




Speech By
Brent Mickelberg

MEMBER FOR BUDERIM

Record of Proceedings, 2 May 2018

MOTION

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Reports

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (5.19 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the private member's motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition, which condemns the Palaszczuk Labor government for its arrogance, hypocrisy and secrecy. At the last election, I put my hand up to be a candidate because, like many people, I was dissatisfied with the political process generally in Queensland. I was sick of government failing to take responsibility and blaming others for its own failings. When I doorknocked across my electorate as recently as last week, that sentiment came through clearly. People are sick and tired of blame-shifting and dodgy deals. They are sick of cover-ups to protect factional allies and they are sick of their political representatives putting the pursuit of power and the maintenance of it above the interests of the state as a whole.

Just last week when I was doorknocking in Sippy Downs, I spoke to a rusted-on Labor supporter. He told me in no uncertain terms, some of which I cannot repeat in this House, that he was sick and tired of the political games, the cover-ups and the deception. He told me he just wants political representatives to work for the good of the entire community, not for their vested interests. Although we did not agree on many policy issues, we both agreed on the need for political representatives to restore the public's faith in the political process.

However, how can we expect the public to have faith in us as their representatives when they cannot see or understand the contents of the countless reviews and reports that this government relies upon to support its tenuous arguments to protect incompetent ministers and decisions that are made on the basis of ideology, rather than public need? During its last term, the Palaszczuk government commissioned a total of 213 reviews, reports or inquiries, which is approximately one every three days.

What do members think the public's view is on commissioning a report by KPMG into public sector efficiency with \$165,000 of their money? The people of Buderim tell me they understand that the government should consider the effectiveness and the appropriateness of their actions, so they do not begrudge the government making appropriate investigations into matters of public importance. However, they do expect to see the outcome of that expense, regardless of whether or not it suits the government of the day.

What do members think the public's view is of a minister of the Crown using his mangocube6 personal email account to correspond with stakeholders and lobbyists in relation to matters of relevance to his ministerial responsibilities? When I was in the Army, if I were to pass information of such a sensitive nature using my Yahoo email account rather than my Defence email account, I would have been charged under the official secrets act and the likely result would have been discharge from the Army. That is how it should be, because the public require confidence.

We have heard this government consistently rely on business cases for things such as Cross River Rail to support their argument when it suits them. How can they expect the public to support such projects when we are not in possession of all of the facts on such proposals? On the Sunshine Coast, duplication of the North Coast rail line has been on the agenda for many years and Infrastructure Australia is on the record saying that it is the No. 1 priority project for Queensland. We have seen business cases released in the past, so if the Labor government believe Cross River Rail is of more importance than the duplication of the Sunshine Coast rail line, they should release the full Cross River Rail business case and allow the public to scrutinise it. Otherwise, they should stump up and fund the duplication of the Sunshine Coast rail line.

As a father, one of the things that concerns me most is child abuse. It breaks my heart every time I hear of a child who has died at the hands of one of those who should have been caring for them. I am sure everyone in this House feels as I do in relation to such a terrible problem. However, that issue should be above politics. That is why I am so disgusted to see instances where, time and time again, this government has attempted to sit on adverse reports, such as the 2016-17 Queensland Family and Child Commission's annual report, when they have released excessively redacted reports or when they have attempted to bury information until a time when it will not be scrutinised as heavily.

It is not good enough. As elected representatives we should be better. The Premier says that she wants to run an open and transparent government, but to date we have only seen a culture of arrogance, hypocrisy and secrecy that puts the interests of the Palaszczuk Labor government ahead of the people of Queensland. It is simply not good enough.