

# Mayne set to be third time lucky

By **RICHARD WILLINGHAM**

IT MIGHT just be third time lucky for Stephen Mayne, the former media adviser, journalist, shareholder activist and local councillor who is on the verge of winning a seat, and holding the balance of power, in the Victorian upper house.

"It is true I'm Australia's most unsuccessful candidate," said Mr Mayne, who ran as an independent in the Northern Metro region.

Saturday's election was his third attempt at Victorian Parliament. He also has run for the boards of 40 public companies, with the aim of highlighting problems within the organisations.

**4 The dangers of debt were scared into my soul . . . 7**  
**STEPHEN MAYNE**

The City of Manningham councillor (a rare electoral success) is locked in a three-way count to see who will be the fifth representative of the Northern Metro region, despite his attracting just 1.06 per cent of the primary vote.

The result may not be known for weeks, but he is being kept in the race to the Legislative Council by preference deals.

Mr Mayne rates his chances as 50-50. Should he win, scrutiny of government will be high on his agenda.

New Premier Ted Baillieu yesterday said he would recall parliament early to push through legislation on ending suspended sentences.

"I'm not comfortable with the

lock-'em-up, throw-away-the-key element," Mr Mayne said.

While the independent candidate welcomed an aggressive police approach to reducing alcohol fuelled-violence and a blitz on trains, he said politicians should not meddle with judicial discretion.

Mr Mayne, who founded online media site Crikey, said he shared Mr Baillieu's socially progressive ideals as well as being an economic rationalist.

"The dangers of debt were seared into my soul when I worked with [Kennett's treasurer Alan] Stockdale to clean up the mess made by [former Labor Premier Joan] Kirner," he said.

Mr Mayne said he would campaign for a drastic cut to the number of poker machines in the state, saying he would like to see a substantial reduction in the \$2.6 billion lost on pokies annually, even if this meant a loss of \$1 billion in taxes.

Under Mr Mayne's plan there would be a midnight closing-time for pokies venues, \$1 maximum bets and compulsory pre-commitments on machines.

Mr Mayne, who takes his inspiration from his mentor, South Australian Senator Nick Xenophon, said the government should also buy back at least 10,000 pokies licences.

He laments the exodus of companies from Melbourne, saying under Jeff Kennett's regime eight of the country's 10 biggest companies were based in Melbourne. Now there are four.

"I'm very keen to represent the CBD. The inner city is very left-wing and not enough people stick up for the interests of Melbourne as a financial centre," he said.

## BAILLIEU'S TRIUMPH



"It is true I'm Australia's most unsuccessful candidate," says Stephen Mayne who is now close to securing a spot in the Victorian upper house