

# DENIS NAPHTHINE STEERS PARLIAMENTARY SHIP TOWARDS SHAW



Peter Adamis 11 June 2014

Some day in the future, Victorians will reflect upon this day and say that this day was the day that history was made in Victoria. A day when members of parliament took decisive action to 'enshaw' the credibility and integrity of parliament was strengthened. But are we "Shaw" about this or are we being taken for a swim down by the 'seashaw'. I would like to think that justice was done and it came as no surprise to find that Ken Smith voted with the government to suspend Geoff Shaw for a specified period. Of course it is all political posturing and it is no doubt that Victorians are not taken in by the political rhetoric and point scoring of both sides of the political divide.

Still one has to admire Denis Napthine for steering through this political mess through the stormy seas of controversy and bring the parliamentary ship with flag still proudly flying to the safety of the 'seashaw' so to speak. The reefs were difficult to navigate through, the hidden undercurrents were hard to detect and with a political storm upsetting the parliamentary boat, Denis Napthine at the helm did Victoria proud. Whether Denis Napthine can build upon this piece of good luck remains to be seen and now has the budget amongst other matters to oversee and ensure that the foundations are laid for a successful return of a Liberal Government.

this author would like to see that all parliamentarians undertake an integrity and credibility check to ensure that their own backyard is free of any controversial matters which may embarrass Denis Naphthine and or the Liberal government, thus creating a domino effect which will reduce its campaign for a return of government. One hope that Denis Naphthine uses the Shaw cudgel as a means of bring in into line other members of parliament who may harbour self interest projects or are tainted with matters such as Geoff Shaw. Denis Naphthine does not need scandals, embarrassing matters or anything that will rock a campaign that is demonstrating it has the political rungs on the board to win the next State election.

It just go to show that even when one is on a 'shaw' thing, it's no guarantee that the desired outcome will eventuate. Labor will have to try harder to win the hearts and minds of Victorians because at this stage the current Liberal government which has the rungs on the board should, with all things be equal be returned with a majority. But then again you can never be 'shaw' in such matters.



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## Rebel Victoria MP Geoff Shaw suspended, fined after parliamentary vote

THE AUSTRALIAN JUNE 11, 2014 John Ferguson Victorian Political Editor

REBEL Victorian independent MP Geoff Shaw tonight was hit with the longest suspension from the parliament in a century after lengthy investigations found he rorted his vehicle and fuel allowance. Former speaker Ken Smith backed the Naphthine government on the floor of the parliament at the eleventh hour, ending days of uncertainty about the government's ability to reach the November 29 election.

Mr Smith told the parliament that he would be supporting the government's motion to suspend Mr Shaw for 11 sitting days, fine him more than \$6800 and force a humiliating apology. He told parliament that Labor's plans to expel Mr Shaw were too extreme and could set a dangerous precedent. His decision late today was expected to give the government the numbers on the floor of the parliament to eject Mr Shaw until September 2, when he faces possible expulsion if he does not comply with the conditions of the suspension.

The parliament engaged in a marathon debate where both sides argued stridently that Mr Shaw be punished but Labor wanted an expulsion, which would have triggered a by-election. When Mr Smith spoke to the parliament Labor all but surrendered any chance of their expulsion amendment being successful.

Mr Smith said Labor's expulsion amendment could "lead to political decisions being made on the future of members when the government of either Liberal or Labor have a very decisive majority and decide to expel a member without a good reason". "I shall not be supporting the opposition's motion to expel the member for Frankston from parliament," he told parliament.

Mr Shaw today described the government motion as "a bit harsh" and is believed to have been devastated by the most severe measures sought against an MP in more than a century. He has blamed Premier Denis Naphthine's refusal to reform abortion law as key to his decision last week to stop backing the government. The numbers in the Legislative Assembly are 44 Coalition, 43 Labor and Mr Shaw.

Mr Shaw faced three investigations into the misuse of his parliamentary car and petrol card, having been found by the privileges committee to have allowed the government car to be used for his private commercial gain. Mr Shaw, who quit the Naphthine government in March on the same day as former premier Ted Baillieu was forced from the premiership, has been synonymous with controversy. He told reporters today that he would not be attending the debate because it was "boring".

Mr Shaw remained absent from for the vote after the dinner break. Dr Naphthine said Labor's bid to expel Mr Shaw lacked fairness, justice and an appropriate penalty. He said that if Mr Shaw failed to adhere to the terms of the government's motion, "I would be moving that the member would be expelled from the house". "This motion before the house will ensure that the member for Frankston accepts the serious consequences of his actions," he said.

"It is about appropriate sanctions and sanctions that are enforceable, sanctions that will stick." Labor leader Daniel Andrews said the government was attempting to avoid a by-election. "If anyone in this chamber wants to know why we are held in such low regard by the hard-working people of this great state then look no further than the conduct of the member for Frankston and the Premier's protection of him via this motion," he said.

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/state-politics/rebel-victoria-mp-geoff-shaw-suspended-fined-after-parliamentary-vote/story-e6frgczx-1226951170081>