




Speech by

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MEMBER FOR INALA

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NEWMAN GOVERNMENT, PERFORMANCE

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.41 am): Last week the Treasurer claimed the Newman government was failing to sell its message about its mass sackings and savage cuts to front-line services. He said it would be making a better effort from now on to get its message across but I do not think the Treasurer and the government have failed to sell their message at all. In fact the LNP, from the Premier down, have sent a crystal clear message to all Queenslanders right throughout the state. What is that message? Put simply, they have convinced many Queenslanders to never again trust this LNP government.

Queenslanders have well and truly absorbed that message in just the first four months of this government. They have seen thousands of government workers—wives, husbands, partners, friends and family members—sacked by a callous government that said one thing before the election and did another after gaining office. They have seen a government change the rules, introduce new directives and shift the goalposts, giving itself more and more power to take away more and more people's jobs and more and more family pay packets. Queenslanders have seen front-line services cut by a government that promised to boost these services. They have seen hardworking, front-line community groups starved of funds, all by a government that said the exact reverse—that it wanted to build stronger communities.

Queenslanders have got the message that the Premier and the Treasurer will break promise after promise that they made in the election campaign. They have got the message from the Premier down that they just do not care. Of course the biggest broken promise was made to their own workers when they said that government employees had nothing to fear from an LNP government. In just the first few weeks of this government, they soon found out that they had everything to fear. Thousands of them are still, to this very day, living in fear. Why? It is all because the Premier and Treasurer refuse to say how many they will be sacking, who will be next to go and who will be keeping their jobs. The Treasurer may try to put a new spin on this LNP government but it has set a new low as the most cold-hearted, arrogant and vindictive government ever seen in this state. So much for the three words we heard the Premier say on election night, when he said very clearly that he would govern with 'humility, grace and dignity'. Despite his solemn commitments, those qualities went well out the window the day the Premier took office.

Every day brings a new disappointment and a new reason for Queenslanders to never trust the LNP again. That is the feeling out there in the local communities that the LNP MPs are supposed to be here to represent. But do we hear a peep out of any of the LNP's backbenchers or ministers? Do we hear anything? All we hear is the sound of silence—except for one, the member for Gregory. The member for Gregory has stood up for his constituents in his local community about job cuts. He can see the folly in the government's tactics, while his colleagues run for cover to toe the party line. They go missing in action, not only on job cuts but when the housing minister sends letters terrorising public housing tenants and when the same incompetent minister plans to close three caravan parks.

People are in tears at those caravan parks because of this hard-hearted government. When I was in Hervey Bay last week, I met people such as Randal and Carol and Ailsa and Clarrie who have made these caravan parks their homes. They told me firsthand of the stress they are experiencing and how the local member sitting in this chamber, the member for Hervey Bay, at that stage had not even been down to visit

them. The LNP government does not care about them now and will not care about them when they are forced out of their homes. When the people living in those caravan parks drive out the gates for the last time, who will they turn to for help? Where will they go? For them, their caravan park is their home. It is where they have chosen to live and where they believe they had certainty for many, many years to come. Under the previous government, they could have gone to their local Tenant Advice and Advocacy Service but they will not be able to do that because the government has cut all funding for those services.

The Treasurer wants to spin a new message for the government, but Queenslanders know that the real message from this government is this: 'You may be on a low income, you may be elderly and fearful, you may have a disability, you may even be disadvantaged or vulnerable, but we just don't care.' The Treasurer thinks the government's message has been distorted by the media, but there has been no distortion and no undue emphasis on the bad news. Put simply, this government is nothing but bad news. Far from having its message scrambled, the people of this state see and hear exactly what this government is like. Part of the problem is its own do-nothing, see-nothing and say-nothing MPs. Unlike the member for Gregory, all the others show a callous indifference to their local communities. The member for Gregory said that jobs would go in the Emerald office of the Department of Transport and Main Roads 'over my dead body'. He said it was the job of MPs to stand up for local jobs, adding, 'That's what I was elected to do.' Yet we have seen in this House time and time again that members here are failing to stand up for their constituents. We have not heard the member for Bulimba or the member for Hervey Bay stand up in this House and say anything about those residents living in the caravan parks, but we do know that the member for Nicklin is out there fighting to keep the Woombye park open. He is out there standing up for the locals and talking to them and listening to them, and that is what the Labor Party is committed to doing. We are committed to being out there and listening, but as far as LNP MPs are concerned the residents may as well pack up their bags now.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! Those on my right!

Ms PALASZCZUK: What we have seen is a total abdication of responsibility for the local people by their so-called local members. It has got so bad that when I referred to the member for Hervey Bay as the 'Tin Man with no heart' his own local newspaper ran it on the front page—

Mr Springborg: What about releasing the payroll legal advice?

Ms PALASZCZUK:—the 'Tin Man with no heart'.

Mr Sorensen: You got your little old editor to write it for you. You are misleading the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members will cease interjecting.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I know that the member has a heart. The *Fraser Coast Chronicle* has the member for Hervey Bay sized up. It knows the quality and level of representation that he offers. It is there on the front page for all to see. Why would anyone in the Hervey Bay or Bulimba electorates trust their local MP?

Mr Sorensen: You are misleading the House. You got your little old editor to write that for you.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hervey Bay will cease interjecting.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The member has the right to stand up and say whatever he wants in this House. Each day we see more examples of the double standards of this government. We see LNP ministers grinning for the cameras as they inspect progress on major projects started by Labor—

Mr Sorensen: Why don't the caravan parks down there take people that need housing?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hervey Bay will cease interjecting.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—or snip the ribbons at their official openings.

Mr Sorensen: Tell me about the person who came to see me yesterday.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hervey Bay will cease interjecting. I warn the member.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Who can forget the Premier and the Transport Minister at the Northern Busway opening or the Premier and the Attorney-General at the opening of the new Supreme Court? Just last week the health minister, who is sitting in this House now, was touring major health projects in regional centres. They were all happy to take the credit for these projects but ruthlessly slammed the budget strategy under which they were built. These projects were built by Labor. Members opposite constantly

attack the investment that Labor made in infrastructure that helped create or save jobs. The only conclusion to be drawn is that the LNP would never have built the busway; the new, extended or upgraded hospitals; or dozens of other job-creating projects. If the Treasurer thinks the government's message is not clear, here is the tip: if you do not like the budget strategy that built these projects, do not open them, do not go and cut the ribbons and do not take credit for them. It is no wonder the people of Queensland cannot trust their local LNP MPs and they cannot trust the LNP ministers.

Speaking of the Attorney-General, last week we saw the spectacle of the state's chief law officer being caught out over what he knew about courthouse closures. This is the minister who reintroduced the offence of lying to parliament yet he cannot get his story straight about plans to cut courthouses. The Attorney-General now meets the low standard of ministerial behaviour set by the Premier, otherwise known as the 'Flegg standard'. Is the Premier happy to have his minister likened to Pinocchio or his backbencher christened 'Tin Man'? If so, he is living in a fairytale himself. It is cruel and unfair for this government to keep tens of thousands of its own workers in a holding pattern until the budget.