



OPINION

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Eager beavers jump all over Cadart's faux pas

FRENCH classes in high school consisted of me sitting between two thugs who had beaten me to puberty by about 10 years, competing to see which one could give me the best dead arm.

It was galling (boom-tish) to say the least that I was marked down for not answering questions when I couldn't raise my arms.

However, I still learned enough of the language to know that when Glamorgan Spring Bay Mayor Bertrand Cadart called some members of his community "bogans" that he was in deep merde.

But did he really? Well, yes, but it has to be put in context.

The mayor was talking about a lack of community spirit or common goal in Tasmania. When he said the population was too disparate, "from the most bogan of bogans... to the greenest pain in the arse", he hit the nail on head.

However, this is Tasmania and we don't like outsiders, even ones who have lived in Australia for more than 40 years, telling us some home truths.

The comments were made in an article in national magazine *The Monthly* about how the Triabunna woodchip mill was deliberately and systematically dismantled by its environmental owners while the details of the forestry peace deal were being hammered out.

It's always interesting to read

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an outsider's thoughts and interpretations of Tasmania's long-running forestry battles and John van Tiggelen's piece in *The Monthly* is very good.

It combines interviews, background information and a writer's eye for detail and description: no one party comes out looking particularly insightful.

Not Tasmanian Liberal Senator Eric Abetz whose hatred of the Greens extends to the rather specious analogy that beavers cut down trees to make dams and that's okay by greensies, but when a human wants to log forests and build dams, it is the worst thing imaginable.

"Beavers have more rights than humans in the Greens' world," he says.

What has largely been ignored is the deliberate sabotage of the site by former Wilderness Society boss Alec Marr, appointed mill manager by its environmentalist owners Jan Cameron and Graeme Wood.

While environmental and industry representatives were trying to negotiate their way through a forestry peace deal, Marr brought in welders and



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electricians to render the site inoperable.

Marr then gloats triumphantly.

"It's truly been a great day: the control's f--ed, the chipper's f--ed, the sorting room is f--ed, the ship loader's f--ed, the high-voltage switchboard is f--ed," he says.

"I reckon to fix it all would cost \$2 million and take six months. One or two more days

like this, and we'll no longer have a mill."

The reaction of mill owner Graeme Wood, who bought the site with fellow multi-millionaire Jan Cameron, to the destruction riled forestry workers.

"He [Marr] just wanted to f-- the industry over; he didn't give a toss about what would happen to the site afterwards," Wood said.

Bogan-gate allowed the main point of the article to be glossed over: that once the mill was bought, it was never, ever going to operate again.

Reporters instead latched on to the bogan comment — one actually admitted to Mr Cadart that they had not read the article, but wanted to know if he stood by the comments.

Calls for a no-confidence motion from other Glamorgan Spring Bay councillors must be viewed through the prism of the pettiness of local council politics (particularly with an election due later this year), where personality clashes, disagreements and vendettas are common.

Those calling for Mr Cadart's head include the people he beat for the top job and those who will run for it in October.

Any political damage they can do to the incumbent helps their chances.

C'est la vie.