

## **We The People**

Program 89

Beautiful One Day, Pay the Next.



Throughout my life I have never understood why bureaucracies and politicians do all they can to acquire more power regardless of their public charter. It seems crazy to me that the race to the bottom is sometimes headed up by ordinary people who become politicians and bureaucrats and then seemingly lose their minds and sense of fairness and social justice. These otherwise good people know full well they have a position of trust and that they have a finite life and so it should follow that when appointed they would do all they can to help society. Being a politician or a bureaucrat should be based on good fair governance and helping to create happiness in the public arena. That's right happiness. Why on earth couldn't we have an administration which measured all its activity against the prime criterion of happiness. Just as Rotary asks "is it fair" so government should ask, "will this bring happiness to society". Now I realise that some will think this fanciful but not so. Surely the prime directive of life is to be happy and surely governments have a duty to do no harm. This should especially apply to local government.

It is in this context that I would like to share some thoughts about a bureaucracy and a Council which apparently have no idea of what public happiness is and are driven by this crazy notion that a good life can be measured by how much is in the bank or the daily ASX number or how much power one wealds or the vagaries of political correctness. In particular the administration at Gold Coast City Council has become all powerful at the expense of the people and is now picking up speed in this regard. They tell us what's good for us and they make decisions based solely on what they believe is best for the people. They don't ask us they just act then at best run a survey or two to justify their decisions.

Whether its unbridled growth at the expense of families or a cruise liner terminal on public land or a lack of concern for the environment it seems the current local government administration is ruled only by money and power. Take the latest decision making which says those who run fitness classes in public parks should pay a fee to an inefficient Council. I see these folk each morning as I walk the beach front between North Burleigh and Burleigh all enjoying the morning sunrise and gathering in small groups for early exercise. They are led by a personal trainer who is part of small business which is the back bone of this country. The trainer ekes out a small living and the people gain fitness. Everyone wins and everyone's happy. Now enter Gold Coast Council who now apparently wants the personal trainer to pay for the privilege of helping people get fit in a public park. There is no damage to the park and no rubbish to pick up, there is little noise and it's great to see so many people out and about in the early morning. It's the Gold Coast and it's what we do. So why does the Council want to register the trainers and make them pay which means that charge will then be reflected back to the people so in the end we the people pay yet again. It's all about control and power but this time it's just real micro management nonsense and doesn't help make people happy and you can bet your life it will cost more to administer than it brings into Council.

On the same basis does this mean a cycling club with 30 members riding in the mornings on a public street must pay. Does it mean a person paid to walk a dog should pay a fee for using the footpath. Does it mean a paid nanny walking kids should pay if on public land. How about a Scuba Diving School using the Seaway, should they pay because it's public land and a public waterway. For that matter how about the professional photography class using a public park or beach to take a shot of a sunset. How about deck chair hire on Main Beach or learn to surf and swim schools. This time it appears Council under the autocratic leadership of the Mayor is going too far. On the one hand he is trying to take away public land at the Spit and yet he now wants the Council to charge micro business for the use of a public park which has a direct positive benefit on the people's health and happiness. Personal Trainers should not have to be Council registered and should certainly not have to pay to use a public park for the general well being of the people. Ah....beautiful one day but you'll pay the next.

**Until next time this is Kent Bayley**