




Speech By  
**Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk**

**MEMBER FOR INALA**

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Record of Proceedings, 29 October 2014

**MOTION**

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (4.02 pm): The opposition will be opposing this ratification motion. As I outlined very clearly when we debated this during the last sittings of parliament, Queenslanders feel somewhat let down by this government in relation to the Queensland Plan. A lot of people attended the first summit in Mackay, including the opposition. We went there in a truly bipartisan manner to participate in what we believed was going to produce some tangible outcomes for the people of Queensland. However, it was not until the ninth hour that the real strategy behind the Queensland Plan came to fruition, and that clear strategy behind the Queensland Plan was contained in the government's response. Very clearly in the government's response there were references to Strong Choices and the asset sales plan of this government. It is disappointing that Queenslanders have been deceived by this government when time and time again Strong Choices is written in the government's response. What we saw from question time earlier today is once again a culture of cover-up by this government—a government that will not even be upfront and open with Queenslanders about how much taxpayers' money is being spent on the Strong Choices campaign. We have heard that the first stage is around \$20 million, but we want to know how much more is being spent.

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** They do not like it. It is a culture of cover-up.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Order! Leader of the Opposition, take your seat please. Minister, what is your point of order?

**Mr POWELL:** It is a point of order on relevance. It was during the last sittings that we discussed the Queensland Plan Bill and there was a bit of latitude given to members. I would suggest, Mr Deputy Speaker, that today we are ratifying the Queensland Plan and I would ask the Leader of the Opposition to point out where in the Queensland Plan it refers to the Strong Choices campaign and draw her attention back to the relevance of the motion.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Leader of the Opposition, I have been listening to what you are saying. The motion is the adoption of the Queensland Plan by the parliament. I ask you to come back to the motion please.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Thank you very much, Mr Deputy Speaker. As I look through the glossy document of the Queensland Plan, on behalf of Queenslanders right across the state I want to know how much the Queensland Plan is costing. I have here a copy of the glossy document. There are more documents and snapshots. There is advertising happening. This is a culture of cover-up by this LNP government which will not be upfront and which will not tell the truth to Queensland taxpayers. Queenslanders have a right to know for goodness' sake: how much is the advertising costing us? It is a very basic tenet of democracy for the opposition to ask questions and for the government to provide answers. However, for some reason this Premier is presiding over a culture of cover-up in this state by not revealing the amount of taxpayers' dollars spent in relation to the Queensland Plan and backed

up by the government's response of the Queensland Plan containing numerous references to Strong Choices which is its plan for asset sales.

**Mr POWELL:** I rise to a point of order again on relevance.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am talking about the Queensland Plan.

**Mr POWELL:** We are not debating the government's response to the Queensland Plan. This is a motion on the Queensland Plan itself, not the government's response.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Again, Leader of the Opposition, I would ask you to come back to the motion, which is the adoption of the Queensland Plan by this parliament.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I am referring to the document. I have a copy of the document here. I want to know how much the document is costing. This is the document I am referring to.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, I am advising you to please remain relevant to the motion.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I have a copy of the motion. I cannot see how it can be more relevant. I have a copy of the Queensland Plan. How much is this document costing Queensland taxpayers?

I now turn to the chapter on Queensland's vision, because, sadly, this government does not have a vision for Queensland. Let us go through the goals in order, shall we? I am more than happy to enlighten government members today. Goal 8: our regions are strong and prosperous. One of the major infrastructure projects that we see is not in the regions; it is down here in Brisbane, and what is it? It is the building of the brand-new Executive Building for the Premier and his ministers—no business plan and over \$2 billion of wasted taxpayers' money. When talking about regions being strong and prosperous, the government announced a Royalties for the Regions program and I understand that in the first year Gladstone and Mount Isa completely missed out on any funding. When I visit Mount Isa and Gladstone, people tell me quite clearly that this government is neglecting the regions. What is the next goal? Let us look at the next goal. Goal 9: we capitalise on unique regional opportunities and assets. We know the vision of this Queensland government, and that is to sell our assets. There is the reference—assets. That is what this government wants to do—sell our assets. When assets like Ergon and Energex are sold off by this government, power prices will go up and cost of living will be a burden on Queensland taxpayers.

Interruption.

Resumed.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Mr Deputy Speaker, thank you. Let me quote goal 9. It states—

We capitalise on unique regional opportunities and assets.

I am merely talking about Queensland's assets. At the moment we have assets. Ergon and Energex and the ports are our assets. It is obvious that the minister is a little bit upset today. Maybe he did not get a good night's sleep. He is a little bit touchy. He does not like to hear the truth.

Let us move to goal 10. I agree that Queenslanders want this goal—

Working together we will achieve more.

Over the past 2½ years, has the government worked with Queenslanders? Not at all! We have seen a culture of fights, fights and fights. We have had fights with the doctors. Let us go back to the doctors crisis. Under the watch of the incompetent, bungling health minister, that went on for six months. Then we had fights with nurses.

**Mr STEVENS:** I rise to a point of order. The ramblings we are now hearing have absolutely no relevance to the Queensland Plan whatsoever. Mr Deputy Speaker, I ask you to put the speaker back to the motion.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Order! Thank you, Leader of the House. Leader of the Opposition, I urge you to remain relevant to the motion.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Mr Deputy Speaker, thank you very much. I am talking about—

Working together we will achieve more.

Imagine what this government could have achieved if it had worked with the doctors, if it had worked with the judges, if it had worked with the lawyers, if it had worked with the firefighters, if it had worked with the ambulance officers! Unfortunately, Queenslanders have been let down. I am quite sure that within five months they will have the opportunity to cast their vote at the next election about whether they believe that this—

**Mr Newman:** June 20.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** G20? Do you want to call an election after G20? Was that what I heard?

**A government member:** June.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am sorry, we do not want you there for that long.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Leader of the Opposition—

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Are they going to go over the three years?

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order members!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Let it be known that the Premier—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Leader of the Opposition, I ask that you please refrain from referring to members in the first person. Refer all of your comments through the chair.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Apparently the Premier was interjecting talking about a 20 June date. Was that correct?

**Mrs Scott** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** No.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, you have the call.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Mr Deputy Speaker, thank you very much. Over the past 2½ years what we have seen is not working together with Queenslanders; it has been picking fights. It has been absolutely disastrous for this government. It has been absolutely disastrous for the Premier. Queenslanders deserve so much more from a government that could have achieved so much.

What we have seen is a government that does not want to be held accountable. If it does not like what it hears, it wants to shut down debate in this House. I say to the minister that, on behalf of the Queensland community, people went into this Queensland Plan process in absolute good faith and they were conned. They were taken down a merry little road and when they reached the end they realised the government's cunning plan. That cunning, secret plan was to link the Queensland Plan directly with asset sales. The government's response backs that up. I want to move on.

**Mr Berry** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Member for Ipswich, I think we have four sitting days left. I think he should make the most of them. Goal 11 states—

We value and invest in local businesses and workers.

How can this government value and invest in local businesses and workers when it sacked up to 20,000 public servants? How can this government clearly achieve that goal of what Queenslanders want when they sacked—

Interruption.

Resumed.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Mr Deputy Speaker, thank you very much. Obviously, the minister is still very touchy. I am just wondering if the minister has been able to find out how much the Queensland Plan advertising campaign is costing, considering he failed to be across any detail at all of the Queensland Plan when we were in consideration in detail. When we were in consideration in detail, he could not even answer a simple, basic 101 question that any minister sitting in that seat should have been able to answer. If he were in a Labor ministry, the Premier would have hauled him in and dressed him down for being incompetent, for not answering questions during consideration in detail. But this is the arrogance of the government. This is the arrogance of all of them.

**Government members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Here they go. Their arrogance knows no bounds. There is five months to go until the next election and Queenslanders are waiting. This is an arrogant government that does not listen, that is out of touch.

**Mr BERRY:** I rise to a point of order. Mr Deputy Speaker, that has nothing to do with this motion. Relevance is an important issue in this House. Mr Deputy Speaker, I ask that you bring this member back to relevance. I would appreciate that assistance.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Ipswich. Leader of the Opposition, it is a broad-ranging plan. I would ask that you continue to address your comments towards the plan.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Mr Deputy Speaker, thank you very much. Goal 11 states—

We value and invest in local businesses and workers.

In the column titled 'What does success look like?' it states—

We have a range of employment choices.

Just last week I was out at Moranbah. Did the people of Moranbah have a choice about whether they could work at the mine down the road from them? No, they did not. That is why we announced another policy that perhaps government members would like to look up on the website—a policy that would give workers a choice about whether or not they worked down the road from where they lived. Yesterday, during the debate we covered that topic in quite some detail, because the people in regional communities feel that the government is not listening to them. They are not being given employment choice. The Queensland Plan then goes on to say—

No matter where we live, we have access to a range of job opportunities.

Unfortunately, under this government unemployment in Queensland is skyrocketing. The September figures show 9,200 Queenslanders searching for jobs in Townsville, 4,900 Queenslanders searching for jobs in Mackay, 9,200 Queenslanders searching for jobs in Cairns, 10,200 Queenslanders searching for jobs in Wide Bay. Under this LNP government, regional Queensland is suffering. The economy is going backwards.

**Mrs Scott** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right. All of the communities out there are suffering. This government axed Skilling Queenslanders for Work. This program allowed young people and long-term unemployed people access to employment opportunities. Deloitte released a report talking about how successful that program was and this government took an axe to it.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I rise to a point of order. Mr Deputy Speaker, relevance.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Nanango. Leader of the Opposition—

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Mr Deputy Speaker—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You have the call and—

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I am speaking directly to the Queensland Plan. I am going—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Leader of the Opposition. I was actually talking to you then and I would ask that you continue your comments being relevant to the plan. When the chair is addressing you, please do not talk.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Mr Deputy Speaker, thank you. Here we go again. The Queensland Plan states further—

Our young people are offered future career paths that mean they don't need to relocate.

At the moment, young people do not have hope. They do not have opportunity in this state because this government has let them down. Where are the new jobs coming from? Where are the new opportunities? What are the futures for these young people and their families? It is very disappointing that so much negativity has happened in just 2½ years that Queensland has been taken backwards.

I move on to the next part of the Queensland Plan in relation to housing stress. If a person does not have a job how can they pay the rent? Over the last 2½ years under this government and under this minister I know that our social housing tenants have felt the stress. Let us go back to a couple of those early decisions. The first decision was to make people reside together—to have strangers in their house. I can remember the petitions. People came to my electorate office: elderly people who had raised their families and lived in their houses for many years. All of a sudden this government was going to tell them they were going to share their house with complete and utter strangers. Thankfully that issue was reversed.

Then we had the most recent stress for housing tenants which was having to report to their local housing officer and apply to take leave if they go on a holiday. I have never heard of a more discriminatory policy. You do not treat people in rental accommodation like that; how dare you treat social housing tenants like that. These people deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. What we have seen from this government is a complete lack of understanding that people go through housing stress in their lives. These tenants are doing the right thing.

**Government members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** This minister grandstands on one or two cases and does not show an inch of compassion or understanding.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Order, members!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** It is great to see that 'Operation Boring' is over. They are all alive and well today. Four sitting days to go until Christmas and they cannot wait. In conclusion, this Queensland Plan is a disaster. Everybody had high expectations of this Premier. They had high expectations of this minister. It has been a complete waste of money. We know now the ads will start coming thick and fast to back up the Strong Choices. We have the G20 cultural celebration ads running as well. This is all against the government's own code of conduct about not advertising prior to the state election. We are six months out but those opposite are not looking at their own guidelines. They do whatever they want in this state because they have 73 members. The arrogance of this government has let people down when it comes to this Queensland Plan.

The opposition will not be supporting this Queensland Plan. The government has taken Queenslanders along a road that has not informed them fully about its true intentions. The Queensland Plan is not a plan for Queenslanders, it is a plan for asset sales pure and simple. That is what this government is on about. Unfortunately the Premier has let them down. There is no vision for Queensland in this arrogant government. There is no vision for employment. There is no vision for young people in our state. There is no vision for regional communities in this state. Unfortunately this government is out of ideas and this Queensland Plan will not be followed up in years to come.