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HD **Being sued by Clive? Join the club, Premier**  
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CAMPBELL Newman, welcome to the club. That would be the “Being Sued By Clive Palmer Club”.

Like other club members, Premier, you have paid your dues. You had the temerity to speak frankly about Queensland’s founder of the Palmer United Party, the man who wants to be prime minister, but who runs to his lawyers to issue legal threats when put under scrutiny in the cut and thrust of Australian politics.

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Not for the first time, you said that Clive, a major political donor when your party was in opposition, wanted to “**buy**” the new Liberal National Party government to advance his own **commercial** interests. And you added that he is now “on a rampage around Australia trying to **buy** other people and **buy** other people’s votes”.

Thin-skinned Clive cannot handle that sort of talk. Remember that your predecessor as premier, Anna Bligh, was dragged into the “Being Sued By Clive Palmer Club” because she had the temerity to speak frankly, too. Her treasurer, Andrew Fraser, the other defendant, would not be intimidated. He said at the time, “I will call out a bully any day of the week.” Fraser also appealed to Clive to “cease and desist from his baseless legal threats, his wild conspiracy theories and his frankly unintelligible and unfathomable ranting”. No joy. Clive simply announced an \$8 billion action against the former Queensland government for alleged breach of confidentiality. Just \$8bn. Like hot air, the legal suit wafted away.

But the double standard in Clive’s parallel universe is always on display. He demands the freedom to say what he likes no matter how outlandish or offensive the utterances.

He tars News Corp head Rupert Murdoch’s former wife Wendi Deng as a “**Chinese** spy”. He brands Northern Territory Chief Minister Adam Giles a “liar”. He condemns cabinet ministers in Newman’s government as “corrupt”. He accuses Newman of having a mental health condition. Yet when strong words come at Clive his response is: “I’m going to sue.” If Clive were to get his way, reporters, commentators politicians and other robust critics across the media and business world who dare to examine inconvenient truths about his record as a businessman and, now, a parliamentarian, would gag themselves.

Who else made it (or almost made it) into the “Being Sued By Clive Palmer Club”? It is a long list. We will mention just a few more among the many wrongdoers in Clive’s eyes.

There is the Great Barrier Reef Marine **Park** Authority, a federal government agency tasked with protecting the waters of north Queensland from the toxic sludge that Clive’s nickel refinery produces in vast quantities, which was warned it would be sued for more than \$6bn for daring to regulate him.

The authority has been conspicuous in its reluctance to take the refinery on in court over its releases of hazardous contaminants.

There is Sydney lawyer Shaun McCarthy, who sat as an accredited judge in a Football Federation case. He was lumbered with a \$10 million action for defamation because of his finding in a formal judgment

that the Gold Coast United club Clive controlled (before he ran it into the ground) had “acted dishonourably”. McCarthy won the matter along with his costs in the Supreme Court.

There is the Gold Coast Bulletin and its editor, Peter Gleeson, who ran a straightforward story about the finding that Clive’s football club “acted dishonourably”.

The story was placed on the same newspaper page as an unrelated story about a playboy “love rat” but Clive was distressed; he thought readers would mistake him for the playboy, so he sued for \$10m. Clive, it’s not always about you.

And there is Nationwide News, publisher of The Australian, and this reporter. We are being sued in the Supreme Court of Queensland over a handful of articles published last year about his business interests, finances and legal threats to a major **Chinese** state-owned **company**, CITIC Pacific. Clive wants more than \$1m in damages.

The statement of claim and our defences are on the public record. These matters, and many others, make it difficult to avoid a conclusion that Clive loves attention — and hates scrutiny. Clive, will you sue us for saying that?

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