

We The People
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Good Day to You. I follow the political scene in the USA carefully as the Democrats and Republicans dual it out on which philosophy will guide the States forward. The reason I find this so compelling is because the Democrats favour socialism while the Republicans follow free market principles. Clearly socialism always fails but many millions of Americans blindly follow the hollow but superficially attractive promises being made. The battle is compelling. During all this President Trump has been impeached and tried for allegedly attempting to make a deal for financial aid to the Ukraine directly with President Zelensky. The basis of the claim was that it formed a **Quid Pro Quo** arrangement illegally. The case has been heard and as predicted failed miserably as it was simply political posturing but at great future cost to the USA. Today's narrative addresses the contemporary phenomenon of the "**Quid Pro Quo**" and the dangers involved as the Gold Coast Council elections draw ever closer.

The term **Quid Pro Quo** means '*this for that*' or '*one thing for another*' while 'quid' is short for "**aliquid**" meaning 'something'. You might also call it contra or barter or trading and so on. Fundamentally there is nothing illegal about this as trading went on well before the establishment of today's monetary system. However the common usage of **Quid Pro Quo** carries a different connotation in that it may be used to assign a darker more sinister meaning as was the case in the USA. As an example, let's say hypothetically, that I am a developer on the Gold Coast looking for an advantage in my business. I come to an arrangement with a local councillor to leak important information to me about land zoning plans and in return will invite the Councillor to my annual business convention in Hawaii for two weeks every year. The old way was a brown paper bag filled with cash but this new **Quid Pro Quo** version is sanitized and camouflaged to appear above board. Nonetheless, it represents a delinquent activity or bribery and therefore a breach of the law. However, for the sake of the analogy, as a Councillor I don't care as I feel I work my heart out for the Council and they owe me.....get the picture. You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours or simply I owe you and then the rot sets in within government. Its reached astonishing levels now everywhere and like a disease eats away at society and the expectations of honest people.

The problem is not so much that it may be happening but having systems and observers in place to expose it. Typically politicians and dodgy business don't like investigations and when they occur and don't uncover the scam then the person or people involved may well appear upright and speak as paragons of virtue such is their terminally corrupt character. In Gold Coast City Council over 98% of development applications are handled by the bureaucracy and do not go before Council. This appears to set the scene and atmosphere for favours and arrangements and thus the public sit in amazement as matters are approved which appear contrary to the public good and proper planning. This problem is further compounded when a cabal exists within Council where the expectation is that everyone will toe the line. This is the **Quid Pro Quo** that destroys public confidence and shatters lives as the evil machinery rolls on unabated. Unfortunately a dark cloud has hovered over this Council for many years and in my view as a start, all development applications once vetted, should go to the full Council and be voted on. After all, it's the Councillors who are chartered with making decisions in the public interest and promoting real practical public consultation and transparent and effective processes. If this strikes a chord with you and you are like the vast majority of Australians who don't trust politicians, then make a point of voting for truly independent candidates at the local Council elections on the 28th of March. In my view we desperately need a rebuilt, re-energized Council which actively and with spirit, follows the Local Government Act of Queensland.

Until next time this is Kent Bayley