incontinence aids and pharmaceuticals. How can they treat people with dignity and respect when they are taking away their funding?'

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** This is the minister who is at home mid-morning and rings the police. I have not known a minister to be sitting at home in the morning. You should be in your office doing work. This government does not care about people. They do not care about people at all.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I remind all members to direct their comments through the chair.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! It is not funny.