




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR CLAYFIELD

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**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; REVENUE
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.32 am): Sadly, the 2017-18 budget is the culmination and confirmation of three years of a do-nothing Labor government. This is a budget that reveals no progress and foreshadows no future. Rather, it almost cruelly underscores in its empty rhetoric the many missed opportunities from a government that clearly was not ready to govern when it was elected—and still is not. In fact, the division in this Labor government—the infighting, the climbing over each other—only seems to have got worse. While an inexperienced Premier, a power hungry deputy leader and an inept ‘Captain Risky’ Treasurer are at war with themselves, Queenslanders have been stranded for three years—without leadership, without direction, without a clear plan.

The price of Labor’s inaction and inexperience is immeasurably high. There is no retrieving the lost opportunities, no bandaiding Labor’s infrastructure spending cuts. The job losses, the cost-of-living increases, the raids on public servants’ superannuation and long service leave funds, the shovelling of debt on to the government owned corporations and the soft-on-crime approach that has put fright into regional Queenslanders: this Labor legacy of devastation is across-the-board and over the top.

We know that Queensland is stagnating and, with a government stuck in neutral, the community is crying out for leadership. Labor’s softly-softly approach is failing Queenslanders. Doing nothing is not working. The economy is hurting, and badly. Families and businesses are paying more through higher taxes and rising living costs. Much needed infrastructure across Queensland is still, three years later, not being built.

Instead of leading the way in job creation and job security, we are falling behind the other states. This latest Labor budget confirms that debt will crash through the \$80 billion mark for the first time in the state’s history, despite Labor’s pre-election promises. Youth unemployment in some parts of Queensland is more than 20 per cent. Appallingly, it is almost 50 per cent in outback Queensland. Under Labor, business investment has plummeted by \$23 billion, meaning fewer jobs and less opportunity.

These are grave problems that need to be solved, yet the reason they are a problem and the reason Queensland continues to slip is that Labor under this Premier is too afraid to act. Hamstrung by the green threat to inner-Brisbane seats and paralysed by the sense of its own incompetency, this is a government that kicks every major decision into the long grass of reviews, inquiries and task forces—more than 200 of them to date.

The greatest risks Queenslanders face today are a lack of job security and another three years of a do-nothing Labor government. Queensland lost 30,000 jobs last year alone and, despite the natural advantages we enjoy in tourism, agriculture and resources and our creative talents, Queensland’s economy is now ranked below Tasmania. The brutal reality is that Queensland’s domestic economy is now \$6.5 billion smaller than when the LNP was in office.

I intend to use my time today to further detail this government's litany of failures, broken promises and hollow rhetoric—in essence, their do-nothingness. Importantly, I will also outline the LNP's real plan to build a better Queensland, to create jobs and diversify the economy and to provide cost-of-living relief.

Let me announce something straight off the bat. For two consecutive years this Premier and this Labor government have increased family car registration by 3.5 per cent. That is twice the inflation rate. In this their latest budget we discover they have slotted in a further two years of these hits. This Labor government is treating motorists like cash cows because the Premier and her Treasurer cannot sustainably manage the state's finances.

Labor's rego slug means that a four-cylinder family car now costs \$700 to register. That is a jump of \$50 in just two years. We just cannot build stronger families when they keep getting smashed with higher costs. Families cannot continue to pay more and more. I am announcing today that an LNP government I lead will freeze the cost of family car registration for three years. This rego freeze will save a Queensland family with two six-cylinder cars \$200 over three years. The LNP understands that every little bit helps, and this will return more money to tight family budgets. Queenslanders know that the LNP can deliver this because we have delivered it before. It is called action—in stark contrast to Labor.

Simply being in government is not good enough. Simply reviewing and not doing is not good enough. Simply collecting a ministerial salary while not making a decision is not good enough. It is cowardly and it lays bare one's inexperience. Governing is about courage—not stillness and, worse, sneakiness. It is about skill, not spin. It begins with listening to the concerns of our fellow Queenslanders and then it is about inspiration, good plans and hard work. It is about action that engenders confidence and hope—hope that we can build a better Queensland and hope that Queenslanders can recover and move on from the pervading do-nothing attitude of Labor and this Premier.

This will be my approach and that of my Liberal National Party shadow cabinet colleagues as we continue to roll out more great policies to build a better Queensland in the run-up to the next election. This is the last budget before that election and, predicably, even typically, we have seen a Labor government promise like there is no tomorrow, but no amount of promises can compensate for the cost to Queenslanders of this government's indecision and lack of vision.

The next election will not be about who can say the most outrageous thing or who can tell the biggest untruth in an effort to trick Queenslanders—at least not as far as my LNP team and I are concerned. The next election is all about Queenslanders. It will be about who has the best plan to build a better Queensland—a Queensland with more jobs; stronger families; lower crime rates; cost-of-living pressures contained; enhanced environmental protections; fair dinkum road, bridge and dam projects; a strong and stable business environment for the creation of jobs and personal wealth; and better government, not more government.

Nobody can ignore the recent shattering terrorism events at home and abroad, and so the question of security and the straight-talking answers it demands will also need to be addressed. There is no getting around this challenge. There is only facing it head-on and doing our best to fight back. Terrorism requires frank and fearless discussion. If we shrink from it, the problem will only get worse. I will have more to say on the threat of terrorism over coming weeks as we prioritise a safe and livable Queensland.

We know economies slow in the expectation of elections because businesses hold off investment decisions to see what might happen, and that is why I call on the Premier, with the election just around the corner, to inject certainty by naming the election date. Businesses and everyday Queenslanders deserve to know the timing. Many have expressed their frustration to me. The Queensland economy just cannot afford another Labor contraction, so, Premier, make a decision and publish the date of the election. Give Queenslanders and Queensland businesses the opportunity to plan with certainty so they can get on investing and creating jobs with the confidence from what is known.

I am the grandson of European and British migrants. On my father's side the heritage is Eastern European from a small village near the border of Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey and on my mother's side it is British from Yorkshire. Like so many Queenslanders, I originally came from Victoria. I was in the first great wave of southern migration to Queensland, and I am proud to be a part of that story. I moved here with my family when I was just 12. Mum and Dad bought a business in Brisbane—a car dealership. They saw opportunity: the opportunity to take a risk, educate their kids and build a better life for our family, and they saw the freedom to do that here in Queensland—a new frontier, a state not mired in rules and regulations and not held back by a big government with a do-nothing attitude, a state with low taxes and a clear attitude of supporting individuals, recognising that it is the private sector that builds our economy and provides the jobs that make our future brighter and our state better, and they did that. Mum and Dad took risks. They worked hard. They put it all on the line.

They were successful, and not without setbacks, but ultimately with the rewards that came from the risk and hard work and enterprise that they showed. That was the environment in which I grew up and was shaped. I want Queensland to be that state of opportunity again because recently we have seen it drift and slip away. Too many rules have crept in that hinder our full potential, that have trampled the entrepreneurial spirit that encourages hard work, effort and risk taking. The Premier and her Labor government have managed to stifle enterprise while at the same time growing the bureaucracy and reach of government. It is costing more to deliver less. Things seem to take forever to get done. Whether it is building a highway or getting your driver's licence, the studies and reviews, the rules and regulations, the delays and red tape grow longer and thicker and nobody can tell you why.

My wife, Mary, and I have three kids and I want them, just as I do every Queensland kid, to have the same opportunities in life that were open to me, to many in this chamber and to the many millions of Queenslanders who have helped forge our great state. The reality today is that because of this Labor government thousands of young Queenslanders do not have financial security or the dignity of a job, and the most telling admission from Labor that it has failed our young people is its 'jobs bonanza' slogan. If it is a bonanza, by definition it is something sudden, unplanned and unforeseen. It is something from nothing and, in the case of this Labor government, three years of nothing. A jobs bonanza is just the sort of rhetoric you desperately grab at when you have a jobs crisis and a lack of opportunity. It is typical Labor spin—the hyperbole of self-interest and political survival—and Queenslanders can see right through it.

Those 30,000 jobs that disappeared from Queensland last year under this Premier and this Labor government were in fact the worst job losses in Queensland's history. Under this Premier and her Labor government, Queensland is battling South Australia for last place in the jobless stakes, meaning more and more Queenslanders are being left behind. Since Labor's election, almost 15,000 jobs for young Queenslanders have disappeared. In outback Queensland, the youth unemployment rate has hit 48 per cent and in major regional centres such as Townsville, Cairns and Wide Bay it is higher than 20 per cent. Under this Premier and her Labor government, Townsville's unemployment rate recently peaked at a record high. Queensland has had more business related bankruptcies than any other state every single quarter since Labor's election and this Labor government has failed to deliver infrastructure, investing less than any other Queensland government in living memory.

The Premier and her Labor government have increased taxes, debt and red tape all the while slashing infrastructure funding. Under this Labor government services are worse, not better. Ambulance ramping is back, the child safety system is in crisis and Queensland's worst rail fail continues. The trains do not run on time and, anyway, there are not enough drivers to drive them! Violent crime has increased, the bikies are back after Labor's ideologically driven move to dismantle the LNP's criminal gang laws—the most effective in the country—and under this Premier and this Labor government electricity costs are spiralling out of control. There is a lot to take in, but that is the scale of wreckage that has washed up on Labor's brittle bedrock of broken promises.

Let us run through a few examples of that broken trust. The Premier went to the last election promising economic health to the extent of paying down \$5.4 billion of debt over six years, but what has she done? She has increased debt by \$6 billion. The Premier went to the last election promising to target full funding of long-term liabilities such as public servants' superannuation, but what has she done? Ignored recommendations from the State Actuary and risked Queenslanders' futures by raiding billions of dollars of public servants' superannuation to prop up her Labor government's ailing accounts. The Premier went to the last election promising to establish a debt reduction trust, but what do we see? No debt reduction trust, no quarantining of dividends from government owned corporations.

The Premier went to the last election promising a cost-benefit analysis and assessment of value for money prior to any project approval and that this cost-benefit analysis would not be hidden from public scrutiny and that this value-for-money assessment would be released for public consultation, but how have the Premier and her Labor government behaved? For 12 months, after hiding the business case, Labor has been embarrassed into the promise of releasing a redacted version. Indeed, the Premier went to the last election promising honesty, openness and transparency, but the Premier has shown her true colours and truth is the casualty. After a series of withheld, redacted or diluted government ordered reports and reviews, this much is clear: if it is controversial, if it is hard, embarrassing or highlights this Labor government's maladministration, they simply cover it up.

Under this Premier, we have seen a government sneak in compulsory preferential voting laws that fundamentally change the way Queenslanders vote with no consultation and only 18 minutes notice. Even the Premier's own cabinet did not know about it. There is an insidious pattern appearing here. The Premier and her Labor government patently believe that self-interest and political survival override the interests of Queenslanders and Queenslanders' right to know. Quite frankly, it is a disgrace.

One issue that seems to consume those opposite is asset sales. So here today I want every Queenslander to know exactly where I and my LNP team stand. Let me make it very clear: we will not sell government owned corporations. I am ruling out asset sales, or leases, and drawing a line under the issue once and for all. Let me say it again: the LNP government will not sell assets. The public has made its view very clear and I have listened. We took a plan to the last election to repay debt, help with the cost of living and boost infrastructure spending through asset leasing, but that plan, to borrow a phrase, is dead, buried and cremated.

But wait: the scare campaign from Labor will still come. We saw it in the recent federal election campaign with the utter fallacy of 'Mediscare'. After three years of delivering nothing for Queenslanders, a desperate and morally bankrupt Labor is going to use the politics of fear to try to muddy the waters all over again. That is all it has. To my fellow Queenslanders I say: rest assured, just like 'Mediscare', any such campaign will be false, dishonest and a cold-blooded untruth. It will be yet another indictment on this Premier and her do-nothing Labor government.

Let us be clear: it was Queensland Labor that sold Queensland Rail while this Premier was a minister, it was Queensland Labor that sold the Port of Brisbane and it was Queensland Labor that sold the Forestry Plantations Queensland. I simply repeat: clearly and unmistakably, we took a plan to the last election and it was rejected. I have listened and we will not be going back. An LNP government will not sell assets.

Those opposite and some of their friends in the big unions also seem to be fixated with our plans for the Public Service. I welcome their interest and comprehension of our clear position. Let me make that position very clear: there will be no forced redundancies. Unless, like every other workplace, people voluntarily decide to leave the Public Service, everybody who is a public servant will keep their job. Just so we are all clear, let me say it again: there will be no forced redundancies.

Building a better Queensland means delivering outcomes, not outputs for the people of Queensland. To do that we need all hands on deck. We will focus on a Public Service of excellence, one measured by outcomes and service delivery, not volumes of paperwork and mind-numbing restrictive practices. The hardworking men and women of the Public Service know that they play a crucial role in the delivery of key outcomes and that the Public Service is exactly what it says: service to the public. It is not a warehouse for, or a monument to, public servants but a means to serve the public.

Just like asset sales, this Labor government, led by a Premier who cannot and will not run on her record, will try to focus on the past. That is because Labor has no record to run on, so I expect in regard to Queensland's Public Service another fake scare campaign from Labor—perhaps the mother of all Labor scare campaigns; 'Mediscare' on steroids—but it will be a campaign with no context, a campaign not based on fact or truth, a campaign conveniently absorbed in the past and deliberately evasive on the future.

I have acknowledged our previous mistakes in government; namely, doing too much, too quickly, and without explaining properly and taking the Queensland people with us. I have learned from our mistakes. Our task was enormous: after 20 years of Labor repairing the state's finances and service delivery while at the same time living within our means. We tackled head-on the after-effects of Cyclone Yasi, together with Cyclone Oswald and their damages bills. We were witness to the end of the mining boom and the end of the construction phase of CSG to LNG and revenue collapsed by \$5.4 billion over three years.

Despite those challenging economic hits, we made decisions and we achieved. We boosted services and we targeted specific problems, such as the dental long waitlist, and we fixed them. On top of that, we delivered \$868 million to fund the NDIS. We finalised the \$1.6 million Toowoomba Second Range Crossing project, generating 1,800 new jobs. We started the \$3 billion Queen's Wharf project—a world-class integrated resort development creating 10,000 new jobs. We built or planned 11 new schools. We launched a 10-year \$10 billion Bruce Highway Action Plan. We established the \$1.1 billion Gateway Upgrade North Project, and we delivered more than \$700 million of infrastructure through our Royalties for the Regions program. We put 1,100 more police on the beat, 1,100 more nurses into hospitals and 761 more teachers and teacher aides into our schools. We developed a 35-year plan with the Commonwealth government to protect and manage the Great Barrier Reef.

After just two years of the former LNP government, Queenslanders were waiting less time for ambulances and less time in emergency departments. We developed and delivered the \$131 million Great Results Guarantee, providing real needs based funding for state schools focused on increasing literacy and numeracy standards. We created the \$300 million Fixing our Schools Fund to clear the school maintenance backlog that was shamelessly left behind by Labor. The list is a testimony to action and activity pitted against this Labor government's blank canvas of indecision and lost opportunity.

The 2017-18 budget has certainly continued the tradition of overpromising and underdelivering from the Premier and her Treasurer, only this time the Treasurer has been conspicuously missing in action. He has done a runner. He cannot look Queenslanders in the eye. Let me tell him that we love him being here. He has done a runner and he cannot look Queenslanders in the eye because this budget—Labor's third and last chance to get it right—instead strikes a new low. It is a swindle and a con.

This budget delivers the opposite of what the Premier, the Treasurer and her ministers promised. Queenslanders were told that they would get a jobs bonanza, but employment is forecast to be lower and the unemployment rate is going to be high for longer. The cut to employment growth between this budget and the government's last budget represents more than 80,000 fewer jobs. That is right: 80,000 fewer jobs. The simple fact is that these 80,000 jobs are not being created because this government does not have an economic strategy—nothing.

For three years this Labor government has failed to invest in the infrastructure Queensland needs. Of the funding it did say it would invest, it has failed to deliver \$3.7 billion of it. This paucity of a plan is reflected throughout the budget papers. It is seen in the continued decline in private investment; it is seen in the dramatic fall in business investment; it is seen, most tellingly, in the downward revisions in payroll tax—a direct result of the lacklustre employment growth under this Premier and her Labor government; and it is seen in the persistently weak wages growth.

Those members opposite, the ones who have bothered to try to argue some sort of positive case from this rotten set of numbers, invariably pass over temporary factors, including a massive uptick on coal royalties and the timing of payments from the federal government. But when luck abates and these temporary factors disappear Labor's true mismanagement is laid bare. We are left with wafer-thin operating surpluses predicated on overly optimistic revenue growth and fiscal deficits for as far as the eye can see, totalling more than \$11 billion.

Debt is climbing to new realms—a record high of \$81.1 billion. That means Labor's debt for every Queensland man, woman and child is almost \$16,000. Again, these debt projections would be grimmer if not for Labor's flimsy expectation that it will suddenly be able to put a lid on expenses growth and employee expenses growth after significantly missing its previous budget targets. This is an important point, because this expenses growth is largely locked in while revenue growth depends on a range of external factors. If Queensland does not see the revenue increases these budget papers project, Labor's deficits will get larger and debt will swell even more. This government has finally run out of hollow logs to raid. There are no more rabbits to pull from the hat for this Treasurer. There is only the shuffling of debt from one credit card to the other.

Standing here a year ago, I said of the then Labor government budget, 'As a blueprint for the future, it's a miserable failure.' Is it any wonder that with that sort of groundwork this year's budget is a fraud and a flop? We all know Labor, unable to prudently manage the economy, is addicted to bludgeoning Queenslanders with higher fees, taxes and charges. Last year I again noted the propensity of Labor treasurers to deftly trouser the hard-earned money of the taxpayer. In this budget we see once again Labor playing perfectly to type: taking, taking and taking again, whether it be higher car registration, higher water charges or higher electricity costs—where, in a money merry-go-round to partly pay for his government's failed energy policies, the Treasurer has just ripped hundreds of millions of dollars from the pockets of hardworking Queenslanders.

In early March I addressed the Queensland Media Club and set out my vision for Queensland and the five priorities of a future Liberal National Party government. Only a Liberal National Party government that I lead will build a better Queensland. The LNP's plan will create jobs, support small business, invest in education to raise standards and we will provide better services for families and retirees. We will restore business confidence and get investment flowing to create jobs everywhere in Queensland.

An LNP government will reduce the risk to our economic security by focusing on six key drivers to create jobs and diversify the Queensland economy. The six drivers are: tourism; agriculture; resources; construction and manufacturing; services, science and technology; and education. Without a strong economy governments cannot provide better services in our hospitals, a better education system for our children or invest in new technology and equipment to help police provide safe and livable communities.

An economy cannot grow if it is weighed down by high costs. One of the biggest costs is electricity. We will make sure that Queensland's energy security is not put at risk and that we do not end up like South Australia with blackouts and industry shutting up shop. A 50 per cent renewable energy target in Queensland will mean higher prices and we will not stand for it. I will not stand for it. Labor's latest so-called energy plan is nothing more than a billion dollar hoax. It means power prices will continue to rise due to rising generation costs.

My team and I have been travelling the length and breadth of the state listening to Queenslanders. We have heard countless stories about missed opportunities. We have heard time and again how most Queenslanders feel that this government is actually working against them, not for them. Perhaps most disappointing of all we have met good young people, many of them who just cannot find a job. Our Get Queensland Working plan will provide up to 20,000 jobs for young Queenslanders, reduce expenses for apprentices and incentivise businesses to train and retain young jobseekers. Unlike Labor's poor copy, our Get Queensland Working plan has always applied to the entire state, not just select regions. We will not deny any young Queenslanders the opportunity for a job on the basis of where they live. The latest national training data released just last week shows 58,100 fewer Queenslanders are in training now compared to 2014. There are more than 10,000 fewer apprenticeship completions under Labor than was the case under the LNP and there are 3,800 fewer training commencements as well.

With our Get Queensland Working plan, an LNP government I lead will provide a \$5,000 incentive for Queensland businesses to take on a new apprentice from start to finish. We will give new tradies a helping hand in the form of a \$500 voucher to buy the tools they need to get working. Small businesses, which we believe in—the engine room of the Queensland economy—will get \$4,000 grants over 12 months to assist with recruitment and start-up costs for eligible young Queenslanders who are unemployed and not enrolled in full-time education or training. To keep these Queenslanders working we will incentivise employers by allowing them to deduct those workers' wages as part of the next year's WorkCover premium calculation.

We want the government to work with Queenslanders to build a better Queensland. That is why our Public Service of Excellence policy will ensure we have the best public service in the nation. It will include a Leaders of Tomorrow program and I will set a 10-year target to increase the proportion of women in senior leadership roles to 50 per cent.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister for Education, I would urge you to control your comments or you will be warned. It is the Leader of the Opposition's chance to respond to the budget.

Mr NICHOLLS: It will include a Leaders of Tomorrow program and I will set a 10-year target to increase the proportion of women in senior leadership roles to 50 per cent based on merit and double the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in senior leadership roles.

Governments should support businesses and industry, not punish them. Red-tape reduction is a key part of our plan for better government, not more government. The regulatory burden under this government is heavy and pervasive and the ultimate price is fewer jobs. The LNP will set a target to cut red tape by 20 per cent over six years. We will work on reducing not only the cost and complexity of regulation but also the time consumed tying up valuable staff and wages in red tape. It will bring relief to the bottom line, allowing businesses to free their arms, grow and employ more Queenslanders. Under the LNP, this House will also have an annual red tape repeal day to remove unnecessary and archaic regulations from the statute books. We need to develop a culture of government facilitating business and industry, not controlling or constraining it.

The LNP will overhaul this government's failed market-led proposal framework where more than 99 per cent of projects have been delayed or rejected. Queenslanders are missing out on jobs and opportunities because Labor is too unwilling or unwitting to work with the private sector. After more than two years, the only market-led proposal approved by Labor is a toll road expansion—hardly the innovation Queenslanders are seeking. The LNP has already announced its first market-led proposal, the Brisbane education and entertainment precinct—a bold, \$2.5 billion plan that will deliver up to 8,000 jobs.

Only the LNP will give business the opportunity to help us to build a better Queensland. Unlike this Labor government, we will deliver our new deal for regional Queensland. I have spoken much about the neglect of regional Queensland under this Premier and her Labor government. The LNP is the only political party that has a plan for all of Queensland. Our new deal to build a better future for regional Queensland is all about creating jobs and delivering much needed infrastructure.

We will grant priority project status to a new, economically viable, low-emission, ultra-supercritical coal-fired power station in North Queensland. In turn, affordable, reliable base load energy will be a catalyst for new industries and business opportunities. The LNP will implement a new 10-year action plan to continue to improve the Bruce Highway, following on from our first 10-year action plan to improve the Bruce Highway. Labor does not have a plan for the Bruce—that great, economic artery of Queensland. We did before and we will again.

We will deliver a plan to provide ongoing support for our resources industry, particularly coal jobs in Central Queensland. Coal is not a dirty word for members of the LNP. We know and understand the resource that powers most of the Queensland economy. Our new deal will also ensure we build new infrastructure, including dams to provide water security and job-creating agricultural projects. New dams will provide economic security for our regions and boost agricultural productivity.

To ensure regional Queensland gets its fair share, the LNP will implement a \$500 million ramped-up Royalties for Regions infrastructure program. We have seen the value of Royalties for the Regions in the past and that is why we are going to bring it back. Regional Queenslanders are desperate for it—in fact, most Queenslanders strongly support this highly successful program that Labor cruelly gutted.

I will finish where I started. Labor's budgets have delivered larger fiscal deficits. Labor's budgets have delivered higher taxes for all Queenslanders. Labor's budgets have delivered cuts to vital spending on roads, rail, dams and bridges. Labor's budgets have delivered more reviews, investigations and reports, along with a rapidly escalating Public Service. Labor's budgets have delivered more waste and bureaucracy, not better services. Labor's budgets have delivered declining economic growth and increasing job losses. Labor's budgets have delivered raids, rip-offs and one-off sugar hits. Labor's budgets have robbed Queenslanders of their birthright—and that is opportunity.

At the next election Queenslanders will have a very clear choice. They can support an inexperienced Labor government with no plans to build a better Queensland or they can back a team that will listen, plan and act to build a better Queensland. That is the Liberal National Party and that is the party I am proud to lead.

Queenslanders also have before them another choice—a choice with serious consequences. A vote for a minor party will only lead to a Labor government's election, just as it has in Western Australia and just like it did here in Queensland in 1998 and 2001. We all know what happened after 1998, 2001 and beyond, as Queensland's Labor governments approached 20 years in office. We saw \$1.2 billion wasted on the Health payroll system with no ministerial accountability despite their crocodile tears. We saw \$9 billion wasted on the SEQ water grid, driving up the price of bulk water by more than 340 per cent. We even saw \$20,000 garden gnomes being purchased by those opposite and 1,500 buy-local T-shirts that were made in Bangladesh.

Labor failures have sacrificed opportunities to build new hospitals, to build the dams we need, to duplicate the Bruce Highway, to keep a lid on the cost of living, to build a better Queensland. Voting for a minor party has one critical ramification—that is, the election of yet another wasteful do-nothing Labor government. I simply ask Queenslanders: can you afford another three years of Labor? Let me again make it clear: there will be no deal with One Nation, no shared ministry and no coalition.

I pledge to lead a common-sense government—a government for Queensland people, not big unions or big business; a government which is straight with the people of Queensland. I will not be taking my riding instructions from a union or from Canberra, for that matter. I pledge to put Queensland first. I pledge to put Queenslanders first. I know that with their vote Queenslanders can make an investment. I say to them: elect an LNP government and you will get a positive return for many years to come.

Coming from a small business background, my parents instilled in me the importance of hard work and dedication. I have the great privilege of serving the locals in my area, be they from Hendra, Pinkenba, Woolloowin, Albion, Windsor, Lutwyche, Gordon Park and all the other suburbs in the Clayfield electorate. I pledge to continue to serve the people of Clayfield and if I am fortunate enough to be chosen as Queensland's next Premier I will bring the same passion, vigour and community service to making the lives of all Queenslanders better.

I love Queensland and I want to build a better Queensland, today and for generations of Queenslanders to come. I simply say to all Queenslanders: together, let us build a better Queensland.