

SE News
HD Talk of the town
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FOOT IN MOUTH DISEASE

PRIME Minister Tony Abbott ventured to Queensland this week and there wasn't a gaffe in sight. Almost. While doing the expected rounds of the morning radio circuit, Abbott got his presenters a bit mixed up. Speaking with Patrick Condren on 4BC, Abbott mistakenly referred to him as "Steve", as in Steve Austin who is behind the mic in the rival slot on the ABC. Condren handled it with his usual quick wit, saying "He's the other bloke" before they both quickly decided it was best they move on.

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LEFT IN CHARGE

DON'T worry. They'll be no compulsory basket weaving lessons. No tests on teepee construction. While the Left has taken over the Labor Party, factional heavyweights have assured TTT they won't let the power go to their heads. They insist this weekend's state conference at the Mercure Hotel will be all about reaffirming "Labor values" into the party's policy platform rather than a witch hunt. "A left wing revolution ain't going to happen," one powerbroker told TTT. But we're sure there was an audible cackle as they hung up the phone.

WE BUY THEM FOR THE ARTICLES

A FEW of the younger members of the Australian Cricket team were spied at Brisbane Airport earlier this week. No doubt waiting for a delayed flight, the cricketers piled into the newsagent for some light reading options to kill some time. However, our airport spy reports the magazines they bought weren't about sport or hairstyles. Nor did they contain, dare we suggest, scantily-clad ladies. They bought magazines about home decoration. We're not saying another word.

HARDLY SATISFYING

IT appears TTT's item last week about the delay in releasing the results of a workplace job satisfaction survey of Queensland's Department of Justice and the Attorney-General staff has hit a raw nerve. Department insiders tell TTT there is a very good reason the details have been delayed – they are worse than expected. And for very good reason, we are told. You see JAG not so long ago was merged with staff from the Department of Corrective Services which, as readers would appreciate, includes staff running the state's many prisons. As a result, the stats obtained have been heaped together. We are assured that while staff morale is low with original JAG employees, the figures are far, far worse among the Corrective Services ranks. TTT is told that rather than release the figures as-is, moves are underway to separate them. We'll keep you posted.

TINKERING AT THE EDGES

THE financial woes of one-time **billionaire mining** magnate Nathan Tinkler continue to mount. Harvey Norman boss Gerry Harvey has allegedly called in his mortgage over the Patinack Farm horse stud, which may scuttle Tinker's comeback bid to buy the Wilkie Creek **coal** mine from Peabody **Energy**. It's understood that staff at the Patinack stud have been told they've got two weeks to find another job.

Although Peabody has been saying the deal over Wilkie Creek, near Dalby, was moving ahead, the funds for it were apparently to come from the Patinack **sale**. The stud was supposed to have been sold to a Dubai-based fund but there are some doubts about that. Tinkler (below) was also reported to have missed a scheduled payment to Peabody on his \$150 **million acquisition** of Wilkie Creek, but was granted an extension. Patinack Farm has properties in the Hunter Valley in NSW and southeast Queensland.

PRIDE OF PROSECUTION ONE, two, three, kick ... back, two, three, turn. TTT loves this snapshot of two of the state's best and most senior prosecutors Sal Vasta (left) and Dennis Kinsella. While we are sure the pair are discussing matters of great legal importance, we at TTT can't help but think the boys were rehearsing a few dance steps. Pride of Erin anyone?

AUTHORISED BY CLIVE

GAVEN MP Alex Douglas might think he's split from Clive Palmer and the Palmer United Party, but it seems Clive might not have got the message. We're told the PUP's DVD entitled Reclaim Queensland For Queenslanders and featuring the pair cosied up on the front is still being delivered to households. "Vote Alex Douglas for Queensland premier," the cover urges, while adjuring us to "Keep this DVD for the State election". And here's a funny thing, on the back it says it was printed in **China**.

CHOOK SCRATCHING THE DIRT POLICE Union vice president Shayne "Chook" Maxwell raised some eyebrows recently after claiming to have information on serious prior offences of some Queensland MPs. Maxwell (left) wrote in the June edition of the Police Journal that he had planned to out MPs and high-ranking government officials with a history of offences but could not under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.

"All I will say is that one person I was going to mention ... I give him the nickname of the 'Brazilian'," Maxwell cryptically wrote.

According to reports at the time, Maxwell obtained the information through a third party rather than by punching names into the police database in his spare time. However, that does make us wonder how Maxwell's source obtained the information and whether it can be legally passed around. Anyway, the article has MPs a bit worried that the dirt file may fall into the wrong hands as the election draws near. And, BTW, the Chook can wield more than one kind of axe as he proved at this year's Ekka. On Thursday grab another dose of gossip about Queensland movers and shakers in our Corridors of Power column available exclusively to Courier-Mail+ subscribers. Join at couriermail.com.au/club

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