22 February 2006

The Editor
Manly Daily

The Daily article "Too Hot a Property" of 22 February 2006 reveals that Warringah Council staff have been directed to prepare a submission "on the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) discussion paper on corruption risks in NSW development approval processes".

It is no surprise that Warringah ratepayers’ money is being used in an attempt to justify the appointment of the unelected Administrator, with an anti-democratic proposal purporting to exclude whole categories of citizens (especially realtors) from holding public office at the municipal level.

Manly Daily readers deserve to know that ICAC determined that there was no substance in allegations referred to it in October 2002 about Warringah Council. No Warringah Councillor was charged with any offence and no Warringah Councillor was held to be corrupt. ICAC assessed the allegations as having insufficient substance to justify an ICAC inquiry. Yet Warringah Council was sacked.

On 2 Sept 2004 ICAC made findings of corrupt conduct against the Mayor of Strathfield, a Strathfield Councillor, a police officer and a developer, and recommendations for prosecution were made in respect of six persons. Yet Strathfield Council was not sacked. Note that the corrupt Mayor and Councillor did not work in real estate or any related profession, with the apparent instigator of corruption having a background in the bottled water business.

On 9 July 2002 ICAC made findings of corrupt conduct in Rockdale Council plus recommendations for criminal prosecutions, against the Deputy Mayor, a Councillor and four other persons. Yet Rockdale Council was not sacked. Note that the corrupt Deputy Mayor and Councillor did not work in real estate or any related profession, with the apparent instigator of corruption having a background as a solicitor.

On 1 Nov 1998 ICAC made findings of corrupt conduct in Fairfield Council against one former Alderman and five other persons and recommended criminal charges against five persons. Yet Fairfield Council was not sacked. Note that the corrupt (former) Alderman did not work in real estate or any related profession, with the apparent instigator of corruption having a background in scrap metal.

ICAC played no role in the sacking of Warringah Council. Corruption was found in three Labor controlled Councils, yet none were sacked. No corruption was found in Warringah Council, and Warringah Council was indeed sacked, to the advantage of no-one except the opponents of democracy in Warringah, including the Labor Party and its cronies.

The Warringah Council submission has been made on behalf of the Administrator’s masters, with no regard to the interests of Warringah residents. If NSW Labor gets its way, the people who know most about local government will be excluded from local government, statewide. As is the case in Warringah.

Michael Darby
Community Expressions
www.savemanlyhospital.org
6 February 2006

The Editor
Manly Daily

Dear Editor

Readers of the *Daily* are accustomed to the unelected Warringah Administrator using the Warringah Council’s ratepayer-funded page for self-indulgence. The Persson propaganda piece (PPP) of Saturday 4 February 2006 plumbs new depths.

This loyal servant of the NSW Labor Government is in the blink of an eye able to rationalise his position of now supporting a hospital site in Frenchs Forest, after all his advocacy of the wholly unsuitable Civic Centre site.

Blatant authoritarianism is evidenced by the statement: “With so much local politics thrashed out in the letters pages of the Manly Daily, it is particularly crucial that the oppositionists are not allowed to distort the message received by the Government”

The Administrator is not satisfied that the short list of his sycophants receive plenty of exposure in the Manly Daily; he is now calling on the Manly Daily to exclude the opinions of the “oppositionists”. Whatever ambiguity has been deliberately written into the PPP, the meaning remains clear.

The Administrator is not limiting the term “oppositionists” only to those members of St Kevin’s Parish whom he has insulted at Council meetings. If you believe in democratic local government, you are an oppositionist. If you believe that communities have a right to retain their long-established community hospitals, you are an oppositionist. If you reject the concept that hospitals policy should be driven by governmental real estate revenue priorities, you are an oppositionist. If you believe that Council should not squander ratepayers’ funds, you are an oppositionist.

Beware any official who fears the ballot box. Doubly beware an official who fears the ballot box and also fears public opinion.

Yours sincerely

Michael Darby
Community Expressions

[www.savemanlyhospital.org](http://www.savemanlyhospital.org)
31 January 2006
The Editor
Manly Daily


He was successful, for the reason that his anti-democratic ambitions happened to coincide with the NSW ALP’s aim to impose upon the people of Warringah decisions which would never be made by any elected Council.

Investigating the Strathfield Council, ICAC on 2 Sept 2004 made findings of corrupt conduct against the Mayor, a Councillor, a police officer and a developer, and recommendations for prosecution were made in respect of six persons. Yet Strathfield Council was not sacked.

Investigating Rockdale Council, ICAC on 9 July 2002 made findings of corrupt conduct plus recommendations for criminal prosecutions, against the Deputy Mayor, a Councillor and four other persons. Yet Rockdale Council was not sacked.

Investigating Fairfield Council, ICAC on 1 Nov 1998 made findings of corrupt conduct against one former Alderman and five other persons and recommended criminal charges against five persons. Yet Fairfield Council was not sacked.

Your correspondent implies that ICAC played a role in the sacking of Warringah Council. That is false.

In regard to Warringah Council, Manly Daily readers deserve to know that ICAC determined that there was no substance in allegations referred to it in October 2002. No Warringah Councillor was charged with any offence and no Warringah Councillor was held to be corrupt. ICAC assessed the allegations as having insufficient substance to justify an ICAC inquiry. Yet Warringah Council was sacked. Worse, the unwelcome, unelected and undemocratic administrator of Warringah has had his term extended beyond the date on which democratic elections are due to be held.

Corruption was found in three Labor controlled Councils. Yet none were sacked. No corruption was found in Warringah Council, and Warringah Council was indeed sacked, to the advantage of no-one except the opponents of democracy in Warringah, including the Labor Party and its cronies.

Having built his reputation on accusing the elected Warringah Council (correctly discharging its obligations under State Government legislation) of being pro-development, your correspondent has endorsed oppressive developments approved and even initiated by the unelected Administrator. This opponent of democracy uses the maxim “local government is for the people” to conclude a letter in which he advocates banning categories of individuals from having the right to stand for office. Astonishing!

Yours sincerely

Michael Darby
www.savemanlyhospital.org
Commonwealth and Warringah

The Editor

In his Foreword to the Commonwealth Secretariat’s 2005 publication “Make it local, make it democratic – the case for local democracy”, by Mayor Smangaliso Mkhathwa and Councillor John Otekat, Commonwealth Secretary-General Rt Hon Don McKinnon wrote:

In this booklet two leading figures in the Commonwealth Local Government Forum set out the case for local democracy. I welcome this as a valuable addition to the Commonwealth Secretariat’s Taking Democracy Seriously series. Taken together with the Principles on Good Practice for Local Democracy, which appear as one of the appendices, I am confident that this booklet will be a most useful aid to the promotion of local democracy in each of our countries. As Commonwealth Heads of Government have themselves stated, local democracy is an essential element in any modern democracy.

Manly Daily readers can read the whole booklet by visiting: http://michaeldarby.net/Warringah.pdf

By any standard of judgment, the NSW Labor Government has turned its back on the democratic aspirations of the Commonwealth of Nations, by imposing upon the residents and ratepayers of Warringah an administrator, unelected and unwelcome. Notorious for disregarding genuine community opinion, the Administrator arrived in Warringah with no legitimacy and has earned none since. He was appointed solely for the reason that the State Government wanted to inflict upon Warringah a raft of adverse decisions which would never be made by any elected Council responsible to the people through the ballot box. The Administrator’s complicity in the plot to close Manly and Mona Vale Hospitals of course threatens harm beyond the borders of Warringah.

The people of Iraq – not even in the Commonwealth – now have free and democratic elections. The people of Warringah demand no less.

Michael Darby
Community Expressions
5 January 2006

Editor
The Manly Daily
manlydailyletters@cng.newsltd.com.au

Dear Editor

The Manly Daily Article “Barr backs IR challenge” (4 January) is further evidence of the Member for Manly’s wholehearted support for the Australian Labor Party. Mr Barr’s vehement opposition to the Federal Government’s progressive workplace reforms contrast markedly with his mild concern about excessive State taxes and his encouragement of the State ALP’s incompetence in infrastructure management.

Mr Barr and all other opponents of John Howard are slow to learn that the goal of increasing real wages is best achieved by tilting the balance of bargaining power in favour of employees. As demonstrated consistently by the Howard Government, that is best achieved by a steady increase in the number of employers who are obliged to bid against each other to win employees through better wages and conditions.

The Labor alternative is to place all possible impediments in the way of employers, thus guaranteeing that the balance of bargaining power will be shifted away from employees and into the hands of those fewer employers resolute enough or cunning enough to survive the onslaughts of socialist bureaucracy.

There is no genuine independent status in a politician who promotes the Labor scare campaign against workplace relations reform.

Yours

Michael Darby
Community Expressions - Save Manly Hospital
16 December 2005

The Editor
Manly Daily

Dear Editor,

The welcome news that Nolan and Passmore Reserves have escaped for now the threat of being converted to hard surfaces has lessened the media impact of a serious affront to the public which took place at Warringah Council Chambers on Tuesday 13 December 2005.

In the face of clearly expressed popular opposition, the unelected Administrator insisted on approving his own "master plan" for the intensive development of the Dee Why CBD. The simple fact is that no elected Council would ever approve a plan which tramples so unfairly on the rights of the locals. Among the victims of the undemocratic decision are the parishioners of St Kevin’s Church.

The Administrator astonished the gallery by adding insult to injury with his gratuitous personal attacks on three St. Kevin’s parishioners. Their right to free speech, in the view of the Administrator, does not extend to making energetic representations in defence of individual liberty, private property rights, and the sanctity of contract.

Warringah residents and all who care about democracy are invited to demand the removal of the “colonial governor” of Warringah and the free democratic election of local councillors as soon as the process can be arranged. The people of Iraq now have the right to vote. The people of Warringah deserve no less.

I wish all the blessings of Christmas to the personnel and readers of the Manly Daily.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Darby
Community Expressions (Save Manly Hospital)
18 October 2005

The Manly Daily

Dear Editor,

Mr Walter Oliver (Manly Daily 15 October) attempts to hang a “hard right” label on me without any knowledge of me or of my community activities.

I am a temperate Liberal who sees politics as an extension of humanitarianism. The legitimate purpose of public life is speaking up for those who cannot adequately speak for themselves.

John Brogden led the Opposition tirelessly in a strong campaign to improve health services for the people of New South Wales, and to his great credit, John Brogden acted on my suggestion that he appoint a NSW Shadow Minister for Mental Health. I remain hopeful that my concurrent recommendation for a Federal Minister for Mental Health will in due course be accepted.

I promote access to health services, so I oppose the closure of community hospitals. I promote the availability of education, so I campaign for the reopening of Seaforth TAFE. I uphold the sanctity of contract and the rights of minorities, so I defend the St Kevins Dee Why parishioners against the Warringah Administrator’s carpark grab. I honour the sovereignty of small nations, so I campaigned for independence for the East Timorese just as I campaigned for the independence of each of the former Captive Nations of Europe. I respect children, and I like to protect them from all harm including sexual abuse and illegal drugs.

On Tuesday I performed poetry for the residents of the Salvation Army’s Pacific Lodge. On Friday I compèred a fundraiser for the Society of St Vincent de Paul at Harold Park. On Saturday I entertained the homeless of Manly at the free hot meal provided for them each week by Alan and Hui Clarke’s Street Mission. Back to Tuesday with a poetry performance in an honorary capacity for a Probus Club - a typical week for a temperate Liberal.

The Liberal Party embraces a wide range of views in a spirit of amity. Not so the Labor Party, as evidenced by the Labor Member for Fairfield’s 20 Dec 2004 description (at ICAC) of the Labor Member for Liverpool: “We are in opposing factions and we don’t talk.”

Yours sincerely

Michael Darby
15 November 2005

Dear Editor

All Manly Daily readers earnestly hope that the victims of the Monday 14 November Spit Hill multiple-vehicle crash recover rapidly from their injuries.

The tragic accident, on a scale which could have cost several lives, is no surprise to regular users of one of the nation’s busiest thoroughfares. The combination of steep gradient, chicane and inadequate lane width is inherently dangerous.

Before it is too late, the NSW Government should reassess the foolish two-extra-bridge-lanes proposal which will only increase traffic pressure on a demonstrably hazardous stretch of roadway. A far preferable approach is a single lane switchable tunnel from Manly Vale to St Leonards Park which will take express buses, trucks and many other vehicles off the Spit Hill and Military Road. The tunnel would run south from midnight to noon and north from noon to midnight on weekdays, reversing the timings on weekends.

Michael Darby
Community Expressions
3 October 2005

The Editor
Manly Daily
manlydailyletters@cng.newsltd.com.au

Dear Editor,

The Manly Daily front page article of Sat 1 October attributes to Mr Harvey Rose the assertion: “What was done to John (Brogden) was despicable. John was done in by the right wing of his party.”

Harvey Rose is an admirable and honourable gentleman who deserves the thanks of all Peninsula residents for his selfless long-term contribution to the defence of Mona Vale Hospital. Those good qualities do not equip him for awareness of the internal operations of a political party of which he is not a member.

Having campaigned strongly for John Brogden since the day he became Leader, I was very keen to discover whether anyone in the Liberal Party contributed to the media exposé which led to John Brogden’s decision to resign the leadership. Extensive enquires led me to the conclusion that no-one in the Party outside Mr Brogden’s inner circle had any knowledge of the Hilton Hotel events until these were described graphically in media reports.

After Mr Brogden’s decision to resign the leadership, a couple of Parliamentarians – one State and one Federal – attempted to influence the choice of Mr Brogden’s successor by attacking members of the Party outside their own faction. Mr Brogden was emphatically not “done in” by anyone in his own Party.

Now we see the situation of a some factional Liberal attempting to influence the choice of Mr Brogden’s successor in Pittwater, by encouraging a false belief on the part of an honest man with high credibility, Mr Harvey Rose, in the correct expectation that Mr Rose is likely to be quoted in the quality press.

Harvey, someone is having a lend of you.

Michael Darby
13 September 2005

The Editor
Manly Daily

Dear Editor

The Manly Daily of 13 September lays bare the Landcom plan for an eight-or-more storeys complex to replace the Seaforth TAFE. The three “options” offered expressly exclude the only option which appeals to the community, the reopening of Seaforth TAFE as an educational institution.

The loud warning for all residents of Manly, Warringah and Pittwater is the transparent insincerity of “consultation” processes initiated by the NSW Government and its servants. The rule is that under cover of a smokescreen of community discussion, the bureaucratic apparatus relentlessly pushes towards its unpopular goal, while individuals who attempt to resist the bureaucratic bulldozer are subjected to unwarranted personal attack.

That undemocratic rule applies whether we are dealing with Landcom’s aim of eliminating the Seaforth TAFE, Northern Sydney Health’s goal of selling off the Manly Hospital and Mona Vale Hospital real estate, the Education Department’s development ambitions for the Beacon Hill High School site, the Warringah Administrator’s insistence on swallowing the Oaks Avenue carpark into an authoritarian “masterplan”, or the same entity’s objective of a hard surface over the Nolan and Passmore Reserves.

Yours sincerely

Michael Darby
Community Expressions (Save Manly Hospital)
30 August 2005

The Editor
Sydney Morning Herald

Dear Editor,

Jonathan Pearlman and Andrew Clennell (SMH 30 Aug 05) attribute to John Brogden a claim that Alex Hawke spread rumours of the “drunken antics” of the erstwhile Liberal Leader.

During the month of August 2005 I had several conversations with Alex Hawke, and he had the opportunity to say anything he wished about John Brogden. John Brogden’s name was mentioned only in the context of our shared determination (then) to ensure that John Brogden would become Premier of NSW in 2007. If Alex Hawke had done anything to draw attention to the shortcomings of any Liberal Parliamentarian, I would have heard about it.

My own website carries some of my radio appearances supporting John Brogden. Alex Hawke congratulated me on at least one of these. Alex Hawke was loyal to the NSW Liberal Leader, just as he will be loyal to the next Liberal Leader.

John Brogden should be grateful to all the Liberals who stood by him, including Alex Hawke.

Yours sincerely

Michael Darby
15 August 2005

Editor
Manly Daily

On August 13 you quoted the Warringah Administrator's criticism of Michael Darby in connection with a public meeting on developments in the area. Mr Persson is seriously mistaken in labelling Darby as "an extremely right-wing member of the Liberal Party". He should play the ball and not the man.

I have observed Mr Darby’s political activity for 30 years and can say with full knowledge that he is an unusually clear thinker with consistent positions on a range of issues. He was, for example, in 1975 the first prominent Liberal to argue that Australia should try to prevent Indonesia invading East Timor and, along with a number of activists who could not in any circumstances be called right-wing, maintained an unwavering commitment to independence for East Timor. Also, within the Liberal Party, Darby has long been an advocate for mental health and prison reform.

Less than a year ago Michael Darby was well received in addressing a meeting of the Former Members of the Australian Parliament, and as editor of the Association’s journal I have been happy to publish him on economic rationality (not rationalism).

A thinker and innovator like Darby deserves better than tired and inaccurate slogans, Mr Persson.

Dr R J Solomon
President, AFMPA
11 July 2005

The Editor
Sydney Morning Herald

BRIAN RAY

Dear Editor

Sadly, Brian and Kathy Ray and their pilot Russell Lee are likely dead, whether from impact or from freezing. While Australians of goodwill are praying for the survival of the victims of an alpine air-crash, Kate McClymont (SMH 11 July) writes sneeringly of Brian Ray’s history and personal associations.

Brian Ray deserves recognition for his entrepreneurial courage which long after his passing will contribute to Australia’s prosperity, and he also deserves to be remembered as a good family man and a loyal friend.

Shame on the sneerers!

Michael Darby
Dear Editor

Congratulations to the Manly Daily and education reporter Julieanne Strachan on the 6 July 2005 front page, alerting Manly and district residents to the latest bureaucratic assault on common sense. The article revealing a foolish Landcom plan to destroy the Seaforth TAFE is supported by a strong editorial “TAFE closure doesn’t add up”.

The nation’s skill shortage is apparent to all. Seaforth TAFE has the proven capacity to accept 1,800 students across a wide range of disciplines, and should be reopened forthwith.

Yours sincerely
Michael Darby
Community Expressions
The opponents of Manly Hospital should get their story straight.

A group of demonstrators at Manly Hospital led your correspondent Lisa Muxworthy (Manly Daily, 10 June 2005) to believe that their activity was part of a work stoppage. Vincent Del Luca (Manly Daily, 21 June 2005) described as “completely incorrect” my statement that the demonstrators included persons who were neither staff nor patients. Dr Grahame Robards (Manly Daily, 25 June 2005) confirmed my comment that there was no general stoppage of work, and admitted that there were “supporters (of BEACHES) other than staff in attendance”.

What the opponents of Manly Hospital agree upon is their insistence that a new hospital must be built ANYWHERE other than on one of the two best hospital sites in the whole world; the present sites of Manly and Mona Vale Hospitals. Their sole stated argument for rejecting these two wonderful sites, each offering ample room, is their assertion that a new hospital must be built “in the centre of the peninsula”, necessarily involving the closure of the fine community hospitals at Manly and Mona Vale. There are many reasons why this argument is transparently insincere, and I’ll list just three.

1. The “shut Manly, terminate Mona Vale” advocates are quite happy with the Wyong and Gosford Hospitals, situated respectively in the Northern and Southern zones of the Central Coast.
2. Now that their silly plan for a Dee Why site has been comprehensively rejected by the public, the “shut Manly, terminate Mona Vale” advocates are now threatening to steal land from the Warringah Golf Club, on a flood plain a few minutes by ambulance from Manly Hospital.
3. The only valid reason for closing Manly and Mona Vale hospitals is the Labor Government’s determination to get its hands on the real estate megadollars, as it is doing through Landcom at Little Bay, the site of the former Prince Henry Hospital

Dr Robards describes me as “a political animal”. I am proud of my political affiliations, and I suggest that all persons working in the interests of a political party should disclose their real goals.

Dr Graham Robards now claims status emeritus at Manly Hospital. I challenge Dr Robards to produce the document bestowing the right to participate in a political operation which involves plucking neonates from the safety of Obstetrics and exposing their unprotected eyes and skin to harsh sunlight for the sake of publicity photographs.

Yours sincerely

Michael Darby
Community Expressions (Save Manly Hospital)
18 June 2005

The Editor
Manly Daily

Dear Editor

Page 3 of the Manly Daily of 10 June carried a report of a demonstration at Manly Hospital.

Residents of Manly and the Peninsula deserve to know these facts:

- There was no general stoppage of work as readers might infer from the article, and the demonstrators included persons who were neither staff nor patients.
- “BEACHES” was exposed during the NSW Legislative Council Inquiry as representing the interests of the arm of NSW Labor, now known as Northern Sydney Central Coast Health.
- Lyn Hopper gave surprising evidence to the NSW Legislative Council Inquiry of a rally which was not witnessed by anybody else. See speech by Rev Dr the Hon Gordon Moyes MLC, recorded in Hansard page 14674 of 22 March 2005.
- Lyn Hopper, who has failed to admit that there was never a rally of 1,000 supporting the Dee Why site, is an ally of David Barr MLA in calling for the closure of Manly Hospital.
- The demonstrators took two new-born babies from the hospital to use as propaganda. This is dangerous conduct, and especially wrong if the mothers did not consent. According to eye-witnesses, babies used as propaganda were carried back to the Obstetrics Block by two nurses.
- The demonstration was attended by Dr Grahame Robards, a member of BEACHES who has no status at Manly Hospital. Dr Robards was photographed holding a neonate. Mrs Robards, well known for her strident expression of a minority viewpoint at public meetings, was also demonstrating.
- Newborn babies must never be exposed to glare, and babies were presented for photographs in the midday sunshine with no apparent attempt being made to cover their delicate eyes and skin.
- The demonstrators prevented an ambulance and other vehicles from leaving the hospital, and stopped a senior medical practitioner from driving into the hospital to see a patient. The medical practitioner was obliged to park outside the hospital and enter on foot, whereupon the demonstrators booed the medical practitioner.
- Manly Hospital and Mona Vale Hospital have two of the best hospital sites in the whole world. Patients and staff deserve beautiful views and sea breezes.
- By closing Prince Henry Hospital and selling off Little Bay through Landcom, the NSW Government has revealed its motives for wanting to close Manly and Mona Vale Hospitals.
- Any shortcomings of Manly and Mona Vale Hospitals are directly attributable to the State Government policy of running down these two fine hospitals in order to justify the plan to close them in direct opposition to the views of the community.

Yours sincerely

Michael Darby
Community Expressions (Save Manly Hospital)
PRESS RELEASE 10 JUNE 2005

COMMUNITY ALERT #02 FROM COMMUNITY EXPRESSIONS

Fake Citizens’ Group in Dangerous Demo

The Manly Daily of 10 June 05 (page 3) carries Lisa Muxworthy’s report, titled “Keep quiet, nurses tell campaigners”.

The Report begins: “MANLY Hospital staff stopped work yesterday to tell the Save Mona Vale Hospital committee to ‘sit down and shut up’ so the State Government could plan a new peninsula hospital. Lyn Hopper, Manly nurse and chairperson for BEACHES (Better Equitable Access to Community and Hospital Services), said workers were frustrated the Mona Vale committee had monopolised the hospital debate.”

Residents of Manly and the Peninsula deserve to know these facts:

• There was no general stoppage of work as readers might infer from the article, and the demonstrators included persons who were neither staff nor patients.
• “BEACHES” was exposed during the NSW Legislative Council Inquiry as representing the interests of the arm of NSW Labor, now known as Northern Sydney Central Coast Health.
• Lyn Hopper gave surprising evidence to the NSW Legislative Council Inquiry, of a rally which was not witnessed by anybody else. Here is an extract from a speech by Rev Dr the Hon Gordon Moyes MLC, recorded in Hansard page 14674 of 22 March 2005:
  While walking back to my office after the hearing I saw Miss Hopper and a staff person who works for David Barr, member of Parliament, walking towards me in the Fountain Court. As we came toward each other I said, “Miss Hopper, excuse me, Miss Hopper, but can you confirm you told the committee that BEACHES organised a rally at Manly where more than a thousand people were present to support the Dee Why site?” Miss Hopper replied, “Yes.” I said, “Thank you”, and continued on my way.
  Lyn Hopper, who has failed to admit that there was never a rally of 1,000 supporting the Dee Why site, is an ally of David Barr MLA in calling for the closure of Manly Hospital.
• The demonstration of 9 June was attended by Dr Grahame Robards, a member of BEACHES who has no status at Manly Hospital. Mrs Robards, well known for her strident expression of a minority viewpoint at public meetings, was also demonstrating.
• The demonstrators took new-born babies from the hospital to use as propaganda. This is dangerous conduct, and especially wrong if the mothers did not consent. According to eye-witnesses, babies used as propaganda, including one baby held for a time by Dr Robards, were carried back to the Obstetrics Block by two nurses.
• Newborn babies must never be exposed to glare, and babies were presented for photographs in the midday sunshine with no apparent attempt being made to cover their delicate eyes and skin.
• The demonstrators prevented an ambulance and other vehicles from leaving the hospital, and stopped a senior medical practitioner from driving into the hospital to see a patient. The medical practitioner was obliged to park outside the hospital and enter on foot, whereupon the demonstrators booed the medical practitioner.
• Manly Hospital and Mona Vale Hospital have two of the best hospital sites in the whole world. Patients and staff deserve beautiful views and sea breezes.
• By closing Prince Henry Hospital and selling off Little Bay through Landcom, the NSW Government has revealed its motives for wanting to close Manly and Mona Vale Hospitals.
• Any shortcomings of Manly and Mona Vale Hospitals are directly attributable to the State Government policy of running down these two fine hospitals in order to justify the plan to close them in direct opposition to the views of the community.

Michael Darby
Community Expressions
www.savemanlyhospital.org
Dear Editor

The unelected Administrator of Warringah has let the cat out of the bag by announcing (Manly Daily 26 May 2005) that it is “already unnatural for a Labor Government to be building a hospital where it had no elected representatives”.

Another leading apologist for closing Manly and Mona Vale Hospitals, Mrs Robards, at the 17 May 2005 public meeting at Dee Why RSL reiterated her oft-expressed view “There can only be one hospital on the Peninsula”, supporting her assertion with the curious claim that “no-one from Palm Beach will clean toilets”.

Put these two assertions together and the position is very clear. All of Labor’s talk about a new hospital for the Peninsula is driven by Labor’s belief – evidenced by the Landcom development at the former Prince Henry Hospital site at Little Bay – that attractive views and sea breezes are too good for patients and hospital staff. No-one can any longer deny that the Labor plan is to sell two of the world’s best hospital sites – Manly and Mona Vale – through Landcom for housing development, to fund Labor’s insatiable demand for short term revenue. The revenue raised through Landcom will not pay for any new hospital. Such funding will come through a public-private sector partnership arrangement which will saddle the people of NSW with many decades of heavy financial obligations.

Administrator Persson is in the job to achieve the goals of Labor, and seems surprised that ordinary people are opposed to him. Mr Persson was appointed on the back of a flawed inquiry which among other things placed unfair constraints upon witnesses who sought to give evidence in favour of Warringah Council. Having been appointed undemocratically, his first concern was to get his appointment extended, and his actions in office have been consistently inimical to the interests of the residents of Warringah. Persson should go, and the hospitals should stay.

Michael Darby
Community Expressions
www.savemanlyhospital.org
Subject: LEP Draft Amendment Submission: - Howard Ave – Oaks Ave Carpark, Dee Why.

I support and endorse the wise objections made by Mr GP Bidder in his letter of 2 May 2005 (attached), and in addition I make these observations.

- It is wrong for any “Government Architect” to offer any kind of plan which involves the property and lives of citizens. “Government Architects” performed such a function in the former Soviet Union.

- There is no validity in any grand plan which is handed down by an unelected administrator, whose function is demonstrably to serve the perceived needs of his political masters, the NSW State Labor Government, while paying no heed to the needs of the residents who have unwillingly been forced to submit their civic concerns to his insensitive control.

- Whatever the legislated position, it is morally wrong for any Council to revoke unilaterally a solemn contract entered into with a vendor of land. The contract with St Kevin’s Church should be honoured, and any bureaucrat who dishonours such a contract is guilty of an affront to civilised society, and must be neither excused nor forgiven.

- The rest of the world, including the rest of Australia, is presently escaping from socialism, authoritarianism and the denial of private property rights which are incorporated in those alien doctrines. Warringah Council should more in the same direction as the rest of the world, the direction of individual liberty.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Darby
14 April 2005

The Editor
Manly Daily
manlydailyletters@cng.newsltd.com.au

Dear Editor

The Manly Daily of 10 April carries a letter by the General Manager of Warringah Council. The General Manager, as an employee of the Council, should not be required to write a political letter on behalf of his boss, the unelected Administrator of Warringah. The Administrator is in conflict with the St Kevin’s Church Car Park Committee for one very simple reason. St Kevin’s provided land to the Council on terms which the Administrator intends unilaterally to revoke.

The highly-motivated and highly-principled defenders of the rights of the parishioners of St Kevin’s are of course not alone in their opposition to the ill-advised and ill-conceived undemocratic plan to place 601 new units in the middle of a high density traffic zone. The American War of Independence was fought because the Colonial Government ignored the cry “No taxation without representation”. Warringah now has its own colonial governor, and the locals are entitled to wonder why they should have to pay rates to an institution which does not allow them to vote, which treats solemn undertakings as valueless, and which is contemptuous of the rights of individuals and the views of community groups.

Michael Darby
Community Expressions
www.savemanlyhospital.org
Dear Editor

At Heaven's Gate a papal banner is unfurled
In greeting Christ says
"Welcome, Priest;
Ye servant of the world".

Michael Darby
13 November 2004

Dear Editor,

Resident in Warringah is a gentleman with an enviable record of public service, whose civic, humanitarian, cultural and charitable activities more than justify the significant recognition which he has received from Governments in Australia, and in the land of his ancestors, Italy.

On page 13 of the 12 November issue of the Daily, an article on the half-hour meeting of Warringah Council impolitely refers to “sacked councillor John Caputo”.

This unwarranted use of pejorative terminology reflects bad journalism, bad editing and bad publishing, and does harm to the reputation of the Manly Daily. Note that on the facing page (12) of the Daily, the same author refers, respectfully, to “former Councillor Ruth Sutton”.

Neither Cav. John Caputo OAM nor any other councillor committed any act of corruption or any other illegality. The Council was accused by its critics of supporting overdevelopment, but those same critics are silent when the Administrator approves developments which the democratically elected Council would never have accepted. Many of your readers now understand that the NSW Car Labor Government dismissed the Council, not because of any shortcomings of the Council, but simply because an elected Council was certain to oppose the plans of Carr Labor. Those plans will be shown to include the extinguishment of Manly and Mona Vale Hospitals, the construction of a hospital on the wholly unsuitable site of the Dee Why Civic Centre, and a major collectivist-style development in already crowded Dee Why involving 611 additional dwelling units. Carr Labor intends to abolish Warringah Council, with South Creek Road forming the border between Pittwater and a “Manly-Warringah” Municipality.

Unlike Administrator Dick Persson, John Caputo has repeatedly faced elections and has repeatedly been elected to Council by the voters. Dick Persson will of course never face a ballot box.

He who fears the ballot box, should be feared by all.

Michael Darby

www.savemanlyhospital.org
2 November 2004

Dear Editor,

On page one of the Manly Daily of 21 October 2004 we read that the Warringah Administrator “sought the extension” of his term, which the Minister for Local Government, against all democratic principles, has purported to extend to 2008.

Taking the lead from Pittwater Councillor Natalie Stevens’ apt description of the “dictatorial role” of the Warringah Administrator, the Local Government Association of NSW has properly called for elections to be held in Warringah in 2005.

Mr Persson’s response (Manly Daily 1 Nov 2004, page 3) is to assert that the matter is not in his hands: “This is a matter for the Minister”. Having ignited the political bushfire of opposition by his self-serving request for an extension, the Administrator is now trying to play Pontius Pilate with a firehose, but he cannot avoid being overwhelmed by the conflagration of public outrage.

Michael Darby
Save Manly Hospital
27 October 2004

The Manly Daily
manlydailyletters@cng.newsltd.com.au

Dear Editor,

In the past, the opponents of the elected Warringah Council have in sheaves of letters to the Manly Daily, expressed their hostility to “overdevelopment” in Warringah. They even instigated a speech in the Legislative Council attacking a five-unit development and arranged for an ABC TV “exposé” on the same subject.

The unelected administrator, overt advocate for closure of Manly Hospital, and suspected of promoting the closure of Mona Vale Hospital, has successfully proposed to the Minister an extension of his own term in defiance of all democratic norms. He now proposes a government-architect-designed development for Dee Why which will add 611 apartments to a square kilometre which already houses 7,000 people. The intended development is punting distance from the site on which the same unelected administrator wants to build a seven storey hospital after tearing down the Warringah Council Chamber and its award-winning library.

The erstwhile opponents of overdevelopment have not only failed to offer any criticism of the Persson plan; in the pages of the Manly Daily they have applauded the anti-democratic extension of gauleiter rule.

Are we looking at a stunning volte-face? Or was the anti-development chant nothing but a pretext for undermining the democratically elected Council?

Yours sincerely

Michael Darby
Dear Editor

It is extraordinary that the Member for Manly (Manly Daily front page, 15 July 2004) impertinently accuses Brad Hazzard MLA of “playing politics” and “not representing his electorate”. Mr Hazzard has honestly sought the views of his voters; and honestly reported the result.

Mr Barr is the first politician in my memory who has ever called for the removal of a hospital from his own electorate. That act of hostility toward his own constituents probably ranks as a world first.

Manly and Mona Vale Hospitals boast the unrivaled patient-friendly and staff-friendly assets of clean fresh air and attractive surroundings, plus the rare visitor-friendly asset of ample parking. Neither of these hospitals should be abandoned in furtherance of the Labor Party’s political goals, which transparently include the elimination of Warringah Council.

SAVE MANLY HOSPITAL!

Michael Darby
Community Expressions
Dear Editor

Congratulations to Terry Metherell and the Manly Warringah Pittwater Historical Society (Opinion, June 10).

The ill-considered proposal to establish a hospital on the Warringah Council site at Dee Why carries the automatic threat of closure of Mona Vale and Manly hospitals with their grounds being sold at the whim of the State Government.

Northern Beaches residents have many other reasons for rejecting the hospital proposal, including:

- Loss of a splendid library in the Sulman-award-winning building
- Destruction of natural environment including the unique Hawkesbury sandstone escarpment.
- Difficulty of access for ambulances
- Impracticability of parking and intensified traffic congestion
- Inevitable problems for local businesses, and
- Dangers and noise of helicopters in a high-density residential area.

Furthermore, the plan should be seen as an artifice in the State Government’s strategy of abolishing Warringah Council.

Individuals who object to the lack of community consultation on this vital issue may care to visit the website: www.northernbeaches.da.ru.

Yours sincerely

Michael Darby
14 February 2004

Dear Editor

Successive Mayors of Warringah used the ratepayer-funded Warringah Council weekly advertisement in the Manly Daily to present useful information, and never used the page for self-promotion. Warringah Administrator Dick Persson seems to have ignored this tradition, and on Saturday 12 February he went far beyond the boundaries of good taste and good sense, improperly using the advertisement as a weapon in a battle with the Member for Davidson, Andrew Humpherson MP.

Mr Humpherson has earned the confidence of voters in Local Government and in the Legislative Assembly. Mr Persson has never been elected to any office.

Mr Humpherson exercises his responsibility to the individuals who elected him, including those who voted against him. Mr Persson is responsible only to the Government which appointed him.

Mr Humpherson lives among the individuals whom he represents. Mr Persson visits, from a distance, the individuals over whose lives he has been given a great deal of influence.

Mr Humpherson can extend his term in office only by earning and retaining the confidence of his constituents. Mr Persson can extend his term by a simple request to the decision maker who has his loyalty.

If Mr Persson wishes to attack Mr Humpherson – or any other citizen – in an advertisement, then Mr Persson should pay for that advertisement.

Michael Darby
Sir,

The prevalence of obscenities at the modern cinema is an unpleasant trend. Defenders of the practice claim (unconvincingly) that obscenity is sometimes necessary for the sake of historical realism.

Clearly, this defence is not available for science fiction cinema, set far in the future.

A major offender is the science fiction movie, "Pitch Black," with a script which proves that obscenities are even less attractive when uttered by women and children. "Pitch Black" also has its male lead utter a particularly offensive blasphemy, which has no connection whatever to the plot, and therefore has been inserted gratuitously in the script as an expression of some individual’s warped personality.

Young people look to cinema for role models. A major disadvantage of obscenity is that it displaces normal vocabulary.

Listen to a teenager with a displaced vocabulary, and chances are you are listening to a teenager already suffering from a serious disadvantage.

Michael Darby