BAILLIEUGATE 14

Peter Adamis 11 August 2014

We are approaching mid August and yet nothing has been brought to light regarding and independent forensic report by the Liberals into the alleged involvement of Liberal Party members in the BaillieuGate leaked tape affair.

Broad church Therefore we are disappointed to find that recent revelations are not in the interests of the broad church that some call the Liberal party and that "selfies" are the order of the day. Those currently in leadership positions are not leading by example and creating an environment of conciliation. Suffice to say, people are tight lipped and are considering their options regarding their future involvement with the party. It is also a sad day for all those who believe in Australian values and a fair crack of the whip. See attached for further reading.

Wrong management decisions. I am of the belief that Liberal party candidates have been hauled into the Secretariat and advised that their social media comments are being monitored and that any comments that are deemed inappropriate, not in the best interests of the Liberal party and outside the parameters of what society deems acceptable. If this is the case one can view it into ways: One that it is a precaution being taken by the Liberal Party to ensure no further demonstrations of inappropriate comments are brought to the notice of the media and the other is that there is a purge against right wing conservatist. Whatever the case may be, both are flawed in their approach and the manner in which they have been delivered.

Errors and skeletons of the past. Furthermore, the matter of Aaron Lane and Jack Lyons would have been handled in a far more sympathetic and compassionate manner by advising and counselling both members that their comments are not conducive to the interests of the party and do not reflect Liberal party ideologies and philosophies. In addition they could have been counselled that they would be placed on notice and should they continue, their services would no longer be required. Using this methodology and management would have sent a powerful message out to al Liberal party members.

To err is human to forgive is divine. If only this was true in life, then I would not be writing about the errors of those who are representing us and the poor reporting and subsequent mediocre management of such recalcitrant members. To be sure that there are ministers at the Federal and State level who at one point in time either before entering parliament and/or since being in parliament to have erred using social media and as well as their personal inappropriate behaviour. Some of these ministers who have misused their position to obtain favours of one kind or another have evaded public backlash and when they are exposed. One hopes that the new generation of ministers will not be tarred with the same brush.

Has Tony Snell gone too far. Having stated the above, members are questioning whether Tony Snell gone too far and if it's time for him to reconsider his quest for another year as President. Unfortunately this is not the path that the Liberal party hierarchy have taken and it is a poor reflection on Tony Snell and his management team the Administrative Committee. There are some within the Liberal Party that are questioning the path he has taken and are of the belief that he alone has been responsible for alienating members. In addition members are concerned by his close associations with the left wing of the Liberal Party, his management of the administrative committee handling of the BaillieuGate tape affair and the alleged hounding and purging the Liberal party of members.

Unity versus disunity. Members believe that Tony Snell should rise above internal politics and preach unity rather than creating an environment of disunity and targeting those with right wing conservatist views who may differ or disagree with him. If Tony Snell cannot be a leader who can be unbiased, impartial and above such petty politics, some members believe that there only one thing for Tony Snell and his management team to do and that is to resign. From my point of view, I believe that Tony Snell and his management team should be concentrating on the State election, not alienating members and be given the opportunity to remain for another year as President. After all there is no other identifiable member within the party that has the expertise to lead the party into the future.

Balance of power minister (s). Looking back upon the recent BaillieuGate leaked tape and the lack of disciplinary and/or counselling action on the part of Denis Napthine towards Ministers and parliamentary colleagues is a sign of weakness and demonstrates that he alone does not hold the balance of power to remain in the top job. Methinks that should he have taken disciplinary action or even counselling of certain members, the government would have fallen and thus it placed him in the inevitable ironic state of a being between a rock and a hard place. This unknown minister or parliamentary colleague who controls the balance of power is holding the Denis Napthine government to ransom, appears to hold a grudge against a number of members.

Power struggle. This power struggle and breaking the gridlock can only be resolved by resignation, public exposure, that worst still be humiliated. Therefore one can assume that Denis Napthine is attempting to place Liberal candidates in electorates that are loyal to him and him alone. Although unity in leadership is a good principle and strategy, politically it can also create an environment of elitism and old boys club that is not conducive to long term relationships. The Post Victorian state election will be a good starting point for any changes to occur, but much can be achieved by the laying political environmental foundations now. Allegiances, alliances will be subject to who will be successful at the polls. I will go on record to state that a Denis Napthine Government will be returned with unexpected results at the next State election.

Are political mentors to blame. In recent years we have started to see a rise in young Liberals and their counterparts the young Labor and Green members cutting their teeth at university clubs each being advised that they are the elite, the future of their respective parties, Australia's future and they are the best of the best. Those of the new generation who are gullible enough and naive into believing every word that their political mentors preach are doomed to find that life on the political trail is not what it is being painted to appear. It s well

known that some Federal Ministers and Senators are tied to and associated with selected University clubs, Leadership programs, sporting clubs and cultural communities. It is also well known that they sue such organisations to identify, recruit and make unrealistic promises to those seeking a political journey in life.

Divide, conquer and control. Many are given their first job in working on a part time basis in the electoral offices and finding that life was not as glamorous as they once thought. Some of these young hopeful in wanting to lease their mentor become involved in activities that attracts negative responses and places them in positions that are not to their liking or to their long term political career objectives. Their negative activities on social media programs, their activities on the spread of misinformation, their activities on monitoring other young Liberal and creating unwarranted character assassinations, all of which are designed to discredit one of their own. What is of interest is that the political mentors do not want unity amongst the young Liberals and such are content to use divide and conquer principles as a mean of control These political mentors have much to answer for. See attached for further reading.

Planning Minister under fire. according to media reports the popular Minister for planning is under fire for the manner in which the department under his portfolio umbrella is in being criticised regarding the master plan for a future high-rise residential region which is being hailed Australia's most significant urban renewal project. It appears the master plan may cost taxpayers in excess of $340 million in a number of planning blunders that involve rezoning of land, potential blow out costs for tax payers, Bolte bridge roundabouts, car parks and primary school near a brothel are but some of the alleged blunders that have been criticised by blasted by planning experts, residents and businesses. See attached for further reading.

Federal Treasurer under pressure. Poor old Joe Hockey is being pressured to cut his losses regarding his budget which to some appear t be draconian and harsh. A budget that was not welcomed by the majority of Australian despite the many assurance and explanations being provided by Joe Hockey and his colleagues. It is unfortunate that Australians have not understood that the thrust of the budget was a short term pain for long term gain and prosperity. It must be difficult to swallow ones pride and to scale back a budget that was in the interests of Australian economic security, but one has to be pragmatic and run with the wolves in order to survive in the political arena. See attached for further reading.

Health Minister Under fire. The Health Minister David Davis who prior to the last state election announced Victoria would gain 800 new public hospital beds is being criticised for falling short of his expectations and according to media reports. There some confusion over the definition of what constitutes a bed, the methodology used and the lack of transparency. For example, it would appear that the definition of beds also includes chairs, people's own beds at home and beds external to hospitals. This is just not good enough and the Health Minister needs to take a closer examination of his department in order that funds are being spent for the benefit of the tax payer. See attached for further reading.

Federal Minister supports Prime Minister over 18C and Budget. It was left up to that young and aspiring Federal Minister Christopher Pyne to praise the Prime Minister, Tony abbot's leadership call over the shelving of any changes to the Racial Discrimination act.

Christopher Pyne appears to becoming the minister responsible for explaining further to the Australian public in a language that all Australians understand without the political rhetoric. In fact he is on record for explaining the reasons for the budget and the requirement for some changes being made in order to get through the Senate. Does this mean that Christopher Pyne is being groomed for additional responsibilities in the future. See attached for further reading.

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SCANDALS SEND LABOR AND LIBERALS INTO DAMAGE CONTROL FOR VICTORIAN ELECTIONS

Gay Alcorn The guardian.com, Tuesday 5 August 2014. Victorian opposition leader Daniel Andrews' staff are expected to be interviewed by police over a journalist's missing Dictaphone. Photograph: Julian Smith/AAP

Two Liberal candidates pull out with less than four months to go and Labor staff are set to be interviewed by police. With less than four months until the Victorian election, both major parties are embroiled in messy problems of their own making. The Liberals are demanding all their candidates identify any private social media accounts and Labor is bracing for police interviews of some of its most senior staffers over a journalist's stolen Dictaphone.

The way parties vet candidates in the social media age is under scrutiny after Denis Napthine's Liberal government suffered a second candidate resigning in less than a week. Jack Lyons, the endorsed candidate for the marginal seat of Bendigo West, stood down after crude, racist and sexist comments on his Facebook page emerged. Liberal party spokesman Andrew Cox told Guardian Australia party officials had called all candidates on Monday night to emphasise that any private social media accounts needed to be disclosed.

The party "goes fairly deep" in its due diligence, requesting that candidates disclose anything that may be embarrassing and checking publicly available sources including social media accounts. Cox said Wednesday's meeting was a regular candidates briefing, but there would be "strong discussion about these matters". The posts on Lyons' private Facebook page – which the party said were made "some years" before he joined the Liberal Party – included one saying that Bendigo was "needing an enema" and calling the city's Golden Dragon Museum "ching chong gardens".

He wondered to his Facebook friends why Africans living in mud huts were forced to walk "5 miles every day for water … why not build the fucking huts closing to the fucking water?" Lyons suggested that a good line to pick up women was, 'Hey, does this rag smell like

chloroform to you," a reference to date rape. The comments were made on his private account – open only to people the user added as a "friend" – suggesting that the leak to the Herald Sun may be yet another bizarre example of the "dirty tricks" bedevilling both sides of politics.

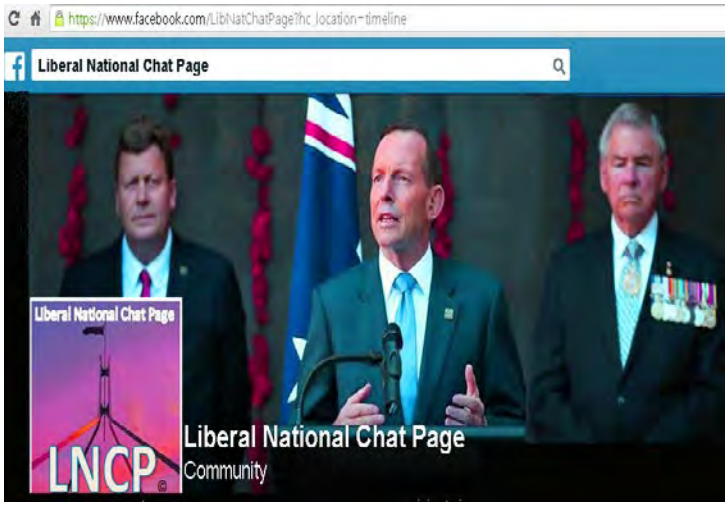
The newspaper reported that Lyons had at first defended his Facebook posts, including one where he described women's hair as a "part of the blur above where her tits are". "They're jokes, mate. I can't help what's there. I hope I haven't offended anyone," he reportedly said. By Tuesday, Lyons' Facebook and website had been shut down. His LinkedIn profile said the project manager at Lyons Constructions earthmoving was a "passionate Bendigonian from country Victoria with a view to see Bendigo and the surrounding regions prosper".

Lyons is the son of Bendigo mayor Barry Lyons, who released a statement saying he and his wife, Betty, were "disappointed and devastated". The embarrassment follows the withdrawal of another Liberal candidate, Aaron Lane, last week over comments on a closed Twitter account posted before he was preselected earlier this year. The former Young Liberal president and fellow at the libertarian Institute of Public Affairs used the term "faggots" and said that "the problem is (IMO) many homos make their sexuality a defining aspect of their being." He stood down as a candidate for an upper house seat.

Labor faces an ongoing shemozzle of its own, with police due to interview senior members of opposition leader Daniel Andrews' staff as part of their investigation into a Sunday Age journalist's mislaid Dictaphone. A private conversation between the journalist and former premier Ted Baillieu was emailed to Liberal members in June. Labor assistant secretary Kosmos Samaras, state secretary Noah Carroll and Andrews' chief of staff John McLindon have admitted to listening to the tape after it was lost at Labor's state conference. It insists all copies and the Dictaphone itself were destroyed, and denies that anyone from Labor passed it on.

Lawyers have said the conduct could amount to theft, as the Dictaphone was not returned to its owner. The Age reported that members of the Premier's office have discussed whether the matter should be referred Victoria's corruption fighting body, Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission. The election will be held on November 29.

http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/05/scandals-send-labor-liberals-damage-control-victorian-elections



Another Blow to Labor

Liberal National Chat Page - Face book 6 August 2014.

the Liberal National Chat page on Face book advises that: Tapegate worsens for Labor Victoria's Daniel Andrews with fresh evidence a Labor candidate knew about the tape.

Ros Spence happens to be married to Kosmos Samaras who admitted to listening to & destroying the tape. 'Opposition leader Daniel Andrews has been dealt another blow over the Baillieu tape scandal amid fresh revelations one of his election candidates knew about the private recording before it was publicly released. Despite Mr Andrews saying he was told only three Labor figures knew of the recording before its June 24 release, The Age can reveal that Ros Spence, who works at ALP Victorian headquarters and is running for the safe seat of Yuroke at the November election, also knew about the missing device.'

https://www.facebook.com/LibNatChatPage?fref=nf

LABOR CANDIDATE ROS SPENCE KNEW ABOUT BAILLIEU TAPE

August 6, 2014 Richard Willingham and Henrietta Cook. Labor candidate for Yuroke, Ros Spence. *Photo: Darren Howe.* Opposition leader Daniel Andrews has been dealt another blow over the Baillieu tape scandal amid fresh revelations one of his election candidates knew about the private recording before it was publicly released.

Despite Mr Andrews saying he was told only three Labor figures knew of the recording before its June 24 release, *The Age* can reveal that Ros Spence, who works at ALP Victorian headquarters and is running for the safe seat of Yuroke at the November election, also knew about the missing device. *The Age* can also reveal that the Premier's office discussed whether the allegations surrounding the behaviour of staff working in Mr Andrews' office could be referred to Victoria's corruption fighting body.

Another blow for Labor leader Daniel Andrews. *Photo: Justin McManus.* Some Liberal staff said allegations concerning the dictaphone scandal - which involve public servants working in Mr Andrews' office - should be referred to the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission because they involved possible serious corruption or an indictable offence.

The dictaphone was handed into lost property by security at the Labor state conference in May before it was taken to the party's Dockland headquarters. A private conversation on the device between *Sunday Age* State Political Editor Farrah Tomazin and former premier Ted Baillieu, who criticised some of his Liberal colleagues, was emailed to hundreds of Liberal members. Ms Spence on Tuesday confirmed she was aware of the audio, but could not comment any further because the matter was being investigated by police.

Ms Spence is the wife of Kosmos Samaras, who is Labor's assistant state secretary and who admitted to listening to Tomazin's dictaphone after it was handed in at the conference. Mr Samaras, ALP Victorian secretary Noah Carroll and Opposition Leader Daniel Andrews' chief of staff, John McLindon, have admitted to listening to the tape before Mr Samaras destroyed it. They sought legal advice about distributing the audio but deny sharing the information. Mr Andrews and the trio have said they do not know how the audio was distributed.

The Labor leader has also said he is confident that only the three, as well as his press secretary Chris Reilly, knew of the tape's existence. Last week Mr Carroll refused to answer a direct question from *The Age* about how many Labor members and staff listened to the audio before it was made public on June 24. He referred *The Age* to a previous statement, in which he said he listened to the recording with Mr McLindon and Mr Samaras.

The revelations come as police prepare to interview members of Mr Andrews' staff. Planning Minister Matthew Guy said Labor could not be trusted and called on Mr Andrews to reveal who else listened and knew about the recording. "Daniel Andrews' excuses are falling apart before our eyes. This issue will not go away for Daniel Andrews. It will not go away for Labor." Mr Guy said Labor's story did not add up and changed from week to week.

"If [Victorians] can't get a story straight from Labor on an issue as straightforward as this then how can they govern the state?" He said the Liberal party would have a further look at whether the matter could be referred to IBAC. "We have had a base look [at it] but obviously we will go back further and have a look at what might be able to be referred."

The Liberal Party wrote to Victoria Police last week offering to fully co-operate with their investigation into the dictaphone scandal and have vowed to cancel the memberships of any members involved. Forensic auditors have helped the Liberal Party with their own internal investigation into the scandal, which has probed computer systems to try and find out who accessed member databases. Mr Carroll has been contacted for comment.

http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/labor-candidate-ros-spence-knew-about-baillieu-tape-20140805-100mzv.html#ixzz39Ykyt4P7

LIBERAL CANDIDATE IN VICTORIA RESIGNS OVER OFFENSIVE FACEBOOK POSTS

Australian Associated Press theguardian.com, Tuesday 5 August 2014

Jack Lyons is the party's second candidate for November state election to step down over social media posts. Jack Lyons defended his posts on Facebook, saying they were jokes and he hoped they did not offend anyone. A Liberal candidate at November's Victorian election has quit after party officials were told of offensive posts on his Facebook page.
Jack Lyons was standing for the marginal seat of Bendigo West. The former publican defended the comments, saying they were jokes and he hoped they did not offend anyone, News Limited reported.

In a statement, Liberal party state director Damien Mantach said Lyons had withdrawn his candidacy. His comments were written as jokes and were posted in a closed Facebook page some years before he became a member of the Liberal party, Mantach told News Limited. Lyons was unavailable for comment on Monday night. He is the second Liberal candidate to resign over social media posts. Aaron Lane was the endorsed Liberal candidate for the

upper house seat of Western Region for the November 29 election when he resigned last week over a series of crude tweets.

http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/05/liberal-candidate-in-victoria-resigns-over-offensive-facebook-posts

CUT YOUR LOSSES ON BUDGET, PETER COSTELLO URGES JOE HOCKEY

August 11, 2014. Facing pressure to reboot his unpopular budget: Treasurer Joe Hockey. Photo: Andrew Meares. Joe Hockey has been urged to reboot his budget and scrap the unpopular $7 GP co-payment, with former Liberal treasurer Peter Costello saying governments have to cut their losses.

The Treasurer is struggling to convince crossbenchers to back his budget, with key measures such as the Medicare co-payment and welfare changes facing defeat. Mr Costello said the Coalition should "reboot the whole argument" by bringing forward the next intergenerational report, which highlights long-term pressures on government spending.

"Sooner or later you have to cut losses": Peter Costello. Getty Images. It should also dump measures unlikely to pass the Senate, he said. "Sooner or later you have to cut losses," he told the Ten Network on Sunday. "The $7 co-payment … it's just not going to happen, so let's move on."

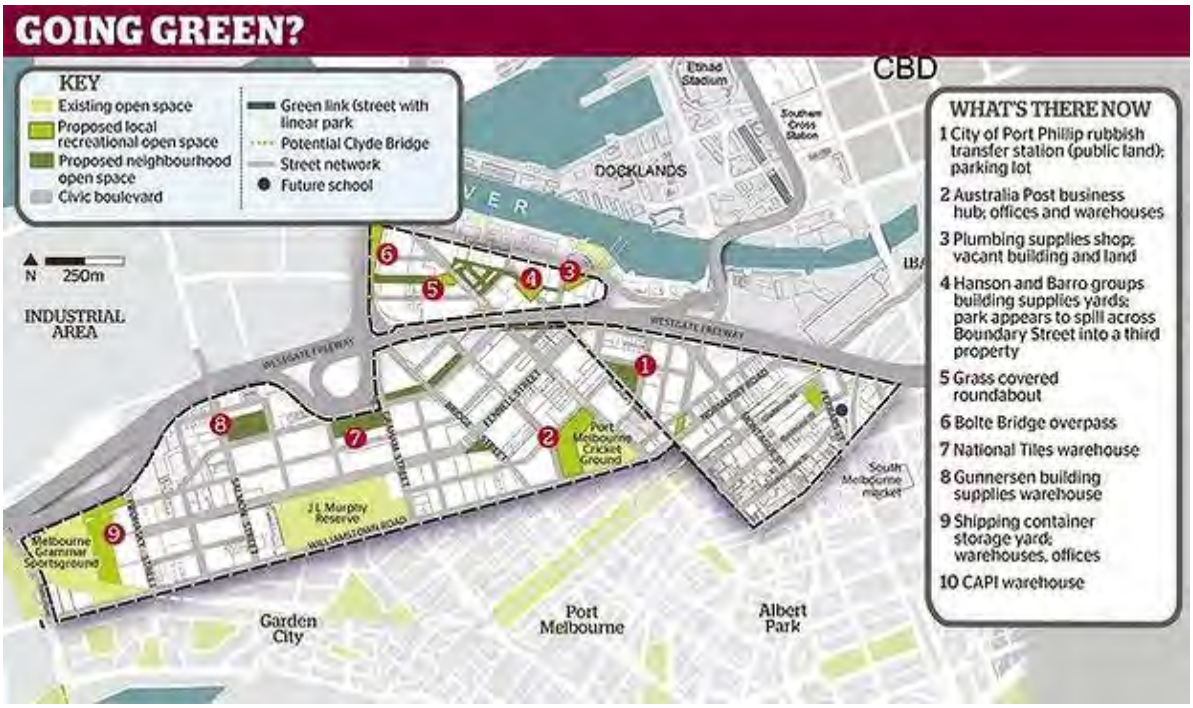
Mr Costello rebuked Mr Hockey for complaining that business had not adequately backed his budget. "There is no point blaming business … he's got to get it through, it's his responsibility," he said. Mr Costello's advice came as crossbencher John Madigan questioned whether Mr Hockey has empathy for those that would be hit hardest by the unpopular budget.

Mr Hockey met with the Democratic Labour Party senator on Thursday as part of his campaign to woo the crossbench. But Senator Madigan on Sunday said he still believed the budget will exacerbate social problems like domestic violence, vandalism and drug and alcohol abuse. "I wonder how much empathy he's got for those people who are going to be hit hard by this budget," Senator Madigan told ABC TV. Education Minister Christopher Pyne appeared to criticise the approach to budget negotiations taken by some colleagues. "Any minister who goes to the Senate with a package and says it's either this or nothing is essentially daring the Senate to vote down their whole package," he told Sky News.

http://www.smh.com.au/national/cut-your-losses-on-budget-peter-costello-urges-joe-hockey-20140810-3dgnd.html

GOVERNMENT FACES $340 MILLION BILL OVER PLANNING BLUNDER

August 10, 2014 Chris Vedelago and Clay Lucas



More than 90 per cent of the space the government has earmarked for parks is privately owned. The state government could be forced to spend up to $340 million buying private land to turn into public parks at vastly inflated prices in light of a major planning blunder in the new inner city suburb of Fishermans Bend. *The Sunday Age* can reveal the government's decision to re-zone 250 hectares of industrial land in Port Melbourne and South Melbourne before creating parks and open spaces has doubled or tripled its value virtually overnight, raising the spectre of a blow-out in costs for taxpayers.

Other controversial moves include designating land under the Bolte Bridge and a busy traffic roundabout as "recreational space", as well as locating a new park and primary school near a brothel.

The decisions have been blasted by planning experts, residents and businesses, with one claiming the Napthine government's parks strategy for Fishermans Bend appears to have been created by "magic trick".

Last month, Planning Minister Matthew Guy released a master plan for the future high-rise residential precinct, which it has billed as the "most significant urban renewal project" in the country.

The document promises a dozen new parks and "green links" to ensure nearly all 80,000 anticipated residents will be within walking distance of public open spaces.

But a *Sunday Age* investigation has found the plan will depend on buying properties from businesses, land owners and developers who stand to reap a windfall as a result of the re-zoning. More than 90 per cent of the space the government has earmarked for parks is privately owned – an area more than five times the size of the MCG. Port Phillip Council has confirmed the value of land in the area doubled or even tripled after the precinct was rezoned from industrial to Capital City in 2012. The reason why the rezoning was done ahead of creating a formal strategy for Fishermans Bend "is a question for Minister Guy", one senior council officer said.

Illustration: Matt Golding. Mr Guy did not respond to a list of questions submitted to his office. Opposition leader Daniel Andrews said on Sunday that the Fishermans Bend rezoning process had been ''botched from start to finish'' because even land needed for parks had now ''been zoned at the highest and best value''.

''Because of Matthew Guy having botched this from start to finish, this may well cost taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars,'' Mr Andrews said. ''It's much like the Ventnor debacle, and much like most things that Matthew Guy touches.''

Developers have been jockeying to get into the precinct ahead of the rezoning and the release of the planning strategy in anticipation of a massive spike in prices. Mark Wizel, a director of commercial real estate agency CBRE, estimates the Fishermans Bend park sites could collectively be worth $340 million or more based on their current "development potential". "Mainland Chinese development companies in particular seem to have a very strong level of interest for suitable development opportunities within Fishermans Bend with specific interest in the Lorimer and Salmon Street precincts," he said.

The spiralling cost of buying land to transform into parks could force a blow-out in the estimated $1.3 billion that needs to be spent on new infrastructure for the suburb, which is expected to be largely covered by a "developer contribution levy". Helen Halliday, convener of community group the Fishermans Bend Network, said the government's strategy was "incoherent" for failing to confirm in advance "fundamental issues" like locating and acquiring land for parks. "To negotiate with landowners down there, they should have started off that process before they rezoned it, not after," she said. "They could have said let's do a collaboration and we can rezone this part of the land if you give us that part of it for parks."

Questions are also being raised about the fairness and effectiveness of the planning process after the Napthine government failed to consult with businesses and land owners whose properties have been unilaterally earmarked as future parks. More than a dozen major land holders and businesses – including Australia Post – are among those whose properties were "painted green" in the master plan, some of whom were taken completely by surprise.

"We were told nothing. When the plans came out we couldn't work out where on the map our building was. It had disappeared," one long-time business operator said. "They didn't even

have the courtesy of putting a dotted line suggesting there was a real business here. It was just gone – like a magic trick."

Entrepreneur Pitzy Folk, who built a distribution warehouse for his CAPI drinks business in South Melbourne, said he has never been formally notified by the government that his land had been designated as a park. "We're probably the first cab off the rank in terms of a property the government would have to buy but I've heard nothing. I have no issue selling as long as I get fair market value. But they've basically destroyed the open market doing this." Mr Folk submitted plans to develop the property into apartments about nine months ago but has received no decision from the government about his application. "All I know is that they have painted my land green on their map. I'm in limbo."

It's the latest in a series of controversies to erupt over the government's plans for Fishermans Bend, where height limits for new apartment towers are "discretionary". The government has also said the highest towers will be in the part of Fishermans Bend dubbed "Montague" because of its plan to ditch the long-promised "Melbourne Metro" under Parkville and the central city, and instead build the "Melbourne Rail Link" from Southern Cross via Montague to South Yarra. But the Fishermans Bend strategy released last week also failed to identify a precise route and local station for the Melbourne Rail Link, instead designating a large chunk of South Melbourne as a "rail investigation area".

One senior transport bureaucrat said much of the public service was still in the dark more than six months after the idea was first floated. "We still don't know where any of it is going – we are still working on how we get it under the West Gate, let along Fishermans Bend," they said. For parks designated on private land, the Fishermans Bend strategy states: "These locations are indicative only. While it is desirable to create open spaces as shown, final positions are to be negotiated through the development contributions and [planning] processes." However, land acquisitions will be inevitable as less than 10 per cent of the planned parks and open spaces are located on publicly owned land. Developers are required to set aside only 8 per cent of a site as open space under the plan.

http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/government-faces-340-million-bill-over-planning-blunder-20140809-1027o9.html

ANMF VIC BRANCH ENDORSES PUBLIC HOSPITAL BED COUNT

10 August 2014 ANMFVIC

Minister David Davis. Let me be absolutely crystal clear here. The beds are being delivered; more than 500 beds have been so far delivered to the end of last financial year, and we're almost to the end of this financial year and there will be even more beds delivered at that point. So your figures are flat wrong and in fact the AIHW figures show a significant increase in bed numbers under this government.

Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation. Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation (Victorian Branch) Secretary Lisa Fitzpatrick has applauded the announcement of an independent census of the state's hospitals beds. Victorian Labor Leader Daniel Andrews said today that, upon being elected premier in November, he would appoint former AMA President Dr Doug Travis to conduct a two-stage independent bed census in 2015. A lack of

beds places inordinate stress on Victoria's hospitals and has a domino effect throughout emergency rooms, on waiting lists and elective surgery times.

Ms Fitzpatrick said there is a severe lack of transparency with regard to bed numbers in the public hospital system. 'This announcement represents a new and honest approach to Victoria's bed shortage crisis,' Ms Fitzpatrick said. 'Our own numbers have revealed an acute bed shortage in our public health system and this contributes to emergency department chaos, violence and dangerous ambulance ramping outside our hospitals.

Bed closure. Ms Fitzpatrick said beds close without notice or public record. They can remain physically in wards but unoccupied due to a lack of funding or disappear entirely from the hospitals. Alarmingly, the definition of a bed under the Napthine Government now includes chairs, trolleys and beds external to hospitals in the patients' own homes. 'We have evidence that shows that beds are being replaced by chairs and patients are being treated in hallways,' Ms Fitzpatrick said. 'The Napthine Government has shown a complete lack of transparency on bed numbers and their definition of beds also includes chairs and people's own beds at home.

'Prior to the last election Health Minister David Davis announced Victoria would gain 800 new public hospital beds, however by our most generous count he is still well short of that mark. 'At our Annual Delegates Conference in July, Mr Davis dismissed one of our members for asking about the promised 800 beds and he assured every nurse and midwife in the room that 500 of those beds had been delivered by the end of the last financial year.

'That is simply untrue. Even his own department's numbers used by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare in April this year said the government had added just 43 beds to Victoria's tally. 'That figure also included existing beds considered 'new' as part of the Albury Hospital merger with Wodonga Hospital, thereby generously inflating the new bed figures.' At the 26 June ANMF (Vic Branch) delegates' conference, Mr Davis offered the following response to a delegate's question on beds: Additionally, the state government's bed shortfall does not take into account a 2014 ANMF (Victorian Branch) bed audit which revealed that 1,116 existing beds were unavailable for use and a further 101 beds were closed.

Ms Fitzpatrick said she would welcome the findings of a 2015 bed audit. 'We believe Mr Andrews's bed census will put an end to the duplicity and spin around the number of available hospital beds to Victorians,' Ms Fitzpatrick said. 'It will move to end the confusion and offer a solution to the many issues our health system is currently struggling with. 'There should be nothing to hide. It's time we learned the truth. Only then can we discover a solution to the problem. 'Chairs are not beds and never have been.'

http://www.anmfvic.asn.au/news/44710.html

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION LAWS CHRISTOPHER PYNE SAYS GOVERNMENT DESERVES PRAISE FOR LISTENING TO PUBLIC ON 18C

Sunday 10 August 2014

Christopher Pyne says the Government responded to public opinion on the racial discrimination laws.(AAP: Nikki Short, file)

The Government should be praised for listening to public opinion and dropping changes to the Racial Discrimination Act, Cabinet Minister Christopher Pyne says. The Government had wanted to lift the ban on offending, insulting or humiliating people based on racial grounds. Last week, Prime Minister Tony Abbott announced the changes were off the table because they caused a "needless complication" to the Government's proposed national security changes.

Mr Pyne has told Sky News the majority of public feedback was against changing section 18C. "It became perfectly obvious to the Government that there was limited community support for changing section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act," he said. "What governments do is they produce an exposure draft for legislation that they think might well be controversial, they then go through a process of public consultation. "That's exactly what we've done and we've listened to the Australian public. We should be getting a tick for listening rather than being criticised for changing our course."

ABC Fact Check tracks the Government's promise to repeal section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act. Crossbench Senator Bob Day has indicated that he plans to revive the proposal to change section 18Cby introducing a private senator's bill when Parliament resumes later this month. Senator Day said on Saturday he believes free speech should be protected.

"Someone has to defend free speech. I think it's the basis of our society and democracy that people should be free to say what they think and allow others then to determine," he said. "A person should not be taken to court because someone says 'I was offended by what you said'." Indigenous politicians Ken Wyatt and Nova Peris welcomed the Prime Minister's back down, but members of the Opposition and the Greens say they are not convinced they have seen the last attempt to change race hate laws. "I think the Abbott Government has just put the watering down of hate speech laws in the top drawer," Opposition Leader Bill Shorten told reporters in Canberra last week. Deputy Greens leader Adam Bandt suggested the changes are "only dead and buried for as long as the public pressure keeps up".

http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-08-10/pyne-says-govt-deserve-praise-for-dropping-racial-law-changes/5660962

MISOGYNIST RANTS FROM YOUNG LIBS

August 10, 2014 Henrietta Cook and Farrah Tomazin. 'Social media is a very, very tricky game for people' according to Dr Lauren Rosewarne. Young Liberals at one of the country's most elite universities have posted racist, crude and misogynist comments on social media, describing women as "sluts", Muslims as "degenerates" and saying all feminists are ugly.

Only days after two Liberal candidates were forced to quit ahead of November's state election over a series of derogatory posts on Facebook and Twitter, the party has been rocked again by offensive behaviour in its ranks. In a series of screenshots of Facebook messages leaked to Fairfax Media, the Melbourne University Liberal Club members attack feminist and alumni Germaine Greer, take aim at homosexuality, and repeatedly demean women.

Club treasurer Stefan Eracleous describes Ms Greer as a "lying f---ing c-m guzzling slut ... and a union member". "She doesn't believe in God. No kids not married ... what do you [e]xpect from a melb uni educated former socialist c---," he wrote. He also refers to London as "the gay capital of the world" and appears to hit out at Muslims, telling a friend: "Just be careful of those mussrats. A lot of them are [a] bunch of Third World degenerate c---s." The club's vice-president, Charlie Cartney, said in a Facebook message in January that a venue was "definitely worth a visit" because it had a Mexican restaurant and an upstairs bar with "lots of sluts", saying in another post: "Get some sluts for me."

Other members of the group referred to former prime minister Julia Gillard as a "twat" and said "Tara Moss should only be on TV if she is in a bikini". The posts are another embarrassing blow for the Liberals - surfacing days after party chiefs warned MPs and candidates to act appropriately on social media - and have fuelled Labor's claims of a broader cultural problem within Liberal ranks. The Young Liberals and university Liberal clubs often are seen as a starting point for people interested in politics, with Melbourne University alumni including state treasurer Michael O'Brien, federal senator Scott Ryan and federal Higgins MP Kelly O'Dwyer.

The Melbourne University Liberal Club's Facebook page also shows members campaigning for the state election with candidates and MPs, including Attorney-General Robert Clark and backbenchers Clem Newton-Brown and Neil Angus. Club president Michael Sabljak said he was not aware of the comments until The Sunday Age contacted him because they were not on an official Melbourne University Liberal forum, but denied the club had a homophobic, sexist or misogynistic culture.

Mr Eracleous refused to provide any comment despite being contacted by The Sunday Age a number of times. Mr Cartney said he was not prepared to provide a response without evidence. Despite being given the relevant material, he still had not commented. The revelations follow the resignation of two Liberal candidates for the state election in recent days over offensive social media posts. Bendigo West candidate Jack Lyons quit last week after it was revealed he wrote dozens of offensive Facebook posts, including racist comments about people from China and Africa.

Former Young Liberals president Aaron Lane, who had been endorsed as the party's candidate for Western Region in the upper house, resigned the previous week after he was exposed for tweeting a barrage of crude comments which included the derogatory term "faggot". Dr Lauren Rosewarne, a senior lecturer at Melbourne University's school of social and political sciences, said it was impossible for the Liberal Party to control its message in the era of social media.

"Social media is a very, very tricky game for people who haven't been trained in media and communications," Dr Rosewarne said. She said nothing was private on social media and if candidates or clubs aligned with the party went "off message or rogue", the party was

responsible for reining them in. "It's really damaging to the political party brand." State director Damien Mantach declined to comment.

http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/misogynist-rants-from-young-libs-20140809-3dfhw.html

AS ELECTION LOOMS PARTIES SEEK FRESH APPROACH

August 10, 2014 Farrah Tomazin *The Sunday Age's state political editor.* Young guns: (left to right) Stephanie Ryan, Neil Pharaoh, Ellen Sandell, Sean Armistead.

In the electoral battleground of Euroa, about 160 clicks north-east of Melbourne, the Nationals' youngest candidate, Stephanie Ryan, is causing quite a stir. Party elders are talking her up as the face of the future; one to watch; a rising star - should she be lucky enough to win a seat at this year's poll. Whatever the outcome in November, there's no doubt the 28-year-old is emblematic of a shift in state politics as each side tries to modernise and broaden its base.

Inside the Nationals - where the average age of its frontbench is 54, and 12 of 13 MPs are men - the transition is significant. Until now, women were traditionally involved at the grassroots level, but only one, retiring former minister Jeanette Powell, was elected to State Parliament. This year, for the first time in party history, rank-and-file members preselected three women, all aged under40. It's a generational change many agree is long overdue.

"Our candidates are selected by the membership, so I think what we're seeing is a reflection of shifting attitudes more broadly in regional and rural Victoria," says Ryan, a former journalist and adviser in the Baillieu/Napthine governments. "Most of the party seem really excited by my decision to contest the seat, but women in particular have been incredibly supportive."

Regeneration is hardly a new concept, but in a difficult political climate - compounded by the 24-hour media cycle, the rise of independents and micro-parties and voter fatigue - it's necessary. Parliament, after all, is meant to represent the broader community. At Spring Street, representation looks something like this: of 128 MPs, only 42 are women: 24 from the ALP, 15 Liberals, one Nationals MP and two Greens. The average age of a Labor frontbencher is 48, while for the Liberals it's 50. And cultural diversity? Only 14 per cent of state MPs are foreign-born, compared to 40 per cent of Victorians who are born overseas or have at least one parent born overseas.

The good news is most parties have sought to broaden their pool of candidates this year. In the sand belt seat of Frankston, for instance, the Liberals have selected Sean Armistead, 37, an employment manager at Crown who could end up being the first indigenous state MP if he can oust controversial independent Geoff Shaw. Across town, in the inner-city electorate of Melbourne, the Greens have pinned their hopes of snatching a lower house seat on 29-year-

old Ellen Sandell, who used be a policy adviser for John Brumby's department of premier of cabinet and recently headed a national climate change non-profit organisation.

Back in country Victoria, Edenhope and District Memorial Hospital chief executive Emma Kealy has been preselected in the safe Nationals seat of Lowan, while a few kilometres south-east of the CBD, Labor has also looked beyond its traditionally trade union/lawyer gene pool in picking Neil Pharaoh, a former director at the Foundation for Young Australians.

"Political parties will benefit more if we pool from a broad variety of experiences," says Pharaoh, 30, who spearheaded the campaign to change the ALP's national platform on gay marriage. "It leads to better policy outcomes." Sandell puts it like this: "I think people are crying out for fresh ideas and an independent approach to politics. They don't want political hacks who have to toe the factional line and take voters for granted."

Monash University politics expert Paul Strangio says renewal in the main parties is usually cyclical. "The tendency is … there's a period of renewal, usually when they're in opposition, then they move forward to a period in government, and then once a major party loses there's an exodus," he says. The defeat of the Brumby government in 2010, for instance, saw several of its most experienced hands quit politics - John Brumby, Rob Hulls, Bronwyn Pike, Tim Holding - opening the way for new blood. This year, the retirement of four National MPs ahead of the election - Jeanette Powell, Hugh Delahunty, Bill Sykes and Peter Hall - presented the Nats with a similar opportunity.

"What is interesting in the transition seats is that there has been a change in the members' attitudes in seats like Lowan and Euroa where they have selected dynamic young women to replace the sitting members - something that would not have occurred 10-15 years ago," Nationals state director Jenny Hammett told *The Sunday Age*.

In recent months, the Liberals have begun an internal review to boost female representation, both in its organisational wing and in parliament more broadly. Liberals state director Damien Mantach says that for the past decade, the party has also made a concerted effort to broaden its membership and pool of candidates "by strengthening grassroots engagement into a number of multicultural communities". Back in Frankston, Liberal candidate Sean Armistead says that for parties to flourish, they too must change "to reflect the changing face of Victoria. We need to create an open and inclusive party. People don't just come to you," he says

THE YOUNG GUNS

Stephanie Ryan. 28, Nationals candidate for Euroa. Ryan grew up on a dairy farm, worked as a journalist at the Riverine Herald, and later became a media and policy adviser under the Baillieu/Napthine governments. Deputy Premier Peter Ryan (no relation) describes her as "the future of the Nationals", while former premier Ted Baillieu also endorsed her publicly last week after the Liberals preselected a candidate to run against her. Euroa is notionally held by the Nats with a 13.6 per cent margin, taking in some of the abolished seat of Benalla.

Neil Pharaoh 30, Labor candidate for Prahran. Neil Pharaoh quit his job as director of partnerships at the Foundation for Young Australians in February to stand as a candidate in the seat of Prahran, now held by Liberal Clem Newton-Brown with a margin of 4.7 per cent. As someone who has never been a trade union official, a lawyer or political staffer, Pharaoh's preselection is seen as a welcome step outside Labor's "traditional" gene pool. He helped spearhead the campaign for the ALP to change its national platform on same-sex marriage.

Ellen Sandell 29, Greens candidate for Melbourne. Sandell trained as scientist and began her career as a researcher with the CSIRO. She worked on climate change policy for former Labor premier John Brumby's Department of Premier and Cabinet, and later became the chief executive of a national climate change non-profit organisation. "The old parties are failing to tackle the big issues," she says. "There is an opportunity for the Greens to be in balance of power after the election and get some action on the issues we care about."

Sean Armistead. 37, Liberal candidate for Frankston. Born in Darwin (his mother is a Ngunga Aboriginal woman), Armistead could become the first indigenous person elected to the Victorian Parliament. "You don't do things to try to hit a historical milestone, but if I'm successful, for me it's about breaking ground ... and being able to tell every single Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kid who lives in Victoria that they have a voice." A manager for indigenous programs at Crown, Armistead was raised in Frankston.

http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/as-election-looms-parties-seek-fresh-approach-20140809-3dfj8.html