

John Della Bosca's affair with a 26-year-old woman has caused him to resign as a Minister of the state of NSW. Both the morality and probity of this issue would be much easier to ascertain if the general public knew the real extent of extra marital affairs in all the parliaments and even local governments in Australia. But this will never happen because of the stranglehold that Irish Catholicism – and to an increasing extent, US style evangelism and 'High' Anglicanism - have on the governance of this country.

Politics in Australia is incredibly compromised by the fact that MPs cannot be honest about their sexuality. There are about 20 gay and lesbian politicians in the federal parliament and probably another 20 who have been or are bi sexual. How many of these people are 'out' – which means they are being honest? Bob Brown, Penny Wong.....OK, that's two. Who are the rest? They don't have to shout it from the roof tops or even declare it formally but because a heck of a lot of legislation is affected by sex and gender, people have a right to know whether their local member is being compromised on an issue because he or she cannot be honest about their sexuality.

How many state MPs have had affairs or have seen sex workers? That figure is likely to be at least 50% for men and women on the first count and as high as 80% for men on the second.

Della Bosca's actions in resigning over his affair are ludicrous and undemocratic. There was much more reason for him to resign over his and his wife's behaviour during the Iguana gate affair. That involved allegations of brutish behaviour, disrespect for service staff and an inflated opinion of one's rights due to being an MP. Journalists are complicit in this because they fail to discriminate between bad behaviour and what is natural sexual behaviour. Most adults will have an affair in their lifetime but how many of us will abuse and belittle restaurant staff because we think the service doesn't meet our station in life. Not many. If John Della Bosca had had his affair in France or Italy, most people would have shrugged it off without even thinking about it. And while many media outlets led with the story that Della Bosca had an affair with a woman half his age, would it have been more acceptable if she was older than him. Probably.

And how many of those who are lining up to point the finger at him have had affairs themselves? Most of them. It's tempting to get all biblical about this and let those who are 'casting the stones' write their own disclaimers before they comment or go to print. However, none of them would do this. Can you imagine a crusty old Liberal backbencher or a moralising Labor Minister saying, "First of all, I have had three affairs in my life that I'd like to own up to but notwithstanding that I think Della Bosca is a shameful excuse for a decent, upstanding

member"! Not likely. They just blew themselves away. But that's the effect of honesty in these sorts of debates. It cuts through the politics, the irrelevant comment and the lies, so the people of the state can see exactly what is up for debate.



State opposition leader Barry O'Farrell told reporters outside NSW Parliament that the Della Bosca affair was like an "X-rated soap opera". He should be very careful. The NSW Liberal Party has hundreds of unwritten manuscripts that make Della Bosca's affair look like Home and Away. In September 2005, Sydney Morning Herald journalist, Paola Totaro wrote an extraordinary story about an attempt to frame O'Farrell from within the right wing of his own party using 'pornography' that had allegedly been found in his bottom drawer some 12 years earlier! (<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/ofarrell-a-target-of-whisper-campaign/2005/09/02/1125302746405.html>). The story involved senior Liberal Party MPs, staffers and even the moralizing crusader in the federal arena, Bill Heffernan. Although O'Farrell denied that the allegations were responsible for him pulling out of the NSW Liberal leadership race in 2005, not many people believed him. Most people thought Brogden had been pushed by the same shadowy figures that were trying to frame O'Farrell. It was clear that the fingerprints of certain Da Vinci Code figures in the Liberal Party were all over the smear campaign on O'Farrell and rather than fight the allegations, he decided to wait for another day. In the same way that the people of NSW have been dudded by the hype over the Della Bosca affair, they were dudded by the fact that O'Farrell did not run for the Premiership in 2005. Again, because sexual material

is so demonized by politics to the point that NSW parliamentarians send people to jail for selling it, it becomes the *bête noir* of moral crimes. And like adultery, it has become the weapon of choice for religious parliamentarians and their staff when character assassinations are needed.

This sad episode is enough reason for the Australian Sex Party to convene a NSW branch and to run candidates in the next NSW election. In exposing the scandal of scandal-making in the NSW parliament, both Labor and the Liberals will have a lot to look forward to. Not.

Few comments from our Facebook page:

The worst one can say for the allegations, is that he breached security protocols -and maybe put the office cleaners at risk of 'biohazard' exposure! :) In the neo-conservativism of corporate/industrial life; you know -"No entry on site without dust mask, goggles, hard hat, dayglo vest..." Yawn!- breaching security is absolutely a sackable offence... Read More. Interesting that the ABC2 "Breakfast" news programme commentators this morning questioned the need for private indiscretions to be cause for dismissal, there is yet hope!

"It's beyond tall-poppies. It's crass envy (or revenge) dressed up as moral outrage. And it condemns the hounds far more than the quarry.□ Another (I think better way) of referencing the hounds and the quarry is the old saying "When ya point the finger at someone, there's three of your own pointing back at ya!"

"When are we going to get over the 19th century and stop publicly punishing people for private shortcomings?

Men (and women) will stray, and society needs to stop tearing itself apart over that. Think of the public cost involved in firing him for starters! If somebody can present intelligent non-moralistic reasons to me for his dismissal, we're all ears here on ASP