

The Big Picture

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“News to use & bemuse”



Editor: Mike Bolan

Across the news

More evidence that Australia is being swamped by bureaucracies that create work and expense for us without any commensurate benefits....

"Labor's decision to change the public hospital governance structure in NSW from eight Area Health Services to 15 Local Hospital Networks is nothing but a re-naming of the Titanic," the chairman of the department of medicine at Sydney Hospital and Sydney Eye Hospital, John Graham, told me last week.

"Both federal and state Labor have stuck the public hospital system with a bureaucracy of enormous proportions. It means there is a huge difference with Abbott and the Coalition because they are prepared to move funds, extra beds and local management back into the hospitals. They are committed to having an autonomous, pro bono board of directors at every public hospital. I think this reform would eventually end the need for state health bureaucracies.

"That would deliver a huge economic benefit because only doctors and nurses and pharmacists and physiotherapists and other front-line health workers can create the reality of healthcare, while the bureaucrats waste at least \$10 billion a year of precious health dollars." [TheAge](#)

Labor incompetence is indicated by the fact that they cannot even get the most important thing to them right – getting into power federally...

WHEN former NSW Labor Party boss Karl Bitar was made national secretary of the ALP in October 2008, Frank Sartor sent him a pithy text message.

"Congratulations on the new job, now that you have f ... ked up NSW, you can go and f ... k up the country," it read.

Sartor was referring to Bitar's role in the disastrous unseating of Morris Iemma, suggesting prime minister Kevin Rudd could become the next victim.

Just how unintentionally prescient Sartor's epistle was, no one could have imagined that the machine men of the NSW Labor Right - oddly named Centre "Unity" - would actually repeat the NSW experiment in Canberra.

That is to say: Bringing down a popularly elected leader in their first term of government on the whim of a focus group, and then believing they could manage the successor like a puppet on a string, dancing to the tune of whatever the next focus group revealed...

And it is Bitar and Arbib, the men in charge of the machinery, who rightly or wrongly have become synonymous with the failed modern Labor model, the disastrous election campaign and the deep-seated malaise that has infirmed the party across all its disparate factions and groupings...

Rudd was created from this factional hybrid, stand for nothing, win at all costs, political machine that trades in slogans and platitudes as the primary political mechanism at the expense of policy. [Telegraph](#)

And on waste and inefficiency...

The figures in the Orgill Building the Education Revolution report show that in most states it costs the government between 25 and 40 per cent more to build buildings for state schools than schools in the Catholic education system.

In some states – like NSW – the difference is boosted by gross government inefficiency. However, given that the trend occurs in every state except Western Australia, we are clearly looking at a fundamental underlying problem.

In the Building Education Revolution the Labor state governments in every state, except WA, appear to have instructed the state schools to use some of the 'union-friendly' rules rather than the efficient system we use for home buildings. The Catholic schools used the efficient system.

I know I sound like a broken record, but now see what was really behind Assistant Treasurer Nick Sherry's backing of the plan to make the tax rules for independent contracting very tough – it would have extended 'union-friendly' building to the Australian housing market. [BusinessSpectator](#)

...and of course...

This election will be remembered for the incompetent advice provided to Rudd by the ALP's once mighty NSW Right, destroying the prime minister's standing and prompting his political assassination by those who gave the advice. [Aust](#)

At least Australia's media is slowly waking up to the realities of our grossly inefficient system of over-government.

Not only is the system wasteful, our political parties are disconnected from reality and driven by dogma, lobbyists and focus groups...

Industry policy is an issue that has been almost invisible in the current election campaign. The ALP's Kim Carr has been so invisible that he makes Peter Garrett look like a lighthouse; and the opposition's industry spokeswoman, Sophie Mirabella, has been even less visible, if that were possible.

Orthodox economic theory says that positive industry policies do more harm than good; but the assumptions that such theories are based on are more suited to the Comedy Festival than to practical economic management. [TheAge](#)

That Was The Week That Was

Governance + spin

NSW Crime Commission doing cash deals [Telegraph](#)
Council proposal to fine graffiti victims [Mercury](#) [Merc2](#)
Greens might find growing up hard [SMH](#)

Climate/water/energy/resources/environment

We're as good as cooked [ThePunch](#)
Tas 'pay as you go' costs most for power [Mercury](#)

Health & education revolutions/communication/defence

Superbug hits Australia [TheAge](#)
BER waste totals \$2 bn in east [Australian](#)
Public schools sacrificed for electoral win: Davidson [TheAge](#)
How your web movements are being watched [ICH](#)
Defence fails to get camouflage right [TheAge](#)

Economy/social/shelter/transport/free speech/World

We need to support value adding industries [TheAge](#)
Pensioners shafted by Labor [BusinessSpectator](#)
Safety fears stop interstate train service [TheAge](#)
America goes dark [NewYorkTimes](#)
Good planning is urgently needed: Monbiot [Guardian](#)