

THE PLACE OF NATURE? ELECTORAL POLITICS AND THE TASMANIAN GREENS

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Green politics in Tasmania is very much a politics of place, driven by struggles to save iconic natural areas such as Lake Pedder, the Franklin River, the South West wilderness and more recently the state's old growth forests and unprotected areas. These struggles have inspired a green politics that is historic, in the sense of inspiring the formation of the world's first green party, and distinctive for the growing and consolidating of green parliamentary representation. Whilst the rest of the world may be attempting to explain the waxing and waning of green parliamentary politics, in Tasmania the questions that need answers are: why does green parliamentary representation persist and has it reached its limits. This paper focuses on the trajectory of Tasmania's parliamentary greening, rather than on the green movement's broader characteristics, disputes and groups. It is a study of recent electoral efforts by the Tasmanian Greens and the counter efforts of anti-green forces. It focuses on the state election in 2006, and argues that there are very clear limits to the place of nature within the state parliament. Whilst the Greens are old hands at gaining parliamentary advantage, in the 2006 election opposing forces used effective tactics to constrain their further success.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF PARLIAMENTARY GREENING

Nearly twenty years ago, Australia's small, remote, southern, and relatively wild, state of Tasmania was described as a crucible of environmental conflict. It provided in microcosm 'a taste of the likely shape of politics elsewhere in the world should the green agenda reach the political frontline'.² Since that time, the Tasmanian Greens (Greens) have been distinctive, no longer only for emerging from the world's first green party,³ but also for their parliamentary longevity and achievements. It is now twenty-five years since Greens were first represented in the Tasmanian parliament, with the Lower House of Assembly's preferential proportional electoral system⁴ ensuring their consistent presence since 1982 (see Table 1). They have supported two minority governments, one centre-right Labor Government (1989-91), and one centre-right Liberal Government (1996-98), with these parties being less distinguished by ideological divides than in the European context.⁵ A key issue dominating the 2006 state election, in the absence of any other catalysing issue, was whether the

Greens would again assume the balance of power and what demands they would bring to government. A further more academic question is whether, after decades in state parliament, the Greens are now capable of partnering more stable and productive coalition governments in which they serve with ministerial portfolios as members of Cabinet.

A clear indication that the major parties (Labor and Liberal) hope to constrain Green parliamentary representation was evident a decade ago in their bipartisan change to the state's electoral system in 1998. The Liberal minority Government, which had been kept in power by the Greens, supported the Labor Opposition's amendment to the *Parliamentary Reform Act* (1998) (Act31/1998) as one of its last acts before the 1998 election. This amendment raised the electoral quota for an individual from 12.5 per cent to 16.7 per cent and cut the numbers in the Lower House. The impact on Greens' parliamentary representation was immediate in 1998, with 10.2 per cent of the state vote under the new quota delivering the Greens only one seat, to its

leader Peg Putt, instead of the four seats that the old quota would have produced.⁶

Having minority government rely upon the Greens had greatly stressed the major parties, and greatly unsettled the business community and ultra-conservative Tasmanians. However, the attempt to wipe out the Greens enjoyed the briefest success. The reform not only raised the electoral quota, but cut the total numbers in the Lower House from 35 to 25 members, leaving both the government and opposition benches severely depleted which remains a problem today. However Peg Putt was widely credited with working tirelessly, supported by only one assistant, to provide effective opposition to the Labor Government on social, environmental and state development issues for the next four years.⁷

At the 2002 state election, the Greens were rewarded for their leader's efforts with a record vote of 18.1 per cent that returned their previous four members, most significantly at an election in which there was no single catalysing environmental issue to stir the public. Indeed it could be argued that their leader's effort between elections not only ensured the persistence of green parliamentary politics in Tasmania at a time when it could have been annihilated but raised the green vote to new heights. So the Greens survived the electoral reform threat against them. The public backlash against their balance of power experience was behind them, they had raised their vote to an all time high, and returned to a position of strength by 2002. What did not kill the Greens parliamentary politics in 1998 in fact only made it stronger at the 2002 election. Indeed, from 1998 in particular, the Greens have behaved more clearly as an opposition party, ironically for four years with only one member, and at the very least have confirmed their third party status.

The green vote in general also reflects

the part that the major parties have played in contributing to Tasmania's parliamentary greening. Typically this happens when environment-versus-development conflicts force the major parties together and create the space for green politics to flourish.⁸ At the 2002 election, for example, the major parties supported old growth logging, a contentious Regional Forest Agreement, and a proposed pulp mill. The Tasmanian environment has now assumed international significance and the pressures for its protection, including of its old growth forests, have escalated not declined. The politics of place are certain to be sustained.

The trajectory of the green vote over the last twenty-five years is therefore one of a steady rising and consolidating despite two clear dips following both experiences of Greens-supported minority government. The 1982 green vote of about five per cent rose to 17.1 per cent in 1989, settled back in the 1990s conservatively to about 11 per cent, and is currently averaging 17 per cent for this decade (see Table 1). This rise does confirm Hay and Haward's⁹ prediction that 'the green vote can make substantial inroads into levels of traditional party support'. These inroads, they suggest, would be on the basis of a favorable election system, and a high and ongoing visibility for environmental issues.

What they did not predict was, as we have seen here, that the green vote would not only survive an attempt to make the electoral system less favorable, but that it would rise to new heights. Neither did they predict the shifting of the 'environmental issues—election outcomes' dynamic, whereby it no longer entirely holds that only critical environmental issues will decide the electoral fate of the Greens. In each of the 1982, 1986, and 1989 state elections the Greens did benefit from catalysing environmental issues fuelling their vote, respectively attempts to dam the Franklin River, build a silicon smelter in a rural-

residential zone, and build a billion dollar pulp mill at Wesley Vale. In recent elections, however, the Green's policy vision for a clean green state, and their efforts at filling the opposition vacuum have substituted somewhat for 'high, ongoing, visible' environmental issues.¹⁰

The success of green parliamentary politics in Tasmania has been fuelled, as elsewhere, by a lack of confidence in established political parties. However this does not sufficiently explain why the world's first green party was founded in the state. Neither does it explain, in a comparative sense, the sustained parliamentary representation achieved by greens since 1982 nor the fact that the world's first green-supported government was again achieved in Tasmania in 1989.¹¹ In terms of national green electoral success in the European context, only Germany, Luxembourg and Switzerland had managed to elect green parliamentarians by 1984, by which time Tasmanian Greens had achieved representation.¹² And whilst Tasmanian Greens first partnered minority government in 1989, in western Europe Greens did not participate in government until 1995 (Finland), 1996 (Italy), 1997 (France), 1998 (Germany) and 1999 (Belgium), although as coalition partners Greens in Europe did stay longer in power.¹³

It does take an understanding of place to explain the historical success and the distinctiveness of green politics in Tasmania. To this must be added the lack

of political differentiation between the major parties and the Greens' capacity for re-visioning state development that attracts voters to the Greens. The Greens also pursue political and administrative transparency of government, a policy that resounds with a cynical public. And, finally, even the reformed electoral system still offers great political opportunity.¹⁴

THE 2006 STATE ELECTION

It is salutary, therefore, to examine an electoral campaign which abounded in anti-green propaganda from all quarters, as political parties, the business community and conservative Tasmanians, all attempted to head off another Greens-supported minority government. The state election in 2006 was indeed the nastiest seen for some time in Tasmania, which is perhaps surprising given that the Greens have been in parliament now for over twenty-five years. And yet, for a campaign that was distinguished more by its attacks on the Greens and its scare mongering about minority government than for any policy debate, the result was unremarkable. The parliamentary make-up was unchanged in terms of numbers by the election.

Fourteen Labor Government members, seven Liberal Opposition members, and all four Greens were returned. What is unknown, however, is the constraining impact that the very effective targeting of the Greens had on their potential prospects given pre-election polling. Going into the

Table 1: Tasmanian Greens House of Assembly results 1986 to 2006—percentage of votes and number of seats

Election	1982 ^a	1986	1989	1992	1996	1998 ^b	2002	2006
Vote/seats	5.4/1	6.1/2	17.1/5	13.2/5	11.1/4	10.2/1	18.1/4	16.6/4

Notes: ^a Bob Brown inherited the first green seat in the House of Assembly in 1983 on a recount following the resignation and subsequent election to the Australian Senate of Australian Democrat Norm Sanders.

^b The quota for an individual was raised from 12.5 per cent to 16.7 per cent prior to this election in an attempt to minimise the election of Tasmanian Greens and the likelihood of minority governments.¹⁵

four-week election period, minority government was looking likely, with one poll having the Greens at 36 per cent in Denison (one of the five multi-member seats), out-polling Labor at 35 per cent; and with the Labor Government at only 32 per cent statewide. The campaign headquarters of the Liberal Opposition was vigorous in its denigration of the Greens and did enjoy a 4.4 per cent swing towards it, whilst there were swings away from both the Greens (1.5 per cent) and the less than popular Lennon Labor Government (2.6 per cent).¹⁶ The final Labor vote was 49.3 per cent, the Liberal vote 31.8 per cent and the Greens 16.6 per cent, leaving only a knife-edge 0.9 per cent margin between the government and the opposition parties¹⁷ (Table 2).

In terms of the 2006 numbers, a Liberal–Green Government is therefore well within reach at the 2010 election, with the Greens potentially either supporting or partnering government. If this is the theoretical possibility then it pays to

examine the bitter reality of an election campaign in Tasmania. In 2006 there was no dominating campaign issue to galvanise the public, no mood for change in a period of economic sunshine, and only a relatively slight likelihood that the Liberal Opposition would win office, or that the Greens would be routed. Even the key electoral issues were predictable, with health a critical ongoing one, followed by the economy, environment and accountability.¹⁸ The only apparent controversy was over the pre-election polling released late in 2005 which showed a 10 per cent drop in support for the government, and the likelihood of a minority government being returned.

Anti-minority government campaigning was fierce from all quarters, and was lambasted as scare-mongering, muck raking in a much criticised performance by Greens leader Peg Putt on election night on national television.¹⁹ Minority government was averted and the Labor Government was returned, which is

Table 2: Tasmanian House of Assembly election results 1996 to 2006: percentage of votes/ number of seats

35 Member Lower House (7 members x 5 electorates @ 12.55% quota): per cent vote/number of seats							
Election	ALP	LP	TG	NP	AD	Others	Government
1996	40.5/14	41.2/16	11.1/4 ^a	2.2/0	0.7/0	4.3/1 ^b	Liberal minority ^c
25 ^d Member Lower House (5 members x 5 electorates @ 16.75% quota): per cent vote/number of seats							
Election	ALP	LP	TG	TF	AD	Others	Government
1998	44.8/14	38.1/10	10.2/1 ^c	5.1/0	0.9/0	1/0	Labor majority
2002	51.9/14	27.4/7	18.1/4	0.2/0	0.7/0	1.7/0	Labor majority
2006	49.3/14	31.8/7	16.6/4	0.5/0	0.0/0	1.8/0	Labor majority

Source: Tasmanian Electoral Commission, Tasmanian Parliamentary Library.

Notes: ALP (Australian Labor Party), LP (Liberal Party), TG (Tasmanian Greens), NP (National Party), TF (Tasmania First), AD (Australian Democrats).

^a These four Greens supported the Liberal minority Government in a balance of power situation.

^b This includes the vote for independent Liberal, Bruce Goodluck, who sat on the cross benches.

^c This Government was supported by the Greens after Labor refused to govern with their support.

^d Parliamentary numbers were cut by the Parliamentary Reform Act (1998) (Act31/1998).

^e Here is the disenfranchising effect of the parliamentary downsizing upon the Tasmanian Greens, who lost three of their seats despite their vote virtually holding between 1996 and 1998.

significant given the personal attacks on Premier Lennon's governing style, character and personal choices throughout 2005, and his initial reluctance to assume the party leadership. And it is significant that the Liberals were the only election winners, drawing votes both with their aggressive attacks upon the Greens, and by supporting the government's old growth forest logging and the proposed pulp mill (at Bell Bay this time, not Wesley Vale).

It is hard to imagine in these circumstances that the Liberals would partner government with the Greens in 2010, although this may well be the choice facing their new leader, Will Hodgman. There are three themes worth exploring in the green vote that illustrate its limits and the difficulties of partnering with the major parties. These are: the advertising attacks on the Greens, the scare mongering about minority government, and the fate of environmental issues.

The advertising attacks on the Greens were significant in the sense that they were anonymous²⁰ and involved spurious claims, that anti-green interests were better financed than green interests. There was also the fact that anti-logging interests were restrained from advertising by the implicit threat of legal action. Twenty prominent Tasmanian environmental activists and organisations were already facing a A\$6million law suit from timber giant Gunns P/L, which claimed that its company had been hurt by their actions, and that its commercial activities had been conspired against. This suit deterred the usual flood of public complaint about old growth logging, and the proposed Gunns pulp mill at Bell Bay.

The major parties, logging interests, big business, and a conservative, cult-like religious organisation, the Exclusive Brethern, all ran fear and smear anti-green advertising campaigns.²¹ The Liberal Opposition attacked the Greens for

supporting illegal drugs, that is, 'taxpayer funded handouts of ecstasy, speed, heroin, and marijuana', an attack based on earlier advertising found to have been inaccurate, irresponsible and misleading by the Australian Press Council.²² The Liberals were also accused of paying for Exclusive Brethern advertising which claimed that Greens' policies on transgender, inter-sex issues and drugs would ruin families and society, advertising that was subsequently referred to the Anti-Discrimination Commission. The Labor Party denied that the Premier's Office was running an 'under the radar' dirt unit against the Greens.²³ And advertisements funded by Tasmanians for a Better Future, an anonymous business collective, promoted majority government and warned against minority government.

The Greens denounced the attack advertising against them as shameful, shadowy and anonymous, but the attacks stepped up more broadly and openly when leader Peg Putt staked her claim to be Deputy Premier in any power sharing deal with the major parties. The scare mongering about minority government was then skillfully and relentlessly pursued in the media, both openly and covertly in terms of anonymous advertising. The Liberals had already signed an undertaking not to share power with the Greens, whilst the Labor Government had said that it would try to make minority government work, but not by any formal power sharing.

Peg Putt was forceful and probably foolish to assert that, in supporting minority government, her party would do whatever it took to advance their policies, because they were not in parliament to be 'beautiful losers'. This was broadly misinterpreted as a threat to block supply and 'sent a shiver down the spine of the business community'.²⁴ Previously the Greens had supported minority government from outside Cabinet, and their aspirations to govern in coalition were seen as a power

grab. Anonymous advertising warned that under previous green-supported minority governments, unemployment had soared, thousands had lost their jobs, young people had moved interstate, investment had stalled, and housing had been devalued.²⁵ It hardly mattered that prominent economist Saul Eslake objected that the fiscal decisions of these governments had been sound, with the Greens responsible on fiscal matters, and their budgets reassuring.²⁶

The prominence of the general attacks on the Greens, and the concentrated campaign to head off minority government, played a role in side-lining any environmental issues during the election campaign to the point of eclipsing even the government's own policy platform. However the election campaign against the Greens was also very well planned and managed by political players, industry and economic backers who by now were long accustomed to the need to neutralise the Greens' own electoral tactics. The government was likely to suffer at the ballot box over several 'green' issues: old growth logging; the proposed pulp mill; a development proposal threatening Recherche Bay; and a marina-style development threatening internationally significant wetlands at Ralph's Bay.

The public had already been deterred by fear of litigation from airing concern over old growth forest issues, even though Tasmania's own community-driven state plan, Tasmania Together, called for an end to old growth logging.²⁷ The government had also taken preemptory action by protecting old growth forest in contested areas such as the Styx and Tarkine. It had sent the pulp mill proposal for independent assessment by the Resource Planning and Development Commission, which assuaged public concern. And it had intervened to ensure both that Recherche Bay was protected, not logged by private landowners, and that the Ralph's Bay

development was sneived until after the election. This neutralising of environmental issues was compounded by the lack of attention paid to the environmental platforms of each party because of their largely uncontroversial nature.

The government promised iconic bushwalks, the establishment of an environmental protection authority, funding for the threatened Tasmanian Devil, landfill reduction, recycling promotion, cleaner production and estuary protection. The Liberal Opposition had a meager, conservative platform addressing rural issues such as weed reduction, and support for voluntary environmental activities 'on the land'. The Greens promised more tourism opportunities, species and feral species management, innovative transport and energy production ideas, and funding for conservation, recycling, pollution control programs. They advocated no wilderness tourist resorts for world heritage areas, extensions to existing world heritage areas, new marine reserves, and an end to exemptions from planning and environmental laws for resource exploitative industries.

But the Greens also campaigned on issues of accountability and fair process, and the traditional issues of health, housing, education and the workplace, which they saw as ignored by the major parties. Indeed their industrial relations policy was seen to eclipse the government's, with unions claiming that the government 'hasn't been looking after us'.²⁸ The Greens were critical not only of the proposed pulp mill, but of backroom deals that they claimed had been done with corporate 'mates' to destroy forests. They proposed that a commission against corruption be established, and that a Bill of Rights be introduced to rescue Tasmania's democracy, restore political integrity, and guard against bullying and secret deals being done over natural resources.

THE GREENS' LIMITS?

There are a number of remarkable aspects about the 2006 election campaign that justify academic reflection and the placing of this election in the long historical context of green parliamentary representation in Tasmania over the last quarter century. Most significantly the continuity of green parliamentary representation is a sign of a healthy, diverse, active and sustained green civil society in Tasmania of which green politicians are only the representative tip of the iceberg. Much of the green electioneering is carried out by conservation groups, umbrella groups such as the Wilderness Society, the Australian Conservation Foundation, and the Tasmanian Conservation Trust, but also by single issue groups, and groups with no political affiliation. Conversely the Tasmanian Greens do not necessarily draw their parliamentary ranks from hardened environmental campaigners or activists, but are as likely to stand school teachers, small business people, community organisers or representatives of local groups or at local level.

While analysis of the sociology of green politics in Tasmania is not a feature of this article, there is nevertheless fertile material for analysis in the conservation movement in Tasmania, including the tensions between grassroots green activists and green parliamentary representatives. Nevertheless, green civil society still appears to vote strongly for the Tasmanian Greens and is likely to sustain their parliamentary presence until such time as either political party significantly greens their policies. The green vote does also benefit from community disillusionment with major party politics, and from suggestions of political corruption by incumbent governments, or the blatant thwarting of transparent public or consultative processes. However, the green vote still has its limits.

In 2006, for example, the Greens had clear aspirations to improve their numbers

from four to six members, to gain the balance of power, and to form a coalition government with whichever party would deal with them. In these terms their campaign was an abject failure. The attack advertising against them was effective in preventing any voter drift on the basis of dissatisfaction with the status quo away from the major parties to the Greens, indeed the status quo was affirmed. The scare mongering about minority government was effective in preventing drift, just as the neutralising of potentially controversial environmental issues was effective in preventing the growth in the green vote over the controversial proposed pulp mill at Bell Bay in the Northeast for example.

It is clear that these circumstances could have precluded the Greens picking up a seat in the conservative Northwest of the state, where they are without one, and a second seat in the green urban electorate of Denison in the South. The Northwest is the Exclusive Brethern's stronghold, and conservative voters would have run scared from the so-called Greens 'ruining of families and society' that Exclusive Brethern and the Liberal party warned of. Northwest Tasmanians would also have been very likely to heed the fear and smear anti-green minority government tactics, which could also have influenced a majority of state voters. The chance of a second Greens member in Denison was denied by deferring the Ralph's Bay issue, on which a Greens candidate had been running strongly, and by tactics employed by the government to neutralise any other critical green issues.

The Greens failed to pick up two extra seats, but also nearly lost a seat in the Northeast. Ironically the Greens vote was threatened by an anti-pulp mill independent candidate, who split the vote to some extent, so that the Greens incumbent was only returned after nearly two weeks of preference counting by the narrowest of margins, that is 136 votes. It was preferences

from excluded candidates from both the major parties that also ironically saw this Greens incumbent returned.²⁹ Had this Northwest candidate not been returned and the Greens been reduced to three members, they would have lost official party status, and with that they would have also lost more than half of their staff, the leader's salary loading, her car and her driver.

In this sense the Greens were very close to annihilation, and very far from their hopes of building their parliamentary representatives and moving into a central position of political power, or at least as minority government power brokers. On the other hand, in historical terms, even the Labor Premier acknowledged after the election that the Greens would always be a permanent presence in Tasmanian politics and should never be written off. The Greens themselves have affirmed that they are a values based party, in parliamentary politics 'for the long haul', looking forward to holding and increasing their vote, and now to taking on a Labor Government which they perceive as perpetrating an entrenched culture of bullying and cronyism.³⁰

The Greens struggle to protect natural areas continues, with the forest debate no closer to resolution, indeed with the debate heightening both over the fast-tracking of the new pulp mill, and by state support for the mill that the Greens have suggested is illegitimate and corrupt. It was this combination of concern for the forests, for environmental standards, and about shady deals allegedly done in support of major developments with potentially significant impacts that first delivered the Greens a partnership in government in 1989. For the Greens, at least, politics is still about the protection of place, just as for the major parties it is about major state development. This dynamic has resonated in Tasmania since the flooding of Lake Pedder in 1972 and continues to demonstrate that, for some people, they and their place will not be parted

when that place is as significant as Tasmania.

This unresolved dynamic is likely the key explanation for the persistence of green parliamentary politics, because the Greens still represent the unfulfilled hopes and politics of at least sixteen per cent of Tasmanians. However Tasmania's parliamentary greening has ironically driven the major parties into a corner, where they provide bipartisan support for development projects that threaten values close to the heart of these Tasmanians and expressed in parliament by the Greens. This has driven a political wedge between the Greens and the major parties that is not easily breached in terms of forming governing partnerships, and that has seen both attempts at such partnerships fail with great acrimony. There appear to be limits, therefore, to the Greens' prospects of government.

CONCLUSIONS

The Tasmanian Greens are nevertheless here to stay. They have historic roots in the United Tasmania Group, the world's first green party, and have been distinctive both for their continuous parliamentary presence and for partnering minority governments of both political persuasions. Green politics in Tasmania remains place based, and will continue to thrive where the environment is threatened. Green politics exploits its own future orientation, which contrasts strongly with that of the major parties. It is a politics of regional development that articulates a clean green vision in economic terms. It is also a reflexive politics, driven by heightened citizen concern, that highlights political and administrative transparency and captures the attention of a cynical public. And it is a politics of opportunity in a state with a proportional preferential voting system. With the very marginal lead now of the government over the combined opposition parties, it is also clear that the Greens will be the brokers in any future parliamentary regime change.

The Liberal Opposition benches are so diminished following the electoral reform that it is virtually inconceivable that a new government could spring forth from them in one election without their doubling their current numbers. So the Greens may have to play a role in the transition to any future Liberal Government. But perhaps in the shorter term, the Greens may be needed to support a Labor minority government. In playing this role, though, the historical

record suggests a future backslip against Labor and the Greens. What is unknown is whether the European experience of more stable, effective government where Greens act as coalition members with Cabinet portfolios would translate to Tasmania. And indeed whether the parties to such a government would suffer the dire electoral consequences that the parties to minority government in Tasmania have historically suffered.

References

- ¹ Dr Crowley is currently the Dean of Graduate Research at the University of Tasmania and the Graduate Coordinator of Public Policy in the School of Government.
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- ³ The Tasmanian Greens were formally constituted in 1989 following the election of a record five Green Independents, including the previous two Green Independents who were already in parliament. Both the Green Independents and the Tasmanian Greens consider themselves the successors of the world's first green party the United Tasmania Group founded in 1972 and have subsequently joined the Australian Greens. See P. Walker, 'The United Tasmania Group: an analysis of the world's first green party', in P. Hay, R. Eckersley and G. Holloway (Eds), *Environmental Politics in Australia and New Zealand*, Occasional Paper 23, Centre for Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania, 1989.
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- ¹⁸ See W. Crawford, 'Who'll rule the roost?', *The Saturday Mercury*, 21 January, 2006, p. 26.
- ¹⁹ Listen on <<http://www.abc.net.au/elections/tas/2006/news/stories/1595269.htm?elections/tas/2006/>>.
- ²⁰ Unlike Australian federal laws covering federal elections, Tasmanian law does not require the disclosure of the sources of funding for election advertisements.
- ²¹ See M. Denholm, 'Greens king hit in grubbiest campaign', *The Australian*, 20 March 2006, p. 8, and M. Denholm, 'Sect's attack ads billed to Libs', *The Australian*, 25 January, 2007, p 1.
- ²² See S. Neales, 'Greens see red over Liberals' leaflet', *The Mercury*, 17 February 2007, p. 2.
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- ²⁴ See *The Mercury*, 17 February 2006, p. 3.
- ²⁵ *The Mercury*, 16 March 2006 p. 29
- ²⁶ *The Australian*, 16 March 2006 p. 4
- ²⁷ The Labor Government did not abide by the very popular community call to end old growth logging.
- ²⁸ See Neales, 'Greens see red...' op. cit. and S. Neales, 'Unions shy on labor support: Green bid to woo workers', *The Mercury*, 23 February 2007, p. 7.
- ²⁹ 2007 polling showed that the green vote has doubled in this region since the state election, as the independent pulp mill approval process has been overridden by the government, and the billion dollar project fast-tracked by both the state and federal governments despite widespread community concern.
- ³⁰ See W. Crawford, 'All done bar the cabinet', *The Saturday Mercury*, 25 March 2006, p. 28.