

# Lewis' credibility

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## nil: Calder

By OSCAR TAMSEN

The CLP's major fund-raiser and former president, Mr Graeme Lewis, had lost his credibility among the Territory's strong financial supporters before his recent resignation, a CLP life member says.

Former federal MP, Mr Sam Calder, made the claim in his now famous letter to the National Party seeking endorsement for a new party in the Territory.

Written on December 1, the letter to the Nationals' federal

president, Mrs Shirley McKerrow, said a query on the CLP's funds company, Carpenteria, persisted with suspicions of "swift financial footwork".

Mr Calder's communication with the Nationals this week resulted in his suspension from the CLP in moves to "rid the party of National Party sympathisers".

### Election

Mr Calder told Mrs McKerrow of talk that Mr Lewis saw himself as a chief minister-elect and that he would achieve this position after an early election win.

"In order to achieve this, Lewis *et al* have tried to manipulate the CLP branches into each

pre-selecting and presenting two nominations as candidates for the next Territory elections," Mr Calder said.

"This could give Lewis a chance of nomination for two seats held by members of the current party in power."

Mr Calder said that, while still holding the CLP's presidential position, Mr Lewis had nominated against the sitting Legislative Assembly members for Fannie Bay, Mr Marshall Perron, and for Ludmilla, Mr Col Firmin.

He considered both were hard-working back-benchers capable of serious parliamentary representation.

"At the party conference and central council in Alice Springs on August 10, 1986, I told

Lewis if he were re-elected CLP president in the face of Grant Heaslip's nomination, the party would disintegrate.

"I have done nothing to bring this about. It is all Graeme Lewis' own work.

### Voting

"At that crucial election, Lewis threatened Bob Jaensch, the North Darwin CLP president, with regard to voting support for the NT vice-president.

"He (Lewis) also threatened Grant Heaslip who was a candidate — and a most important one — running for president of the party.

"He also pressured me.

"Had Lewis heeded my previous advice not to stand, he need not

have subsequently pressured any of us to support him.

"Without any orchestration from me, there has arisen a very strong groundswell against the CLP. This is of interest in central council."

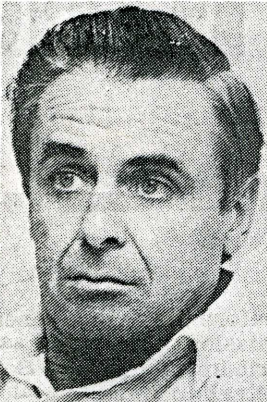
Mr Calder said the Fannie Bay and Ludmilla parliamentary representatives were strongly supported within their own branches.

"There is even a Government party supported assault on the Rick Setter CLP-held seat of Jingili," he said.

"These are the sorts of things which have destroyed the CLP image among its own supporters and have undermined public confidence in the political party as a body which can carry on Government, free from any sinister CLP ... influence."

Mr Calder said he had no intention of seeking political power for himself.

All he wanted was to ensure the Nationals stepped into NT politics to shake the "Conservatives" who had wrecked the party he helped to establish.



Mr Lewis