

NORTHERN TERRITORY COUNTRY LIBERAL PARTY



14 July, 1987

Mr G. Heaslip
President
N.T. Country Liberal Party
Woods Terrace
DARWIN 5794

Dear Grant,

I am unable to attend today's Management Committee meeting as Josephine is ill and I have other committments in Alice.

Whilst we are all disappointed with Saturday's result we must not allow recriminations and public brawling to cloud our judgement. The inescapable fact is that there has been a major shift in public opinion away from our Government.

Those party members who dismissed the public service demonstrations as inconsequential clearly pointed up their own insensitivity to the electorate. When 2000 parents and teachers meet on a common issue in Alice Springs to condemn the Government of the day there is obviously a problem in the electorate. They were not the "looney left" and they weren't all school teachers - they were mums and dads who don't believe in us anymore (they proved that on Saturday).

We need to put our house in order now. The public bickering must stop. I view with concern that you chose to compound Paul Everinghams inopportune comments by your own remarks on television on Saturday night. Paul Everingham remains the most successful political entity in the Territory. Whilst I do not share his opinion on all matters (including his assessment of Grant Tambling) I respect his political judgement. Paul is not to blame for our electoral loss - it is not a question of fault but rather of lack of judgement.

Speculation of a leadership challenge is yet another symptom of the malaise that besets us. Bob Collins started it and like lemmings to the cliff edge we follow. Statements that there is no leadership challenge only adds to the speculation (shades of "Yes Minister"). Steve is Chief Minister, he is the choice of his colleagues and thats where the matter rests.

The Presidency of the Party is a matter for annual conference. I gave you my total and unequivocal support as President. You have that support for the remainder of your term.

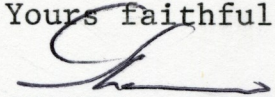
There is within the wider community a deep distrust of our Government and Party fueled by an impression, albiet it false, of

indecision and maladministration. We have a responsibility to put our house in order and get on with the job. Any further public utterances are not in the interests of the Party. Further attacks on Paul Everingham will not be tolerated.

I congratulate Bill Forward on a job well done in the most difficult of circumstances.

Finally, I am of the view that Grant Tambling should sit with the National Party.

Yours faithfully



SHANE L. STONE

VICE PRESIDENT