

Some lessons for pollies

State politics has never really drawn my interest, however I respect the work our state members put into supporting the community.

Higher up the chain though, there is a festering of all sorts of muck.

In Victoria for example, Daniel Andrews is essentially holding his state's population captive, unable or unwilling to target sections of the community whose activities and beliefs are facilitating the spread of Covid-19.

In Western Australia (WA), Mark McGowan has closed all his borders, with the WA Chief Medical Officer admitting that the primary reason for this is to keep residents at home where they will spend more.

In Queensland the same attitude prevails, with many businesses suffering greatly from the lack of tourist inflows. These Labor lockdowns fit nicely with newly invigorated socialist beliefs, that the government always knows best.

While Labor leads the charge in locking down citizens, we shouldn't ignore Jackie Trad's real estate deals or Eddie Obeid's wheeling and dealing. On the political right, we've got the Ruby Princess circus and the activities of Daryl Maguire, now under investigation. Notwithstanding the massive wealth generated by the opening of coal mines, we should also not forget the bad old days of Bjelke-Peterson, when for a long time Queenslanders were essentially cut off from the rest of the world and the retirement life of some politicians involved jail.

About half of state spending is paid for by the federal government, most of the rest being inefficient, unfair and damaging imposts such as payroll tax and stamp duty. Despite massive reform, duplication across states is still rampant and parochial grandstanding is the standard modus operandi.

So here we are, on the eve of a state election. Labor is dissing the LNP and the LNP is dissing Labor. One Nation attempts to trash Brittany Lauga's reputation. Clive says he hates Labor.

SPEAKING FRENCH

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Across social media, hatred has drowned out policy.

What of policy? Labor says it cares about workers' rights but backs policy that actually costs jobs and sides with the barefoot Greens to shackle the mining industry. The LNP, meanwhile, dust off the gramophone and wind the handle on the old election '78 to play crackly tunes of new dams and crime clamp-downs. Is it any wonder people are jaded with politics? Where are the new ideas?

Where is the leadership?

The inexplicable shortage of ideas to benefit our region can only be put down to people having to hold the party line. Here are some policy tips to get the voters interested. Candidates can use these words verbatim:

- "I will see to the relinquishment of the lease on Great Keppel Island. The current leasee and successive aspirants have failed to make good on their ambition. That has cost the community dearly and there is no chance that the development will ever go ahead in its current form. My government will work with local councils to fund the establishment and construction of a comprehensive facility comprising camping, glamping and accommodation units, all-solar powered and complete with roll-on-roll off access ramp. This facility will be relatively low cost and popular with locals, grey nomads and international tourists alike. It will integrate without undermining the excellent work of existing businesses and once established it can be offered



Columnist David French says Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews is holding his constituents prisoner.

to the private sector for lease or sale on commercial terms."

- "Family violence is a scourge on our community. The outrage expressed after someone is hurt, or indeed dies, is little more than an emotional outlet. My government will put in place early intervention measures such that people involved are provided with not only care, but a compulsory program of professionally administered, disciplined support carried out far away from family and other influences to ensure that attitudes to relationships meet acceptable standards."
- "Youth crime is often a function of family breakdown and poor social structure. My government will provide well-organised, professionally run camps for wayward youth, along the lines of several excellent examples that already exist. Attendance will be compulsory and attendees will emerge without a criminal record and with experience and a certificate of completion for at least one of

a number of immediately useful vocation alternatives. Attending camp more than twice will mean an automatic jail term of at least three years."

- "Businesses have an obligation to pay superannuation and to pay their tax. Well run businesses have record keeping procedures that support business viability and assist in meeting these obligations. My government will insist that to be able to operate in Queensland, all businesses keep formal records which must be submitted no later than 31 October. All businesses must undergo a streamlined special purpose audit to ensure tax and superannuation payments are up to date. Businesses that don't pass audit cannot trade in Queensland."

There you go, something interesting to take to the electorate over the next two days. Federal candidates, I'll have something for you in a while.

Walk to raise awareness for extremely rare disease

By Liam Emerton

On Sunday morning, a group of about 35 local Central Queenslanders gathered to support a wonderful cause.

A walk for awareness organised by MDS foundation in the United States is usually held in all of the states in America, however this year it branched out globally.

Central Queenslander Fiona McWhirter helped put together what she believes was the only MDS awareness day walk in Australia, which was held on Sunday in Rockhampton.

MDS is a group of diseases which all affect the production of normal blood cells in the bone marrow.

In Australia, only 1600 people were diagnosed with the disease and worldwide it was only 87,000 people who were diagnosed.

It usually is diagnosed in those over 65-years of age, however organiser of the Rockhampton walk Mrs McWhirter is one of the unfortunate few who have been diagnosed with it, despite being much younger than 65.

Mrs McWhirter said it was great to be able to raise awareness for the rare bone-marrow condition.

"As far as I know our team was the only one registered in Australia," she said.

"I was diagnosed in May.

"It's very isolating, nobody knows about it and nobody has heard of it.

"You live regionally and you're walking around looking normal but you've got all these things happening inside and your bone marrow isn't doing what it's meant to be doing.

"Just to raise awareness is important to me so that if there's anyone else out there we can have some sort of connection or people know that they're not alone."

Mrs McWhirter said it was a really great day and it helps her a lot knowing so many people are supporting it.



Fiona McWhirter front and centre with a majority of the Central Queensland locals who turned up for the MDS Awareness walk on Sunday morning.

"I was very happy that I had people doing it with us," she said.

"I did the 'light the night' event a few weeks prior and this one was a little bit more personal because it was about the disease I have.

"I was rapt that so many people joined me."

Mrs McWhirter's risk of a Covid-19 infection is extremely high due to the disease, something that affected her immediately after her diagnosis.

"My risk of infection is a lot higher than most people," she said.

"I'm a nurse so I'm pretty savvy with looking after myself and wearing masks if I need too and washing my hands.

"Initially I didn't go anywhere until we had a really good handle of everything going on.

"The risk of infection is so high that if I was to have any kind of infection I would be forced to the emergency department and put on IV and antibiotics straight away.

"That's my route of action."

Mrs McWhirter said that the best way to help doesn't have to be through monetary donations.

"A lot of people, especially in today's climate, have uncertainty with wages," she said.

"If you can't donate money to the Leukaemia Foundation and that kind of place - donate life is free, and if you're under 45 you can sign up to be a stem cell donor.

"That sort of thing helps prolong life and saves lives and it doesn't cost you anything."