

"THE GIANTS OF BLOODYMINDEDNESS"

"We can win against them - eventually!"

1. The recent opening of the EastLink Freeway, reminded us of the battles with CityLink!

When CityLink first opened, we said it would be nice to have an "Electronic ID Tag" for the car, even although we expected to use it very little. But only if, like a Telstra pay phone card, it would last forever if not used.

Well, CityLink said, "No Way!" They said, "Your E-Tag runs out at the end of the year, use it or not!" We said, "Get Lost!" We went on to explain to them, that they can't lose, as they have our money, even if we never use the E-tag! Yet they still said, "Our policy is that, the E-Tag runs out! So it's "Use or Lose!" So we said, "You lose, as we will not use City-Link!" This big corporation said, like the DHS say, we don't give a damn about you little people!

Now, we have an East-Link E-Tag, as the policy has changed to what we said it should have been in the first place..... Our E-Tag now lasts for ever, use or not!

2. When the Melbourne Underground Rail System first opened, the escalators were chaos. People stood everywhere. Those in a hurry could not get through, especially on the long escalators. If something was not done soon, a chaos precedent would be set.

So we said to the "Authority", that in London the "Underground" has signs saying, "Stand on the Right". Finally, similar happened here!

Even although the signs have now been removed, although a few wooden holders remain, the signs were there long enough to set a pattern of those who choose to stand or walk. It is amazing to see how orderly the big escalators at Parliament Station are, even at the most busy times.

The signs were removed under some OH&S rules! London does not have a problem with this - Their signs remain, as always!

3. Many years ago, a small, education department special school had wall to wall restrictive practices against the families of their students. Parents were discouraged from meeting or knowing each other, they were discouraged from going to the school except when specifically invited for parent/teacher meetings,

and there was no information or newsletter.

When we asked them to seek the opinion of other parents towards forming a parents group to support, console and empower each other, they said, "No Way!" When we said, therefore, let us do it, they said, "No Way!" So we said, "Give other parents our contact details, and an invitation for them to contact us!"

Finally they did this! And now, many years later, the schools has a wonderful parent support and fundraising group, it has wonderful equipment for the students, it has wonderful parent/teacher relationships, and it has a wonderful and very regular newsletter.

Finally the little people penetrated the "corporate" armour!

However, the DHS not only has better armour than the American forces in Iraq, but it has the protection of the Minister for Community Services, the State Government, the Ombudsman, the ODSC, the OPA, the HSC and VCAT. It has an effective "funding/acceptance gag" on most community and advocacy groups. And, it has the ultimate weapon of "Captive Market" to maintain its despotic power over the people it is intended to serve.

So this battle for genuine service entitlement, integrity, accountability and customer service will be long and hard!

The Federal Government broke Telecom's power over people, with the incentive of big business. The needs of people with a disability do not even get on the first rung of the ratings ladder, so similar is unlikely to occur!