

*Illuminating*  
Private letter to Leo Port while he was overseas  
at Christmas - New Year end of 1971.

PERSONAL  
and CONFIDENTIAL

December 21, 1971

It is now the Tuesday following the last Council meeting of the year and I thought I should write to keep you in touch with what has been going on here. Please regard this letter as an entirely private and personal one - even some of our best friends may not appreciate that I had been writing to you.

At yesterday's Council meeting the Labor boys did not put up any strong argument against either the FSR or the Parking Codes. Both seem to have been accepted without demur. Press comment has been favourable, although most of it has in fact been confused in matters of detail.

Andrew, Jack Harris and John Doran interviewed the 4 applicants for the position of Chief Planning Officer last Saturday. Barry Lewis was not present. You will be pleased to know that they knocked back Hans Hein who was in the German army on the Russian Front during World War II. They knocked back John Gilmour as being a rather dull fellow with restricted experience in Bankstown and they unanimously went for 29 year old Michael Llewellyn Smith, the young architect who has just finished a Master's degree in planning and who worked for us on the Wynyard Action Plan. You will remember that he also organised the students' exhibition in Hyde Park. Andrew cleverly avoided any conflict on this appointment in Council. He went round to the Labor Caucus room before yesterday's meeting and put before them all of the applications, together with his recommendation. They were completely unmanned by this direct approach and so Andrew brought the recommendation on to the business paper and it was duly endorsed by Council. Mike is expected to start work some time in the middle of January.

The CRA Aldermen held their Budget session at the Town Hall on December 12. I enclose a copy of the submission that I made up for Andrew and which he put to them. It was a great pity that both you and Nick were absent.

Andrew reminded me to put in Item 14 "Planning and Design for Long Term Redevelopment of Garden Island Area for Public Enjoyment". He also told me what figures to put in, namely \$8,000 spread over 3 years. After the meeting he reported to me, somewhat maliciously, that unfortunately his colleagues had unanimously thrown it out. So while the cat's away the mice do play.

You will notice that the 1972/74 program as submitted called for a total of \$240,000 for consultants' fees in 1972. David Griffin and the boys cut this to \$200,000. Andrew now has the job of re-allocating the break up of this lump sum among all of the various tasks. It may be possible for you to get something for Garden Island back in.

The other major items that I want to draw to your personal attention are the attachments to the 1972/74 program dealing with the design of streetscape improvements and street furniture, and an allowance for an action plan on noise and pollution control. You will see that on both of these memos I refer to the fact of your personal concern and involvement with these matters. You initiated the streetscape improvements and street furniture work during 1971 and you have also been keen on action planning for noise and pollution control. I think Roger Wilkinson, at my instigation, discussed this with you. You will remember that the \$15,000 allocated and now spent in 1971 on streetscape improvements and street furniture did NOT come out of Andrew's strategic and action planning budget. On the new estimates it was shown as a separate item no. 434. The boys, on 12.12.71, made no allowance for it in your absence. Andrew has ignored the subject when I have brought it to his attention. This worries me greatly because there is need for an enormous amount of continuing work in this field during 1972. The design and implementation of new street furniture can in fact be one of the most spectacular and popular things that Council can do prior to the next election. So I do hope that you will be able to have something like \$30,000 put back into the estimates for this purpose.

I leave to your own judgement the extent to which you wish to fight for budget allocation for an action plan on noise and pollution control. You are a better judge than I of the relative importance and practicability of this.

I don't think I need to say any more. I leave it to you to study the enclosure carefully and to take what action you see fit. I am certainly looking forward to seeing you in the week of January 10-14 and spending some time with you finalising our work on the first stage of the streetscape improvements and street furniture action plan. I imagine that you will agree with me that it should be presented to Council at its first Committee meeting of the year on Monday, February 7.

The Western Perimeter Car Parks Action Plan has been completed and presented to Caucus. David Griffin has meticulously edited some of Peter Casey's English expression. Andrew is going to study its political implications down at Merimbula. If Andrew does not lose confidence, it ought to be presented at the first Committee meeting in the new year.

Simon Miles duly arrived just after you left and I took him down to Canberra for the ANU Urbanisation seminar for the weekend. He was able to make a good contribution to the discussion and got on well with Nigel and Dick Spann and Jack Barnett, and a number of others. He has fired me with some enthusiasm to get the Sydney Study Group going again on this project dealing with the processes of planning and developing Sydney region and I'm looking around for new talent to bring into the group. I won't do anything definite on this until you return. Meanwhile, Simon is giving us wonderful publicity

for the City of Sydney Strategic Plan in the INTERMET Communiques.

The other day, the Minister for Local Government announced the appointment of a giant committee of Inquiry into the entire business of Local Government for New South Wales, with Jack Barnett as Chairman of the Committee.

This fits in very well with the project Simon wants us to do and I am hoping it will be possible to get some helpful working relationships with Jack. Incidentally, Simon's program calls for three international conferences of the Groups working on the project: one a year for the next three years. Two representatives from each Study Group would attend each conference. That should spark a bit of enthusiasm for the task.

I received Edith's newsy postcard. Thank her very much and ask her to keep one or two more coming.

All else is very well here. Martin Place is increasingly becoming part of Sydney's life. There was one statement in the press recently that Carols by Candlelight would be telecast live from the Plaza and thousands of people turned up. Unfortunately, the report was in error. The telecast had actually been shot the week before. This, however, seems to indicate the great popularity and drawing power of the new Plaza.

Don't forget not to mention that I have written to you.

Yours ever,

G.