

McGowan clarifies details of his meeting with Crichton-Browne

Updated Tue 6 May 2008, 5:54pm AEST

The Education Minister Mark McGowan has clarified a statement he made in parliament last month, about a meeting he had with the former Liberal Senator Noel Crichton-Browne.

Mr McGowan told parliament they met in 2001 because Mr Crichton-Browne wanted to pass on information about members of the Liberal Party.

Today, Mr McGowan conceded that it was him that initiated the contact with the former Senator.

Mr McGowan says he wanted to meet Mr Crichton-Browne to discuss political issues and says there is nothing unusual about that.

"I rang him and I said to him would you like to have a coffee, that's the extent of it, now I've never met with him in the carpark of parliament to discuss evidence I'm going to give to the Triple C, I've never had any other meeting whatsoever with him," he said.

Mr Crichton-Browne has accused Mr McGowan of misleading the parliament about the nature of their meeting.

"He clearly has some difficulty in telling the truth," he said.

"He rang me for the exclusive purpose of asking me to provide him with whatever dirt I might have on the Liberal Party so as to allow him to ingratiate himself with the leader."

Topics: political-parties, alp, liberals, perth-6000

First posted Tue 6 May 2008, 4:50pm AEST

News

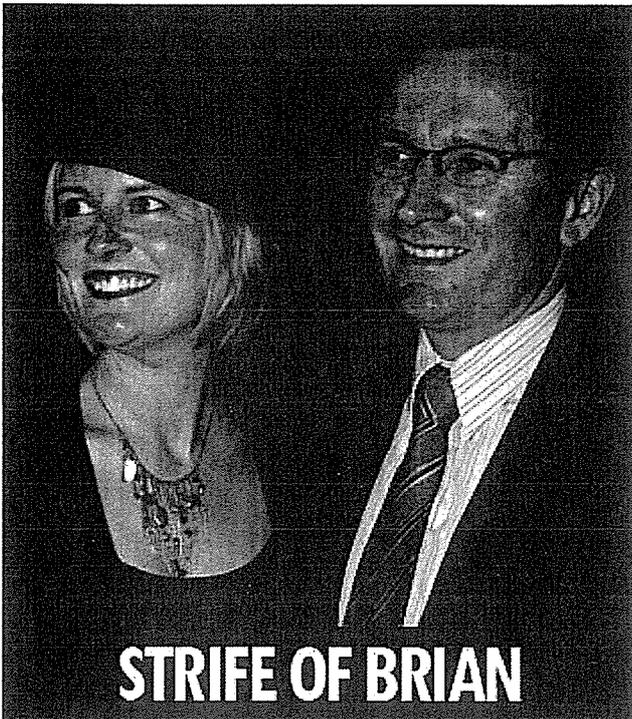
Perth Now

News

Mark McGowan email link to Brian Burke

- by: By Sunday Times education writer Paul Lampathakis
- From: PerthNow
- April 25, 2008 10:00PM

1



LINK: Using the email address of Mr McGowan's wife, Sarah, the pair exchanged emails where Brian Burke advised Mr McGowan about campaign fundraising strategy.

Source: The Sunday Times

THE future of the Premier's right-hand man, Education Minister Mark McGowan, hangs in the balance after revelations of his links to Brian Burke.

Mr McGowan has repeatedly denied involvement with Mr Burke – telling parliament and the media that the former Labor premier even prepared a campaign against him at the 2005 election.

But explosive emails obtained by *The Sunday Times* reveal that aspiring premier Mr McGowan was working with the disgraced lobbyist at that election.

Using the email address of Mr McGowan's wife, Sarah, the pair exchanged emails where Mr Burke advised Mr McGowan about campaign fundraising strategy.

Other emails show Mr Burke also wrote a fundraising letter and newspaper ads to get Mr McGowan re-elected.

Shadow attorney-general Christian Porter called for Premier Alan Carpenter to sack Mr McGowan.

"What makes it a dismissable offence is that by using his wife's email it has been clearly done with the intention to deceive . . . as to the true nature of his relationship with Mr Burke," Mr Porter said.

* [The emails were sent when Mr McGowan was parliamentary secretary to then-premier Geoff Gallop, during Dr Gallop's ban on ministers and their staff meeting Mr Burke and lobbyist Julian Grill.

Mr Carpenter – who also has a ban on ministers contacting the lobbyists – forced out ministers Norm Marlborough, John Bowler and Tony McRae over their dealings with Mr Burke and Mr Grill. He could not comment because he was abroad.

Acting Premier Eric Ripper would not comment.

Emails in February 2005 – just before the election – show Mr Burke guiding Mr McGowan on strategy. They involve Peel MLA Norm Marlborough, Fran Logan – who is now Energy and Resources Minister – ALP state secretary Bill Johnston and former federal Labor leader Kim Beazley.

"Dear Mark . . . it is absolutely essential that you keep Norm (Marlborough) fully informed about the funds raised in response to the (Kim) Beazley letter," said Mr Burke's email to Mr McGowan, at 10am, February 1, 2005.

"This frank sharing of information is important in any team situation and I will explain to you when I see you why it is so critical.

"Norm mentioned to you a fundraising dinner with Kim – as discussed, we need to get dates from Kim, and Norm is ringing him today. I would hope to sell 25 to 30 tickets at \$1000 each – what do you think about including Fran (Logan) or someone else?"

Mr Burke's email also invited Mr McGowan and his wife to a barbecue at his house.

Mrs McGowan responded first, saying she would "pass on" the email, then Mr McGowan emailed back the next day, saying: "Dear Brian . . . I will pass on to Norm (Marlborough) today a list of donations I have received so far as a result of the fundraising letter.

"The fundraising dinner is an excellent idea if Kim (Beazley) has the time.

"I am comfortable about including Fran Logan, but would also like to see the ALP and Bill Johnston receive some of the proceeds."

Another email shows Mr Burke telling a designer how to word slogans on Mr McGowan's, Mr Logan's and Mr Marlborough's election ads.

In an email about a fundraising letter written by Mr Burke, Mr Burke asks that a party staffer tell Mr McGowan that "ALL of the donations will go to his campaign".

"The aim of the exercise is to maximise the donations received," Mr Burke's email said.

The Sunday Times phoned Mr McGowan yesterday and asked whether Mr Burke helped him in the last state election.

Mr McGowan responded: "It's not true mate, there's no emails. Look, I'm. Look I'm. This isn't my email address. Can I just, can I talk to my wife . . . Can I call you back because I have no recollection of this?"

The questions continued: "I mean you would remember if Brian helped you in the last state election."