




Speech By
Tim Nicholls

MEMBER FOR CLAYFIELD

Record of Proceedings, 22 August 2017

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.43 pm): I thought I had seen it all in this place; I really did. I thought I had seen it all, but I have seen the once mighty Labor Party shown to be the pack of fools that we all know they were and led over the cliff. Like lemmings, all of the backbench sat there for the last two hours following the lead of the Deputy Premier, the member for South Brisbane—the tactical genius who put a lot of thought and effort into a motion like that, a motion that was so successful.

I have to feel sorry for the member for Sandgate. It is not often that I feel sorry for the member for Sandgate, but he knew when the Deputy Premier stood up and made the announcement that it was going to go off the rails. The planning and the practice that the member for Sandgate is so beloved of went out the window. I would love to be a fly on the wall at the next caucus meeting of the ALP when the Deputy Premier and the Leader of the House have their gentle discussion. I know the high regard that they have for each other, and that regard has now spread to the entire backbench. Gee, they must be feeling cock-a-hoop with the faith in the leadership tactics of the team over there this morning! They must have got up this morning and got the tactics group together, huddled around and said, 'This is what we're going to do,' and worked it out. You have all been sold a pup, backbench of the Labor Party! The only one who could see it coming and knew what was happening—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: The member for Sandgate sort of realised it, but he was late to it. Given the train situation, that is not surprising. The only one who could see it coming—and happy birthday, member for Bundamba—was the member for Bundamba, who knew exactly what was coming. Despite a sore temptation, she stuck with the party line. I am sure that if they give the member for Bundamba a speaking slot in caucus she will have something to say about that. I look forward to the next instalment coming out, because today we have seen the absolute farce that the Labor Party has turned this parliament into. Let no-one be under any misapprehension that what we have seen is the sign of a government on its own motion losing control of the parliament.

When it comes to being in government, there are a few things that are more important than being able to maintain control and discipline in the House and this government has failed the test under this failed Premier, who lacks the leadership to be able to control the Deputy Premier and the member for Yeerongpilly, the erstwhile mangocube tweeter. She lacks the ability to control her own cabinet. We know what the factional numbers are in there. We saw that with the Adani decision. Today we have seen that farce writ large and played out courtesy of the Australian Labor Party.

While Queenslanders are paying more and higher power prices, while youth unemployment in outback Queensland is above 50 per cent, while youth unemployment in Cairns and other regional centres is above 20 per cent, while roads are not being built, while bridges are not being built, while

crime is running out of control in places like Townsville and when we see reports like the Coroner's report that the Attorney-General dropped at seven o'clock last night so that it avoided scrutiny, Queenslanders are entitled to hold this Palaszczuk Labor government to account and to say, 'This is not leadership. This is not about delivering for Queenslanders and Queensland families. This is not a government that is securing my job and my kids' jobs.' This is not a government that is doing something effective to deal with the hidden power tax that this Treasurer is imposing on every Queensland business. This is not a government that is looking after small business—businesses like Dobinsons Spring in Rockhampton that I visited with members. This is not a government that is dealing with the problems of the canegrowers. This is a government—

Mr PITT: I rise to a point of order. It appears that for the second time today those opposite are so excited about the motion that they have given notice of for this evening that the Leader of the Opposition is trying to debate the motion now. I ask that you rule on relevance in terms of his—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! There is no point of order.

Mr NICHOLLS: This is a government that would rather take points of order and play silly political games than actually use this parliament to debate the issues of most importance to Queenslanders. This is a government whose Treasurer wants to talk about standing orders and take points of order rather than talk about why he is presiding over a tax rip-off of Queenslanders while he is delivering—

Mr PITT: I rise to two points of order. The first is that I take personal offence at those comments and I ask that they be withdrawn. The second is that I reiterate the point of order I raised before. The member is clearly linking his statements now to a debate that we are intending to have at six o'clock this evening. I ask you to listen to the member and ask that he hold his comments for that debate.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr NICHOLLS: I am sorry, Madam Deputy Speaker, but I did not hear what he found offensive.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sorry, member for Clayfield, but I did not hear it either and I did not hear the last 30 seconds of what you were saying. However, just as a matter of decorum, if the Treasurer found it offensive I ask you to withdraw.

Mr NICHOLLS: Sure. I am quite happy to withdraw, Madam Deputy Speaker. If I infringe again by not knowing what it was that I had said—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes. Could I also ask you please to take care that you are not straying into the area that you will be debating tonight.

Mr NICHOLLS: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I know that the member for Mulgrave is somewhat sensitive when I refer to taxes, but I can also refer to the rate at which car registration fees are increasing and I can refer to his broken promise about no taxes on Queensland property investments by foreign investors. There are numerous taxes that the member for Mulgrave has imposed on Queenslanders and Queensland businesses that do not infringe in any way, shape or form upon the subject of the motion tonight. In fact, there has been a veritable cornucopia of taxes and increases in fees and charges under this Treasurer. That is why this morning we talked about a Labor government of cons, costs and crisis. They have been the hallmarks of this government—a government that has continued to fail to deliver, with this Labor Premier showing no leadership on matters of importance.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Could we please have some decorum? We do not have conversations across the chamber and we also do not call each other names. It is unparliamentary and I ask all members to desist.

Mr NICHOLLS: In the short time left to me I want to make a couple of other comments on matters of importance. First I offer my condolences and those of the entire LNP team to the victims of last week's Barcelona terror attacks, especially the family of Sydney youngster Julian Cadman, who was callously killed in the attacks along Las Ramblas on the weekend. It was another tragedy caused by gutless individuals attempting to destroy our freedoms and our way of life. Once again, like in Manchester, London, Paris, Berlin and Nice, they will fail. We will not let evil prevail. We will stand united against these gutless individuals and our message to them is that you will not defeat us.

On a brighter note, I also want to acknowledge a true gentleman of Queensland politics, former premier Mike Ahern. Mr Ahern's dedication to public life in serving his community is unquestioned. Yesterday, the Former Parliamentary Members' Association of Queensland awarded Mr Ahern the

inaugural lifetime achievement award, named after former member Alan Sherlock in recognition of his contributions to public life through service in his parliamentary career and following his retirement. On behalf of all LNP members I thank him for his service and recognise the importance of that award.

On a serious note—it is something that I think people do want to know about—last week we saw I think one of the most disgraceful things that I have seen a member of this House partake in; that is, the member for Morayfield's treatment of Gary and Leanne Pullen. It was nothing short of disgusting and sickening. To use a grieving family for a photo opportunity, knowing full well that you have deceived them, is a new low. What a complete and utter disgrace. As I said at the time, the member for Morayfield should hang his head in shame. Sadly, that is what Queenslanders have come to expect from this Labor government under this weak, do-nothing leader. This is the standard that she accepts from her ministers and it is, I think in the eyes of most Queenslanders, utterly and completely unacceptable.

We then have the member for Pumicestone. He is an embarrassment to this place. His bullyboy behaviour is another insight into this Premier's lack of leadership. She has constantly stood by and supported the member for Pumicestone and in doing so has condoned his behaviour.

Mr WILLIAMS: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take offence to the reference and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask the member to withdraw.

Mr NICHOLLS: I withdraw. There is a litany of other events that show that this government has given up on governing and is more interested in politics. It is only the LNP that will work for Queensland.

(Time expired)