

# Dean Wells MP - Ideas and action

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## Introduction

*Plato, the ancient Greek father of philosophy, said that either philosophers should become kings or kings should become philosophers. Dean Wells, (Labor, Murrumba, in the Queensland Parliament), is probably the closest thing we have in Australia to what Plato was looking for. By background Wells is a philosopher, an author, a lawyer and a father of three. One of his parliamentary colleagues, Rachel Nolan (Labor Ipswich) described him as 'still the most gifted and wisest orator among us.' (Queensland Parliamentary Debates 2007). With Dean Wells and his record in intellectual and political life you have a scholar, philosopher, thinker and achiever whose work leaves society significantly better than before. He is one of the brightest and the best.*

*The following selections from his speeches are chosen because they were connected with some reform Wells was initiating that had some historical significance, or in some cases simply because of their philosophical interest. Philosophically Wells is a Consequentialist in the Utilitarian tradition of Jeremy Bentham (the greatest happiness principle). He believes the common good requires strict limits to state intervention in the private lives of citizens, and radical egalitarianism in the distribution of public wealth and public benefits. He is part of an historical pattern in which Benthamite Utilitarianism has frequently been the conscious motivator of Australian political reformers.*

*The excerpts do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, but are collected as a useful reference for students working in the field of Australian Parliamentary studies.*

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