

TAKEOVER OF CALVARY HOSPITAL CANBERRA

I recently learned that the ACT government aided and abetted by Federal Labor has forcibly moved into the Calvary Hospital in a hostile takeover. I say forcibly as they were prepared to use police force if there was any resistance by management or staff! The sight of a government funded crane removing the Calvary cross from the building early Sunday morning was a very stark image of the direction this government feels is appropriate for Australia's future. Australia is a well established and widely recognized democracy in the world. The democratic guiding principles of a modern democracy where respect to ideas and philosophies of other citizens, private ownership of assets and a fair go for all is cherished and a fundamental cornerstone of our country's success. In principle everyone is entitled to express ideas, given the chance to become a politician or a community leader of significance, follow a religious philosophy of their own choice and to have their own dreams. The value of the above is obvious when we consider how the populations of so many other countries fare in the absence it. Compare Australia with any of the autocratic nations like Russia, China, North Korea, Iran, Belarus and Myanmar to name a few. In Australia we love the fact that people are given a fair go and each person has only the power of one vote. In each of the above countries political elites believe they, and only they or a minority of like minded individuals know how to best govern their country. Opinions or policies from non elite fellow country men or women never get to see the light of day. Any individual who raises alternative viewpoint are likely to end up in jail or never seen again or robbed of their possessions. eg Jack Ma's Alibaba and Ant group in China. Democratic principles and the absolute equal rights for everyone before the law are fundamental to the success of our country.

So where does this take us when we see an Australian Territory government decide that they are above the existing laws of the jurisdiction they govern. ie ACT. This select elite group in power now for 20 years, knowing that their intention to take over Calvary Hospital will be strongly resisted by others of an opposing view, push through very significant changes to the standing parliamentary orders for the passage of bills through parliament ie debating the proposed changes in the public forum of parliament and then voting on whether to accept or reject the proposal. Either way the public are informed and have to live with the result. If they do not agree they can express their objection at the next election. This is what we do in a democracy. In this case the organization effected does not even get the chance to discuss the proposition and does not even get a chance to appeal or even be compensated. In response to a media question on compensation the ACT government representative brushed it aside and stated they will decide if will be offered and how much and again presumably without consultation with the effected party. Historically this is precisely what happened wrt industries, media, church or charitable run organizations such as hospitals, schools, aged care facilities, etc. in many of the above mentioned autocratic regimes. It currently is also how several ME and African countries operate today as many Australian mining companies have found out to their cost. ie steal a major asset such as a lithium mine in the recent case of ASX AVZ in the Congo, take possession of it on behalf a Chinese backed group and then talk about possible compensation if any for the rightful owner which is invariably unsuccessful.

With respect to Calvary Hospital the Health Ministerhas stated the government's objective is to make Calvary consistent within the Canberra main hospital. She admitted to significant issues at that hospital with respect to the operation of that hospital. However, they want to make the system more "culturally efficient" whereas the real objective is to bring the hospital in line with this groups views on abortion and assisted end of life despite it being abhorrent to us. Procedures which are an anathema to the current operators, patients and staff at Calvary who choose to work and be treated there because the ethos of the hospital is important to them. Whichever way the narrative is spun

this type of hostile takeover is in common law terms known as robbery and thuggery and it should be seen and condemned as such. I am 82 years of age and have never before witnessed anything like this by a legal authority in Australia. The danger of this totalitarian decision concerns me. It could be the forerunner of similar operations by government authorities to re-shape the operation of other private hospitals, faith run schools or aged care homes, etc. where the ethos of the organization is not acceptable to the views of certain political parties. Do we as individuals now have to bend to this group's ideas however morally abhorrent, they may be to us?

I understand Senator Matt Canavan has tabled a private members bill in the Senate which if passed will have the effect of requiring the Federal Government Senate to conduct an inquiry into the ACT's Health Infrastructure Enabling Act 2023 which facilitated this sudden hospital takeover without the normal due processes required of Territory and State Government's wrt bills making significant changes to the operation of their Parliaments. I therefore wish to add my support to this bill going before the senate as a robust defense of democracy is enormously important to the future of this country.

David Saunders