




Speech By  
**Tim Nicholls**

**MEMBER FOR CLAYFIELD**

---

Record of Proceedings, 8 August 2017

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL:  
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.46 pm): I am grateful for that enthralling and enticing report from the member for Sunnybank as I am also equally grateful for his astute shepherding of the Finance and Administration Committee during the question and answer process. His tolerance and forbearance, despite numerous interjections by the member for Logan, was unbelievably kind. Indeed you, Madam Deputy Speaker, played no small role in respect to that matter.

The Palaszczuk Labor government promised a jobs bonanza but has given Queensland a jobs crisis. As we said on the night that the budget was released to underwhelming response, it is a budget con job. It is a budget that, for the first time in Queensland's history, will see debt exceed \$81 billion. It was planned for by the member for Mulgrave and the member for Inala and supported by all those on that side. Despite \$10 billion worth of raids, despite ceasing contributions to the public servants' superannuation fund and despite their own asset sales, the debt continues to go up to \$81 billion. The debt continues to increase.

It was again made clear throughout the estimates hearings that this government says one thing and does exactly the opposite. This is a Premier whose supposed catchcry is 'jobs, jobs, jobs', but she has no issue selling out the jobs of Queenslanders in a bid to hold onto Greens preferences in inner Brisbane seats like South Brisbane. This is a Premier who claims that she is committed to openness and accountability but whose own actions show a lack of transparency. This Premier only acts when her hand is forced, and that was again made abundantly obvious through the Finance and Administration Committee's hearings and subsequently during the balance of the estimates hearings. At estimates I had the chance to ask the Premier and her officers questions about the investigation into the member for Yeerongpilly's deletion of a private email account which was used for government purposes following an RTI request received by his office. The day immediately after that estimates hearing the CCC announced that it had completed its investigation into the member for Yeerongpilly and found—

... there is sufficient evidence to raise a reasonable suspicion of corrupt conduct relating to the potential destruction of public records ...

That led to the member being unceremoniously—eventually—stood aside as minister and sent up to the back of the House with his tail between his legs. Again, the Premier only acted when the public outcry became too loud to ignore.

The CCC's findings also revealed a concerning and ongoing practice amongst ministers which the Premier did not want to acknowledge at estimates—that is, the use of private email accounts. The CCC was of the view that the use of personal email accounts for ministerial purposes is in breach of both the Queensland Ministerial Handbook and the Ministerial Information Security Policy.

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Farmer): Member for Logan, the member for Clayfield is not taking your interjections, so please cease.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Of course, these findings stung the Premier into action and she announced yet another review and overhaul by her department into the practice, but when the Premier was asked about these issues during the estimates hearing she simply did not want to know about it and she dodged the questions.

When the opposition outlines concerns, the Premier sticks her head in the sand. When the CCC admits there is a problem, the Premier has no choice but to act. Members should make no mistake about it: the Premier only acts when she is forced. She shows no leadership and she fails to live up to her promises on accountability.

Again this year the Premier used estimates to table and release documents that were well overdue in a bid to hide them from scrutiny. The Premier knows that releasing these documents prior to estimates would have led to some tough questions, so what did she do? She tabled them on the day of the estimates hearing to avoid scrutiny. For example, the Working for Queensland survey was conducted between April and May 2016 yet was only made publicly available on the day of the estimates hearing—more than a year after the survey was conducted. Perhaps the Premier's attempts to hide this document were because the survey showed drops in her department's satisfaction with organisational leadership and job development. The Premier also released on the day of estimates figures revealing yet another blow-out in the size of the Public Service, following on from the government's inability to keep to its own fiscal principle linking growth in the Public Service to population growth. The fiscal principle that was announced last year—

*(Time expired)*