



Monash Mayor Geoff Lake plays 'Simon Says' and councillors raise their hands

Abalinx Peter Adamis 27 May 2016

Politics is like swimming in a whirlpool full of sharks and if one does not know how to survive the spinning and changes in directions they are bound to be eaten and/or worse sucked in and drowned.

One way or another, little fish never get to be any bigger and the only way to avoid this scenario is to never allow yourself to become involved with sharks or find yourself in a whirlpool without an end. This leads me to why I wrote this article and for whom it is intended. I leave it to the readers to sift through the maelstrom of the jargon and make their own assumptions.

I would like to draw readers attention to a recent article in the Monash Leader on May 26, 2016 by Christine McGinn which caught my eye and I felt to come to the rescue of an old friend. Mind you, I have not seen that friend for some time and yet, it would be remiss of me if I did not take action and report on a potential seduction of a friend to the dark side of politics. The article was about Geoff Lake the current Mayor of Monash City Council and his latest ruling on behaviour.

Geoff Lake the current Mayor of Monash City Council is fast becoming a legend in his own life time. Not only is he becoming nonchalant about his leadership style, he leave a lot to be desired in his communication with his councillors. Not content with being the mayor, he now wishes to create an environment that is almost reminiscent of a state within a state and he does not care who he upsets to create that environment of his choice. On the other hand the people of Monash should be asking whether their Mayor is qualified to run a Kindergarten given his recent comments of: "If you behave like children you have got to expect you will be treated like children,"

An example of his latest escapade involves the seduction of Russell Hannan, the current Liberal Party Treasurer, Past President and former Mayor and currently working for a Federal Minister, to monitor the behaviour of the council meetings for a paltry \$10,000. If this is not a bribe, then it certainly is a honeypot that could rival that of the evils that fled Pandora's Box. Surely Geoff Lake does not believe that Russel Hannan to be so gullible, naïve and stupid as to take up his offer when he well knows that given Russel Hannan's political associations and affiliations will be in direct conflict with Liberal minded councillors on the Monash City Council.

But then again Geoff Lake the Mayor is not without blemish or controversy himself when considering his own background and actions regarding matters that attract political actions. Geoff Lake to his credit will do what it takes to remain relevant to the people of Monash and if it means becoming a creative and innovative disruptive councillor, then so be it. According to news media reports, Geoff Lake's actions have included matters such as:

- 1.. He was against making changes to the However, former Monash mayor Geoff Lake said the proposed changes being considered by the Victorian Electoral Commission was anti-democratic because it would remove voters' right to know candidate preferences at the time of voting, as in a postal ballot.
2. He clashed with 3AW talkback radio host Neil Mitchell after he was criticised for starting up the "nature strip police". Mitchell spoke with Geoff Lake over the Monash Council's proposal to fine homeowners \$200 if grass on the nature strip in front of their properties grows longer than 30cm.
3. Geoff Lake had a free dinner and hospitality at Mr Bowness' birthday bash, and was given a ticket and hospitality to the Australian Open tennis men's semi-final in 2014 and 2013, as well as dinner for Mr and Mrs Lake in 2012. From my point of view I don't see a problem or a conflict of interest with this but public perception and integrity representation is another matter.
4. Cricket Victoria also treated him to hospitality at the Australia versus England One Day International in 2014.
5. Cr Lake was also shown hospitality at the September Club courtesy of the City of Melbourne in 2014.
6. The City of Melbourne is also keeping close ties with Cr Lake giving him free tickets to Oaks Day, the men's final at the Australian Open, and to see Hawthorn and Essendon battle it out at the MCG in June last year.
7. He declared that Blackrock Real Estate Asia Fund II paid for his flights and accommodation to Tokyo and Shanghai to attend a forum in November 2014.
8. While he was Monash councillor he contested and won a bitterly fought pre-selection to contest the seat being vacated by long-serving Labor frontbencher Simon Crean. However allegations of stalking a political rival surfaced after he won the pre-selection, causing him to offer a signed apology to fellow Monash councillor Kathy Magee over a 2002 exchange.
9. To his credit Geoff Lake said he did not support brothels but the council did not have a "compelling planning ground" to oppose the development at the tribunal.
10. He and the then Liberal for Health Minister, David Davis clashed about extending state-wide smoking bans to cover outdoor dining areas. Geoff Lake, who wanted the then Liberal State Government to create a state-wide ban against smoking in alfresco dining areas and said that Mr David Davis should be renamed the "minister for passive smoke" for failing to take action. He went onto say that the Health Minister had ample opportunity to ban smoking in outdoor dining areas since he became health minister in 2010.

There are sections of the community in the City of Monash that would rather see the back of Geoff Lake, but you can bet your bottom dollar that he will turn up so to speak if an issue was worth commenting Love him or leave him one could say when describing the Mayor, while others would say better the devil we know than the devil we don't. Why people dislike him and why other others support him is a matter of conjecture and for the people of Monash to decide. I am sure that they have not heard the last of him.

As always, my apologies for the poor grammar, punctuation and savagery of the English language. It is fair to say that the source material for the article was derived from major media outlets. All that I can say is that it is great to be alive and one does not give up in the face of adversity.



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