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The Letters Editor,

### **De Tocqueville on our State**

Alexis de Tocqueville, wrote in his "Democracy In America":

"The Government covers the surface of society with a network of small complicated rules, minute and uniform, through which the most original minds and the most energetic characters cannot penetrate to rise above the crowd.

The will of man is not shattered, but softened, bent and guided; men are seldom forced by it to act, but they are constantly restrained from acting. Such power does not destroy, but it prevents existence; it does not tyrannise, but it compresses, enervates, extinguishes, and stupefies a people, till each nation is reduced to nothing better than a flock of timid and industrious animals, of which the government is the shepherd.

Above this race of men stands an immense and tutelary power, which takes upon itself alone to secure their gratifications and to watch over their fate. That power is absolute, minute, regular, provident, and mild. It would be like the authority of a parent if, like that authority, its object was to prepare men for manhood, but it seeks, on the contrary, to keep them in perpetual childhood.

The principal of equality has prepared men for these things; it has predisposed men to endure them and often to look on them as benefits"

It looks grim for Australia, as Henry the last makes the rules, Julia's the stumbling shepherd and the unions the nipping sheep dogs.

### **Mac Nichols**

*BSc. Mining Engineering*

*M. SME*

*Madora Bay WA 6210*

#### References:

1. Alexis de Tocqueville "Democracy In America" Volume 1 <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/815>
2. Alexis de Tocqueville "Democracy In America" Volume 2 <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/816/816-h/816-h.htm>