



Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck

Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources

Liberal Senator for Tasmania

MEDIA RELEASE

31 January 2019

Labor confirms return to sham forest deal job losses

After repeated denials from Tasmanian State and Federal members, the Federal Labor leadership confirmed they are promising to return Tasmania to the dark days of the sham forest deal which destroyed 4,000 jobs.

Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources Richard Colbeck said that forestry workers and the industry were right to be furious after local Labor members denied the truth for more than a month.

Assistant Minister Colbeck: “After playing for time since their Annual Conference in December, Labor has officially announced their policy to reintroduce the sham forest deal which locked up Tasmania and collapsed the forestry industry and jobs.

“Former Wilderness Society and current Labor Environment spokesman Tony Burke has come out spruiking Labor’s policy to return to the deal which destroyed 4,000 Tasmanian jobs, scoffing that “The only people who don’t seem to want peace in the forest sector and certainty for industry and their markets are the Liberals.” *

“The bad news for the greatest threat to the forest industry, Tony Burke, is that Tasmania and the forest industry have moved on from the disaster of his sham deal – they said so comprehensively at two elections.

“The Industry, under the supportive policies of the Liberals in Government is on the rise, investing and growing.

“Labor and the Greens put all that at risk.

“Labor will try to spin their position as supporting the industry, but we know from history that they don’t.

“This revelation confirms that Labor will say one thing one day, and another the next.

“Federal and State Labor members and Senators must today publicly reject a return to the sham forest deal.

“Justine Keay misled the Tasmanian public on 18 December last year when she said of reports that Labor were recommitting to the sham forest deal that “Senator Colbeck is desperately making up claims as a distraction”. **

“The State Labor Party – the most left-wing rabble in any state in the country – also maintains a commitment to the sham forest deal on their publicly available Party Platform. ***

“Spokesman Josh Willie misled the Tasmanian public on the same day when he said any suggestion of a Federal Labor move back to the sham forest deal was a “spurious claim” and said there were no plans to go back to the dark days of the Tasmanian Forest Agreement – now it is all there in black and white.

Media Contact: Felix Ellis 0457 517 734

“At least their Braddon Labor counterpart Shane Broad was honest in their intentions when he boasted to *The Advocate* in May about the job-killing deal. ****

“Greens spokesman Nick McKim showed gobsmacking hypocrisy when he called into question my integrity by saying “This is just about Richard Colbeck trying to restart the forest wars” while in the same breath reiterating his party’s complete ideological commitment to the disastrous deal he stitched up as part of the Labor-Green trainwreck government in Tasmania”. *****

“It is worth noting that the only people using the language of war and conflict are Labor and the Greens.

“Foresters and the industry are telling us they want the certainty provided by the Liberal-National Government’s National Forest Industries Plan.

“The Liberals in Government are planning for the exciting future of the industry through our forest industry plan while Labor are lost in the distant past.

“Industry and workers have told us explicitly that they don’t want to go back to the dark old days of lock-ups and job destruction as part of a Labor-Green policy of terminal decline.

“Tasmanians agreed, with both Federal and State Liberal Governments coming to office promising to rip up the sham forest deal which was written by campaigner and Labor frontbencher Tony Burke.

“Industry are furious and Tasmanians have a right to wonder how many times they have to tell the Labor-Greens: no lock ups, no job losses, hands off Tasmania!”

ENDS

--

When released, the Labor National Policy Platform will read: “Labor will continue to support the implementation of the conditions of the Tasmanian Forestry Agreement (TFA) as a future pathway for the forest industry in Tasmania. This provides resource security for the iconic special timbers industry, under agreed terms. Labor supports this as a broad industry plan to achieve the outcomes from the TFA.”

* *Labor flirts with forest protection, angering timber industry*: <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/labor-flirts-with-forest-protection-angering-timber-industry/news-story/79613cff35811a02a4504b0b079b8b90>

** *Nightly News 7 Tasmania – 18 December 2018*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-B_Q781rAM&t=629s

*** *Tasmanian Labor Policy Platform 2018*: <http://taslabor.com/platform/natural-resources-energy/>

**** *Tasmanian forest lock-up fears: Jonathon Duniam*: <https://www.theadvocate.com.au/story/5374311/tasmanian-forest-lock-up-fears-jonathon-duniam/>

***** *Nightly News 7 Tasmania – 18 December 2018*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-B_Q781rAM&t=629s