

JIM CARLTON

I have been a friend of Jim for over three decades. Our shared interest in Australian economic reform put us in touch and kept giving us reasons to stay in touch. Jim was interested in the Liberal Party doing well. But even more interested in the success of Australia, so he was comfortable providing support to the economic adviser to Labor Prime Minister Bob Hawke.

Much is made now about policy bipartisanship through the Australian reform era from 1983 to the end of the century.

There was not as much bipartisan support for hard reform then as is remembered with fond nostalgia today. Jim was one of a small number of members of the Opposition parties during the high tide of reform who really did make change easier for the Government. Important parts of the achievement of that remarkable period would not have been possible had not Jim Carlton thought long term Australian prosperity more important than short-term politics.

I knew Jim from that time as a man of strong commitment to humanity above narrow interests of any kind, of high integrity, and of rare capacity to see clearly all of the weaknesses of our flawed species without giving up on us.

It was my great pleasure to get to know Jim really well as comrade-in-arms in an audacious experiment in development in the most challenging of conditions.

Sir Mekere Morauta, the former Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, first and longest serving Secretary for Finance and former Governor of the Central Bank of Papua New Guinea, asked me to share this message with you today:

Sir Mekere said,

“Jim Carlton was a founding director of PNG Sustainable Development Program LTD (PNGSDP), a company established to hold shares in Ok Tedi Mining Ltd for the benefit of the people of Western Province where the mine is situated. Jim, with colleagues on the Board, ensured that the dividend income earned was protected under a strong governance structure - something becoming very unique in PNG. Jim became passionate about PNG development and the value of PNGSDP in providing economic and social services to a most undeveloped part of PNG. He

became passionate about the development projects undertaken and funded by PNGSDP; he could see their benefit to the lives and welfare of people, and that gave him great satisfaction and pleasure.

Jim was also closely involved in a subsidiary of PNGSDP, PNG Microfinance, of which he became Chairman until he retired just over a year ago. I was always struck by Jim's propriety, mixed with the most delicious, even wicked sense of humor, and the litany of fabulous stories he could tell of current and former Australian politicians.

Di, the Board and management of PNGSDP were all shocked and saddened to hear the news of Jim's sudden death. We send you and the family our condolences, and we thank you for sharing him with us."

Over that decade of working closely with Jim, I learned what a good, wise, generous, conscientious, amusing and altogether remarkable man Jim was.

In PNGSDP, we shared a week each quarter in PNG. Much of this time was in out-of-the way places in PNG. Some of them beautiful beyond ordinary imagination. Some daunting in the austerity that they enforced on visitors. Everywhere Jim interacting closely with people from fascinating backgrounds.

Jim was nearly seventy when we started on our PNG collaboration—but no inconvenience or discomfort diverted a determined commitment to the responsibility that he had accepted. Jumping out of tiny planes, travelling along rough roads whose edges marked a precipitous descent into clouds: Jim was there talking to the villagers about their rubber plants or school or aid post, from early until late. Always with his own survival kit. A few biscuits for everyone when the food failed to turn up; some good humour to pour onto the most fraught reality; and a flask of whiskey in case all else failed.

Jim's devotion to duty and friendship reached new heights when he agreed to Chair the Board of the Ok Tedi mine when my work on climate change kept me away for half a year.

We were always working against the odds. Jim made sure that we did everything that we could to beat those odds. Jim's efforts helped to make sure that there are now almost two billion dollars

kept securely for the time Papua New Guinea and one of its poorest Provinces have Governments that are interested in development. And against the odds, PNG Microfinance Ltd whose Board Jim chaired is providing services today to people whose limited means cause the banks to close their doors—one of the few things that works for ordinary people in a broken country.

I remember Jim Carlton for many good things. Above all, I remember Jim for never losing sight of the humanity we share with people everywhere, for never forgetting that we must make the most of every chance in this difficult world; and for reminding us all that there was something that we could have a good laugh about in every unhappy manifestation of the human condition.

We miss him dearly.

Ross Garnaut

Melbourne

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