




Speech By
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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Integrity

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): This government has trashed transparency. This government has trashed integrity. This government has trashed accountability. Today, we saw the Premier adding a few more walls to the integrity bunker that she is hiding in, refusing to answer questions. First, it was a committee that she has a deep understanding of—but no-one else understands why that is relevant. Then, it was the CCC investigations that for some reason she has an understanding of. Now, she is putting up rushed advice from the Solicitor-General as another wall. I ask: who is the Premier hiding from? Is she hiding from the truth? Is she hiding from the lengthening list of whistleblowers? Is she hiding from Queenslanders? Is she hiding from her own Labor MPs, who are whispering to the media, walking the hallways of this place and saying behind her back that she is losing control? All the old concocted PR tricks of the 30 media spinners do not cut it anymore. After seven years in power, integrity does not matter to her anymore.

Today, clear evidence in the Premier's diary has been laid bare. Her director-general knew about the raid and yet, despite briefing the Premier on over 50 occasions, the Premier seriously expects Queenslanders to believe that she was never told about the trashing of our democracy until she read it in the media—that she was never told what was really on the laptop. We now only have two conclusions: in her third term, either the Premier's inner sanctum no longer trusts her or she is up to her eyeballs in the greatest hit job on the Integrity Commissioner we have seen.

When I go around the state listening to Queenslanders, they tell me that trust in government matters to them. Trust is ringing for an ambulance and knowing it will be there in your hour of need. Trust is knowing that when you are sick, there is a hospital bed for you. Trust is not blaming another level of government because you have not built any new hospitals. Trust is knowing you can go to bed at night and not wake up and see a stranger rummaging through your possessions. Trust is not having a revolving door of a youth justice system that signals to out-of-control kids that they can thumb their nose at the law—a system that has consequences for repeat action. Trust is knowing that when police nab a young thief who has gone astray our systems will provide the support to get the child back on track.

Trust is knowing that the government has a plan to deal with rising population growth. Trust is not leaving commuters stuck on the side of the road, because the government cannot deliver a project on time and on budget. Trust is disclosing NAPLAN results so that parents can understand how their school is performing. Trust is not hiding data about asbestos in schools. Trust is planning and delivering new water infrastructure to expand agriculture, not replacing what you messed up in the first place. Trust is being able to ensure every Queenslanders can have a roof over their head. Trust is not leaving tens of thousands on a housing waiting list while the government dithers. Trust is not ignoring overcrowding issues in First Nations communities that contribute to greater social disadvantage.

Trust is meeting your environmental targets and protecting special areas for future generations. Trust is not delivering press releases about targets that you are never going to meet. Trust is making sure that every child is safe. Those 53 children known to Child Safety who died last financial year—we broke their trust. The issue of trust in government is now more important than at any time in over three decades. The best way to maintain trust is to act with integrity.

Let us recap some of the issues that have been raised in the last few weeks. The Integrity Commissioner highlighted issues around the influence of Labor lobbyists. She then had her office allegedly raided by the Premier's Public Service Commission and a laptop taken and wiped. What was on the laptop and who benefited from it being erased from history?

The former state archivist—that is the person responsible for keeping the records—was pressured into changing a report into a minister's use of private email for government business. The report was subsequently released, but sections critical of government ministers were removed. His contract was not renewed. A former senior media adviser was forced out of his job after raising concerns about 'unethical, immoral and at times potentially illegal behaviour'. A former senior policy adviser to the Premier claims he was sacked after raising integrity issues. The former legal services commissioner said that ethical issues he raised on the job were ignored. The former director of the Forensic Disability Service says that she was scapegoated for exposing flaws in the justice system.

The issues raised demonstrate a concerning pattern of behaviour within this government: speak out and you will be pushed out. This government has broken the trust placed in it by the people of Queensland. We do not want a state where public servants are conditioned to hide information that may be damaging for their political masters.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! Member for Miller!

Mr CRISAFULLI: We do not want a state where doors are only open if you hire the right Labor Party aligned lobbyist in a car park. We do not want a government that is more interested in how things look than how they are.

Voters trust elected officials to act honourably. The only honourable thing for the Premier to do is establish a commission of inquiry to get to the bottom of the issues raised by the many current and former whistleblowers. Why? Because a commission of inquiry will provide protection for witnesses and whistleblowers. It is independent of government. It will investigate the Premier and her ministers and their role in it. It has greater powers to obtain evidence. As demonstrated this morning during question time, either the Premier was kept in the dark or she is up to her eyeballs in it. Either way, the truth must come out.

Integrity matters to Queenslanders and it matters to me. When I was elected as opposition leader at the start of this term, I decided that we would not just mirror the roles of the government; I wanted to put integrity front and centre. We named a shadow minister for integrity, who will drive a standard and a culture that we will be proud to put forward to Queenslanders. We named a shadow minister for open data, because if government has the information it belongs to Queenslanders. That will drive the cultural change and the services that people expect. We named a shadow minister for customer service, because we intend to make sure that the people of Queensland are served by their government. It will be a cultural change for the people of Queensland, as opposed to ministers heavying public servants.

I want to read a quote that is particularly relevant this week. It states—

I think there was a very strong evidence out there that the government had stopped listening to the people and when that happens people stop listening to the government.

That quote is from the then opposition leader and now Premier describing the Bligh government. The comments related not to political opponents but to a long-term Labor government in which she sat around the cabinet table—just like now, a government that had trashed transparency; just like now, a government that had trashed integrity; just like now, a government—

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! Pause the clock. Member for Miller, you are on a warning.

Mr CRISAFULLI:—that had trashed transparency; just like now, a government that had trashed integrity and doctored reports to cover up its mates; just like now, a government that had trashed accountability; and, just like now, Queenslanders are waiting to take out the trash of a dodgy, rotten, long-term government.