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“In Support of Progress”

Newsletter

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Parliament

The MYER City Council

The return of Parliament

Parliament resumes this week. The government will be bringing legislation into the parliament to give effect to a number of election promises, and one of those will be the transfer of ownership of TasWater.

The government made the point during the election campaign that it was seeking a mandate to transfer ownership of TasWater from “Councils”. It got it. I have been supportive of this move on the principle that the ownership of TasWater will be more clearly defined. I am uncomfortable with the idea that the ownership of such an asset is diffuse, because the absence of specific direction enables the organization to become a law unto itself.

Accountability and responsibility are two fundamental principles and these are lacking at present. Yes there are details to be worked through regarding such a transfer, and yes, the devil can truly lie in the detail, but the principle is sound.

A question? If I have an issue of policy who do I go to? To “the Councils”? Which one in particular? Far better that there be a single owner, with an accepted final responsibility for decisions taken. At present, that does not exist.

The Opposition has said that it will continue to oppose the takeover, even though the government went to the election seeking a mandate for such action and was returned. The Opposition is wrong to do so, and their argument is what exactly?

I cannot see any principle at play here in their continuing objection, simply that they can and will obstruct for the sake of it. Well, what if the shoe was on the other foot? Just suppose the opposition had been swept to power on its policy of gaming machine reform, but was unable to get its legislation through parliament because it was opposed by those that did not agree with it. What would its reaction be? They would be the first to condemn such action.

The Hobart (MYER) City Council

The Council has been grappling with the notion of whether to become a UNESCO City of Literature, which would have cost ratepayers some \$175,000 per year. Finally, it decided against it, which is probably a very good idea, considering the following contribution to the “literature”.

In Saturday’s paper, a notice appeared, over the name of the Acting General Manager, calling for public submissions into a review of a Dog Management Strategy. A part of the wording of that notice was “*Irregardless of whether you are a pet or a non-pet owner, your opinion is important etc etc.*” Well, I am neither a pet, nor a non-pet owner. Irregardless....

The Council is rapidly joining my “favourites” list, which includes the do-nothing Macquarie Point Development Corporation. In fact, the Lord Mayor recently raised concerns that the Antarctic precinct at MP would not exclude other uses. Really? In other words, there is still no plan, apart from some “interim” park.