



LENNON'S CONTEMPT FOR DUE PROCESS BAD NEWS FOR DEMOCRACY AND COASTLINE

CORPORATIONS CALLING THE SHOTS - LACK OF ETHICS AND GOOD GOVERNANCE EXPOSED

Tasmanians who treasure their democracy and their coastline have been let down by too many of their elected state representatives in both Houses of Parliament over the past six weeks.

The champions for community, democratic processes, and the environment in Tasmania's Parliament are worth naming personally. They are Independent MLCs, Jim Wilkinson (Nelson), Kerry Finch (Rosevears), Norma Jamieson (Montgomery), Sue Smith (Mersey) and the now legendary Labor rebel for a cause, Terry Martin (Elwick), and the four Greens' MHAs in the Lower House, Peg Putt (Denison), Nick McKim (Franklin), Kim Booth (Bass), and Tim Morris (Lyons). These members have earned deep gratitude from constituents who share the view that the cash value of major projects does not sweep away good governance and due process.

The emails arrived in a flood

Although he was not required to cast a vote, Legislative Council President, Don Wing, also registered his strong objection to the government's handling of the pulp mill assessment and acknowledged public outrage. "*... in my 25 years in this Parliament almost, I have never seen such an enormous disparity between the representations made on an issue. I think the emails I have would, in imperial terms, be of a height of probably eight to ten inches and probably about ten emails to the contrary ..*" (Hansard, 29 March 2007)

Wider implications

Lennon Labor and the State Liberals in the House of Assembly, as well as four ALP and five independent Members of the Legislative Council (MLCs) voted in support of the *Pulp Mill Assessment Bill 2007*. Their vote has implications for the future of planning assessment in Tasmania. It sidelines the RPDC. If it can be done once, it can be tried again. This is why Save Ralphs Bay Inc. is so concerned, not just for the Ralphs Bay Conservation Area, but for coastal landscapes and communities all over Tasmania.

Eastern Shore MLCs, Lin Thorp (Rumney) whose electorate includes Ralphs Bay, and Allison Ritchie (Pembroke), who is up for re-election on May 5, voted for the fast-track mill Bill. During debate in the Chamber, both sought to reassure the Ralphs Bay community that they would not support the same shoddy process for Ralphs Bay.

Hansard tells the tale. In a two minute contribution to the Bill's Second Reading, the Member for Pembroke said, "*I know that opponents of this bill would argue that they are concerned about the message that is being sent by setting up a process separate to that of the RPDC and I would agree with that proposition if I thought that the planning systems were working as they should be at the present time. However, at this point, I do not have that opinion.*" (Hansard, 29 March)

Promises promises

Rumney MLC, Lin Thorp, appeared to forget what long, unhappy memories we have of promises repeatedly broken. She said, "*I was extremely relieved to get a commitment from the Premier on his own, and through my caucus colleagues on two occasions, that the situation we are facing here with Gunns is unique and that the Walker Corporation proposal, should they choose to go ahead, will go through the very tough processes of the RPDC and that this situation will not occur again.*" (Hansard, 29 March)

You decide ... <http://www.hansard.parliament.tas.gov.au/isysch.htm>

SRB Inc. understands why so many Tasmanians are cynical in the extreme about any assurance Mr Lennon makes.

Fast-track planning approvals for major development projects are no substitute for integrated, scientific and independent assessment which allows for full and open public input. The pulp mill Bill excludes further public and expert evidence from the new state 'approval' process. It sets a terrible precedent. The Lennon Government has demonstrated time and again its collective contempt for proper process and community concern.

STAND UP FOR DEMOCRACY CITY HALL

Monday 30th April @ 12.30 pm

Save Ralphs Bay will be holding a **public forum** on protecting democracy, communities and the environment

- * Hear what **Terry Martin MLC** has to say about ethics and good governance in Tasmania.
- * Find out what the pulp mill **political quick fix** might mean for major project assessments in future.
- * Hear survey results – do the May 5th election MLC candidates back fast-tracking the Walker Corporation project?
- * Does Tasmania need an **Independent Commission against Corruption** or similar body to ensure transparency and accountability in government?

If you think the Lennon Government has gone too far, set aside lunchtime Monday 30 April and stand up for the state of democracy in Tasmania.

RPDC REPORTS ON RALPHS BAY VALUES

Last year, the RPDC started an Inquiry into the establishment of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the Bruny Bioregion, the south-east corner of Tasmania's coastline.

In November, Save Ralphs Bay Inc gave a presentation at the Bruny Bioregion Hearings. We called for a State Reserve encompassing all of Ralphs Bay, which could become a significant educational and tourism focus on the Eastern shore. Our submission to the Hearings (E4) can be seen at "<http://www.rpdc.tas.gov.au>"

The RPDC has recently published its Interim Report on the Bruny Bioregion, which is open for public comment until April 30th. The Interim Report identifies a number of candidate MPAs near Ralphs Bay, and recognises the area for its important Spotted Handfish and shorebird habitat.

SRB Inc encourages supporters to make a personal submission in support of protecting Ralphs Bay. If you agree with our arguments in favour of making the whole of Ralphs Bay a State Reserve, please tell the RPDC!

