



Parliament sat for two weeks in the Albert Hall in Launceston. On sitting days, Tasmanians against the Pulp Mill (TAP) maintained a "Restore Democracy Tent". The Premier visited it in the first week, and if I was listening to Ross Story (white beard, pictured above) attentively enough, Bartlett told the TAPPERS inside he didn't want the mill to get up ...



Various people were coming past the tent and some were stopping and chatting. Mums with babies, school children. The TAP people got a good reception from everyone.



**I saw Brenton Best, (State Labor politician, member of govt) being interviewed. He was asked if Steve Kons' lying to the Parliament was not something that was relevant to Nick McKim. McKim had been accused of acting improperly by not declaring some vested interest in some business his partner was involved in. It was exasperating to hear Best tell the media cameras outside the Parliament here in Launceston, that Steve Kons had made a mistake - he wouldn't say that Kons was caught straight-out lying to the House. No, he called it "a mistake".**



**Kim Booth (Green Politician, about to sponsor a Bill the Revoke the Pulp Mill Approval Act) speaking to the press. He had a haircut for the occasion.**

**To enter Parliament as a Green, Kim had to sell his sawmilling business out at Meander (in the mountains of the Great Western Tiers) to ensure that he brought no 'vested interests' with him into the Parliament.**



**Someone passing by the 'Restore Democracy" tent, signing a petition.**



**Nick McKim, leader of the Tasmanian Greens, being interviewed outside the Albert Hall, the place where the Parliament was sitting temporarily in Launceston - 27th August 2008.**

**Nick's not big on ties.**



Various police were walking past, stopping and chatting. Later they would assist in expelling us from the Parliament. One of them gave me a friendly warning about the poor state of my push-bike's tyres. Later it was time to go inside and listen.

We had to pass through security. I was sent down to the toilets to take off my 'No Pulp Mill T-shirt' (I had a shirt hiding it - the woman must have had X-ray vision) and my camera had to be checked into to a 'cloak room', not taken into the chamber. This took us all quite a while, and then we were free to sit down. We listened to a long address from Premier Bartlett (Labor) and a reply from Will Hodgman? (Liberal) and it appeared that Nick McKim (Greens) would not be allowed to speak. This was changed and he was given about two minutes - at which decision the gallery clapped and got told-off for it. The Speaker said if we did it again:

"You know what you'll be doing? You'll be spending your time enjoying the sunshine outside."

Then Kim Booth got his chance to introduce his Bill to revoke the Pulp Mill Assessment Act 2007 and after making his address he said "Well Premier, draw that 'line in the sand' and ... reject the Pulp Mill".

He was roundly clapped and again we were chastised by the Speaker. When Bartlett got up to reply, a woman began yelling the word "Corruption" and she was grabbed by Security, roughly, and hustled off. We couldn't hear Bartlett - he was too soft - and some started calling out "Speak up please!". Security came back and hustled off the other two woman who had been with the first 'Corruption!' lady. I hadn't heard them call out. One of them was in a wheelchair, they were no spring chickens. As they were being taken out, they too began yelling "Corruption!"

**[Section 11 which removes any persons rights to seek compensation, make appeals etc in matters related to the pulp mill.]**

Bartlett then in relation to Section 11, accused the Greens of over-reacting and said of one of Kim's examples that it was completely false. He went on to say that "The removal of Section 11 would unfetter Gunns completely." He was met with incredulous laughter from the gallery. Imagine! Section 11 according to Bartlett was there to protect us from Gunns!

When Jeremy Rockliff got the floor he wasted no time in calling the Bill a "classic Greens' stunt" and went on to say that the Greens were "anti-everything". His use of the word 'Democracy' in reference to the actions of the Parliament in passing the PMAA, were met with jeers and he did not improve the situation when he said that there would be "disastrous results for business investment in the state" if the Bill to revoke the Pulp mill approval was approved.

When Rockliff said that "The Greens are trying to move the goalposts as usual" there was again strong laughter from the gallery ... and jeers.

Lisa Singh (Labor, Govt) got up and told the House how she wouldn't need to abstain from a vote this time, because the matter had already been decided and, her views being already well known, "I stand by that position" - whatever that meant. She used the word "outrageous" in relation to the Greens Bill and the public begin to heckle her, for she has been raising her voice in a none too pleasant way. She concluded that there needed to be "a 'line in the sand' on this issue and finished with: "I stand by the Premier - this Government has done enough".

A vote was taken which was procedural and on voices, it not being clear whether the ayes or the naes 'had it', a division was called. As the MPs got to their feet for the division, elements of the gallery, perhaps because they couldn't hear properly, the PA being too soft, thought that the vote for the Bill had been taken (unsuccessfully?) and began calling "Shame!" They began standing up. Some began to turn their backs on the MPs and others followed suit, realising that it was too late to be able to stop those who had already stood, who had already turned and in some cases, had taken off shirts to show their 'Anti Pulp Mill' T-shirts underneath. And so they joined them.

Voices and hubbub ruled the day and security began telling us that we had to go and it was being said that the Parliament was closed and indeed some of the Parliamentarians were walking off down to a side door. They, including the Premier, had to pass within feet of us and we told them 'Shame' and 'This is not right.' They didn't pay us any attention.

The cries of shame continued while the politicians left the chamber. The only ones to remain were the Greens. They remained sitting in their seats, no longer facing the Speaker's chair, but turned towards us. As we saw that they were alone in the Chamber, the others, the Liberals and the Labor Members having gone, our cries were replaced by strong, sustained clapping and we were looking at the four of them. We kept clapping, no voices now. Just clapping. At first they acknowledged us with smiles, and nods. Then they started clapping us, and we continued to applaud them, and they returned this with their own acknowledgement in like manner. Cassy O'Connor, the newest Green, who replaced Peg Putt, was showing signs of emotion as the whole of the gallery in the Albert Hall demonstrated its solidarity with these four lonely people, the Government and Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition having abandoned the Parliament to the People. Her eyes were glistening, as she understood in that moment, that some link was being forged. I too felt that something special had happened and I wanted to tell her she was not on her own. This was not polite, token applause. This was one of those moments which would be hard to forget. The Government had abandoned its own parliament, taking with it the Opposition, both united in their betrayal of the People over the Pulp Mill, over Gunns, over honest, ethical Government. Only the Greens remained with us, the Public.

**Police came into the Parliament and helped the security personnel get us all out of there. Some were refusing to move, demanding to know under what law the police had the right to require them to move from the Parliament. It took quite a while before the 200-300 members of the public were able to be excluded. There was no rudeness, no violence from either side. Only a stubborn unwillingness from the public to yet again be excluded from the decisions that affect their lives.**

**This is why we say the government is undemocratic.**

**Inside it was mayhem. I doubt the speaker even knew what he was going to do next, and whether it would work.**



**I collected my camera and started taking pics while still inside. You can see the last few members of the public leaving 'the House'.**



**The chap controlling security. He has told me to stop taking pics and I said "Yes, last one!" and kept on shooting so he has walked in front trying to block my camera.**



**But ... I was taller. You can see the cops' hats - they'd been getting Ross and Fiona Story to leave. The Stories were sitting tight as long as possible, but left before being arrested.**



**Nick McKim (Leader of the Greens) came outside with us and spoke. Here he is trying to get back inside, while members of the gallery are still coming out. Everyone going in had been given a white tag, which is what the woman is wearing. It said "GALLERY PASS".**



**This woman and man were in favour of the mill. The man's name I think was Steven. They both asked me about my reasons for opposing the mill. The man's view was basically, that if you want to do something, and the law allows it, then you shouldn't be stopped from doing it. The woman brought up the issue of the employment that the mill could bring.**



**Security is now closing the doors. Nick McKim can be seen further inside.**



**This attendant ...**



**... is now part of history.**



**The new Greens Member of Parliament, Cassy O'Connor, (left of picture) taking notes, listening to what one of the people who has been kicked out, has to say.**



**Security begins to close the outer doors. It's the parliament that is listing to port, our member of the public remains upright ... the ship of state is going down ... last goodbyes ... last messages ...**



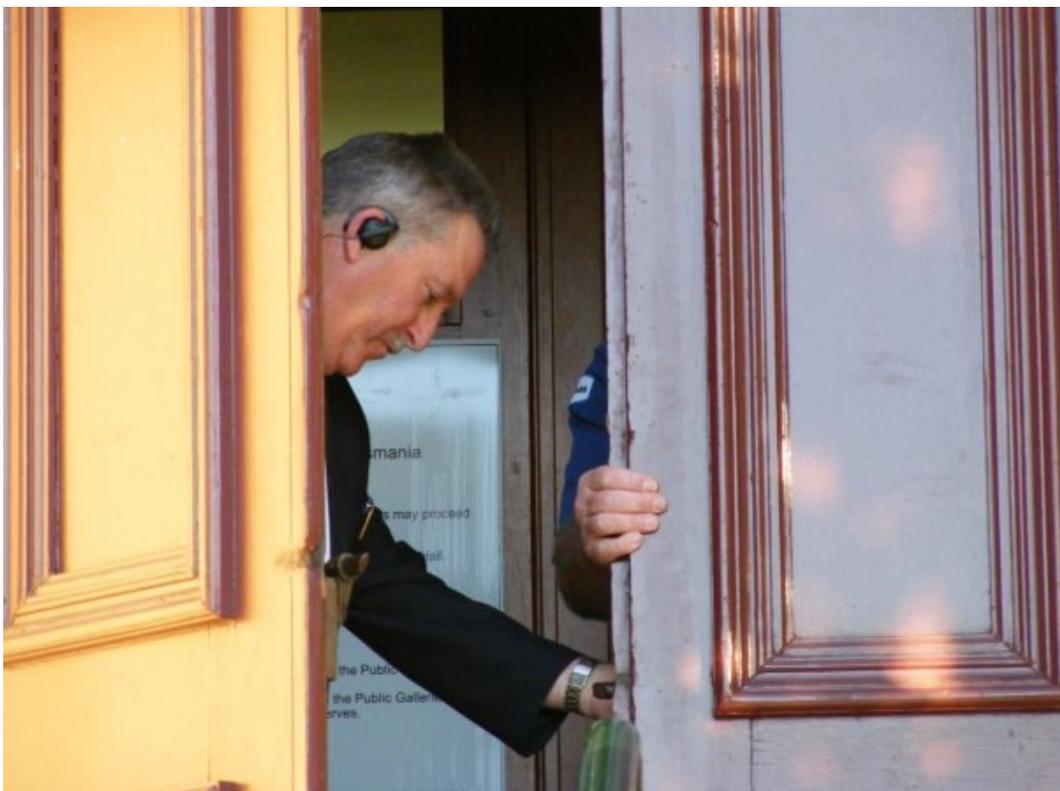
**These are the very last people to leave the sinking Parliament. I thought they were absolutely fabulous! In the background, Cassy looks to her fellow Greens.**



**One last note ... Come on Cassy, you'll get locked out!**



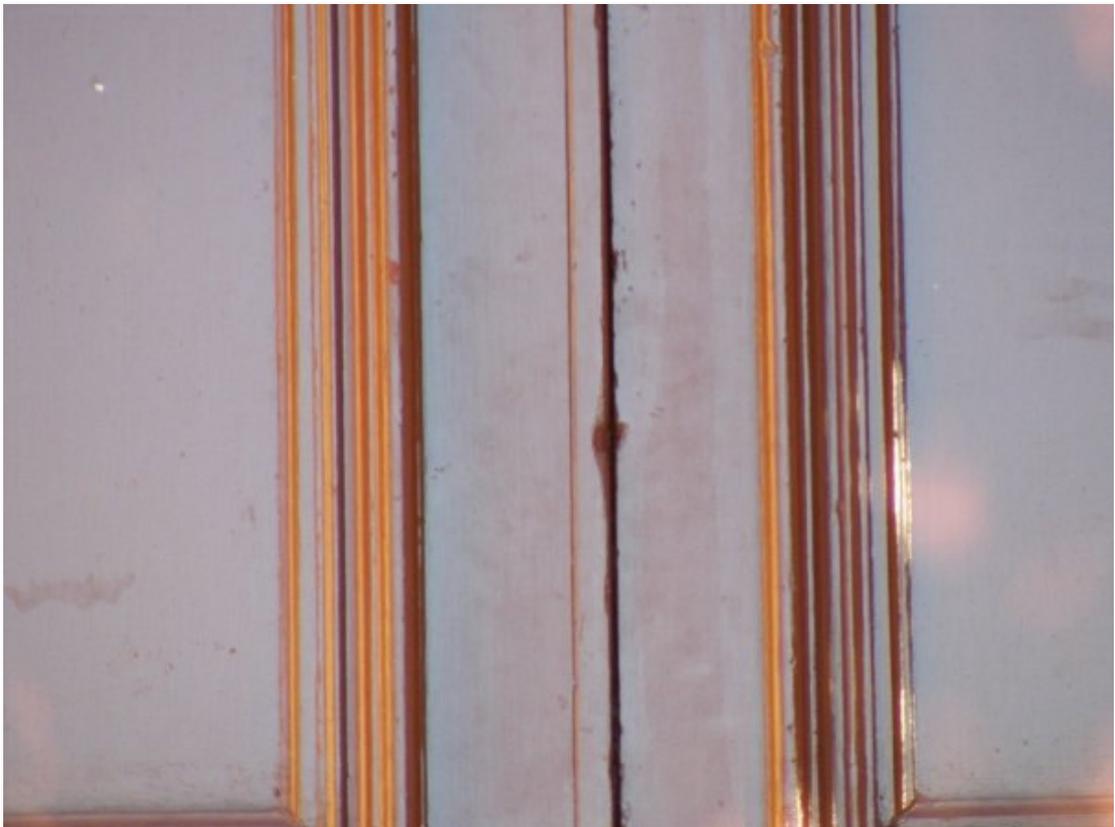
**And so she goes in ... in a unique act of heroism, Cassy has chosen to go back into the chamber, knowing her vote will fail, knowing that the ship of state, about to be locked against the outside world, is fatally damaged, and is sinking.**



**and now the doors are closed, bolts put in place...**



**...firmly...**



**parliament is now closed ... against the people.**