




Speech By
Hon. Anastacia Palaszcuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

Record of Proceedings, 6 May 2014

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Independent Commission Against Corruption; Grayson, Mr J

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.06 am): Today in question time I asked the Premier a very clear question: will he table in this House the pecuniary interest register of his right-hand man, his director-general, Dr Jon Grayson? Has that pecuniary interest register been tabled? No, it has not. This is what the Premier said in the open government policy forum in August 2013. He said very clearly—

Madam SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Leader of the Opposition, I am sorry to interrupt you. Members, there is too much noise in the chamber not related to the proceedings. Leave the chamber if you are doing so, quietly, and those who are staying, please do not talk. I call the Leader of the Opposition.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The Premier said, 'I want to preside over the most open and transparent and accountable government in the nation.' If the Premier is true to his word, he will today table the director-general's pecuniary interest register in this House. We will accept nothing less.

I have gone through the correspondence that the Premier has tabled in the parliament today. There is a letter that the Premier wrote to Dr Ken Levy and a letter back from Dr Levy to the Premier. Dr Levy indicated that he would be writing to ICAC in New South Wales. I do not see any correspondence back from ICAC. So, yes, there is still a cloud over Jon Grayson. Yes, there are still questions to be answered about Jon Grayson. What the Premier has just done is come in and submit to the House a ministerial statement where he outlined that finally the director-general has realised that the media pressure now means that he has to divest himself of interests that could be a perceived conflict of interest when it comes to him dealing with companies in this state.

If he is now going to these lengths of divesting himself of these interests including Gasfields Water and Waste Services, which has been the subject of media attention, BT Minerals Pty Ltd and Coal Logistics Australia Pty Ltd, Queenslanders deserve answers. Queenslanders deserve the full pecuniary interests register of what Jon Grayson holds. This is the Premier's right-hand man who goes into cabinet meetings, who goes into CBRC meetings, who sits next to the Premier when he is making fundamental decisions about who gets what contracts in this state. This is a director-general who has had direct interests in companies that deal with the Queensland government. Is there something wrong with this? Absolutely there is. Does this stink? Absolutely it does. Does this present a clear and present danger? Absolutely it does. The Newman government pretends to be open and accountable—

Mr Seeney: It was dealt with absolutely correctly—absolutely correctly, not like you.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Well, Deputy Premier, table the pecuniary interests register. No, they will not. Secrecy and hiding—that is what this government is good at. They do not want Queenslanders to know the truth.

Mr Seeney: You should learn a lesson on the right way to do things—credibility and probity.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Well, if there is a problem, Deputy Premier, table the register. What are you hiding? What are you hiding?

Madam SPEAKER: Order, members!

Ms PALASZCZUK: No. They will not release it.

Mr Seeney: They have smear and innuendo.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Well, release it! If you have nothing to hide, release it. I am very concerned about these companies that—

Mr Crandon: Where are your diaries?

Ms PALASZCZUK: We will get to that in a minute.

Mr Crandon: Where are your missing diaries?

Ms PALASZCZUK: For goodness sake!

Madam SPEAKER: Order, members!

Ms PALASZCZUK: So rude, Madam Speaker—so rude.

Mr Seeney interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order, members! I call the Leader of the Opposition.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am very concerned about Gasfields Water and Waste Services, BT Minerals and Coal Logistics Australia. How many times have the director-general or ministers been meeting with these companies? Have they been granted any public money? These are the questions that need to be answered and they need to be answered today.

Someone raised the issue of my diary. Let's get it on the public record. In question time the Premier provided totally incorrect information about his request for my diary as transport minister. I inform the House that the Premier's office made an RTI application for my ministerial diary from February 2011 to March 2012. We went through the proper RTI process and replied in March 2013. However, I am advised that the Premier's office did not proceed with the RTI application at that time. I have not received any further formal RTI requests. It is my belief that the Premier may have misled the House. Madam Speaker, I will be writing to you further about this matter.

Once again, this is a diversion—a diversion from matters that go to the heart of this government. We know that Jon Grayson has been named at ICAC. He has been named at ICAC, and today I am alarmed that now all of a sudden he is divesting himself of these interests. Obviously there is more to this story than meets the eye. Obviously there is more to this story, just as we have seen in New South Wales. Who would have thought that the Premier of New South Wales would go? The police minister, I think, has gone. There are now issues about other ministers down there—all to do with issues that have been raised at ICAC. The fact is that Jon Grayson has been named as a person of interest at ICAC, and now Queenslanders need to know what is the pecuniary interests register of the Premier's right-hand man.

This goes to some other issues I have been alarmed to read about in recent media reports also concerning the LNP particularly in relation to some art union fundraising. Why I am concerned about this? Let me put it on the public record. The LNP has registered an art union for a BMW. The concern about this is: is the LNP going around the electoral laws in relation to the tickets? More importantly, what I am concerned about is that art unions have usually been the domain of charities such as Endeavour and other organisations such as the RSL. So do I have concerns? Yes, I do have concerns when these organisations find it very difficult to fundraise. Yet the LNP seem to make an art out of fundraising as much as they can. I do not believe that is good government, and I think that the Premier instead of accepting that practice should actually be saying he does not think that it is appropriate at all.

Also in question time today another very serious matter was raised, and that is the matter that was raised by the member for Rockhampton about the issues that are happening at Rockhampton Hospital. These health issues are extremely serious. A healthy kidney was taken by a surgeon—the wrong kidney was taken. What we have further heard from the board is that there could be in fact

another I think it was up to four cases. So we are now talking about four or six cases by the same surgeon. It is not good enough for the health minister to shoot the blame home to the board. It is up to the health minister to take full and absolute responsibility. The health minister needs to get to the bottom of this situation.

I commend the member for Rockhampton for raising these issues. These are absolutely serious issues. I offer my deepest sympathies for the families that have been affected. It would be a very concerning time and very tragic for the families. I do hope it all goes well, but once again it is the incompetent health minister who is failing to deal with these issues. In question time today he could not even say whether it was four cases or six cases. You either know or you do not know. Obviously the health minister does not have the full details and he is not across the portfolio.

If we want to talk about the Queensland Health doctor contracts, just the other day I was stopped by a senior doctor and she told me, 'Please keep asking the questions because it is not resolved. I'm actually not signing up and doctors are still continuing to leave the state.' I think a head anaesthetist has recently resigned from a leading hospital in South-East Queensland.

Today we have seen once again the Premier refusing to stump up and to provide the pecuniary interests register. We have seen the health minister avoid issues in relation to the botched surgery at Rockhampton. Once again this government is failing—it is not open; it is not accountable.

(Time expired)