

CHECKMATE - ABBOTT VERSUS BISHOP?

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Australians love a battler and that is exactly what Tony abbot is seen by the public. Dont be fooled into believing the media beat-up or the Members of Parliament rhetoric or even to the barbs by other political parties. All have one thing in common and to be there at the 'hanging and downfall' of an Aussie bloke who refuses to give up in the face of adversity. This is the type of bloke that we want to represent us on the world stage and on a domestic front.

It is true he makes the odd gaffe now and then but then again we all do and Tony Abbott is proving to be exactly that. An ordinary bloke who has greatness thrust upon him to lead his party and that of the Australian people. what is likeable about Tony Abbott is that he has the interests of all Australians at heart and will go to great lengths to ensure Australia's interests come first and not the interests and aspirations of a few who have designs on the leadership.

Let us put things into perspective and analyses the past 24 hours and see if we if a projection can be made. At this point in time Australia and the public as a whole need stability, a strong economy and a vision that will create an environment where the current and future generations will benefit from. Tony Abbott is delivering such a platform and it would be foolish to change a stallion with a mare while the race for Australia's economic future is on the line.

Ms Bishop yesterday where she dismissed the question, declaring she had had a "delightful meeting" with Mr Abbott is but a shrewd way of stating the obvious that 'I dont have the numbers yet' and the three men alongside her. She is on record as stating that, "I support the prime minister, I understand the speech he gave today outlined a very positive direction for us, a narrative for us to take to the next election". Again this is code for 'I dont have the numbers and yes his speech was a new direction and yes I will be monitoring him until such time as he falters again"

Ms Bishop is aware that it was a 'make or break' speech at the National Press Club, but use of such language by some Coalition MPs' is also code for we have already made our mind up. At this point MS Bishop does not have the numbers to roll Tony Abbott and being a canny politician herself knows the negative and destabilising effect it would on the public perception of such a move and subsequently be responsible for a one term Coalition government. Ms Bishop is an accomplished and polished member of cabinet and highly thought of by Tony Abbott and it is inconceivable that she would consider challenging the leader. One would think that Ms Bishop would be close enough to Tony Abbott to bring about harmony within the Coalition.

Tony Abbott is in his speech was correct in pointing out that, "when things are difficult, the last thing you want to do is make your difficulties worse". This message was a direct address to his parliamentary colleagues that it was not in their interests to make drastic and unstable changes in midstream. In fact one parliamentary colleague, who initially thought that Tony Abbott should step down, changed his mind after hearing the Prime Minister speak and was pleased to hear the tone and change in the attitude.

TONY Abbott did not waver, did not back down and true to his nature 'shit fronted' those working against him by addressing what was at stake and to think again any moves of working against him. True his style of leadership may rub a few people the wrong way or put people's noses out of joint but then find a Prime minister who has not been accused of the same behaviour.

Mind you this does not mean that Tony Abbott should change overnight or drastically but he is perceptive to know that some of his language and approach could do with some spit and polish. As one media outlet put it succinctly "For a man under siege, the Prime Minister showed no sign of buckling despite the pressure being brought to bear." Tony Abbott isn't going anywhere and as such the coalition should be bearing that in mind when they next meet.

Tony Abbott therefore has the cricket and his colleagues have the ball. All that they need now is a level playing field, identify where they will field their players and get back to running the government and looking after the long term interests of Australians. After all is that not what cricket is all about? During this game of political cricket it will be up to Tony Abbott the "captain" to make the call, inspire the team and work towards winning the test series. Any player who considers that they are worthy of leadership should not disrupt the game midstream because the other side is batting better or that the paying public is not happy with their performance. Stay the course, support the captain and get on with the job of winning.

Despite the odds, the above 'political cricket game" is not as difficult as it may seem. It is only through unity and sheer hard work that any team can win and they must all have confidence in themselves and in the belief that they can win. Distractions such as the Victorian and the Queensland defeats should not rest with Tony Abbott but on those responsible in the respective states for running campaigns that were just not up to the mark. In the case of Victoria, the sole responsibility for losing the election is on the sycophants and recalcitrants who gave the wrong advice. In the case of Queensland, the LNP moved too fast and attempted to change a culture overnight thus alienating the public.

In conclusion, one hopes that sanity prevails and that Tony Abbot can move on from the threat of a leadership challenge and learn from it. Otherwise at the next election a new Coalition leader may emerge who may not be as skilled and/or endowed with the courage that Tony Abbot has as leader. The next few days will certainly be an eye-opener and one hopes that Tony Abbott sees the light and consults more often with his colleagues rather than being an island on his own. Given all that is at stake and for the future of a coalition government going in for a second term; it is this author's prediction is that Tony Abbott will retain the leadership.



Peter Adamis is a Journalist/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. Contact via Email: abalinx@netspace.net.au or via Mobile: 0409965538