

LIBERAL EMR GORDIAN KNOT

Peter Adamis Abalinx 9 May 2017



Where does one begin to unravel the Political Gordian knot one may ask? The Gordian Knot is a legend associated with Alexander the Great and used as a metaphor for solving an almost impossible problem and in this case the preselection of candidates for the preselection battle of the Eastern Metropolitan Region.

After considerable behind the scenes battles of wits, innuendoes, secret deals, character assassinations, whisperers and powerful recommendations, wannabee cardinals expecting to be crowned, arrived only to be shattered, demoralized and crucified by an unforgiving audience. Gladys Liu, Srinivasan Vasan and Nick Demiris certainly deserve better treatment, but that's what can occur at times in the political arena.

Questions are arising whether the preselection process is rigged, is the methodology behind the preselection process sound, fair and equitable and should it be about what type of person we want in parliament. The best process that I have ever come across in life in selecting good candidates has been the Military War Office Selection Board (WASB), but then again WASB is not about politics and has no place in the selection of candidates for Parliament. Pity as our current crop of parliamentarians are considered a mediocre bunch and many like Bruce Atkinson should be retiring voluntarily and make way for new blood.

The EMR result does not appear to have surprised some of those of the champagne set and one could say that they are secretly delighted with the result. Whatever the case may be Emanuele Cicchiello, beat both Mr Demiris and Gladys Liu for third place and effectively knocked out Srinivasan Vasan in the process. Mind you, young Cicchiello is a good lad and has been around for quite some time which makes you think of Aesop's tale of the hare and the tortoise, which in this case the tortoise (Chichello) won. I have known young Emanuele for many years and is good to see him persevere and finally make the grade. All that I can say, is good luck Manny.

In unravelling the EMR Political Gordian Knot, we find that the old alligator, Scott Ryan still has teeth despite being battered in recent months by factions growing against him. I give full credit to the alligator and the cake whisperer for their behind the scenes combination of innuendos, character assassinations, secret deals, double crosses and old fashioned face to face communication with delegates. Not only was Matthew Guy shown as being impotent but he was not alone in the destruction of other wannabee power brokers such as Peter Clark, Richard Dalla Riva and Tim Smith. In fact we can go one further and potentially state that Matthew Guy's secret meetings with Tim Smith and Nick Demiris is a good demonstration of either impotency or double cross by Matthew Guy.

To make matters even more interesting, we have to remember that the EMR was a battle for influence, power and control and Bruce Atkinson only won because Inga Peulich was assured she would be safe in her seat. In other words it was a tit for tat type of a preselection where it was reminiscent of a factional tit for tat between Jeff Kennett and Michael Kroger. Back in 1996 Helen Shardy was supported by Jeff Kennett and Peter Katsambanis was supported by Michael Kroger. I remember one of the factional leaders saying "well they got what they wanted and we got what we wanted. I was on the preselection for both and although I did not understand the comments then, it would be later that they would come back as a reminder that factions were in fact involved within Liberal party, no matter what Malcolm Turnbull said to the party faithful at a function in NSW.

Despite Scotch College upbringing, Chinese and Indian sub-continent powerbrokers and members of the political elite, Demiris, Lieu and Vasan should take stock of what has occurred and not be perturbed by the outcome. There is always the western region for those who still believe that they have something to contribute. There is no room for loyalties, no room for backroom deals, character assassinations or standing on the pedestal trying to attract delegates who have now become more politically savvy and will vote according to what they observe, hear and told on the day of the preselection.

Now that the Northern Eastern and southern regions have been sewn up, maybe and just maybe something can be done in the Western region for Demiris, Lieu and Vasan if they are willing to have a go. My guess will be that Demiris will not and that maybe Liu and Vasan have another fling at the golden chalice that has eluded them for so long. Demiris is young and can weather the blow for another encounter in the future or on the other hand use his skills at the organisation level rather than as a parliamentarian. He has the ability and experience to do well as a future State Director.

Despite being overseas, my heart still is in Australia and politics being politics is in my blood no matter where I am located. Good luck to Bruce Atkinson and Emanuele Cicchiello and hope that 2018 is good year for them both and that Matthew Guy achieves his elusive goal of becoming Premier of Victoria. Life as we know it can only be sustained by vigilance and with that vigilance comes responsibility. Let us hope that 2017 and 2018 are good.



Peter Adamis is a Journalist/Social Media Commentator and writer. He is a retired Australian military serviceman and an Industry organisational & Occupational (OHS) & Training Consultant whose interests are within the parameters of domestic and international political spectrum. He is an avid blogger and contributes to domestic and international community news media outlets as well as to local and Ethnic News. He holds a Bachelor of Adult Learning & Development (Monash), Grad Dip Occupational Health & Safety, (Monash), Dip. Training & Assessment, Dip Public Administration, and Dip Frontline Management. Website: abalinx.com Contact via Email: abalinx@gmail.com or via Mobile: 0409965538