

High noon . . . and there's anger on the campaign trail

It was high noon in the vital Nunawading election today.

Hundreds of mountain men — and women — rode through Ringwood streets to protest at the State Government's proposal for a giant alpine national park.

The protest cavalcade was a mass of Drizabone coats, hats and saddles as it came over a hill in Eastfield Rd. before gathering at Ringwood shopping centre. Mounted protestors from Victoria's high country have been riding the streets of Melbourne's eastern suburbs for days mustering votes for the Liberal Party candidate, Mrs Rosemary Varty, in the Nunawading Province re-run poll.

A Mountain Cattlemen's Association spokesman, Graeme Stoney, said today it was the first time the cattlemen had entered a political campaign.

They had no option but to oppose the Government on the Alpine Park issue.

Mr Stoney said the proposed legislation would destroy the livelihood of Victoria's high country cattlemen.

The Liberals oppose the park proposal, and could block it in the Upper House if Mrs Varty wins the August 17 election.

● A spokesman said today the Cain Government had repeatedly maintained that cattlemen would not be removed from the high country.

Picture: NOEL BUTCHER

Kennett hits ALP foul play

The Leader of the Opposition, Mr Kennett, today called on the ALP to take personal abuse out of its Nunawading by-election campaign.

Mr Kennett accused the Premier, Mr Cain, of "going for the man and not the ball" in the battle to win the crucial Upper House seat.

Mr Kennett — who was accused of mud-slinging during the State election campaign — said Mr Cain was putting the whole profession of politics at risk by his comments.

"It is hard enough already for the public to have confidence in its politicians," he said.

"Politicians don't have a very high standing — people don't trust them because of the activity they get involved in.

"Labor's campaign against me is just adding to people's cynicism about the profession.

"How are you going to attract good men and women into politics in the future? The whole standing of politics and the Parliament is being put at risk."

Labor had run a deliberate personal campaign against him beginning in the lead-up to the State election in March with the "bull in the china shop" advertisement.

By PENNY DEBELLE

This had been continued in the Nunawading campaign by "vitriolic comments" made by Mr Cain and the ALP candidate, Mr Ives, and the Labor commercial being shown on television.

"It is a deliberate campaign of personal denigration directed at me, and I call on the Government to get this campaign on to the issues."

He denied he had waged a personal campaign against Mr Cain in the State poll and said his "little daughters comments" — a reference to his widely-publicised remarks that Mr Cain could not be trusted with your daughters — had been off the cuff and taken out of context — "and I apologised for it".

The ALP television commercial warns Nunawading voters not to let Mr Kennett put "a spanner in the works" by voting a Liberal into the seat which is the key to control of the Upper House.

The National Party, which is campaigning in support of the Liberal candidate, Mrs Varty, has also called on Mr Cain to stop using personal abuse in the campaign.

National Party leader, Mr Ross-Edwards, said Mr Cain had reached for the mud bucket and should feel ashamed.

