



# BAILLIEUGATE 9

Peter Adamis 27 July 2014

Politics is not for the faint hearted as some are beginning to find out. The political environment within the Victorian region is such that it could come close to rivalling the intrigues of a Byzantine era and the zealots of a bygone Roman era.

**Political innocence.** An influx of new arrivals to the political scene are being led like lambs to the slaughter believing in the machinations and parasitic concepts and ideas of their political leaders. Many have approached the author advising that since they joined the Liberal party they have been subjected to the influences of political activist factional warriors vying for their support and allegiance. They have all stated that they did not join to become members of factions and only wish to see that the status quo remained in Victoria, by supporting Denis Napthine Government.

**Keeping powder dry.** In all cases the author has advised them to enjoy the political journey and to make their own mind in regarding whom to support and to steer clear of an factions bent on bring about the destruction of the Liberal party and its conservatist values. This is no easy feat as those of the Liberal social left entice the new members with seductive gifts and promises that cannot be kept. Still one must keep ones powder dry in such trying and uncertain times. In any case its common knowledge that powder is often useless if it's too dry and not used occasionally!

**Opposition denials fall on deaf ears.** The opposition for example are denying any connection with the alleged stolen BaillieuGate tape, they are denying any involvement with the emails sent to Liberal Party members and they are denying that they are the cause of causing rifts within the Liberal Party. This however is still too early to tell what the outcome will be as police investigations into the matter it would appear have not been finalised. When the official report is released, one can be sure that there will be some red faces, embarrassed parliamentary colleagues and a den of other iniquitous characters who are currently hiding behind a veil of political respectability.

**State Government on the attack.** The party in Government is now back on the attack, armed with the knowledge that the leaking of the tape had nothing to do with Liberal party members and/or that they had any knowledge of the tape itself. In fact one Minister has gone on to say that Liberal Party members would be sacked if found to be involved. Talking this line of attack is like saying who is calling the kettle black one might think. The same Minister has been quietly preparing his turf in order to create an environment that will cause a leadership challenge in the near future of post election time. This is not a bad thing, but his actions and those of his underlings are playing a risky game of politics that demonstrates not having any life line or brakes when approaching the political abyss.

**One rule for one - one rule for all.** However Victorians must not forget a similar case where according to The Age: "the explosive email cites the case, saying: Mr Baillieu not only insisted that they were sacked, but that they be thrown out of the Liberal Party for disloyalty. The email called on party members to do the same to Mr Baillieu, and kick him out for breaching party rules." Does one rule apply to parliamentary figures, another for the hierarchy and yet another for the members who make up the bulk of the Liberal party? Why is it that the same rule that applied to Geoff Shaw not apply to Ted Baillieu is the question on every bodies lips. Heaven forbid that it does as Ted Baillieu for all his faults is a good bloke but was let down by others who were his advisers and minders.

**Political Role switches.** Methinks that Ted Baillieu will hang on to his position at Hawthorn and I would not be surprised if he steps down as a Minister, resign and pave the way for David Davis to take his seat and provide the platform for a leadership challenge. David Davis is a truly political animal that is a gladiator who normally survives in the arena of second class fighters. This should only come as a surprise to those who fail to see the signs being created by the silent and nefarious characters plotting in the background using the minions and pawns to change the political chessboard and Victorian landscape. With David Davis in the lower house, this will allow Mary Woolridge to be the "Top Dog and the big Kahuna in the Upper House. '

**News Media.** The Age and other news media are keeping their powder dry for the moment, monitoring the political and community environment for opportunities that will provide them with the platform to launch their attacks back upon the lawmakers who profess to be above such negative and guerrilla type shenanigans. Most journalists if not all are a good natured lot and all want to see a level playing field, a stable economy and a secure political environment that mirrors that of the community it is supposed to represent. as such it is not out o the question that these same journalists work long into the night in cultivating and engaging their sources of information in order to bring about and/or expose activities that would be considered nefarious in nature.

**Opposition failed opportunities.** The State opposition according to many believe that they had it in the bag so to speak regarding the upcoming State election, but it would appear that some hot heads against the better judgement of wiser and cooler elders, felt that they could widen the credibility gap by taking advantage of alleged potential rifts within the Liberal party. What the opposition failed to do was to follow u on the leaked tape by concentrating on the people in question rather than denying and withdrawing from the BaillieuGate leaked tape. In doing so they lost many opportunities to strike home the final nail into the political coffin and bury their opponents.

**Cannibalistic witch-hunt.** The Liberals on the other hand went on a ill-conceived witch-hunt which alienated members, supporters and potential new members and in some cases caused undue anxiety by the innumerable insinuations and innuendoes within Liberal party ranks. These poorly -planned cannibalistic investigations have revealed absolutely nothing and much time has been lost in attempting to identify innocent Liberals who have different points of view.

It is the authors view that these are all side shows designed to deflect from the hidden agendas that are being plotted, hatched and subtly carried out by a conglomerate of members of parliament, headed by a Federal Victorian Minister ("Little Napoleon") and aided by his State Minister counterpart, ("Attila the Hun") and a member of the hierarchy (Pinocchio who will not tell a lie). On a personal note, this author is of the belief that not enough focus is being paid to the upcoming state election and that the Victorian public is still an undecided conglomeration of unbelievers.

**Leadership challengers.** One could go on further to state that Victorians should not be surprised if an environment is being created for a leadership challenge and that that challenge will come as surprise to many. In any case whoever is to win the prize of leadership will be tarred with the brush of destabilisation and the finger will ALWAYS be pointed at them when that time comes. No matter how well they dress it up. Therefore Victorians should keep in mind that no leadership challenge is ever successful unless all the stake holders involved have played out their role in accordance with the game plan. There are four contenders, two in the upper house and two in the lower house. One of the challengers if successful will bring about many changes within the Victorian political system that will have long lasting effects and usher in a new era of left wing Liberal Socialism, thus reducing the influence of the right wing conservatist.

**Rival of right wing Conservatism.** Over the past decade the socialist Left wing of the Liberal party has been growing in strength at the expense of an ageing of the right wing conservatist membership. This growing left wing presence has been checked on a number of fronts by the conservatist loyalists and activist who have returned as a result of monitoring the growing danger of extreme left wing activist. New members as indicated above are more susceptible to the Liberal left wing seductive promises and political handouts than those who have had the benefit of political experience and hindsight. Although all alleged factions are keeping their powder dry, it will not be long before an explosion of political storms come battering at our doorstep that will change the course of political history in Victoria.

**Political cloaking.** There are members within the Liberal party who are attempting to use the successful Josh Frydenberg template to win a Federal seat. These same members have been monitored to be hovering like mosquitoes around new members, political influencers, creating alliances and cloaking their real objectives. These same members are also creating waves at a time when such action should be avoided at all costs and should be biding their time. The use of irregular and infantry minor tactics as used by the Defence Force are no match for the skilled political activist and/or operator as the rules of engagement are different. One could say that the best advice is to keep abreast of what is occurring in their particular electorate, work hard by cultivating members, contributing by developing and assisting towards campaigns and sharing the knowledge gained with others whilst at the same time selecting suitable political warriors that can be trusted when the opportunity arises.



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## DANIEL ANDREWS DENIES ALP INTERCEPTED, LEAKED LIBERAL TAPE

THE AUSTRALIAN *JULY 25, 2014* John Ferguson & Pia Akerman

VICTORIAN Opposition Leader Daniel Andrews has threatened legal action over revelations that senior Labor figures may have intercepted and distributed a journalist's off-the-record interview with former premier Ted Baillieu. The Australian understands Labor figures have been linked to passing on information from the Dictaphone, which Sunday Age reporter Farrah Tomazin lost at Labor's state conference in May.

Mr Andrews today said allegations that senior staff from his office and Labor Party chiefs had any involvement were "wrong and defamatory". "The distribution of this recording always has been and always will be an internal matter for the Liberal Party," he said in a statement. "These allegations have been referred to our lawyers."

Planning Minister Matthew Guy said the allegations revealed the true nature of Labor. "It shows the character of the kind of people who could govern the state after November," he told the ABC. "These people's character is bereft of any decency, of any honesty, of any transparency. "That is how Labor would govern Victoria and for all Victorians it should terrify them that these people in the Labor Party could govern Victoria after November."

The Australian has been told the recorder was lost and was found by a security guard, despite Fairfax's earlier claims that it was stolen. It is believed police understand the recorder was then improperly interfered with and the information, which detailed a bitter attack by Mr Baillieu against several of his colleagues, was widely leaked. There is no suggestion Mr Andrews was aware of wrongdoing by any Labor member.

Victorian ALP secretary Noah Carroll last night denied Labor involvement: "The Victorian ALP categorically rejects any suggestion that it was involved in the theft of any Dictaphone or the distribution of the contents of any Dictaphone." If it is proven Labor or anyone close to Mr Andrews was directly involved in disseminating the recording without the reporter's approval it could have disastrous consequences for Mr Andrews ahead of the November 29 poll.

The recording was sent last month to hundreds of Liberal Party email addresses, prompting senior Liberals to lash out at "rats" within the Liberal ranks. The Baillieu conversation was revealed at the time of a heated preselection battle and was an unauthorised recording of what was meant to be an off-the-record discussion. In it, Mr Baillieu stridently criticised several colleagues and The Australian, alleging a party conspiracy was behind the fallout over the preselection ballot that cost minister Mary Wooldridge her chance to remain in the lower house.

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/state-politics/daniel-andrews-denies-alp-intercepted-leaked-liberal-tape/story-e6frgczx-1227001130819>

## The questions Daniel Andrews refuses to answer

**On Thursday *The Age* submitted these questions to the Opposition Leader:**

"We are publishing a story in tomorrow's paper on the alleged theft of a dictaphone owned by Farrah Tomazin by senior members of the ALP. We understand you are aware of this issue.

**1** Were any members of your staff ever in possession of a conversation with Ted Baillieu from a dictaphone owned by Farrah Tomazin and/or recordings contained on the dictaphone before some of its contents were released via email to Liberal Party members on June 24?

**2** We understand that (staff members named) received the details of that conversation and could be parties to its further distribution. What action do you propose to take against them?

**3** When did you become aware that senior Victorian Labor Party officials took possession of the dictaphone following the state Labor conference?

**4** Are you aware of how a private recording on the dictaphone came to be publicly released? Were members of your staff involved? Were you involved?

**5** Are you aware that the ALP sought legal advice on releasing the contents of the dictaphone?

**6** Were you aware that the dictaphone was removed from a lost property box after the Labor state conference and listened to by Labor party officials and members of your staff?"

***The Age* also submitted a similar series of questions to ALP staff members and officials. It received only this response, from ALP state secretary Noah Carroll:**

"The Victorian ALP categorically rejects any suggestion that it was involved in the theft of any dictaphone or the distribution of the contents of any dictaphone. As this matter is currently being investigated, we shall not be making any further public comment.

I wish to advise you that this is the collective response of all of the individuals that you have sent similar questions to this afternoon on this matter."



## ALP THE GUILTY PARTY

July 25, 2014 Josh Gordon and Farrah Tomazin

Senior staff from Opposition Leader Daniel Andrews' office and Labor Party chiefs were involved in the theft of a journalist's recording device as part of a dirty tricks campaign to destabilise the Napthine Government.

*The Age* can reveal that a dictaphone belonging to *Sunday Age* political editor Farrah Tomazin was handed in to lost property by security at Labor's state conference in May, before it was obtained and listened to by one of the top officials in Victorian Labor ranks.

The dictaphone contained a private conversation between Tomazin and former Liberal premier Ted Baillieu in which he was critical of colleagues.

More than a month later a link to the conversation, now posted online, was emailed to hundreds of Liberal Party members by a person claiming to be a Liberal Party member - using a false name.

It is understood that copies of the taped conversation were made by a senior Labor official and scrutinised by others in the party's organisational wing, as well as senior strategists in Mr Andrews' office.

The group is believed to have debated whether the recording could be released publicly to fuel tensions in the Liberal Party ahead of the November 29 state election.

The senior ALP official who first listened to the dictaphone decided not to release its contents after seeking legal advice.

Despite this - and against his wishes - a recording made its way to a third party, before it was released to hundreds of Liberal members and MPs on June 24.

*The Age* is aware of the identities of the people involved but at this stage has chosen not to name them. Those believed to be involved were asked a series of questions about when they came into possession of the dictaphone or its contents, whether they listened to it, and whether they had any role in its dissemination.

*The Age* also asked Mr Andrews whether he was aware any members of his staff were involved. All individuals declined to comment, but state secretary Noah Carroll did not deny that the contents of the dictaphone had been listened to by senior Labor officials and members of Mr Andrews' staff. "The Victorian ALP categorically rejects any suggestion that it was involved in the theft of any Dictaphone or the distribution of the contents of any Dictaphone," he said in a statement.

"As this matter is currently being investigated, we shall not be making any further public comment. I wish to advise you that this is the collective response of all of the individuals that you have sent similar questions to this afternoon on this matter." Under section 11 of Victoria's Surveillance Devices Act it is a crime carrying a maximum two-year jail term to knowingly distribute a recording of a private conversation between other parties without their consent, unless it is in the public interest. It is also regarded as theft not to return property to its rightful owner.

The retrieval of the recording device by security staff from the Moonee Valley Racing Club is captured on CCTV footage, which has now been viewed by *The Age*. The footage shows Tomazin sitting on a chair around 11am on May 17 - the first day of Labor's two-day conference. As she gets up to leave, the device slips out from between a notebook and conference papers onto the seat. Moments later, two security guards see the device and one of them eventually goes upstairs to hand it in.

The alleged criminal behaviour and dirty tricks by senior figures in the Victorian party raise tough questions for Mr Andrews just four months from the November 29 state election. While the Liberal Party has been conducting an investigation into how membership details were accessed, amid suspicions that agitators from the Liberal Party's hard-right were responsible after being provided with a recording of the conversation, Labor has previously claimed to have nothing to do with the dictaphone.

"This is a completely internal Liberal Party matter. Completely internal to the Liberal Party. I want to be very clear about that," Mr Andrews said in June. *Age* editor in chief Andrew Holden said: "At this stage we have chosen not to name the individuals involved in order to protect the identity of our sources. The information is completely trustworthy. However, there is a clear public interest in the moral and legal standards of those who seek to have a significant role in the government of Victoria.

"Accordingly, we call on the Leader of the Opposition to identify all those who were involved in this matter, to explain what disciplinary actions he will take against them, and to reassure the public of Victoria that he had no knowledge of this illegal activity."

**What they said.** "What should the penalty now be for Mr Baillieu? What about all of the others who have also leaked and been recorded by *The Age*?"

**Email from "Elizabeth McRobert", June 24.** "This is a sideshow. What we are on about is getting on with governing for Victoria."

**Premier Denis Napthine, June 24.** "It shows that Ted is still upset, is still frustrated by a number of his parliamentary colleagues."

**Former premier Jeff Kennett.** "This is a government tearing itself apart." When asked by a reporter if the Labor Party had anything to do with the leaked tape, he replied, "No. We did not."

**Deputy Opposition Leader James Merlino, June 25.** "This is a completely internal Liberal Party matter. Completely internal to the Liberal Party. I want to be very clear about that."

**Opposition Leader Daniel Andrews.** "There is no relevance for me to be involved in these investigations. They are investigations for the Liberal Party, not me, they are not government issues."

**Denis Napthine, June 27.** "Two weeks ago James Merlino denied the Labor Party had any involvement in this issue. Daniel Andrews now needs to explain what was meant by those comments, and does he stand by that denial."

**Planning Minister Matthew Guy, July 6 Q & A What happened to the dictaphone?** The dictaphone was left on a seat at Labor's State Conference and a security guard handed in the tape to lost property. It was then listened to by senior ALP officials and kept at ALP HQ.

**Who emailed the tape of the conversation to Liberal Party members?** Labor officials made copies of the tape, but received legal advice it would be illegal to distribute them. It is unclear who passed a copy to a person with access to Liberal Party records, who distributed it.

**What is happening with the investigation from here?** The Victoria Police are continuing their investigation, with a prospect of theft charges against at least one senior ALP official.

**What did Opposition Leader Daniel Andrews and the Labor Party know?** On June 25, Deputy Opposition Leader James Merlino told reporters that Labor had nothing to do with the release of the conversation.

**What charges could people face over not returning the dictaphone?** Under the Victorian Crimes Act, a person is guilty of theft if he or she "dishonestly appropriates property belonging to another with the intention of permanently depriving the other of it". It can attract a penalty of up to 10 years' imprisonment.

**What charges could people face for distributing the audio from the tape?** Under the Surveillance Devices Act, it is a crime to knowingly distribute a recording of a private conversation without consent, unless it is in the public interest. Offenders could face a maximum of two years in jail.

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/alp-the-guilty-party-20140724-3ciis.html>

## LIBERAL FEARS ON SECRET DONOR BUSINESS

JOHN FERGUSON The Australian Political Editor July 26, 2014

THE Victorian Liberal Party habitually exploits legal loopholes to hide large donors' names from scrutiny, and some members fear it is accepting potentially corrupt donations, according to a secret recording of a meeting that has exposed the party's innermost campaign workings.

*The Weekend Australian* has obtained a recording of Victorian Liberal Party director Damien Mantach revealing intimate details to 30 party members about campaigning and measures to be taken, such as special fighting funds for Melbourne's southeast to counter potential corruption. Mr Mantach spoke openly in the meeting about ways the party exploited the law to ensure many companies and private donors' details were never made public, donating up to the legal disclosure threshold on June 30 and then making a similar donation the next day.

At the meeting he stripped control of the campaign from local members and explained why they had also lost control of their finances. The recording is highly embarrassing for Mr Mantach and the party, has outraged him and is the second time in 17 months that he has been exposed on tape discussing internal matters. In the latest recording, he was critical of what he said had been the historical misuse of funds at Liberal Party headquarters for reasons other than for which the cash was raised.

*The Weekend Australian* can reveal that amid concerns about the legitimacy of fundraising in key electorates and the importance of the area to electoral success, a special campaign director was recently appointed to oversee donations and strategy in Melbourne's outer southeast, which will be central to the November 29 election result. The official, respected Liberal adviser Simon Frost, was appointed to oversee the campaigns in the seat of Cranbourne, being contested by former AFL star Geoff Ablett, and the seat of Narre Warren North, contested by local councillor Amanda Stapledon.

Mr Frost will also play a key role in the seat of Frankston, held by rebel independent Geoff Shaw, in the party's bid to seize back the electorate. During the May meeting in Cranbourne South, about 30km from the CBD, Mr Mantach revealed that the party would splurge more than \$10 million on the state campaign. Mr Mantach was questioned at length about donations and party finances, with the party having taken control of the branches' finances by setting up special fighting funds.

"I can assure you at my age I've got no desire to go to jail," Mr Mantach said when questioned about election funding. However, he revealed how the party allowed donors to avoid being named by paying a large sum over a 24-hour period — up to double the amount allowed for non-disclosure — at the end and start of the financial year. This, he said, was within the law. "Now, if someone wanted to give, let's say a \$20,000 donation and they want to do it anonymously, well at the moment it would have to be disclosed," he said. "But, for example, we have a lot of people who give us a donation for \$10,000 on the 30th of June and a \$10,000 (donation) on the first of July and they fall under the disclosure limit."



He said this fell within the law. "A lot of companies do that and a lot of individuals do that." *The Weekend Australian* has been told there was "great uncertainty" about fundraising in the Cranbourne electorate and questions about where the money was coming from, specifically in relation to property development. One key concern was the potential for conflicts of interest regarding Mr Ablett, who is a councillor. Mr Ablett did not respond to calls.

Ms Stapledon said she was "absolutely" confident her donations were above board. Mr Mantach told the party function that because Mr Ablett and Ms Stapledon were councillors, special measures were needed to ensure that they could be protected from allegations of corruption. *The Weekend Australian* understands the party has been forced to conduct an extensive investigation into fundraising to ensure no laws were broken after receiving a series of complaints and warnings from members.

Mr Mantach took the highly unusual step of asking the audience at the function to inform him of any concerns about possible wrongdoing. He assured them that "we'll do things ethically, legally and in full compliance". Underpinning the extent to which the Liberal Party in Victoria is cashed up, Mr Mantach told the gathering that extra staff were being hired to contest the marginal Labor seats and that money — via offices and extra staff — would be provided to the regional cities of Ballarat, Geelong and Bendigo.

Former premier Ted Baillieu referred his then chief of staff Tony Nutt and Mr Mantach to the Independent Broad-Based Anti-Corruption Commission in March last year after a secret recording was released showing them offering the former ministerial adviser Tristan Weston money and help to find a new job after he had to quit. Mr Baillieu resigned as premier two days later but IBAC did not pursue Mr Nutt, Mr Mantach or Mr Weston.

Mr Mantach said in a statement yesterday he had held wide-ranging discussions at the meeting. "It was impressed upon all attendees of the need to be united and work hard to demonstrate the strong agenda the Napthine government has for this region," he said. "Fundraising was discussed at length and it was made clear to all attendees that the party always fully complies with the rules governing disclosure. It is extremely disappointing that a bitter, disaffected local individual has chosen to record and leak discussions from this meeting.

"Notwithstanding this pathetic attempt at undermining, the party is very focused on our campaigns in the area and excellent work by our candidates." A spokesman for the Australian Electoral Commission said it administered the provisions of the Commonwealth Electoral Act in relation to financial disclosure. Under the disclosure threshold, a maximum of \$12,800 can be donated between July 1 this year and June 30 next year and \$12,400 for the previous financial year. This would mean that \$25,200 could be donated in 24 hours and be exempt from disclosure.

<https://plus.google.com/106210093180875476946>



## VICTORIAN LABOR LEADER DANIEL ANDREWS ACCUSED OF BEING 'DECEPTIVE AND TRICKY' OVER TAPE SCANDAL

July 26, 2014     Henrietta Cook  
*State Political Reporter at The Age*

**Tape theft claims 'wrong, defamatory.'** On Friday in regional Victoria, Daniel Andrews was repeatedly quizzed on the theft of a Fairfax journalist's dictaphone, the opposition leader repeatedly responding that the claims were wrong. Opposition Leader Daniel Andrews has been accused of being "deceptive and tricky" following revelations on Saturday that his chief-of-staff listened to a secretive recording from a journalist's missing dictaphone.

As Labor went into hiding on Saturday and refused to front the media, a fired up Planning Minister Matthew Guy called on Mr Andrews to answer questions about his involvement in the tapes scandal. It follows explosive revelations in *The Age* on Friday that a senior ALP official took *Sunday Age* political editor Farrah Tomazin's dictaphone after security staff handed it into lost property at Labor's state conference in May and the device was brought back to the party's Dockland headquarters.

On Saturday, the *Herald Sun* said the Opposition Leader's chief-of-staff, John McLindon listened to the sensitive recording before it was distributed by Liberals. A sensitive, private and off-the-record conversation in which former premier Ted Baillieu criticised some of his colleagues was then copied and scrutinised by a small group of senior state Labor figures. *The Age* has chosen to not name the figures at this stage. It was handed on to a third party, and emailed to hundreds of Liberal Party members and MPs last month.

Mr Guy said the tape scandal raised serious questions about whether Mr Andrews and his deputy James Merlino were lying. "Two months ago, Labor leader Daniel Andrews and his deputy James Merlino came out and categorically said Labor had absolutely nothing to do with this stolen tape scandal. Now we see revelations that Labor's most senior staff member in Victoria is being accused of being right in the middle of this scandal," Mr Guy said.

Mr Guy said he did not have any new information on the Liberal Party's involvement in the distribution of the private conversation. He said Liberal Party members linked to the saga would have their membership revoked. "If there are matters for branch members, they will answer, and if some of those are in the Liberal Party, they won't be for too much longer." He said he thought former premier Ted Baillieu was rightfully, "very angry and upset".

"He is entitled, like everyone, to have a private conversation with a journalist, and not have that listened to, distributed, or legal advice sought, by other people," Mr Guy said. Mr Guy said Mr Andrews needed to answer whether his chief-of-staff had seen the party's legal advice about releasing the conversation. "There are so many questions that remain unanswered by Daniel Andrews and the Labor Party." "If Labor look deceptive and tricky, it's probably because they are.

And that's why Victorians have a right to keep on asking Daniel Andrews, are you being truthful with Victorians on this matter?" He said the fact that Labor had sought legal advice contradicted comments made by Mr Andrews that the party had nothing to do with the matter. "This issue goes to the heart of Daniel Andrews' credibility." On Friday, Mr Andrews denied any involvement in the distribution of the conversation. He said the allegations were wrong, defamatory and threatened legal action against *The Age* over its article. "I don't accept for a moment that any of my staff are implicated in this," Mr Andrews said.

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/victorian-labor-leader-daniel-andrews-accused-of-being-deceptive-and-tricky-over-tape-scandal-20140726-zx4jl.html#ixzz38eUat8GA>

## **DIRTY WORK REVEALS A SPECIAL KIND OF HATRED**

Josh Gordon Date: 25/06/2014 The Age

There is a special kind of hatred in politics. It is not the predictable hatred political operatives feel towards opponents on the other side of the political divide. It is the deep, toxic, personal hatred members of political parties reserve for their own kind. Usually it roils away beneath the surface; all too often it boils over. Whoever it was that nefariously obtained a dictaphone, illegally accessed the Liberal database and emailed a recording of a private conversation between Sunday Age journalist Farrah Tomazin and former premier Ted Baillieu was clearly so blinded by factional hatred they were prepared to inflict significant damage on their own party. Five months out from the state election, Denis Napthine desperately needs to reclaim the political agenda after years of controversy, including leaked recordings, an internal plot to overthrow former police commissioner Simon Overland and months of parliamentary chaos linked to the Shaw saga.

This week Napthine tried to demonstrate his government was getting on with "governing for all Victorians" with new laws allowing police to confiscate the assets of drug traffickers. But once again he was thwarted by his own party. One theory in Liberal circles is that there is a small but active group of disgruntled Liberals who are conducting a guerilla-style campaign to destabilise the government. The objective of this crack squad of right-wing commandos is to induce a loss for the Coalition to clear the way for promotions, fresh blood and a new conservative agenda after the November 29 election, sources say. Loopy though this may sound, the undermining has been so persistent and severe you have to start to wonder if such theories are credible.

The recorded conversation between former premier Baillieu and journalist Tomazin is hardly extraordinary in terms of content. In it Baillieu is mildly critical of some of his parliamentary colleagues. Big deal. Indeed, since stepping down as premier in March last year after effectively being knifed by his own colleagues, Baillieu has been restrained and disciplined. What is extraordinary is that someone, or a group of people, is prepared to go to such extraordinary lengths - including possible theft of a recording device and using an internal database - to destabilise the party. You have to feel sorry for Napthine. Right now the worst enemy he has is not the Labor Party but his own colleagues who seem intent on thwarting the government's re-election chances.

## Coalition crisis

October 2011

A report from the now-defunct Office of Police Integrity accuses Tristan Weston, former adviser to police minister Peter Ryan, of leaking confidential information to the media in order to undermine then police chief commissioner Simon Overland.

Mr Weston is forced to resign and Benambra MP Bill Tilley is forced to stand down as parliamentary secretary for police after being implicated in the plot.

May 2012

It is revealed that then Liberal Frankston MP Geoff Shaw misused his taxpayer funded car and fuel card to run his hardware business. This was later backed up by an Ombudsman's report, which suggested the matter be referred to Parliaments Privileges Committee.

March 2013

Secretly recorded conversations reveal Mr Baillieu's chief of staff, Tony Nutt, offered help to disgraced former staffer Mr Weston to find new employment.

Mr Shaw quits the parliamentary Liberal party to become an independent, placing him in a balance-of-power position. He hits out at Mr Baillieu's leadership. Later that day, Ted Baillieu resigns as premier.

September 2013

Charges laid and later dropped by the Director of Public Prosecutions against Mr Shaw for abusing his taxpayer funded car and fuel card. Mr Shaw says the saga is a waste of time and public money.

February 2014

Liberal speaker Ken Smith is forced to stand down after Mr Shaw declares he has degraded the Parliament and no longer has his confidence.

June 2014

Mr Shaw threatens to support a vote of no confidence in the government but is instead suspended from Parliament for 11 sitting days for misusing his taxpayer-funded car.

Private conversation involving Baillieu leaked to Liberal Party members.

[http://newsstore.theage.com.au/apps/viewDocument.ac?page=1&sy=age&kw=LIBERAL+&pb=all\\_ffx&dt=selectRange&dr=6months&so=relevance&sf=text&sf=headline&rc=10&rm=200&sp=nrm&clsPage=1&docID=AGE140625KR1HN1L5R49](http://newsstore.theage.com.au/apps/viewDocument.ac?page=1&sy=age&kw=LIBERAL+&pb=all_ffx&dt=selectRange&dr=6months&so=relevance&sf=text&sf=headline&rc=10&rm=200&sp=nrm&clsPage=1&docID=AGE140625KR1HN1L5R49)

## STOLEN TAPE EXPOSES LIB RIFTS

Mark Hawthorne, Richard Willingham 25/06/2014 The Age

Bitter ructions in the Victorian Liberal Party have been thrust into the spotlight, distracting from Premier Denis Naphine's efforts to seize control of the political agenda. On Tuesday morning an email featuring a recording of a private conversation between former premier Ted Baillieu and a Sunday Age journalist was sent to Liberal Party members in Victoria. The Liberal Party has launched an investigation to discover who may have illegally accessed a computer database and emailed members - which was sent from an Elizabeth McRobert, who the Liberal Party says is not a member.

In the recording, Mr Baillieu is critical of parliamentary colleagues, including upper house MP Bernie Finn and rogue Frankston MP Geoff Shaw. Mr Baillieu speaks of Mr Finn and his "crazy mates" pushing Mr Shaw on several issues.

Following the suspension of Mr Shaw from Parliament earlier this month, the Naphine government has moved to recapture the political agenda focusing on law and order and spruiking a series of new tough-on-crime laws. But the email has again made public divisions within the state Liberal Party, forcing the Premier to field questions on the latest round of infighting. "This is a sideshow. What we are on about is getting on with governing for Victoria," Dr Naphine said. He said all questions regarding the tape should be directed to Mr Baillieu.

Fairfax Media believes the private conversation was taken from the tape recorder of The Sunday Age's state political editor, Farrah Tomazin, which was stolen just after the state budget in May. The Liberal Party does not yet know who - if anyone - accessed its database and sent the email. "It is unclear who is responsible for the distribution of the material but we note that Fairfax Media is seeking legal advice over the matter and stolen recording devices," state director Damian Mantach said. Mr Mantach and a colleague were summoned to the Premier's office just after 10am on Tuesday, where they met the Premier's key advisers and were asked to explain how the email addresses were obtained.

The release of the tape has renewed calls from some within the Liberal Party for Mr Baillieu to retire from politics, which would free up the prized seat of Hawthorn for a fresh face. Mr Baillieu did not wish to comment on Tuesday. Party sources said the email was sent from a Gmail account and used an American-based email proxy service called Mail Chimp to avoid junk mail and spam filters. "Everyone on our database has received the email, which is a concern," said one party insider.

The editor-in-chief of The Age, Andrew Holden, said he was "appalled by the defamatory claims made in the email and rejects them totally". "Our reporters do not take part in the internal matters of political parties and we always respect confidentiality of information and sources," Holden said. The email also alleges that the tape recording was released by The Age state political editor Josh Gordon last week, after a private conversation with a person in the Liberal Party. "I strenuously deny the allegations," Gordon said.

"At no stage have I ever been privy to or had access to the private conversations of my friend and colleague Farrah Tomazin. I did not contact anyone last week to discuss internal party matters and I certainly did not email any private conversations to anyone in the Liberal Party," he said. The Age has reported the theft to the police. In a case of history repeating for the Liberal Party, the email also references the last major breach of the party's computer policies back in 2008. Two Liberals working for the party started an anonymous blog, hewhostandsfornothing.blogspot.com, which was devoted to undermining Mr Baillieu when he was Victorian opposition leader.

The blog referred to Mr Baillieu as "Red Ted" and accused him of being too far "left" for a Liberal Party leader. An investigation ordered by Mr Baillieu traced the blog to two staffers at Liberal Party headquarters in Melbourne, Simon Morgan and John Osborn. Both were sacked. Tuesday's explosive email cites the case, saying: "Mr Baillieu not only insisted that they were sacked, but that they be thrown out of the Liberal Party for disloyalty." The email called on party members to do the same to Mr Baillieu, and kick him out for breaching party rules.

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