



Speech By  
**Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk**


**MEMBER FOR INALA**

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**MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Strong Choices**

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.00 am): Today I asked a very clear question to the Premier. That question was will the Premier confirm that Crosby Textor had an integral role in formulating the government's Strong Choices campaign. The Premier answered yes to that question, but there was a second part to that question which was how much were they paid and what were the sources of the other consultants and how much are they being paid.

I raise this issue because I think Queenslanders have a fundamental right to be concerned when Liberal Party strategists are being employed to do the Treasurer's bidding. The government is being very tight lipped about who is receiving taxpayers' money for doing work in relation to their Strong Choices campaign. I think many Queenslanders share my view that this is a fundamental waste of taxpayers' money. My challenge to the government today is to release the details of who is being paid and how much are they being paid. This is a government that has said it would be open and transparent. In fact, I think the words were it was going to be the most open and transparent government in Australia. If it is being open and transparent, how much is Crosby Textor being paid, how much are the other consultants being paid and why will the Treasurer not release these facts and figures to the Queensland community?

Once again, in the wake of the Stafford by-election, the LNP has deployed 'Operation Boring'. Obviously that message has gone out far and wide to every single LNP member who sits in this House. What is it about conservatives and the use of military terms? Time and time again we see Tony Abbott referring to military titles. Now we have the Premier using the term 'Operation Boring'. Those opposite do not like the terms 'Operation Listen' or 'Operation Sack Jarrod'. We know that the Premier has 'Operation Moggill' firmly in his sights and I have been advised that the Premier is giving his support to 'Operation Redlands'. We will wait to see details in relation to 'Operation Redlands' and 'Operation Moggill' in the not too distant future. I have heard that these 'operations' might be delayed until later in the year after parliament has risen and in the Christmas season when things are a little quiet.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, I am sorry to interrupt. Please pause the clock. Members, there are too many conversations in the chamber. Please take them outside. I call the Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Today I want to reflect on the LNP record over the last 2½ years. It is a dismal record. It is a record that I was pleased to recount to the party conference on the weekend. This record needs to be remembered. We will be reminding Queenslanders each and every day up until the election about this government's record. When the Premier talks about jobs, Queenslanders need to be reminded that it was this government that, after telling public servants before the last election they had nothing to fear, axed up to 20,000 jobs. We have also seen a slowing economy and skyrocketing unemployment. The Premier said that he

would be moving towards unemployment levels of four per cent. It is going in the wrong direction. It is heading towards 6.8 per cent. We are not seeing job creation programs across the state. What we are seeing is this government continuing to open infrastructure projects built by the former Labor government. I find it quite hypocritical that the Minister for Transport condemns the work of the former Labor government, yet we see his smiling face on the TV hopping on the Gold Coast Rapid Transit project. The Gold Coast Rapid Transit project was built by Labor. We will remind Gold Coast residents of that fact. Those opposite can have the smiling faces, they can cut the ribbons, but Queenslanders will be reminded of the fact that it was Labor that introduced these job-generating projects. It was the infrastructure programs that kept Queenslanders in jobs, especially during the global financial crisis, which people seem to want to sweep under the rug.

We will also continue to remind Queenslanders about the trashing of democracy in this state. We will continue to remind Queenslanders that the current acting chair of the CCC, Dr Ken Levy, remains in that position despite the fact that after the Stafford by-election the Premier said that the chair would now have bipartisan support. Dr Ken Levy does not have bipartisan support and should be removed. I want to know if there is a reason why the government still wants Dr Ken Levy there. Are there any matters before the CCC at the moment involving any LNP members or any current members of this House? Is that why Dr Ken Levy is still there?

We know that secret cash donations are happening across this state. They are happening because this government changed the electoral donation laws. This government raised the threshold from \$1,000 to \$12,400. This is the record of this government. With the revelations of ICAC I would not be surprised if the government of New South Wales moved its electoral donation laws towards the law Queensland had previously. This is a government that will have tens of thousands of dollars in its election war chest for the next state election that no-one knows who has donated. This is the trashing of democracy in this state. This is a government that will do whatever and say whatever to stay in power. This is a government that will not be open and transparent. This is a government that will not say who is donating to it. This is a government that is returning to the days of brown paper bags where no-one knows anything and Queenslanders are kept in the dark.

**Mr Pitt:** This is a desperate government.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I take that interjection. This is a desperate government. We will also be reminding Queenslanders about the fights that this government has picked with its community: the fights with the doctors, the ambulance officers, the construction workers, the public housing tenants and the pensioners. Who can forget the recent state budget, when the largest group of people that this government decided to pick a fight with was the pensioners of this state? I can guarantee one thing: the pensioners of Queensland will not forget it. Who is going to forget the fights with the judiciary and the all-time low, the fights with the legal profession?

However, one thing that stands out that Queenslanders will not forget is the soaring cost of living, because this government went to an election saying that it was going to lower the cost of living, yet we have seen skyrocketing electricity bills. The Premier can stand in the parliament and smile, but it was he who said that he would lower the costs. Time and time again, we have seen electricity bills going through the roof and families struggling to make ends meet. The families in my electorate are doing it tough and they are doing it tough in the electorates of Mackay, Mulgrave, Woodridge, South Brisbane, Logan and every part of this state. Queenslanders are finding it very hard to make ends meet.

We very clearly asked the Premier how the assets selloff will impact household electricity prices. We asked if there has been any modelling done in relation to this issue. Once again, there was no answer. Queenslanders deserve to know. If it is selling large chunks of our electricity industry to the private sector, how can the government guarantee that electricity prices will not go up? If it has not done the modelling, we simply do not know. Once again, it is on a need-to-know basis. This government is hiding the facts and hiding the truth from Queenslanders. We will continue to raise these issues on behalf of Queenslanders. In the lead-up to the next election we will be talking about jobs, we will be talking about education and we will be talking about health. There will be a very stark contrast between what Labor stands for and what this government simply does not.