March 27, 2015

Abbott future on line in state poll

Jo Coghlan, Dr, Southern Cross University

Available at: https://works.bepress.com/jo_coghlan/94/
ABBOTT FUTURE ON LINE IN STATE POLL

Big swing against Baird could spell end for PM

LUCY ARDERN

PRIME Minister Tony Abbott’s political future is riding on the NSW Coalition losing only 20 seats tomorrow.

Federal backbenchers around the country are ready to act if the conservative backlash is greater.

Southern Cross University lecturer and former Keating government staffer Dr Jo Coghlan said if the NSW Coalition lost more than 20 seats, pressure would mount for Mr Abbott to step down.

“If another five seats fall, it could mean Mr Abbott is gone on Monday,” she said.

Dr Coghlan said the anti-Abbott sentiment would be a factor in some seats on Saturday – including some in northern NSW.

“(Liberal leader) Mike Baird is popular, so it will not be the same as Queensland,” she said.

“But the anti-Abbott sentiment will play a role here.

“The shine has gone off the conservatives for a lot of people, particularly in the north because they read the Queensland and NSW news.”

Dr Coghlan is predicting large swings in Lismore and Ballina, but thinks Tweed and Clarence will be retained by the National Party with a reduced margin.

“The National Party could lose as much as 10 per cent in Tweed and Clarence,” she said.

“But they won’t go marginal.”

Dr Coghlan said the number of candidates in Ballina would make things tougher for the Nationals.

The vote will be split between eight candidates in Ballina, and all of them – except National Chris Beavis – are putting the party last.

The contest has also been opened up by the decision of National party stalwart Don Page to retire after 27 years.

“Ballina could go down to the wire,” she said.

The fight between Lismore council deputy mayor Isaac Smith and Nationals’ MP Thomas George is also shaping up as one of tomorrow’s most interesting political contests.

This week Mr Smith said roads and coal seam gas were the biggest issues for voters across most of northern NSW.

He said he was relieved the election was almost over.

“It is good to see the finish line,” he said.

The National Party could lose as much as 10 per cent in Tweed and Clarence.

DR JO COGHLAN
WHERE TO VOTE

All polling places are open 8am-6pm on election day

- Manifold Public School
- Modanville Public School
- Murwillumbah Civic and Cultural Centre
- Nimbin Central School
- Richmond River High School
- Rosebank Public School
- Sir Henry Parkes Memorial School of Arts
- St Joseph's Primary School
- South Murwillumbah
- St Michael's Centre
- St Paul's Memorial Hall Lismore
- St Vincents Private Hospital Lismore
- Stokers Siding Public School
- Sydney Town Hall
- Tabulam Public School
- The Channon Hall
- Trinity Catholic College St Joseph's Site Lismore
- Tyalgum Public School
- Uki Public School
- Urbenville Public School
- Wiangaree Hall
- Wollumbin High School
- Woodburn CWA Rooms
- Woodenbong Central School
- Wyrallah Public School
Tony Abbott will have some anxious moments until the results are out.