




Speech By
Hon. Anastacia Palaszczyk

MEMBER FOR INALA

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Newman Government, Performance; Federal Budget

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.00 am): Today in question time we asked a very clear question to the Premier about the sacking of his assistant minister for health, the member for Stafford. It has been revealed that the member for Stafford had raised concerns about powerful interests peddling their interest in the LNP. This House wants to know what were those issues that the member for Stafford raised with the Premier. The Premier has said on record that these concerns were not raised before his sacking. If these concerns were raised after his sacking, the public deserves to know what these concerns are.

This can be highlighted even more by the question that the member for Rockhampton asked today of the Premier about a tender process in relation to a boot camp. The allegations that were aired on Channel 7 last night were extraordinary revelations. What were those allegations? Those allegations were that the Attorney-General awarded a contract to a tenderer that was not preferred by the department. In fact, those RTI documents show very clearly that that tender was \$1 million more—\$1 million more! What could \$1 million buy for Queenslanders across Queensland? What could \$1 million be used for? It could go to the advanced breast cancer awareness clinic. It could go towards some elective surgery—\$1 million could be put to very good use. But this Attorney-General awarded a contract to someone who put in a tender for \$1 million more than the preferred tenderer.

It does not stop there. Six days after the contract was awarded—six days after the contract was awarded—a donation was made of, I think, \$5,500 to the LNP! It is no coincidence that the member for Stafford has raised concerns about the influence of donors to the LNP. Now I am concerned about how tenders are awarded by this government, and there must be a full inquiry. There must be a full inquiry! We heard the Premier here today. He stood up in question time and said, 'The Attorney-General and I have no knowledge.' I want to know what the Attorney-General knew, when he knew it and how these contracts were awarded. If this is the practice of this government in the Attorney-General's department, for goodness sake, what is the practice in every other minister's department? What is the practice?

We need to go through all of the tenders that have been awarded by this government and who has donated to the LNP. We are concerned about what is happening at ICAC. We have seen the Premier stand by Jon Grayson, his hand-picked director-general—'Nothing to see here'. With the boot camp tender we are told, 'Nothing to see here. We have no knowledge of it.'

Ms Trad: 'Don't you worry about that.'

Ms PALASZCZUK: 'Don't you worry about that'—we have all heard that phrase before. That is the history of Queensland.

Ms Trad: That's the history of the LNP.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is the history of the LNP in Queensland. Now we have the Premier saying, 'Nothing to see here. Nothing to see here. The Attorney-General and I have no knowledge.' You cannot award a contract to someone who is not the preferred tenderer and then accept a donation to the LNP. Refund that donation immediately! Refund that donation immediately!

I now want to move on to the federal budget—the horror that is the federal budget. Where has this government been in the weeks leading up to the federal budget? Where were they when these headlines emerged, 'Bitter medicine to cure the budget'? Where was the Premier talking about Joe Hockey and the headline, 'It's that crook'? Where was the Premier when they were talking about 'Hockey's budget warning: we all have to contribute'? Where was the Premier of this state when the front-page headline was 'Axe falls on 70 federal agencies'? Where was the Premier? He was nowhere to be seen. He was nowhere to be seen at all in relation to the horror that was coming from this federal budget.

But we know that Tony Abbott—yes, he is Campbell Newman's mate, and Campbell Newman, the Premier, admitted today, 'Once a mate, always a mate'—has copied the Campbell Newman playbook, the LNP playbook, to a T. And what do I mean by that? We had here a Commission of Audit. Does everybody remember the Commission of Audit? Yes, we had the Commission of Audit here in Queensland. What did the federal government do? It said, 'Well, we'll copy Campbell Newman and Tim Nicholls. We'll have a Commission of Audit.'

Where was this Premier and where was the LNP when concerns were being raised about a new GP tax in Queensland? Where was the Premier? Did he go out into the public and say, 'Queenslanders don't want this new GP tax?' He remained silent, as did every other LNP member. So do not come in here this week and say all of a sudden, 'We're standing up to Tony Abbott.' That is rubbish. That is the complete hypocrisy of this LNP government.

This Abbott government is tearing Australia apart. Families cannot afford a \$7 co-payment, a new GP tax. I was at my local Richlands Medical Centre last Thursday and a doctor said to me, 'Annastacia, how are these families going to pay? They are not going to be able to afford to come and see the doctor. When the elderly have to go and get their regular blood tests, how are they going to afford to come and see the doctor?' This is how out of touch the LNP is. For Campbell Newman to come in here and say that Tony Abbott is his mate and he will always be his mate, let me say this to Queenslanders: once LNP always LNP. A leopard does not change its spots. This government is guilty of hanging up its stripes—or hanging up its 'spots'—with the federal government down in Canberra. Where was this government—

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! Members.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Did we see Campbell Newman, the Premier, stand up to Queenslanders when they were axing nursing homes in this state? Where was the moral outrage about that? Where was the government when they were axing 4,000 jobs from our hospitals? Where was the outrage? There was no outrage. Where was the outrage when they axed up to 20,000 jobs across Queensland?

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members will cease interjecting. The Leader of the Opposition has the call.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Where was the outrage when they axed the Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service? No outrage there. Where were they when they axed the caravan parks? No outrage there. Where was the outrage when there was the call for pensioners to have to start sharing their houses with strangers? No outrage there. This government cut to the core. They ripped billions out of Health. They ripped billions out of Education. Now we have the hypocrisy of this Premier to stand up, to thump his chest, and pretend that he is standing up for Queensland.

This Premier and this government have not stood up for Queensland families. So how can Queenslanders now believe he wants to stand up for them against Tony Abbott? There is only one party that will stand up to Abbott, and that is the Labor Party. There is only one party that is passionate about the future of this country. There is only one party that will stick up for the pensioners. There is only one party that will continue to fight the Abbott and the Newman cuts, and that is the Labor Party.

We will stand shoulder to shoulder, we will stand side by side, and we will take the fight up to Tony Abbott each and every day, as we have taken the fight up to this Newman government each and every day. We will continue to hold this government to account. We will continue to fight, and we will expose them for the hypocrites that you are. Queenslanders are smart people. They understand what is happening out there. They will not forget their cuts to services, to hospitals and to the education system. For the Premier to stand up to Tony Abbott is just a sick joke.