




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR NANANGO

Record of Proceedings, 30 November 2022

INTEGRITY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

PUBLIC SECTOR BILL

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (3.14 pm): I rise to contribute to the cognate bills before us today. I note that it was the Premier who stood up, I think when she first was elected as Premier, on a platform of openness and transparency. What has happened since then? We are now standing in this House and the opposition and the crossbench are unable to talk at full length because we do not have just one bill on integrity but we have two. They have been made cognate, so that means we do not get 10 minutes to speak on each bill like our community members expect we should have. Where is the openness and the transparency? Where is the integrity in relation to these cognate bills?

That is why it is important that the government hear from the opposition because they come in here and carry on about how bad the Newman years were. Sure, but what about the time we have been in here—seven long years, nearly eight years—under the Palaszczuk government? The arrogance and hubris started from day one. The arrogance is unbelievable when they stand in this chamber with not one bill but two bills resulting from the failures of integrity, the failures of accountability, the failures of openness. We are here debating these bills because the Palaszczuk government has failed on all of those accounts. It is completely unacceptable that the members of the Palaszczuk government do not even understand that. They are still blaming the Newman years for their own faults in the last eight years. The hubris is unbelievable.

I want to talk about some of the comments made in the Coaldrake report, starting with the title *Let the sunshine in*. The Premier stands up and says, 'We are going to implement the recommendations lock, stock and barrel.' Where are we today? We are absolutely nowhere near 'lock, stock and barrel' because that is the Palaszczuk way. We know it has already taken three years since the Bridgman report to get even half of these recommendations implemented. We are here today after the Premier committed to the people of Queensland that she was going to implement the Coaldrake report 'lock, stock and barrel'. Where is the openness now? Where is the transparency now? Where is the accountability now? It is absolutely nowhere to be seen because that is the Palaszczuk way.

Remember that the Coaldrake report is about the Palaszczuk government and the public servants who work hard each and every day on our behalf feel under the Palaszczuk government. This is not about any other governments; this is about the Palaszczuk government. The report findings talk about 'an atmosphere of fear' and 'fear of unwanted career impacts and the loss of employment status for unwelcome advice'.

I do want to give credit to two public servants today who are my aunts—one of whom has passed a way—Ruth and Nora. Both of them started their Public Service career right here in this parliament. They spent their entire careers working in the Public Service. They always told me about frank and fearless advice. That is exactly what the good public servants of this state deserve—that they are able to give frank and fearless advice. When one of the findings says that public servants feel 'pressure from

some ministerial staffers for responses that minimise problems', how on earth can they give frank and fearless advice with that sort of pressure coming from the Palaszczuk government? They cannot. That is why there is a culture of fear under the Palaszczuk government. Those opposite are so arrogant. The hubris is through the roof. They do not understand it. They refuse to listen.

All they yell out is, 'You sacked them!' Start listening to the public servants who are leaving your offices. Start apologising to the public servants who can no longer give frank and fearless advice. Start apologising to the nurses who are looking for support in regional hospitals because the health minister lacks the integrity to stand down. The health minister knows that she has to go. Her time is up. The failures of the health minister cannot go on. If she had any integrity she would do the right thing by the patients, nurses, doctors, administrators, cleaners, security—anyone who works in Queensland Health—and she would resign. That would be ministerial accountability, and Coaldrake said that we need to have ministerial accountability back in this state.

Let's remember another finding: 'discouragement from providing written advice on difficult topics' and 'senior public servants directing employees to sanitise advice and alter recommendations to align with what was presumed to be the Minister's position'. We all remember the sanitisation about the poor kids on remand in watch houses. Do you remember that sanitised report? The member for Bulimba was the Minister for Child Safety. No wonder she keeps getting moved sideways. Goodness me, it is unbelievable.

An opposition member: The member for Maryborough said if they speak out they should be named and shamed.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will take that interjection. It was the member for Maryborough who went on local radio, I believe it was, and said they should be named and shamed. He probably wanted to say 'the minister is completely out of control in her department' as well, but I am not sure he went that far.

There were more findings in the Coaldrake review. Do you remember this one, Mr Deputy Speaker: 'a Director-General taking steps to prevent a report from "reaching the Minister's ears" so as to ensure that the Minister could continue to plausibly deny knowledge of the matter'? We are talking about the Palaszczuk government and a culture of fear inside the Public Service. They deserve to give free, frank and fearless advice, and the member for Clayfield only got halfway through the list.

Since Annastacia Palaszczuk has been the Premier of this great state let's remember how many ministers have had to fall on their sword—which is why the people of Queensland genuinely wish the health minister would do the right thing. Let's remember the minister for agriculture, who decided not to pay her rates bills and then not to tell anyone about it. She had to go. Let's remember the former deputy premier Jackie Trad, the member for South Brisbane. We do not have enough time for her integrity issues.

An opposition member: They had to change the law.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: They had to change the law. The Ministerial Code of Conduct was changed. We had the ski lodge that the now Attorney-General was at. It even had its own private ski lift. We had the principal who was appointed thanks to the deputy premier because the principal who should have got the job was not in the right faction with the deputy premier at the time, or something, so she intervened there. We had mangocube! He went and sat up there in the back corner. We had the Premier who got done for using her own private emails after she told her ministers not to use them for business. Let's not forget that the Premier of this great state, Annastacia Palaszczuk, the member for Inala, was found in contempt of parliament. She is the first and only premier of this nation to be found in contempt of parliament.

I say to the Premier of Queensland: where is the integrity? Where is the accountability? Where is the openness? If the Premier wanted to stand by those words why have these bills been cognated? We cannot even get a decent amount of time to address the issues. I am not even halfway through the issues we need to talk about in relation to the integrity and accountability of this Palaszczuk government. It is about time the Palaszczuk government understands that the people of Queensland deserve better, and so do our hardworking public servants.