

# “In Support of Progress” Newsletter

Date: 4 March 2018

## **The State Election** - *aftermath*

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A day after the election, and with over 80% of the vote now counted, all commentators have had something to say, and analysis is everywhere. However, one can now make some preliminary observations – the following 10 may be of interest – see also chart over page.

1 The Liberals won convincingly – they gained over 50% of the primary vote. Starting from a high base, they did not lose much support. In fact in Bass they actually increased it, and they could even win another seat in Bass.

2 Labor increased its support, which now stands at 33%. That is a long way away from 50%. At this stage, it would appear their support rose at the expense of the Greens, as the effect on the Liberal vote was minor. However, they did gain seats. The end result for Labor, given those elected, has been a shift to the left. It was a big ask to seek government with only 5 sitting members re-contesting, and a raw set of candidates – a good campaign but bridge too far!

3 The Greens vote plummeted, and it is likely only one Green will be returned. I believe the reason is two-fold.

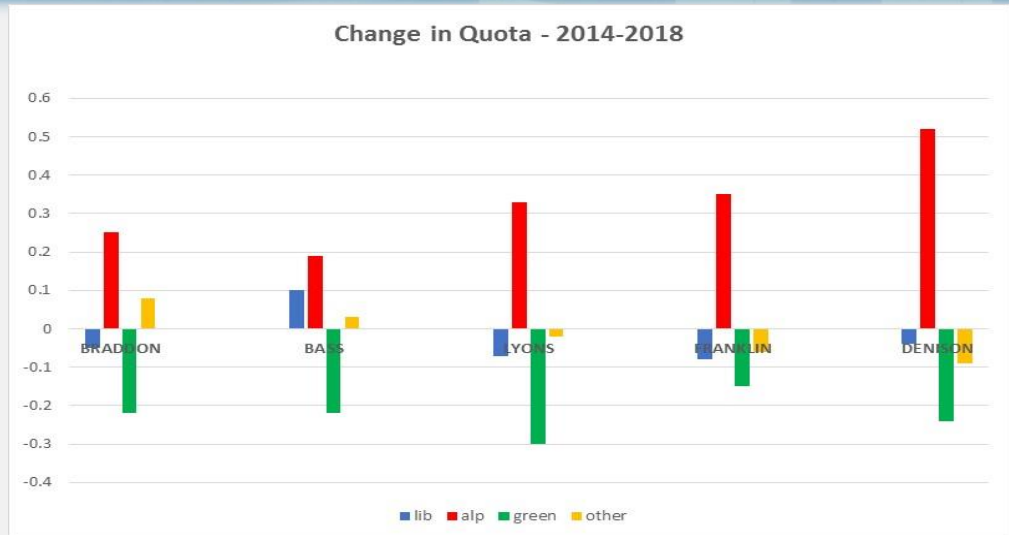
The first, as the Bass Greens MP acknowledged on election night, is that they could not get traction on any environmental issue. Forestry hardly rated a mention, and salmon farming was subsumed within a broader “focus” on campaign expenditure. Maybe those environmental issues have run their race. Maybe the public simply turned off.

The second is that the day environmental activists capture the imagination of the broader body politic is over. The major issue for the Greens was the Tarkine, yet in Braddon, with their leading political activist fronting their ticket, they got less than a quarter of a quota.

4 Minor parties did not get a look-in. Single issue parties, and those which surround the personality of a single person, will get swamped, in less exceptional circumstances they may gain some traction. In this election, they did not. The Jackie Lambie Network did not run Jackie Lambie, so its effect was minimal.

5 There was a geographical divide. The response in the north of the state was different to the south. The north responded positively to the state of the economy and the call for jobs and growth, the south far less so. A region dependent on the private sector, vs a region dependent on the public purse.

This is shown most clearly by comparing Braddon and Denison. In the seat of Denison, which has provided a result quite different to the other 4 electorates, social issues were far more prevalent and far more likely to affect the way electors voted. In Braddon, it was the economy, pure and simple.



6 Neither leader's team captured over 50% of the vote in their own electorate.

7 The makeup in the new Parliament will have an interesting gender bias. On the assumption the Liberals win 14 seats (with the loss of a seat in Braddon) the Liberal Party will front with 10 males and 4 females. Labor, noting they already have 4 members in the Upper House, will have 10 females and 4 males.

8 The make-up of the Parliament is far from finalized. The 5<sup>th</sup> seat remains a contest, with the contestants being:

electorate	Libs	ALP	GREENS	CONTESTED
BRADDON	3	1	0	LIB/LAB
BASS	3	1	0	LIB/LAB
LYONS	3	2	0	(LAB/LAB)
FRANKLIN	2	2	0	(LIB/GREEN)
DENISON	2	2	1	(LAB/LAB)

9 The speeches on election night were illuminating. The Premier's speech was calming and inclusive – a good presentation. The Labor leader was defiant, but unfortunately in the heat of the moment, forgot the niceties of congratulating the Liberals on their win. It was an obvious oversight, and it has since been rectified, but it did take away from an otherwise excellent speech. The Greens leader was bitter. No grace in it at all. Her speech was filled with emotional hyperbole, which suggested a recognition of declining relevance.

10 The ALP contest in the seat of Franklin had no sitting members contesting. Even then, the so-called favoured candidate polled less than a quota. Favoured he may be, but it did not translate into votes.

And from here?

The government will need to form a new Cabinet – The lineup will be interesting.

A lot of people will start knocking on the government's door, seeking a fulfilment of promises made. How will the Treasurer cope?

Campaign funding reform must be high on the agenda of the new parliament. If nothing is done, we will see the same levels of expenditure for single causes all over again. And that is not healthy, no matter where it comes from.