

Tory Menchshelyi
President
Northern Territory Country Liberal Party
Darwin

Dear Tory,

I hereby formally resign as a member of the Country Liberal Party to take effect immediately.

I have not been active as a party member since returning from the March 2013 trade mission to Tokyo as Chief Minister. Today, after 20 years of membership, and as a life member, I take one final step and end my membership of the CLP.

I do this today because I have decided to contest the next election as an Independent candidate for the Blain electorate.

Nathan Barrett's fall from grace got my attention but it was the state of governance due to the actions of Chief Minister Giles and his supporters in the CLP that I could not ignore.

I have therefore decided to leave my international work and return to Palmerston to offer my services again to the people of Blain and Palmerston. My intention is to help rebuild our community's trust and confidence and to get on with the real work: reducing crime, addressing the cost of living, improving the economy and services such as health.

This for me is like the moral obligation one has to render assistance at the scene of an accident. An accident that was years in the making and involving too many in the CLP. While it is sad to see this once proud party brought so low it is the effect that this descent has had on the NT, its people and its reputation in the Commonwealth and internationally that is almost unforgivable and has demanded from me a response.

This is a time when the people across the Territory need to be brought together to begin to contend with the real everyday challenges resulting from crime and declining social standards. Today we face the very real prospect of a Labor Government elected less on their own merits and capacity than on the rejection of the CLP.

This is a time when the integrity of parliament needs to be built up not torn down. Without sound leadership at the parliamentary level we have little chance as a community to push back against lawlessness and chaos nor respond appropriately to any challenge, social or economic. We need to address not only the issues of how to respond appropriately to those who commit crime, but also be pro-active so that less crime is committed in the first place.

As I said earlier I have not been active in the CLP since 2013 because my family and I needed to recover from the most bruising period of our lives. My precious family, my commitment to the people of Blain and the wider NT community enabled me to endure those dark days.

My decision to withdraw was also out of respect to Australians sickened by the shedding of political blood. I chose to avoid adding further injury to the body politic and remained silent.

Whatever grievances I may have held were personal and not relevant to my decision to resign. I choose to now wash to my hands of these past concerns and focus instead on more important matters free from any obligation to the CLP.

Before doing so I wish to place on the record at this time my respect for the noble service of some fine Territorians within the party whose efforts were admirable but sadly unsuccessful.

While there are a number of loyal workers within the party who have tried valiantly to do the right thing by the Territory there are only four names I will mention at this time: Suzanne Cavanagh, Barry Coulter, Graham Lewis and Shane Stone. Though we have not always seen eye to eye, their service to the Territory through the CLP was conducted honourably and motivated by a love for the Territory. Their legacy will remain.

For who choose to remain in the CLP after the next election I wish you well but I will not be joining you. My energies will be reserved for the task of rebuilding the trust and confidence that our community should have in our political system.

I plan to do this as the independent member for Blain in the next parliament.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terry Mills', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Terry Mills
7 August 2016