




Speech by

Peter Wellington

MEMBER FOR NICKLIN

Hansard Tuesday, 21 August 2012

MOTION: QUEENSLAND RAIL

 **Mr WELLINGTON** (Nicklin—Ind) (5.53 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion moved by the member for Mount Isa. I repeat the motion for the benefit of all members. It is—very simply, very clearly—that this House acknowledges the community opposition to the privatisation of rail assets and commits to retaining ownership of Queensland Rail. It is very simple, very clear. I am amazed at the Treasurer's attempt to belittle the member for Mount Isa in his reflection that he cannot understand what the motion is about. Can I say it is very simple and very clear to all Queenslanders. The Treasurer may not understand it but Queenslanders certainly do.

Mr Newman interjected.

Mr WELLINGTON: The Treasurer has spoken about trust. I simply say that the last government was clearly voted out because Queenslanders lost trust.

Mr Newman interjected.

Mr WELLINGTON: I am not taking interjections from the Premier so will you please be quiet and listen in silence. The LNP government has inherited state debt of \$65 billion and is headed to \$100 billion, as identified in the independent Commission of Audit report, if no policy changes are made. For the benefit of members I will quote from the *Courier-Mail*.

Government members interjected.

Mr WELLINGTON: Members are invited to look at it. They are not my comments, they are comments from someone else. What does the journalist say about this alleged \$100 billion debt about which government members and ministers have been standing up in here and apologising for misrepresenting the status of? I will quote for the benefit of everyone and especially the Premier.

Mr Newman interjected.

Mr WELLINGTON: Premier, will you please be quiet and show some respect.

Madam SPEAKER: Order!

Mr WELLINGTON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I will quote from the article.

Mr Newman interjected.

Mr WELLINGTON: Look, Premier, will you please show respect. I wish Queenslanders could see how you are performing now. You are performing like a school aged child in your school.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! I ask that comments be directed through the chair and that interjections and the banter cease. I call the member for Nicklin and ask for you to also ensure your comments are parliamentary.

Mr WELLINGTON: The article states—

The \$100 billion figure is a worst-case scenario if nothing is done and current spending is maintained until 2018 which is two years beyond the horizon of normal forward estimates.

It is a bit like saying the Broncos risk taking out the NRL wooden spoon if they don't win enough games next year. That's true, but a statistical outlier in terms of probability.

It is almost ridiculous. The Treasurer, as we speak, is saying trust us. Today we have had Queensland ambulance officers, Queensland firefighters and as we speak Queensland teachers out there saying they do not trust this government. The Deputy Premier said on Channel 10 tonight. 'We are not going to hear them. They are wasting their time.' It is time that the Premier and the government listened to what is happening in Queensland. The last government was clearly voted out because it lost the trust of Queenslanders. Quite frankly, this government is rapidly losing the trust of Queenslanders. The motion is very simple and very clear. I believe that the Treasurer is trying to misrepresent the state of Queensland's finances. There is no doubt there is a significant debt, but this motion is very clear, very simple, in saying we want to stand up and fight for Queenslanders. In relation to the claim, 'Well, what are you going to do?', I have already stood in this chamber and said put the assets—

Government members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! The interjections are getting to the point where it is hard to hear and we have some other competition.

Mr WELLINGTON: I am glad that we can all hear the Queenslanders outside saying, 'We want to speak with the government.' But the government does not want to hear any more. Prior to the election the government was saying, 'We are with you. Trust us.' Now it is saying, 'Sorry, we are not hearing.' Isn't it amazing how quickly the tide will turn. If only some of the backbenchers were able to step outside and speak with their constituents—their teachers, ambulance officers and fire service members. In relation to the cutting of the debt, I repeat that we have significant assets in the Mary Valley that are available for sale now.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Before I call the member for Nicklin, I remind members in the House that their comments are to be directed through the chair.

Mr WELLINGTON: I also represent part of the Mary Valley and I have an interest in making sure that land is sold at a fair market price. For Queenslanders to sit here—

A government member interjected.

Mr WELLINGTON: I am not talking about a fire sale. I am saying let us stop the High Court challenge, let us put some of the land on the market and let us get a fair market price. The reality is that you cannot have it both ways. We know the market in Queensland has changed. Let us put it on the market and let us reduce the debt, and we can do it now.