FROM MATT'S PERCH

By Matthew Russel

I have said all the following before, and I know I will need to say it again, and again, but it would appear few have been listening or care enough to do anything about it.

It seems that there are always political pressures on aviculture, imposed by the government bodies, Commonwealth, State and Local.

For instance, just recently I received a draft of biosecurity regulations that suggested a quarantine regime for all our aviaries. A regime that would make it almost impossible to keep any birds using the tried and tested procedures we have evolved over the years. If these proposals where put in to practice, and policed, the cost of keeping birds would be out of reach of many of us.

Just as well the proposals were only a draft, and the representatives of the Bio-security section of the Department of Primary Industries have promised full and frank discussion with the avicultural community; and have asked for input from aviculturists to ensure that an outcome is reached that satisfies the needs of all parties. It is the task of groups like ours to ensure such promises are kept.

If it was not for clubs and societies like ours, and many others around the country, I can see a day when it could become illegal to keep exotic birds in Australia. It could be easily done, some official with no interest, or knowledge of, keeping birds decides there is potential for marauding feral flocks of Fire Finches and Amazon Parrots to devastate our crops and kill off our native birds. How can this disaster be diverted? Answer: prohibit the keeping of all exotic birds. You may think I am exaggerating, but it almost happened, just last year, in Tasmania. Why can't the public keep exotic mammals and reptiles in Australia? Because the government thinks they are too much of a risk to our environment (I agree some are, but that's not my point). My point is that you were able to keep them in the past, and I don't want my Grand Kids saying: "Why can't exotic birds be kept in Australia? My Grandpa had a Macaw when I was a kid and it was a wonderful pet. Why can't I have one now?" How sad would that day be?

As a society we can jump up and down as a group and stop these things happening, but without the society we would be on our own. Without a committee to administer our affairs we would have no Society, and no united voice.

We as aviculturist need the committees that run our clubs and societies, and **our committee needs you!** Please consider helping out by joining the committee.

If you would like more information on how you can help the Society, contact our Secretary, or e-mail me at: tara_matt@hotmail.com.

Cheers,

Matt

P.S:

There is much truth in the old, but oft quoted, maxim:

"United we stand. Divided we fall."