

KEY STAFFER PAID \$22,500

SECRET tapes lifting the lid on confidential dealings and payouts behind the police command crisis have rocked the Baillieu Government.

More than four hours of digital audio recordings and documents have emerged revealing former adviser Tristan Weston — who quit in the wake of an OPI report into the split between top cops Simon Overland and Sir Ken Jones — was paid \$22,500 by the Liberal Party.

EXCLUSIVE

James Campbell

The payments were made after Mr Weston was forced to resign as an adviser to Deputy Premier and Police Minister Peter Ryan.

The tapes also reveal that Mr Weston was repeatedly offered help in finding a new job by the Premier's most senior adviser, Tony Nutt — actions at odds with

JOB HELP AT ODDS WITH PREMIER

Ted Baillieu's public assurances that his office was not assisting the former adviser.

"I mean, I know Gina Rinehart," Mr Nutt tells Mr Weston in a phone conversation on July 10, 2012.

A source has provided the *Herald Sun* with digital recordings of three phone conversations and two meetings involving Mr Weston, Mr Nutt, and the Victorian director of the Liberal Party, Damien Mantach. The

BAILLIEU ADVISER SLAMS DEPUTY PREMIER

Herald Sun played no role in recording the conversations. In them, Mr Nutt told Mr

Weston "there's lots of people we collectively know — Damien, Ted — in the real world. If that's where you end up, the Liberal family is never going to forget you and your family."

In one tape, when Mr Nutt tells Mr Weston he must resign, Mr Nutt says: "I appreciate that there may be more there ... but he's the Deputy Premier in a one-seat majority government."

Mr Weston yesterday stood by his version of events: "I was always taught that if you can't say something nice about someone, you should say nothing at all."

Mr Ryan's spokesman said: "The OPI exhaustively investigated these issues and published findings adverse to Mr Weston. Mr Ryan stands by all comments made in all forums regarding these issues." **Reports, Pages 4-7** П



l'll help you get a **Top Baillieu aide**

pledged support to former adviser

TED Baillieu's top adviser repeatedly promised a former adviser to Police Minister Peter Ryan he would help him get a new job — revelations at odds with the

Premier's assurances. In a phone conversation recorded on July 10, Mr Baillieu's chief of staff, Tony Nutt, even told Tristan Weston he knew Gina Rinehart, indicating he'd approach her to give him work.

Mr Weston said he was interested in doing security assessment work in the mining industry, and Mr Nutt said he was happy to oblige.

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"There's a lot of ... people . I know in the mining industry . . . I'm a Perth boy originally, you know. I mean, I know Gina Rinehart," Mr Nutt said in the call.

"I've met a lot them, and the ones I don't know, I know the bloke who knows the bloke who set up the company 30 years ago, or something. So you know, I know a lot of those people."

The call to Mr Weston came a day after Mr Weston told Liberal Party state director Damien Mantach he was annoyed at Mr Ryan's comments about him: "I think, you know, Peter Ryan tends to run off at the mouth, and it would be in his best interests not to, mate."

The offer of job assistance was in addition to \$22,500 paid to Mr Weston on the say-so of Mr Mantach, who in one recording can be heard reminding him: "I am the person who stepped in and put you on a payroll for three months ... And you know, I didn't have to do that, and I did.'

Mr Nutt's offer, and other promises of assistance, were made both before and after October, 2011, when Mr Weston resigned following the OPI's accusation he had run a campaign against police chief Simon Overland.

Last July, broadcaster Neil Mitchell put it to Mr Baillieu that Mr Ŵeston had "taken a fall" and that Deputy Premier Peter Ryan was "up to his neck in it and to help square things off your people are trying to get him a job'

Mr Baillieu replied: "I don't believe that's the case", and "I just don't think there's any credibility to that scenario". The recordings reveal Mr Nutt's first promise to Mr

James Campbell

Weston was made even before the OPI had tabled its report on crisis in police command.

A week before the OPI report became public, in October, 2011, Mr Nutt met Mr Weston and Mr Mantach at the Liberal Party's headquarters in Exhibition St. None of them knew wheth-

er the OPI's report would clear Mr Weston of misconduct, criticise him, or recommend he be charged.

But Mr Nutt was keen to reassure Mr Weston that whatever the report found, the Premier and the Liberal Party would not forget him. "(There's) lots of people

that we collectively all know – Damien knows and I know and Ted knows and lots of people know, um - in the wider world. So if that's where we wind up in a month or two, with you looking to the wider world, then I think that you shouldn't feel that the Liberal family is suddenly sort of going to say, 'Thank you very much' and wave you

"You know, that's not the way we work," he said.

At the same meeting, the two men discussed with Mr Weston how he could avoid the media in the days after the report was released.

Mr Mantach said the party could find Mr Weston and his family accommodation at short notice

"We can quickly find a cottage or a house or, you know, another sort of accommodation you need. You know, down the west somewhere I think would be good, where you're right out of the Melbourne CBD," he said.

"You know, in a quiet town somewhere, whether it's Queenscliff or Point Lonsdale, or further down at Anglesea or Apollo Bay or somewhere, that's — you've got to go away, mate. I mean, the last thing we want is media turning up at school,

and on this sort of issue." The day before the report was tabled, the three men met again.

At this meeting, Mr Nutt told Mr Weston he had read the report — "they've really gone after you" — and it would be impossible for Mr Weston to keep working for the Government, especially



TRISTAN WESTON

A Detective Leading Senior Constable with 15 years' experience in Victoria Police. Appointed as Peter Ryan's adviser on police in March 2011. Resigned October 2011 after OPI report found he undermined Simon Overland.



TONY NUTT

Took over as Ted Baillieu's chief of staff from Michael Kapel in January, 2012, after nine months as director of his private office. Previously chief of staff to Prime Minister John Howard and state director of the Liberal Party in South Australia and Victoria.



DAMIEN MANTACH

Replaced Nutt as Liberal Party state director in February, 2011, when Nutt went to Ted Baillieu's office. Previously state director in Tasmania after working in the **Howard Government's Government** Members Secretariat.



SIR KEN JONES

Senior British policeman, appointed Deputy Commissioner of Victoria Police in 2009. Fell out with Simon Overland after raising concerns about issues including parolees. Resigned after being directed to take leave in May 2011. Was critcised by the OPI.

as the OPI was signalling it might still charge him.

But after helping Mr Weston to draft his resignation letter, Mr Nutt made it clear he was prepared to help Mr Weston find work in the mining industry, once the controversy had died down. "I would be in a position say to people directly.

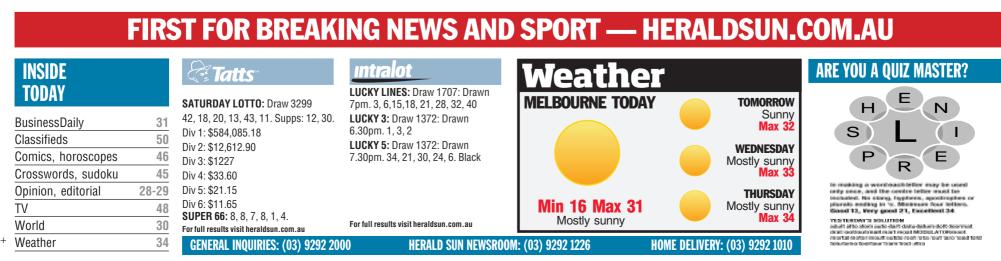
well, look, you know, there's been unpleasantness, pretty political, but, you know, if you're looking for a good quality person, here's a good quality person," he said. In July, 2012, a week after

the OPI said it would not charge Mr Weston, Mr Nutt rang him to discuss what help he could be.

"So given that that's now clear, and given there's no question of any legal proceedings against you, then I think it would be good to sort of ramp up the assistance," he said.

"You know, happy to assist. But obviously I don't want to go blundering around the place in

you've got something lined up, subject to clearance. But if ... it's something we can do to help, we'd be keen to do that now that we're not in this awful environment of ... can the Premier's office say something to someone, and then he's charged a week later?' iames campbell@news com au





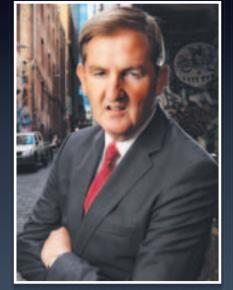
BILL TILLEY

Former Victorian policeman. Liberal MP for the seat of Benambra since 2006. Appointed December 2010 as parliamentary secretary to Peter Ryan. Resigned October 2011 as parliamentary secretary after OPI findings criticised him.

TED BAILLIEU Became Premier after successfully contesting the November 2010



job...I know Gina



PETER RYAN

Deputy Premier and Minister for Police and Emergency Services. Leader of the National Party. Employed Tristan Weston as his ministerial adviser on police after the 2010 election. Denied knowledge of Mr Weston's activities.

MICHAEL STRONG

Former Crown prosecutor and judge of the County Court. Appointed Director of the Office of Police Integrity in 2008 and resigned in January 2012 after the decision by the Baillieu Government to abolish the OPI.

BAILLIEU'S JULY 2012 RADIO INTERVIEW WITH NEIL MITCHELL

MITCHELL: You want to know what I'm getting at? I'm getting at the suggestion that Tristan Weston's taken a fall, that Peter Ryan's up to his neck in it and to help square things off your people are trying to get him a job. That's what I'm putting to you.

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BAILLIEU: Well I just don't think there's any credibility to that scenario.

MITCHELL: Well there is possibly if you've been trying to get work for him.

BAILLIEU: Well I've said to you Neil I don't think that's the case...



SIMON OVERLAND

Appointed Deputy Commissioner of Victoria Police 2006, and Chief Commissioner 2009, under the Brumby Labor Government. Resigned July 2011 after the Ombudsman found he authorised the release of misleading crime stats during 2010 election.

BEN HINDMARSH

Chief of staff to Deputy Premier Peter Ryan. He gave evidence critical of Mr Weston at the OPI inquiry and denied claims by Mr Weston that he had endorsed Mr Weston's conduct.

COMPARISON RATE

Employee's Name: Location/Employee Cox	CAMPAUON Rate	50 DO 10
Pay Details Normal Pay Care Super Care Super Annual Leave	173.3333 543.384354 7044 675.90 9.00% Total 4.0853 Days	Pay Line 11101/12
	Liberal Party (Victorian Division) Tristan Weston	Pay Date 51/01/12 34/5
Risertal Pay Care AL	173.3333 843.2602./H 5675.00 9.00 % Total: 3.3973Days	173 333 5675 0 1 6666 D

REVEALED: Adviser Tony Nutt told Tristan Weston that he knew Gina Rinehart, Australia's richest person, while offering to help him find work. Liberal Party pay receipts documenting cash paid to Mr Weston. The Herald Sun has obscured Mr Weston's ABN in the tearouts.

Pau Point

\$43,209

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'Stasi' culture attacked

James Campbell

THE Office of Police Integrity was steeped in a "cowboy, Stasi, bizarre, no judgment, just-fit-peopleup" culture under the leadership of Michael Strong, according to Premier Ted Baillieu's top adviser.

In a conversation recorded in July last year, Tony Nutt cited the "corrupt" culture as a reason why the Government intended to make it much harder to make a complaint to its new Independent Broad-based Anticorruption Commission.

"(You) would have noticed that with IBAC we've put in all sorts of constraints and controls to ensure that the kind of generalised allegation and automatic destruction of people's good name has been much more severely constrained... and we're going to have all sorts of supervising mechanisms so that they're not unchecked and rampaging around the place," he said.

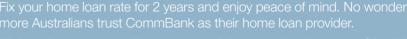
place," he said. Mr Nutt reassured former ministerial adviser Tristan Weston the Government was keen to make sure that OPI staff did not move across to the IBAC.

"No, no, no. We're not going to keep the same people," he said. "We're trying to make sure that the CEO is a

"We're trying to make sure that the CEO is a person who is . . . straight, professional, not a player." He said acting IBAC Commissioner Ron Bonighton had been told personnel selection should reflect the need for a cultural change.

"If someone's a, you know, technician, or a typist or something, that's one thing. But those people who, if you like, the custodians of the culture aren't necessarily the ideal people now," he said.





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The tale of the tape

OCTOBER 21, 2011:

Meeting between Damien Mantach, Tony Nutt and Tristan Weston.

Nutt: "There's lot of people that we collectively know, that Damien knows and I know and Ted knows and lots of people know in the wider world... you shouldn't feel

going to say 'thank you very much' and wave you and your family goodbye. Nutt later says: "You now, as we get over that hump, the Liberal family is there."

that the Liberal family is suddenly

OCTOBER 26, 2011:

Meeting between Damien Mantach, Tony Nutt and Tristan Weston. Nutt: "... and I appreciate that

there may be more there as you mentioned the other day but he's the Deputy Premier in a one-seat majority government."

Nutt: "Well what I understand there was a very aggressive set-up sort of Guantanamo interrogations minus the waterboarding ... "Nutt continues: "...what surprised me was, for a judge it was over the top and clearly written to a script. evil Sir Ken, evil Tristan, is what it was.'

"What we don't want is Ryan not really focused on you, but to generally puff it up instead of calm it down. Peter does have that

tendency, frankly as I'm sure you would have experienced working for him. he can go over the top...' Weston: "Would you pay my contract or what would be the arrangement?"

Nutt replies: "...where people go in certain sets of circumstances it wouldn't usually be the case ... they wouldn't have automatic entitlement to be paid out." Nutt then says: "I suspect through some mechanism or another, we might be able to do something ... '

Nutt: "For a reason that will be obvious to you, this part of the discussion has no reference whatsoever to the earlier part of the discussion... there can be no question of inducement."

.. the abuse of power has been extraordinary... and it's all too cozy and it's been basically a police... a commissioner management technique. A body's that supposed to be in check on the force becomes a body to enforce the will of the Commissioner."

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Ted's man scorned **Nats leader**

James Campbell

POLICE Minister Peter Ryan was last year told by Ted Baillieu's top aide to "put a sock in it" and stop criticising his former adviser, Tristan Weston.

Tony Nutt also told Mr Weston that by not publicly responding to Mr Ryan's public criticisms, he'd "acted with integrity in what's been an awful situation". The comment is one of a

series of disparaging remarks the Liberal adviser made about Mr Ryan — the Deputy Premier and leader of the National Party - in conversations recorded between October, 2011, and July, 2012. Mr Ryan, Mr Nutt said at an October 26 meeting, had

a tendency to "puff it up". "He can go over the top when it needs to be calm," he said.

"It's like the (Michael) Kapel-(deputy police com-missioner) Sir Ken (Jones) meeting. For reasons I still don't understand, instead of going 'I didn't know about it beforehand; the meeting took place, and frankly, I prefer it did not take place, but it did; let's move on', he revved it up." (Mr Kapel was Mr Nutt's predecessor as Mr Bail-

lieu's chief of staff.)

In one conversation, Mr Nutt told Mr Weston that despite Mr Ryan's statements to the OPI criticising Mr Weston's dealings with the police union and the media, he had done nothing out of the ordinary.

"A ministerial adviser deals with the press; a ministerial adviser handles the politics: a ministerial adviser talks to the union," he said.

"All of that happens every day of the week, everywhere in Australia, all the time. Ah, including, frankly, the odd bit of, vou know, ancient Spanish practices and a bit of bastardry on the way through. That's all the nature of politics.

"What do we think (Labor leader) Mr (Daniel) Andrews' staff are doing today? Sitting down thinking about road building?"

The problem, he told Mr Weston in a meeting on October 26, 2011, was that Mr Ryan's evidence and



The Herald Sun believes the public has an absolute right to know what was discussed in these phone calls and meetings. What was being thrashed out in secret strikes at the heart of the administration of government and police force

FULL EDITORIAL, **PAGE 28**

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that of his chief of staff, Ben Hindmarsh, to the OPI would make it difficult for him to remain as a government adviser.

Mr Nutt, at one point, appeared to concede that Mr

Weston's version of events might be correct, saying: "I ap-preciate that there may be more there."

But, he said, the political reality was that the Premier would back Mr Ryan, "the Deputy Premier in a oneseat majority government".

Days before he read the report, Mr Nutt had accurately predicted that Mr Ryan and Mr Hindmarsh's evidence

was likely to cause Mr Weston problems. At their meeting five days

earlier on October 21, Mr Nutt speculated about how the pair had behaved when quizzed by the OPI, in contrast to the Premier's then chief of staff, Mr Kapel: "Kapel is pretty smart, and I don't think he would have gone along dropping people in it. But I think it's not inconceivable that other actors, um, in the flurry for selfdefence, might have said whatever they've said.'

He later speculated that Mr Ryan and Mr Hindmarsh had not coped as well.

"If I were looking for a pressure point, and I will assume for a minute that the chief of staff or the minister had been grilled by the OPI, with the lights flashing and the cameras recording, um, and the whole — and I've never been

through it, but I understand that it's pretty aggressive; they take themselves very seriously, even when dealing with ministers — um, so, you know, I can envisage the sort of, some phrase in the report that basically says, well, 'We didn't authorise Mr Weston to do this or Mr Weston to do that.'

"Whether or not they did, we'll just leave aside for the minute."



JULY 9, 2012:

Telephone conversation between **Damien Mantach and Tristan Weston** Weston: "I hope we don't have a guarrel because I don't think you're that sort of bloke." Mantach reponds: "Well mate, I am the person who stepped in and put you on the payroll for three months just to keep a bit of ... '

JULY 10, 2012:

Telephone conversation between Tony Nutt and Tristan Weston

"So, can I do this? If you're agreeable, what I'll do is just very discreetly now go to work and see if we can find some people dotted around the place on the basis that it's settled, some part time work. Is there any particular task/set of hours, like is it night work... you see...there's a lot of those people in Queensland and in Western Australia who through certain sources I know in the mining industry in Western Australia because I'm a Perth boy originally you know, I mean I know

Gina Rinehart. I'm not sure that's a good or a bad thing but I know a lot of those people.'

Nutt: "...but you would have noticed that with IBAC we've put in all sorts of constraints and controls to ensure that the kind of generalised allegation and automatic destruction of people's good name has been much more severely constrained under the future anti-corruption commission and we're going to have all sorts of supervising mechanisms so that they're not unchecked and

rampaging around the place doing pretty much what they want to anyone.'

JULY 11, 2012:

Telephone conversation between Tony Nutt and Tristan Weston

"ramp everything up... Ted has deliberately left the parliamentary secretaryship vacant. In due course, if this issue ever settles down...I know he'd like to give Bill another go in another opportunity ... '

Nutt: "...you're quite right. He was treated like s--t... there's no doubt about that, he was just treated like dirt.

...and obviously it's in everyone's interest and I spoke to Ryan last night after you and I spoke and said 'for God's sake Pete put a sock in it' you know I mean off the record of course...

Weston: "I can't put any sugar on it. Peter is a liar. Peter lied to the OPI, Peter lied to the Parliament and he's continuing to lie about what he did and didn't know."

put a sock in it

HOW IT ALL UNFOLDED

NOVEMBER 2010 Baillieu Government elected.

MARCH 2011

Tristan Weston begins work as a ministerial adviser in Deputy Premier Peter Ryan's office after being given leave from Victoria Police.

APRIL 2011

Weston meets Sir Ken Jones to discuss a possible role in the IBAC.

MAY 2011

Jones announces he will resign from Victoria Police in August.

Overland sends Jones on indefinite leave, complains to the OPI that Jones has been leaking.

The Government summons Overland to explain his

actions. JUNE – SEPTEMBER 2011

OPI holds secret hearings into allegations against



Sir Ken Jones. Weston, Peter Ryan, and Parliamentary Secretary Bill Tilley all give evidence along with Ryan's chief of staff Ben Hindmarsh.

OCTOBER 2011 The OPI releases Crossing the Line report which accuses Weston of running a campaign against Overland without authorisation. Weston resigns.

Tilley resigns as Parliamentary Secretary. **JULY 2012**

OPI admits it will not charge Weston. Ted Baillieu denies the Liberal Party is trying to help Weston get a job.

Nutt's phone call suggests a **Tilley comeback**

James Campbell

TONY Nutt dangled the prospect of a return to a frontbench role for ousted parliamentary secretary Bill Tilley in a phone call to former ministerial adviser Tristan Weston.

"Ted has deliberately left the parliamentary sec-retaryship vacant," he said in the phone call on July 11, 2012.

"In due course, if this issue ever settles down, you know, I know that he'd like to give Bill another go," he said.

The offer came near the end of a call which began with Mr Nutt asking Mr Weston to try to stop Mr Tilley going on the Jon Faine radio program, and criticising Peter Ryan.

"I'm sorry to ring you first thing in the morning, but do you have any currency with Bill? I mean, is there anything you could do?" he said. Mr Weston said Mr Tilley

was "very angry" about how Mr Ryan had treated him. "He was sort of ostracised from the outset and he was given no role ... and always marginalised and ostracised

by the Police Minister's office," he said. "Bill's on the

warpath ... because he's

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Bill Tillev

basically been labelled a liar by Peter Ryan."

At another point in the conversation, Mr Weston said: "I can't put any sugar on it. Peter is a liar. Peter lied to the OPI, Peter lied to the Parliament and he's continu-ing to lie about what he did and didn't know.'

Mr Nutt acknowledged Mr Tilley had been badly treated by the Deputy Premier. "He was treated like s--t. There's no doubt about that.'

A spokesman for Mr Ryan said last night: "The OPI exhaustively investigated these issues and published findings adverse to Mr Weston. Mr Ryan stands by all comments previously made in all forums regarding these issues.'

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