




Speech By
Annastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

MOTION: COMMISSION OF AUDIT

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (5.38 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion moved by the shadow Treasurer. I note with interest that today the Premier launched his annual reading challenge, encouraging children across the state to read as much as they can, to learn from what they read and to enjoy literature. I remember as a child, probably like many other members, the joy of immersing myself in a story and the wonder of discovering that the written word was something to be valued. A love of books is a gift to be instilled in a child. How ironic that the Premier should be encouraging reading. How insincere that today he quoted a book he read with the Minister for Education—a book called *Library Lily*. He said—

The trouble was, once Lily started to read, she couldn't stop.

The Premier should practise what he preaches. Once he got the Costello report in his hands he should have kept reading until the end. For the past 47 days this Premier has kept a document that almost every Queenslanders would be interested in reading under wraps in his bottom drawer. I find it incredible that the Premier, despite being asked on numerous occasions, has admitted that he took his good time reading the Costello report. It took days. It took weeks. He did not practise what he preached. I find it incredible that it would not have been his top priority for reading, that it was not at the top of his list of books to read. In fact, almost seven weeks after receiving it, he has apparently only just got around to finishing it.

We do not know what is in this secret report, but I can only assume from the Premier's effort that the Costello report does not make very compelling reading at all. It cannot be much of a page turner. If the Premier has been working his way through it for a total of 47 days, it must not do much to hold the reader's attention.

What we do know is that this is the document that the Premier and the Treasurer will use to chart Queensland's economic future. That is a future that we can be assured will involve a wholesale sell-off of our state assets, a program of widespread sackings and job losses and a wholesale axing of essential services that Queenslanders hold so dear. It is a future that will take this government's slash-and-burn program to a new level of calamity.

We do not know the full extent to which this government intends to further plunder and pillage Queensland in any great detail because the Premier continues to refuse to tell Queenslanders what is in the report. He refuses to show them what is contained in the report prepared by Peter Costello, a man who can in no way be described, as the government describes him, as independent. He himself has declined to read it.

Why the lack of interest? Why the secrecy? What they have to hide is a report that will in all likelihood set out in explicit detail their long held and long planned for desire for mass privatisation and outsourcing of public services. It will put Queensland up for sale. We know that, because the person who wrote it has a track record of privatising \$72 billion in assets under the Howard government.

Mr Krause interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: If backbench members want to interject, perhaps they can interject on the Premier and Treasurer and ask them to release the report so that they can read it. The lot of them are being kept in the dark about this as well. They do not trust them enough to show them what is in the report. They are keeping silent.

We know that the same person who helped the LNP to fundraise with cash-for-access events prior to the 24 March election was suddenly hired to go through the state's books. And we know that the Premier has played a cruel waiting game with the people who elected him on the hollow promise to be open and accountable. It is not being very open or accountable if you are hiding a secret report. Forty-seven days have elapsed. Still we have not seen the secret Costello report. He is still hiding. I say to the Treasurer: this is a bad strategy. Whoever advised him to keep this report hidden from Queenslanders has given him the wrong advice.

(Time expired)