

Terry Martin speech

Ladies and gentlemen, to say that last six or seven weeks has been an extraordinary period of my life, I think you'd understand would be a bit of an understatement. If I go back to the beginning of March, I certainly could not have foreseen the events that were to unfold over the next month.

At the same time I suppose my political sixth sense which I suppose comes from 22 years of public office was kind of warning me of a certain inevitability of my political future. And I suppose this came from my increasing frustration, that the Paul Lennon Labor Government, which I was a member of in 2007, was very, very much different from the Jim Bacon Labor Government which I agreed to stand for in 2004.

To me 2 things have changed, firstly despite some great achievements such as the nationally groundbreaking Stolen Generation legislation, which Paul Lennon deserves enormous praise, and I've been very congratulatory in my praise, and very full in my praise of Paul Lennon's leadership on the Stolen Generation. But generally though I've become increasingly frustrated about our priorities in government, and what would seem to be a declining focus on what I believe were the Labor Party core social justice values. Evidenced by in my opinion was our absolutely appalling performance in the provision of affordable housing as just one example. And secondly my ever increasing concern about the way in which the Lennon Government seemingly did business.

The perceived lack of commitment to due process which Jeff has just spoken about in some detail. The seemingly ad hoc decision making that seemed to emanate from the top floor of the executive building rather than the Bacon Government's commitment to achieve the documented strategic vision for Tasmania through a well structured clearly identifiable process.

And then also comparing 07 with 04, we also had what I thought was Jim Bacon's greatest legacy. That was his ability to inspire Tasmanians to bring Tasmanians together and to believe in themselves and believe in the future of Tasmania once again.

Instead, in 2007 what we've seen is a return to the divisive state of government we experienced during the 70s, 80s and 90s. The political philosophy of divide and conquer which inevitably leads to Tasmanians tearing themselves apart. During my political life I've always believed in the philosophy of trying to harness and utilise the massive pool of energy which is out there in the community, in a positive way, rather than negatively.

For example, during my years at Glenorchy. The Glenorchy City Council became the first council in Tasmania to adopt the Community Council model of government. And I don't have time to speak in a lot of detail about that today, but it involves developing a community plan for 50 odd public meetings. A plan which was much more than just a strategic plan for the council, but a guide for how we wanted the community to be in 20 years time. Basically it was written by the people of Glenorchy, with their values and their aims and aspirations for the future. It was a roadmap not just for the council but for all other stakeholders, to lead Glenorchy towards a vision.

And as part of that was the need to empower the community through community participation programmes which involved setting up community precincts throughout the city. The success of that has been quite incredible. Again I don't have to go into it.

My other area of expertise: The tourism industry. I became inaugural president of the new peak body which is gone on to become the Tourism Council of Tasmania back in the mid 90s. What we had was a fragmented industry. It's a unique industry, tourism. You need all those separate components, Transport, accommodation, restaurants, pubs and all of the service industry that comes together. There is no strategic direction. Every time there was a different government. Every time there was a different minister, off we'd go in a different marketing direction. You can't run a business like that, because what was happening was we were constantly going around in circles.

So the solution to that was to develop a protocol agreement between the then State Government under Ray Groom and the industry. What I also went and did was to get the Labor Opposition and the Tasmanian Greens to support the same document. So had tripartite agreement. And out of that came the first strategic plan for any industry in this state which was Tourism 21 which is still in operation today. Set an ambitious target we deliberately set the benchmark high and we made it three years ahead of schedule, despite the sceptics thinking it wasn't achievable.

So what I'm trying say is that my philosophy is not rocket science. Basically in this world we have two types of energy. We have positive and we have negative. It's not rocket science. What I've been all about in my years in public life is trying to harness the collective energy of the community in a positive way.; Work together towards a common goal, rather than the absolute soul destroying negativity of the divide and conquer mentality which unfortunately the norm for most governments today. Why is that? Is it because it's easier for politicians and political advisors to implement?

No I actually think that it's because most politicians underestimate the intelligence of the public and what's happened to me over the last month, the response to my crossing the floor is proof of that. The response has been extraordinary but I'll come back to that.

I've never underestimated the intelligence of the public. And I don't think Jim Bacon did either. His solutions were along the same thinking as me. Tasmanians together. The industry plan, the local government partnership agreements. Everything focussed in a strategic way about bringing people together. That is what I thought I was joining in 2004.

Ladies and gentlemen I'm not intending this to be a eulogy for Jim Bacon, far from it.

What I'm really trying to do is to illustrate the changed philosophy that of the Tasmanian Government of 2004 compared to now in 2007. It comes back to this leadership style. I know the government attack dogs will be sent out again, accusing me of living in the past, of idolising Jim bacon etc. etc. etc.

I'm not. I know Jim's weaknesses. Like all of us he was human being. We've all got weaknesses. I do not hold Jim up on pedestal And I know that Paul Lennon is very touchy on the subject. And quite frankly I sympathise with him. To become premier under the tragic circumstances that he did and into a job he didn't covet. And being compared with your very popular predecessor is certainly a very difficult cross to bear.

But I need to talk about it. Because what I'm talking about is the change in the style of government, the change in the style of leadership. A style of leadership which is of the crash-through mentality. A style of leadership focussed on development no matter what the cost. And whenever you do that, the first victim of this style of government is respect for due process, and all of the things that Jeff was talking about.

And that's what we've been witnessing over the past three years. Am I the only member of the PLP who shares those concerns?. Of course I'm not, and judging by the extraordinary response I've had from the public since crossing the floor there is a huge number of rank and file ALP members who share my concerns, as well as a very broad cross section of the Tasmanian public. I don't intend to go into great detail about the Pulp Mill legislation because we don't have time and because my views and my recent crossing of the floor have both been extensively well covered by the media.

But just briefly to recap, where I came from was 20 years experience in land use planning through a role in Glenorchy City Council. Through that my strong belief in the planning system. The Land Use Planning Act..... it's getting a little bit dated. It could do with a little tuning up around the edges, but it's served the State well. I have enormous confidence in it. I had enormous confidence in the Project of State Significance component of the legislation . I threatened to cross the floor in May .... But with Lyn and Alison on board we got the changes to the conservation zone...legislation for Ralph's Bay . But I never doubted the Project of State Significance process because...as I said to a friend one night, who lives down at Cremorne, it wasn't the fast tracking process which she thought.

There's one of the most rigorous costly, time consuming processes that anyone the state could ever go through. Anything that's gone through the POSS process I would have confidence they are the projects that should go ahead. Because most would not succeed in getting through the process. But I remember at a dinner party down at her house, she said: "But Terry, the Premier has the final say. He can recommend something different to the RPDC." And my response was: "Believe me. No Premier. I can't imagine any circumstances by which a Premier would ever go against the RPDC recommendations and recommend something different to Parliament. Ladies and gentlemen, I've got to say, I might be a little bit wrong, and I don't often admit that I'm wrong but do when I need to.

I first became concerned back in late January early February, when there was media speculation about the pulp mill and the Premier's intentions. So I wrote a letter to the Premier on the 7<sup>th</sup> of February in which I expressed my concerns. I talked about the media speculation and sought clarification from him on what circumstances would prompt the government, or he, to ever recommend something different to the

Parliament from the RPDC recommendations. And I also expressed quite clearly my concerns if that were to happen. At a subsequent meeting he allayed my concerns. Thirty five days later Gunns withdrew from the RPDC process and the rest is history.

My worst fears were realised.

My reasons for believing the new approval process is nowhere near as good as the POSS process: First of all I have no confidence in the guidelines. I don't believe they are world best practice as the Premier keeps saying. There is a deletion of the public hearings. As I've already said that's completely contrary to the whole philosophical belief about the way governments should be. There is a deprivation of appeal rights and legal action, partly addressed by the amendments in the Legislative Council, but still long short of what the legislation should be.

Worst of all. No integrated impact statement. Just an environmental statement, but no social impact study, just a benefit study and not integrated. It's just ridiculous they should approve a pulp mill without the integrated social and economic impact study as part of it. We won't know what the cost to the community is if we approve the pulp mill. No matter what happens now the process is so tainted that there'll be a total lack of public support in the outcome.

I mean how good a job will the decision makers in Parliament do with the decision. Worst of all the whole process we've gone through creates an extraordinary precedent for future development, and to my way of thinking it puts the whole planning system at risk. We've seen over the last 3 years the gradual erosion of planning processes in this state.

The big box development at the airport. Yes it's a federal issue, but it's an anomaly. The airport legislation was never meant to approve this sort of thing, this sort of commercial development. The state government should have lobbied and lobbied and lobbied and lobbied, and fought with the Federal Government for it to go through the normal state processes. But no, development at any cost is the thinking that stopped that. There's a clear need, and it's identified by what's happening in Cambridge, a clear need for regional planning. Yes there are some weaknesses with the process but it's largely a lack of resources that the RPDC has had. I think it's the lack of state policy which LUPA is designed around. We haven't had it. We've only had the two state policies.

In the last sitting week of parliament we saw further erosion of the planning system, with the dam works legislation. Just a little bit. I basically agree with the intent of the bill because of the importance of water in the state, but there are sections which amend the role of RIMPAT, the planning tribunal and the ability to hear appeals that now limits their role to consider procedural matters. This creates an incredible precedent. And as I said in my speech in the chamber, this is a precedent that for the rest of RIMPAT's role in other legislation, they will no longer have the opportunity to give a second opinion about the facts of the decision hearing. For example, no new evidence will be able to be presented. And the planning fraternity in this state is very concerned about the gradual erosion of the planning process, and they seem to be developing a view that from the top of government, and I mean the top, that planning is considered nothing more than an impediment to development.

We can't allow that to continue.

Given my 30 years of business experience, I'm not anti development. No one can accuse me of that. Development is important, jobs are important, but it's not worth selling our soul for. As important as economic and job considerations are, social and environmental factors are equally important. The triple bottom line is critical for society to derive the full benefit of any development. Also in Parliament I spoke about the need for good governance, about ethics and morality in government. And I told the story about an encounter with a taxi driver in Melbourne, where having had a good conversation with him, he asked me: "What do you do mate"? I suddenly found myself embarrassed to have to bloody say I'm a politician. I shouldn't be, I should be proud to be a representative of the people. But like most of my colleagues, from time to time, we are embarrassed. Why? Because of the very things Jeff was talking about. And it's little wonder. You look at the Federal Government, and the Prime Minister who won an election on one of the biggest whoppers ever told in this country.

I mean if it wasn't so tragic for a Prime Minister to lie about kids being thrown overboard, it'd be funny. But it's tragic. He told another big whopper that led this country, this nation of ours that we should be proud of, to be part of the invasion of another country, for the first time in our history. Another whopper. Weapons of mass destruction. Where are they?

And Tasmania, as I said in my speech. I don't know the facts and the rights and the wrongs of all of the sagas, some of which Jeff mentioned, but the reality is that there is a perception amongst the public that there's something wrong. That there's something shonky and that's just not good enough. And the pulp mill is another example on an ever-growing list of crash-through sagas over the last few years. So the response since I crossed the floor has been nothing short of extraordinary. The e-mails, the letters, the cards, the phone calls. The first day, my office was unattended the message bank on the Friday morning had 62 phone messages of support, not one of abuse. I've only had 2 e-mails criticising me. I've had 8 hundred in total. The response from the people in the street, at Salamanca, or Hobart's CBD or the northern CBD or even in Launceston where I wouldn't have thought I'd be recognisable, the response has been extraordinary. But the reason I'm talking about it is, it's been a bit of a journey. Because at first I found it a little bit overwhelming. At first I was quite pleased with it because it gave me some hope for the future.

It told me that people cared, because I bet the top floor of the Executive Building thinks they're all greenies, all the people who're anti pulp mill. They're not. It's not about the pulp mill. Maybe at the most 10 percent of them, but 90 percent think it's about ethics and morality in government, and that gave me some hope. That told me that people cared about those things that I cared about. But over Easter I tried to start responding to some of the e-mails. I started reading them in depth. I felt a bit embarrassed because they were eulogising me. Words like hero and icon and legend.

Hallo, this was a little bit over the top because what I did should not be considered special, It should be the bloody norm. As far as my future goes, as you all know, I'm still a member of the Labor Party and I'm proud to be so, because I still believe in the core social justice values which Jim Bacon articulated in 2002, which was the trigger

for me joining the party. And I just think it's the leadership of the state that's got it wrong, so I'm proud to still be a member of the party, though I'm no longer a member of the State Government. I've had one sitting week as an independent. Believe me I'm going to be a fiercely independent member of the Legislative Council.; And I've found that to be exceptionally invigorating and exceptionally liberating. And I think I'm in a much better position to serve the people of Elwick, as well as the people of Tasmania.

The solutions? Yes we need to fine tune our planning system. I've been doing a lot of work over the last couple of weeks in relation to ITAC or ethics commission. I've had a couple of meetings with Geoff. I've spoken with other similarly interested people and it's my intention to do something through the Legislative Council, but I'm not quite sure what's the best model yet, so I'm working on that.

I think also there needs to be change within the Parliamentary Labor Party. There needs to be a change to the PLP internal process to give backbenchers a say. I wrote to the Premier in September last year telling him exactly....telling him the future is what I did because I told him clearly that if changes I weren't made to the way it was supposed to operate and the dysfunctionality that exists within the Labor Party, if it wasn't changed I would inevitably have to cross the floor if I didn't agree with something I had no opportunity to have input into. That's exactly what happened in this case.

It needs to change. There are some good people in the Labor Party. Good parliamentary members, there are good backbenchers, but they don't have a role. They don't have an opportunity to be part of the decision making process. There also needs to be in the Labor Party a shift away from factions that are controlling the party. And there has to be a greater role for rank and file members. And most importantly of all, it's time for generational change within the Parliamentary Labor Party. There needs to be new style of leadership. We have some great young parliamentary Labor Party members with damn good values, who I know would re-invigorate the Labor Government. They need to be given an opportunity. Some of the PLP members who've been there for 15, 20, 30 years in some cases...time to look in the mirror guys and question yourselves as to whether you can do as good a job as those coming through.

I'd like to take the opportunity to thank the organisers for giving me the opportunity to speak. Thank you.