

SE News
HD **HOW DOES CLIVE SOLVEA PROBLEM LIKE JACQUI ?**
BY Daniel Meers
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INSIGHT TASMANIAN DEVIL Rogue PUP senator Jacqui Lambie is turning into a loose cannon for her party leader Clive Palmer with statements so outrageous even he would think twice about repeating, writes Daniel Meers CLIVE Palmer hung up on a radio interviewer in Perth this week. He wasn't asked about allegations that he siphoned \$12 million from a Chinese government-owned company to pay for his election campaign.

It wasn't even intense pressure over his brain snap, on the ABC, that left the leader of the Palmer United Party so speechless all he could come up with was "Goodbye".

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In fact, the interview-ending question wasn't even about him. All it took was two words; Jacqui Lambie.

His potty-mouthed Tasmanian senator who wants a wealthy, well-hung man and believes Australia should buy missiles to fire at the Chinese when they come to invade us and turn our grandchildren into slaves.

The above paragraph would be funny, if Ms Lambie didn't hold the balance of power in Australia.

Prime Minister Tony Abbott cannot get any legislation passed without the support of Ms Lambie and Mr Palmer's Palmer United Party (PUP).

Put simply, the chief dog has bought a PUP that has a bigger bite than himself. And he doesn't know what to do with her.

MPs from both sides of politics believe she is a risk of fleeing the kennel and equally could be damaging to Mr Palmer if she is not put on a tight leash.

The single mother of two decided to join PUP because she didn't have enough money to run as an independent.

Ms Lambie is good with other people's money. She even got the defence force to pay for a breast reduction as part of compensation she claimed from back problems sustained while working in the Defence Force for over a decade.

The former military truck driver's decision to use the billionaire mining magnate's money to run for Parliament worked. She was elected with just 6.6 per cent of the vote and now earns about \$200,000 a year for the next six years.

Her foray into public life has been littered with gaffes and wild statements. None crazier than this week.

If you missed the week, here's a taste; "If anybody thinks we should have a national security and defence policy which ignores the threat of a **Chinese** communist invasion, you're delusional and got rocks in your head," she said in a written statement.

"Both Labor and the Liberals-Nationals have failed to build an Australian military that is able to defend us and stop our grandchildren from becoming slaves to an aggressive, anti-democratic, totalitarian foreign power." As government Minister Barnaby Joyce said this week: The comments would be funny if she'd had 15 beers.

Ms Lambie, for all her madness, is an influential senator and her comments are looked at globally.

Such idiocy has the potential to put Australia's \$150 **billion** trade relationship with **China** at risk.

Then there's her views on a potential suitor.

"They must have heaps of cash and they've got to have a package between their legs," she said.

"They don't even need to speak."

Her open-book approach gets even more open when she spoke about her bikini line on a radio program.

"Right now the state I'm in, you'd want to bring out that whipper snipper first," she said.

"It's a very scary area to talk about this morning." Yes, that's who is running our country at the moment.

Her views on politicians are just as fascinating.

She once said Mr Abbott needs a bucket of cement.

"You've got one of two choices. You can run and hide or you can say to yourself 'here's a bucket of cement - toughen up'." There are mixed views in the corridors of power in Canberra over Jacqui Lambie. Some think she is dumb and has no idea what is going to come out of her mouth. Sydney radio host Ray Hadley, in all sincerity, this week suggested Ms Lambie needs mental help.

Others believe the woman from Burnie, in Tasmania's north, is far more conniving than people give her credit for.

They think she knows how to **milk** the media. The fact we're devoting this column space to her now suggests that could be true.

She knows her market. She knows Tasmanians want a street fighter who will stick it up Canberra.

What is of concern, is the damage Ms Lambie could do, both to Australia and the fledgling Palmer party.

And Mr Palmer knows that.

It's why he hung up. He doesn't want to deal with the issue. Mr Palmer can shut anyone up and can **buy** almost anyone he wants. But he doesn't know how to solve a problem like Jacqui.

As Mr Palmer tried to hose down his Q&A brain snap this week, Ms Lambie issued that infamous statement taking his views further.

Mr Palmer probably wisely didn't comment and copped the embarrassment of hanging up on an interview.

"I don't want to talk about that ... because I don't have to. Goodbye," was his response.

He has a problem.

Without all the PUPs in one kennel, Mr Palmer's clout as Australia's most influential politician is shot.

He knew that. He flew to Western Australia after describing the **Chinese** as "mongrels" to ensure his **Chinese** born senator Dio Wang was still in the kennel.

He is acutely aware that Ms Lambie is a loose cannon. A public rebuke could cause her to jump ship.

There is already strong speculation she was disappointed Glenn Lazarus was made chief PUP in the kennel. Mr Palmer doesn't want to push his luck too far.

Political commentator Professor Paul Williams of Griffith University believes Ms Lambie will be difficult to "rein in".

"I could certainly see her going out as an independent in the future. She could definitely use Clive to launch her career and go out on her own.

"I could see her being popular in Tasmania." That's Mr Palmer's biggest fear – that **brand** Jacqui, as ridiculous as it is, may be could become too big for the Palmer Party.

Expect a few more dial tones while Clive works out how to solve his biggest problem. Ms Lambie's dream to land a well-hung man may be easier to achieve.

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