

Enter Record of Interview Craig Hawkins &

OP GRAND

EXHIBIT No. 320  
*[Signature]* CLERK

**TAPE NO:** 1 (of 2)

**DATE:** 04/10/05

**PLACE:** Southport

**TIME COMMENCED:** 14.08 P.M.

**TIME CONCLUDED:**

**INTERVIEWEE:** Ian Solomon

**INTERVIEWER/S:** Craig Hawkins

**LEGAL OFFICER:** Anna McDonald

**RE:** Operation Grand

**FILE NUMBER:** MI-05-2482

Complainant:  
Subject(s): Operation Grand  
Investigator:  
Statement Of:  
Legal Officer: Anna McDonald  
File Number: MI-05-2482  
Directory :

COPY TAPE 1 OF 2 - RECORD OF INTERVIEW BETWEEN CRAIG HAWKINS AND IAN SOLOMON

LEGAL OFFICER: Anna McDonald

RE: Operation Grand

IS = IAN SOLOMON

CH = CRAIG HAWKINS

SW = STEVE WHITELAW

- 1 CH: The time is approximately uh 2:14 p.m. on Tuesday the 4<sup>th</sup> of October 2005. My name's  
2 Craig Hawkins. I'm an investigator with the Crime and Misconduct Commission uh here  
3 at the address of 10 Ferry Road, uh Southport uh conducting an interview uh with Mr Ian  
4 Solomon. Just for the purpose of voice recognition, if everyone could introduce  
5 themselves by name, starting with yourself, Mr Solomon  
6  
7 IS: Ian Solomon  
8  
9 SW: Yeah uh Detective Sergeant Stephen Whitelaw, Crime and Misconduct Commission  
10  
11 CH: Now as we discussed prior to commencing the tape, uh Mr Solomon we're here to  
12 discuss uh any knowledge you may have in relation to the uh 2004 Gold Coast City  
13 Council elections and candidates in relation to that um you're happy for the interview  
14 today to be taped?  
15  
16 IS: Yes.  
17  
18 CH: OK um now as I said, it's in relation to the uh Gold Coast uh City Council elections in  
19 2004 uh and some allegations that have been made against some of the fund raising  
20 activities for candidates uh and in fact for current councillors within that Council um just  
21 to start with, we'll get some uh personal details from you including your full and correct  
22 spelling of your name?  
23  
24 IS: Yes, it's Ian Solomon, S-O-L-O-M-O-N, uh date of birth, 10<sup>th</sup> of June 1961. (Phone  
25 rings) sorry just a second.. hello.. yes it is, look can I give you a call back in about 45  
26 minutes? I'm just in an interview. I've got your number, yeah, what's your first name?  
27 OK, no problem.  
28  
29 CH: Uh no middle name?  
30  
31 IS: Uh no.  
32

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33 CH: And home address?  
34  
35 IS: Uh street number 26 Norfolk Avenue, Surfers Paradise.  
36  
37 CH: And contact phone number?  
38  
39 IS: Uh mobile 0412 754 416, office 5528 5506  
40  
41 CH: And your uh current occupation?  
42  
43 IS: I'm a company director  
44  
45 CH: And what company is that?  
46  
47 IS: It's a company called Pittwin Pty Ltd and (UI)  
48  
49 CH: And any other directors of that company?  
50  
51 IS: No  
52  
53 CH: You're sole director?  
54  
55 IS: Correct.  
56  
57 CH: Now just in relation to the 2004 elections, during that time, I believe you were a member  
58 of a chamber of commerce? Could you just inform me where that was and what position  
59 you may have held?  
60  
61 IS: Yes, in 2004 I was the President of Southport Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc.  
62 It's a voluntary position, uh, I had been in that position for 6 years uh and I've been a  
63 member of the Chamber for around a dozen years  
64  
65 CH: And uh at the time um you were President at that time? Who was your Vice-President?  
66  
67 IS: Uh there were three Vice-Presidents. Um I'd have to go back to the minutes and see who  
68 who they were those those positions change with some frequency but the man who uh  
69 man who became president for one year was Alec Watson, he was one of the vice-  
70 presidents, and uh he obviously only had one term and there's a new president now.  
71  
72 CH: OK, so going to the uh...  
73  
74 IS: I chose not to I chose not to recontest the position after six years  
75  
76 CH: So when was your last year there?

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IS: Uh I finished in July 2004. I'm still on the Committee now. Oh no, I'm a vice-president now. I got elected vice-president in uh July.

CH: So in relation to the 2004 Gold Coast City Council elections, um did you have any involvement at all in relation to those elections with any candidates?

IS: Not specifically with any candidate in particular um for a long period of time, one of the main whole-of-city policy issues which I had particularly been uh keen to promote and actively involved in was what we called City Image um which was actually an initiative that eventually was entrained by our Chamber, a collective of Chambers which met under the banner of the combined Chamber of Commerce, and also it was adopted by the Regional Economic Development Advisory Council as an initiative which should be supported by uh Gold Coast City Council's Economic Development Unit, which concerned the perception of Gold Coast as a business destination, especially amongst the policy and uh um senior public servants in Canberra and institutional investors and investment advisors in Melbourne and Sydney and the capital markets. Uh so that was a major project that I'd worked on and put a lot of time in uh self-funded participation in two trade missions to Canberra, uh self-funded a whirlwind tour of the Melbourne and Sydney capital markets in the company of a local lawyer John (UI) who was then chair of the Combined Chamber and a local business man Lionel Barden who was also the president of or one time was the president of Robina Chamber of Commerce. So that was an issue that was a particular particularly dear to me; I had a view that there was a shallow stereotype about the Gold Coast that it was uh transient and uh wasn't a quality destination to invest and do business and we were able to gather significant material to show that that's not the case and a lot of these initiatives were then adopted by Council and uh a lot of the promotional material that has subsequently been generated uh has dispelled those myths, that we are in fact a very good destination, we have an educated, motivated young population, and it is a very good place to live and do business and uh invest. Um a lot of um my time on Chamber activities was expended uh dealing in a frustrating environment and there were I'd say it was unanimous that uh most of the Chamber presidents were frustrated with some of the decision making that was coming out of the Council the the previous Gold Coast City Council, in particular, a small number of the candidates, um a small number of the councillors, like for example, the local councillor in Southport, uh Councillor Dawn Crichlow, uh she hasn't supported a what would be considered a pro-business policy or initiative for about five years, um trying not to get personal she is a woman with very limited uh experience in at a senior business level uh she's done very little travelling and has a very shallow and narrow band of uh interest, uh you would have seen the (UI) report of her going on national television complaining about a uh mustard-coloured yellow block of apartments (overtalking) she goes for she champions ridiculous causes uh expends a lot of what's called divisional funds, it's a unique funding situation in Gold Coast City Council, where each councillor has some I think the current figure's about eight hundred thousand dollars a year which is called discretionary fund uh I I found that an absolute uh and still have major issue that

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121 that particular discretionary fund is available to councillors to literally spend on a whim,  
122 almost without, yeah they have to they have to substantiate the expense, uh in terms of  
123 showing where the money went, but they can basically choose to spend it on whatever  
124 they like.

125  
126 CH: So it's there anyway?

127  
128 IS: Correct. And Southport has seriously suffered as in my view Dawn has wasted a lot of  
129 that money. She spent a hundred and twenty thousand dollars on some vintage  
130 reproduction Munster-type streetlights which are contextually totally inappropriate, and  
131 did do nothing to enhance or foster the business environment, and those words enhance  
132 and foster the business environment are the pillars of the constitution of our chamber,  
133 about making sure that our business environment business community prospers and is  
134 vibrant. So, um these frustrations, uh we we had uh we had identified that an  
135 organisation called Gecko and a number of other smaller so-called community  
136 representative groups had very effectively lobbied Council or caused such publicity in the  
137 Gold Coast bulletin which essentially is the only it's the dominant media outlet on the  
138 Gold Coast. The tone that is adopted by the Gold Coast Bulletin tends to set the agenda,  
139 rather than the other way around, where it is tends to report the agenda, or report what's  
140 going on. A number of major important economic development initiatives uh were  
141 thwarted through effective lobbying by Gecko and other smaller groups uh to bring about  
142 a state of political paralysis at Council level. Uh key projects include uh Nature Link,  
143 which was a Cairns Skyrail-style project, proposed for the hinterland, a subsequent uh  
144 project similar to that called Ecotrans, um a major study which the Gold Coast City  
145 Council uh uh hosted for thirteen months, which I was a member of the committee called  
146 Vision 20-20, which uh delved into the resourcing and management of the Gold Coast  
147 Broadwater and Southern Moreton Bay and the land use and future of all the surrounding  
148 lands, silting of the Broadwater, pollution, conflict of the maritime activities, fishing  
149 fleet, recreational users, jetskis, seaplanes, helicopters and the like; a very intensely  
150 utilised area but totally unfunded and under-resourced. Uh that was a very  
151 comprehensive study, very broad base of community representatives, there were over  
152 thirty-four different uh committee members on that committee, and a number of those  
153 resolutions that were made were simply noted by the then Gold Coast City Council and  
154 went no further, which was incredibly frustrating. We also saw uh in particular Dawn  
155 Crichlow champion against a private company, Leighton Contractors building a multi-  
156 level hospital annexe on a site in central Southport, adjacent to Gold Coast City Council,  
157 which was to include a desperately-needed uh Medivac helipad, uh air bridge across to  
158 the Casualty area, a psychiatric hospital and a multi-deck, fully secure carpark. The  
159 proposal by Leighton Contractors who had gone through an extensive bidding sorry  
160 Leighton Properties, an extensive bidding process because they were going to deliver that  
161 to the city at no cost to the ratepayers, and no cost to the state taxpayers of Queensland. It  
162 was a win-win for everybody, and Dawn systematically lobbied to kill that project by her  
163 uh intransience (sic) over uh a strip of centre parking uh which and I don't remember the  
164 exact number but it was generating something like forty thousand dollars of centre

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165 parking parking fees a year. That was a massive piece of infrastructure that would have  
166 been an important catalyst for the uh urban renewal that's taking place in Southport now,  
167 and she she went on a almost manic uh campaign to to see that killed on personality lines  
168 against her other councillors. Um in this overall climate, there was extraordinary  
169 frustration by ordinary business people and at the end of the day, the Gold Coast City  
170 fundamentally is made up of small business people. I think there's only twenty-five  
171 businesses, twenty-five companies here that employ more than fifty people, but yet it has  
172 tens of thousands of small businesses. So we're all ordinary business people, people with  
173 families, people with mortgages, we we need our thin and volatile economy to get some  
174 deep roots and we weren't getting that type of direction out of Gold Coast City Council.  
175 Uh the then mayor, Gary Baidon, a really nice man, but unfortunately a victim of this uh  
176 decision-making paralysis; uh it was broadly perceived that he would win the uh win the  
177 mayoralty again, so um at the Combined Chamber in particular, we had discussed at  
178 length the need to try and balance or neuter the the the negative or the lack of decision  
179 making, lack of forward thinking decision making that was coming from Gold Coast City  
180 Council. Um in fact a few weeks before the end of 2003, Premier Beattie came and  
181 spoke to a combined Chamber cocktail party, and he practically stood up and gave us a  
182 gave the business community a bit of a spray, saying how can you have the second largest  
183 uh local authority in the country and not have any discipline and rigour in your Council  
184 and you business people really, you you need to get behind some candidates, so at least  
185 we know where we stand in the in the State Council decision-making process. So I guess  
186 all of those things were triggered, we had a combined Chamber meeting in early  
187 November 2003 I think  
188

189 CH: Chamber of Commerce?  
190

191 IS: Combined Chamber yep, combined Chamber meeting and we discussed we we regularly  
192 discussed major policy issues and we discussed the fact that we were about we were  
193 looking down the barrel of all three levels of government having their elections over the  
194 next few months uh federal, state and council, and what was the response going to be?  
195 What were we going to do to try and deliver better outcomes for business people with  
196 families on the Gold Coast? So we talked about that broadly and generally, and  
197 subsequently to that um a group of us had a a quick lunch; it was reported in the paper  
198 that it was an afternoon session ,that's not the case at all; it was a plate of toasted  
199 sandwiches, hosted by Tom Tate who owns a resort called the Islander in Surfers  
200 Paradise; Tom was the president of Surfers Paradise Chamber, and a group of us uh all  
201 the names were reported in Saturday's Bulletin met at that lunch, and we sort of looked  
202 on a division by division basis, which councillors we knew knew by their reputation and  
203 their past work were pro-business and sensible and which were the dickheads, and they  
204 were pretty identifiable as well.  
205

206 CH: Just for the tape, can I just get you to identify who those who was present at that meeting?  
207

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208 IS: Oh look, I can't quite remember exactly, but Tom Tate was there, uh John Lang, then  
209 president of Coomera Chamber of Commerce was there, um I was there obviously, uh  
210 Bob Janssen who was then president of Nerang Chamber, he was there, and there were  
211 three or four other people, I just honestly can't remember, and I looked in my diary the  
212 other day when the journalist rang me up with a blue about it and uh I didn't have the  
213 notes on who else was there, um Councillor David Power arrived uh a little later in the  
214 meeting, about halfway through the meeting because we wanted to talk to him about the  
215 same frustrations, and he would have been well aware of those frustrations. I think it  
216 would be fair to say that the sensible pro-business candidates had strong uh connections  
217 with their local Chambers of Commerce, as indeed Dawn Crichlow did. I mean Dawn  
218 Crichlow, and this is important for you to probably note in your in your in your  
219 deliberations, Dawn Crichlow started her political career as an alderman on the old Gold  
220 Coast City Council with using the Southport Chamber of Commerce as her power base.  
221 She ran a a re-opened the Nerang Street Mall uh agenda and she's remained a vice  
222 president of the Chamber of Commerce until only two or three years ago, when her stupid  
223 antics simply you know our organisation and our business community simply outgrew her  
224 stupid antics. And I put a lot of effort into making sure that the business community and  
225 the Southport Chamber had a had a workable relationship with her as the as the local  
226 councillor. In fact, she came to my wife and my wedding in calendar year 2000.  
227

228 CH: Were were all the Chambers in favour of getting involved in sort of political sense?  
229

230 IS: It's a it's a long historic uh set of circumstances that that especially in local council, that  
231 Chambers of Commerce had had associations with with Council, it's probably gone back  
232 for forty or fifty years. It certainly has been in the entire time I've been involved, that it's  
233 the most effective way to bring about outcomes at grass roots level on the pavement, so to  
234 speak, especially in the Gold Coast, where there is such a strong link between divisional  
235 funds and fixing a problem, so it's quite normal uh and any assertion, or any suggestion  
236 that to have the Chambers of Commerce I mean essentially, a Chamber of Commerce in  
237 the Australian context exists as a lobbying organisation, to support business people.  
238 That's fundamentally what it does. Others might say that it's for networking and having  
239 breakfasts where you have a guest speaker and you meet other business people, but I've  
240 always maintained and and you know my track record in the public domain is, is it  
241 effective lobbying tool, and I used it as a lobbying tool to ensure that Southport Chamber  
242 of Commerce was perceived to be a responsible and relevant organisation when it came  
243 to policy decision making uh to do with the Southport business environment.  
244

245 CH: OK. Now are you aware of the establishment of a fund to support candidates?  
246

247 IS: Yep. I'll just get to that. That's what we talked about at the lunch. We we identified  
248 which candidates which divisions basically had councillors that we felt that we should  
249 were were pro-business and deserved deserved support, and which divisions had  
250 candidates that needed to be uh needed to be needed to where candidates who were  
251 coming forward could be basically checked out to see whether they were business-

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252 friendly and sensible and decent people, and if they were uh, we try and encourage those  
253 candidates rather than uh the incumbents. And Peter Young, uh Peter Young had a a very  
254 uh I don't think the candidate who ran against him was the optimum choice, but Peter  
255 Young was very entrenched; sometimes it's very hard to get uh it's interesting that Peter  
256 would want to take on on some of the candidates. I believed at the time and I certainly  
257 expressed it pretty broadly, and I told Roxanne Scott, who was to run against Dawn, that I  
258 didn't think Dawn was able to be beaten, um just to give you some background there, I  
259 actually ran for Council in 1994 and Dawn Crichlow was a candidate uh was an  
260 incumbent councillor an alderman at the time and also Peter Lawler who's now the State  
261 MP for Southport; he was also an alderman, and they both one of them was going to lose  
262 and I just thought that they were being pigheaded and stupid and a moderate candidate  
263 might be able to run up the middle and scoop the bait. But it was not to be. Dawn just  
264 spent a bucketload of money and and she's been re-elected ever since. But I still had a  
265 working and and uh cordial relationship with Dawn all all over the years up until about  
266 two or three years ago when there were too many issues that I it wasn't worth continuing  
267 to spend my time on the relationship. As I said, she came to my wedding in 2000, in  
268 2000, the year 2000. Um at that uh at that lunch um uh David Power and myself and  
269 Tom and Bob, we all just sort of discussed that rather than do it on a piecemeal approach,  
270 if there was any money raised or could be uh solicited from business supporters of a  
271 larger um you know larger business people and in the Gold Coast, that generally means  
272 the property identities, not always, but clearly it's the property industry that's the  
273 dominant industry here, so that terrible word property developers pops up um the you  
274 know it would be useful if those moneys were spent on the candidates that could be put to  
275 best use. I didn't I I put my view that I didn't think Dawn could be beaten, and it was a  
276 waste of money, resourcing and candidates to run against her. And that was about it; that  
277 was about the end of my involvement in the uh in the whole of the process.

278  
279 CH: In that whole political sort of ...

280  
281 IS: Yeah, I noticed Rob Molhoek in Saturday's Bulletin quoted saying that I had a  
282 conversation with him where I in a group of others, there were two or three other people  
283 there, where I was really putting the pressure on him to join the group; that conversation  
284 never took place with me present; and up until it was first reported in the paper, I didn't  
285 even know the advertising agency, the Quadrant, or whatever they're called, uh was the  
286 advertising agency involved. I didn't get into that degree of detail. But one thing that I  
287 did do was we we talked about establishing this this trust and getting a solicitor to  
288 administer it, um and somebody of repute was desired to be uh uh the administrator or the  
289 trustee, and I suggested Lionel Barden, because I knew Lionel was of like mind on the  
290 prevailing issues; uh Lionel is a former Telstra Australian businessman of the year, uh he  
291 recently stood down from Robina Chamber and he's a bloody good bloke. Why we liked  
292 his track record for service to the Chambers is is transparent. And I regret that, because  
293 as a consequence, his name's been dragged through the mud, as was published in the  
294 paper, he he was David then approached him, my understanding is and he said yes.

295

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296 CH: That's um ...  
297  
298 IS: And that's that's a sad thing for Lionel, 'cause he's had a kick in the guts every every  
299 time there's a a you know a disparaging newspaper article.  
300  
301 CH: So as far as the Lionel Barden trust fund, that's you have no other knowledge other than  
302 he was uh it was under his name?  
303  
304 IS: I didn't learn until afterwards that Tony Hickey, a local lawyer, was the administrator and  
305 Lionel was the trustee. But Lionel's taken a terrible drubbing over it and uh you know I  
306 had no further knowledge of how much money went into it and who got what, other than  
307 what I read in the paper. But what I had been concerned and alarmed about right from the  
308 outset was the malicious angle taken by Alice (UI) Jones a very close but long-time  
309 family associate of Dawn Crichlow's who was a journalist at the Gold Coast Bulletin and  
310 still is, who wrote about this Machiavellian thrust to seize control by a bloc. If Roxanne  
311 Scott in my view had received a phone call two weeks after the election and said are you  
312 part of a bloc, you know, were you part of the Lionel Barden trust fund bloc, she wouldn't  
313 have even known those words. And the whole thing's been a um you know it's then been  
314 turned into this mystery of the bloc and does the bloc exist and what is the bloc and you  
315 know the whole thing's a load of shit.  
316  
317 CH: Ok  
318  
319 IS: Um and in fact, to go on and win a Walkley Award for it just totally undermines your  
320 whole belief in merit for effort.  
321  
322 CH: So in relation to Councillor Power and Councillor Robbins, what dealings did you have  
323 with them at all?  
324  
325 IS: Very little; I've only spoken to Sue Robbins probably ten times in my life and never  
326 about this. Never about the uh the collective; in fact I don't think I spoke to any  
327 councillor uh about the on-going activity uh or the election campaigns or um I had a  
328 conversation with Dawn Crichlow, must have been in the New Year of 2004 when I was  
329 talking to her about something else and she was really keen to know whether I was going  
330 to run as a candidate; I think in one of those little busy bits or gossipy little columns in  
331 the Bulletin of which there are many pages, it was mentioned that I might have been  
332 interested in running. Um I've only ever run for public office one in 2004. I am a  
333 member of the Liberal Party; uh during '98 through to 2001, I was very active in the  
334 Liberal Party, and I did seek pre-selection for the Federal seat of Moncrieff, uh but I  
335 wasn't preselected and the current federal member was preselected and subsequently won  
336 and has been the member since. Um and at the time I stated that uh I was offering myself  
337 on a one-off basis uh I was then forty; I'm now forty-four. I wasn't continually going to  
338 become a perennial David Childs-type candidate who runs for every possible public slot.  
339

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340 CH: Slot that's up for grabs  
341  
342 IS: Yep  
343  
344 CH: Ok  
345  
346 IS: I have my own business and my own investment activities and I don't need to get on the  
347 public committal of uh public expense.  
348  
349 CH: I'll just quickly run through some of these points which you've covered broadly anyway.  
350  
351 IS: Yep, yep  
352  
353 CH: So the knowledge of the Lionel Barden trust fund is as we discussed; you had that initial  
354 meeting with other um Chamber members, (overtalking) discussed that there should be  
355 perhaps a fund organised in relation to that and it became the Lionel Barden trust fund.  
356 Um did you have any knowledge of how that was administered?  
357  
358 IS: Uh not prior, or maybe I might have been told Tony Hickey was going to administer it,  
359 but I had no idea of you know whether it was by cheque, by cash in a paper bag, I had no  
360 working knowledge of it whatsoever.  
361  
362 CH: And as far as the role of (UI) was, you were just aware they were the they were in charge  
363 of running the the fund?  
364  
365 IS: I'm not even sure and I'm not trying to be vague  
366  
367 CH: No no  
368  
369 IS: I don't know whether I even knew that before the election  
370  
371 CH: OK. Do you have knowledge at all of contributors to that fund?  
372  
373 IS: Only what I've read in the paper  
374  
375 CH: So no personal knowledge of it  
376  
377 IS: No personal knowledge whatsoever  
378  
379 CH: Uh any knowledge of what candidates accessed the fund?  
380  
381 IS: Only what I've read in the paper.  
382  
383 CH: OK what about how funds were disbursed?

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384  
385 IS: Same answer; only what I read in the paper  
386  
387 CH: Now you mentioned Quadrant before; did you have any knowledge of the role of  
388 Quadrant printing other than what you mentioned before?  
389  
390 IS: No, none whatsoever. I didn't know I didn't know the name I think it was Chris Morgan,  
391 something like that,  
392  
393 CH: I think you might be right  
394  
395 IS: Chris Morgan – I think I heard his name around the advertising industry ridges, but I  
396 don't think I've ever met Chris Morgan. If I have, I don't know him and I didn't know of  
397 the name Quadrant until after the after the event.  
398  
399 CH: OK. Did you meet with any candidates to discuss funding at all?  
400  
401 IS: Yes, I did. Roxanne Scott came to me, to this office, to elicit um overt support from the  
402 Chamber. She came here um Southport Chamber is now the longest historically-  
403 established Chamber in Queensland; it's been established for over a hundred years. We  
404 have traditionally, for many elections, had uh on the Tuesday immediately preceding the  
405 Saturday local government election, we've had all of the mayoral candidates for a  
406 breakfast debate.  
407  
408 CH: OK.  
409  
410 IS: Um Roxanne Scott came to see me and wanted to be a speaker at that March breakfast  
411 slot. I explained to her that that would not be possible, because we had already secured  
412 the uh commitments of all the mayoral candidates for the last shootout effectively; it's  
413 generally the last time they come together in a debate;  
414  
415 CH: Debate  
416  
417 IS: It's a bloody good media event and this year we went all out and that year we had all  
418 those little at each table we asked six or eight questions and uh Gary Baidon got an  
419 absolute drubbing um and there was a smell in the air for the first time that Ron Clarke  
420 might have been actually going to knock him off um interestingly going back to that  
421 November meeting, there was a view that Baidon would be re-elected; so we had to have  
422 a majority of councillors, not counting him, so that he he'd have enough courage to go  
423 with the popular decisions; to go with the majority. So that was the climate um  
424  
425 CH: So as far as she was concerned (overtalking)  
426

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427 IS: Went down and told her I'd give her an acknowledgement and I didn't give her any  
428 money of my own; but I sent her off to see a few people who I know hate Dawn  
429  
430 CH: Right.  
431  
432 IS: Um and that was about that. I also went to a uh the launch of Rob Molhoek's campaign  
433 which was a bit of a piss-up in the park up at uh Harley Park at Labrador and um that's  
434 where he alleges I put all this pressure on him and told him to go to the Quadrant meeting  
435 and all that sort of thing. I had no knowledge of any of that activity, so he's either got a  
436 little bit confused, or maybe John Lang or someone else was putting him under that  
437 pressure.  
438  
439 CH: Ok  
440  
441 IS: But certainly, I didn't have that conversation with him. But I don't think there's anything  
442 sinister in that I think he's just you know he probably had a hundred and fifty people all  
443 there, and when you're running for candidacy, you'll take support from wherever you can  
444 get it.  
445  
446 CH: Ok. So again, just to confirm that there was no funding that you were involved with?  
447  
448 IS: No  
449  
450 CH: John Lang, you've mentioned him, what's your relationship with John Lang?  
451  
452 IS: Uh John's been a bit crook and just retired; John's in his seventies, but I've known John  
453 for many years; um he is a true gentleman, and very long-time, long-established old Gold  
454 Coast family with a real estate business at Coomera. Um John and I served on the  
455 combined Chamber together for many years. We went on a trade mission to New  
456 Zealand together, uh just a genuinely lovely bloke, uh we're of like mind on most issues.  
457 I haven't seen John for about twelve months. He's stood down from being president of  
458 Coomera; he actually had a breast cancer um and uh he's also in a wine club I used to go  
459 to on a monthly basis; just a nice bloke who you know who I had a fond affinity to and of  
460 like mind on policy issues affecting the Gold Coast.  
461  
462 CH: OK. Were you aware of uh Mr Lang's role in the elections in 2004? (overtalking)  
463  
464 IS: Yeah, he was the campaign manager for Brian Rowe. I'm not sure whether I knew that in  
465 November 2003 or not. I may have been but it's no big deal whether he was or he wasn't  
466 and again this is as I say, lots of Chamber of Commerce people were involved generally  
467 on the non-Labour side of politics in in and around local government and state Liberal  
468 and state National candidates.  
469

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470 CH: OK, do you have any knowledge of him approaching any other candidates and offering  
471 them any financial assistance in relation to those elections?  
472  
473 IS: No knowledge other than that he was at that same launch of Rob Molhoek as I was.  
474  
475 CH: Are you aware of him saying anything to Mr Molhoek in relation to ..?  
476  
477 IS: Not in my presence, other than other than maybe just a general affirmation that it was a  
478 good thing he was running. At the time I had my office in the same office building as uh  
479 where Rob Molhoek worked in Citibank. He used to work for the radio station RG  
480 Capital Radio I think it's called, and I had my office in the same building and I'd see him  
481 maybe two or three times a week at the coffee shop or walking in or out of the car park or  
482 whatever, so, he's no stranger to me and but I didn't say oh baby, have we got a big bag  
483 of cash coming out of this slush fund for you (laughs) you bend over now and take it.  
484  
485 CH: There was no optional funding with that?  
486  
487 IS: No, no. I think I bought a hundred dollars worth of raffle tickets, or it might have been  
488 fifty dollars worth of raffle tickets, but then that's not atypical. If I go anywhere, I went  
489 to a cancer polo day on Sunday, and I think we bought a hundred dollars or fifty dollars  
490 worth of raffle tickets in one of those bags, fifty dollar show bags full of crap that you  
491 don't use, but it's for a good cause, so that's the sort of thing.  
492  
493 CH: Bob Janssen uh Janssen sorry, you mentioned him before. What do you know of him?  
494 What do you ...?  
495  
496 IS: Yes, he's more closely related to primates than most human beings. Um Bob Bob's a big  
497 mouth. He's he has a small Chamber of Commerce; his credibility's shot to shit um he's  
498 been on the combined Chamber for years and years. I don't have a great deal of personal  
499 time for him and when I tell him that, he thinks it's uh amusing banter. Um he's a big  
500 mouth, he's got this fervent, he's got this extreme view about Gecko and green groups as  
501 Alice Jones had about the sinisterness of the bloc. Um he uh he's his statement to the  
502 CMC and his immediate gut-spilling that he did last week is purely grand self-promotion  
503 um I read in the paper where he received five thousand dollars from the fund to run a  
504 dirty campaign against or a component of a dirty campaign against Peter Young. Well  
505 fair enough, that's democracy as far as I'm concerned, but you'd think you'd be boasting  
506 about it if you'd been successful.  
507  
508 CH: Mm  
509  
510 IS: But he was unsuccessful in his bid to unseat Peter Young and why would you be bragging  
511 about it? He's a dickhead.  
512

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513 CH: Do you know of any other involvement he had with the Gold Coast City elections at the  
514 time?  
515

516 IS: He I know he had he has a hatred Peter Young, over various issues that happened out at  
517 Nerang to do with there's an old quarry out there that they wanted to put some sort of  
518 Hinterland Interpretive Centre or something; I don't know the detail, but he's got lots of  
519 issues with Bob Janssen; uh Bob Janssen's got issues with Peter Young and so he's done  
520 whatever he can to try and upset (UI)  
521

522 CH: Did you have any personal knowledge of that or again, is it just what you read in the  
523 paper?  
524

525 IS: No, oh, I think he might have you know he might have rung me and talked to me about  
526 this. I've got no no detail. I might have I mean I knew he was involved in attempting to  
527 beat Peter Young. I don't know what the extent of that was. I certainly had no prior  
528 knowledge that he had received that type of funding for a component of the campaign like  
529 that.  
530

531 CH: OK.  
532

533 IS: But had he, it wouldn't have ruffled my feathers either.  
534

535 CH: Tony Young of the uh Gold Coast North Chamber of Commerce, do you know what his  
536 role was in the elections at all?  
537

538 IS: Tony White?  
539

540 CH: Tony White  
541

542 IS: Yeah, Tony White, yeah. Tony's another interesting character on the stage. Uh Gold  
543 Coast North Chamber of Commerce was brought into being as an organisation  
544 specifically to attack then Councillor Alan Rickard and wanting to keep this meeting  
545 tight, but there were a number of long-established traditional Chambers of Commerce on  
546 the Gold Coast, of which Southport was one. When Gold Coast City Council and Albert  
547 Shire amalgamated, uh all of a sudden, there was a much lesser access to your local  
548 councillor. The importance of having a good pro-business local councillor and getting  
549 access to projects and council officers and those divisional funds needed a pro-active  
550 Chamber of Commerce. Uh Tony White and Otto Pfeiffer and other people from the  
551 Northern Paradise Point end of the Gold Coast obviously saw the successes that  
552 Chambers like Broadbeach and Southport had by having a councillor on side, and that  
553 Chamber was brought into being specifically to try and give a legitimacy to a campaign to  
554 unseat Alan Rickard. Um the rest's public history, what type of lengths he'd gone into  
555 that um you know Otto Pfeiffer has backed a candidate against Alan Rickard every local  
556 council election I think for years. Tony White got dragged into that, and Gold Coast

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557 North was brought into being for that purpose um he didn't adopt the view that we should  
558 be so pro-active in supporting or not supporting candidates and maybe that was because  
559 he chose Tony White chose to support I think David Childs over Grant Pforr. Um there  
560 wasn't a lot more I can tell you about it, but I know that he really was campaigning  
561 against Grant Pforr for David Childs. I don't know much of a mandate we have to do that  
562 or how much dough there was floating around.

563  
564 CH: You don't have any real personal input or knowledge of ...?

565  
566 IS: No I don't

567  
568 CH: OK. Now uh that meeting we spoke of before, you met uh Councillor Molhoek, was that  
569 a uh meet the candidates function or was it just a zone?

570  
571 IS: That was at his campaign launch.

572  
573 CH: OK, did you attend any meet the candidates functions?

574  
575 IS: Meet the candidates functions? Not out in the ground; if I've been at a business breakfast  
576 where there were candidates that you could meet, then I probably would have met them. I  
577 mean I know most of these people, there's very few people that pop up as a candidate that  
578 you know we're a small business community, so I can't I'm not being evasive; I just can't  
579 honestly remember; I didn't go out to go to a meet the candidates function because I knew  
580 them already.

581  
582 CH: OK. So any of those functions you did attend, do you recall anyone being asked, any of  
583 the candidates being asked if they were funded or they were part of a bloc or a ticket or  
584 any members of the public?

585  
586 IS: No, not as far as I'm aware.

587  
588 CH: OK. Now uh

589  
590 IS: I can be more positive than that; I can actually say to you I specifically recall no-one was  
591 asked those questions.

592  
593 CH: OK. Now were you present at a combined Chamber meeting at Southort around about  
594 February 2004 where Tony White asked Brian Rowe if he received funding and belonged  
595 to a bloc?

596  
597 IS: Do you want me to go and look in my diary?

598  
599 CH: Um if you'd like to check, I'll just pause the tape while you go and have a look.

600

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601 IS: Yeah, turn that off  
602  
603 CH: Change the tape at 2:53 p.m.

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**[Enter Record of Interview –CRAIG HAWKINS AND IAN SOLOMON**

**TAPE NO:** 2 (of 2)

**DATE:** 04/10/05

**PLACE:** Southport

**TIME COMMENCED:** 14.55 P.M.

**TIME CONCLUDED:**

**INTERVIEWEE:** Ian Solomon

**INTERVIEWER/S:** Craig Hawkins

**LEGAL OFFICER:** Anna McDonald

**RE:** Operation Grand

**FILE NUMBER:** MI-05-2482

Complainant: OPERATION GRAND  
Subject(s):  
Investigator: CRAIG HAWKINS  
Statement Of: IAN SOLOMON  
Legal Officer: THERESA HAMILTON  
File Number: MI-05-2482  
Directory :