



A WEEKLY COMMENTARY

ON TARGET

- NEWS HIGHLIGHTS
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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance—

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Thought for the Week: "Property is desirable; it is a positive good in the world. That some should be rich shows that others may become rich and hence it is a just encouragement to enterprise. Let not him that is homeless pull down the house of another, but let him work diligently and build one for himself; thus by example assuring that his own shall be safe from violence when built."

-- Abraham Lincoln.

NO IMMEDIATE FEDERAL ELECTIONS: "Canberra- The Country Party leader, Mr. Anthony, last night predicted the Government would back down on its planned changes to electoral laws. Mr. Anthony said the amendments would be opposed in the Senate by the Country Party, Liberal Party, and DLP."

-- The Sun, Melbourne, March 27th.

Prime Minister Whitlam warned on March 25th that elections could be held for both Houses of Parliament if any Government legislation were blocked or delayed. Mr. Whitlam was speaking at the Victorian ALP general assembly in St. Kilda Town Hall. He was echoing a similar warning made last week by the Services and Property Minister, Mr. Fred Daly. Mr. Daly said that the Opposition would risk a double dissolution if they blocked a Bill to change the electoral law. The Bill would reduce from 20 to 10 per cent the degree by which the number of voters in an electorate can differ from the normal quota. Country Party representation would be seriously weakened by the proposed change.

The League of Rights rejects the unrealistic dogma of one-vote-one-value dogma but, unlike the Liberal and Country parties, has attempted a grass-roots educational programme concerning the fundamentals of traditional British representative government. (We strongly recommend Responsible Government in a Free Society by Dr. Geoffrey Dobbs. Price 57 cents posted.) For twenty-three years the Federal Country Party joined with the Liberals in making Australia one of the most urbanised nations in the world. The Country Party persisted in supporting centralist financial policies which resulted in a situation where Country Party spokesmen are advocating that the Country Party merge with one or both of the two other non-Government parties, the Liberals and the DLP.

Country Party leader Mr. Anthony can afford at present to talk strongly in appearing to challenge the Government on the electoral issue. Assuming that the DLP Senators stand firm in defeating the Government's electoral proposals in the Senate, three months would have to elapse before the Government could re-introduce the legislation in the Senate. If defeated a second time, the way would be cleared for Mr. Whitlam to force a double dissolution. In a double dissolution the DLP would stand to lose two or three of its Senators. Much would depend upon the political and economic situation at the time.

All the evidence indicates that any new elections in the near future would result in a further increase in Mr. Whitlam's majority. We share with all genuine conservatives a deep concern about the direction in which the Whitlam Government is taking Australia. But just as we were realistic when we warned last year that the Liberal-Country Party Coalition was heading for electoral disaster, we warn today that those who believe the Whitlam Government could be defeated in a new election at present are deluding themselves. The credit expansion policy set in motion last year by Mr. Snedden is generating intense economic activity, some industries being desperately short of skilled labour. Some social welfare payments have been increased. Change for the mere sake of change regrettably appeals to many, particularly the young. And so the "new style" of Government is still something of a novelty. And following Mr. Whitlam's performance at the Victorian State Conference last week-end, there is every reason to agree with Mr. Alan Ramsey of The Australian who says that Mr. Whitlam enjoys a stature unknown in the ALP since Mr. John Curtin.

Compared with the Whitlam Government, the Opposition has appeared weak, divided and negative. Opposition leader Mr. Snedden has failed to impress. There are deep divisions between the Country Party and many in the Liberal Party. Discussions about who is going to join with who to form a new "united" Opposition confirm our view that the Opposition parties are being led by men more concerned with some type of organisational unity, which they hope is the key to electoral success in the future, than with seeking for a unity on fundamental principles. Talk about establishing a "united anti-Socialist Opposition" is so much hypocrisy coming from those who for twenty-three years established the very foundations of the Socialist State upon which the Whitlam Government is building.

We predicted long before the last Federal Elections that Australia was entering a new political era in which there would be an increasing fragmentation of existing party political groupings and a new realignment. The establishment of Mr. Steele Hall's new party in South Australia is a reflection of the divisions inside the Liberal Party everywhere. At a time when there are brave words about the Liberal and the Country parties uniting, the new South Australian Country Party has contested the recent South Australian State Elections with encouraging success. Mr. Snedden's caution about a Liberal-Country Party amalgamation stems from the fact that he represents the trendy, small "1" Liberals who believe that the way to a return to office is by creating an "improved image", and from a concern that in a new party Mr. Anthony would almost certainly become the leader. A number of Liberals fear that if the DLP and Country parties joined to form a new political party, this party would start to challenge the Liberals in many urban electorates. Those who see a resemblance between the present situation of the anti-Labor parties and that period of ferment out of which the new Liberal Party emerged under the leadership of the then Mr. R.G. Menzies, are overlooking the fact that the Socialist challenge by the Chifley-Evatt Government was much more clearly understood, and that the Country and Liberal parties had men of some understanding of the issues involved, and they were backed by an intensive educational programme on fundamental principles. For twenty-three years there was a steady erosion of the ground-work established before the 1949 Federal Elections, when the Liberal-Country Party Coalition came to office. No educational work of any type has been undertaken by either the Liberal or Country Party.

What then of the future? Mr. Alan Ramsey correctly observes that Mr. Whitlam is not a man with strong friendships inside the Labor Party, and that his current dominance is "therefore, a relatively brittle dominance that will last only for as long as Mr. Whitlam can keep Labor fat on the by-products

of electoral success." But realities are running against Mr. Whitlam. His Achilles heel is a finance-economic policy which must generate increasing inflation, and, later, increased taxation and other controls. When the bill for the present honeymoon period has to be presented, then will come the electoral reaction. The ALP will experience the same acute internal tensions fragmenting the present Opposition parties.

There are unpleasant days ahead. It is now too late to avoid them. But out of the growing ferment will come a resurgence of constructive political activity, based upon fundamental principles. By its constant adherence to principles, and the dedicated work of members and supporters, the Australian League of Rights has provided the one force which offers any hope in a desperate situation. We therefore urge all our supporters to press on with our programme in depth and not to be side-tracked with current political party bluffing about an early Federal Election. Victorian supporters must make every effort to prevent a Labor victory at the coming State Elections, not because of any enthusiasm for the "Dicky Bird shirt" campaign being conducted by the Hamer Liberal Party, but because every check on Canberra's power must be maintained at all costs.

MR. AL GRASSBY'S NEW CITIZENS: "After seven vain attempts in the past 15 years, 42-year-old Mr. John Sgro became an Australian yesterday. The Minister for Immigration, Mr. Grassby, conferred Australian citizenship on the 42-year-old Italian painter at the Government Town Hall in Melbourne. 'Congratulations, welcome to the family and to the nation in peace and affection', Mr. Grassby said to a beaming Mr. Sgro. 'I've been waiting an awfully long time for this', said Mr. Sgro. 'Now I'll have the right to vote and have my say in the nation.'" -- The Australian, March 27th.

Mr. Sgro is a member of the Victorian Labor Party. But obviously he was not debarred from citizenship because of that, nor because he was a unionist involved in a number of strikes. According to The Australian, Mr. Sgro describes himself as a "militant Marxist". Mr. Grassby says that Mr. Sgro "was a victim of discrimination purely because of his political beliefs." While the ALP of 1973 has no objections to having a "militant Marxist" as a member, the great majority of Australians are entitled to ask why their Government should not discriminate against a man whose proclaimed political beliefs must result in activity against the basis of traditional Australian society. The essence of Marxism is violence. Mr. Grassby says he is against violence.

STATES HAVE VICTORY OVER CANBERRA: "Canberra- The Federal Government yesterday capitulated to the States in the housing grants dispute - the first Commonwealth-State financial confrontation since Labor took office in December." -- The Age, Melbourne, March 24th.

In the first flush of power the Federal Labor Government talked brashly about how it was going to impose its will upon the States in several spheres. The Federal Housing Minister (Mr. Johnson) insisted that houses built under the Commonwealth-State Housing agreement be offered for rental only. The Victorian State Government strongly resisted, pointing out that its policy was to encourage as much home ownership as possible. After meeting with the six State Housing Ministers, Mr. Johnson said that the Commonwealth was now prepared to allow 30 per cent of housing grants to be used for home ownership. Mr. Johnson also indicated that the Commonwealth might "reluctantly" agree to a higher proportion of Commonwealth funds being used to build houses for purchase.

Victorian Housing Minister (Mr. Dickie) said upon returning to Melbourne from Canberra that the Commonwealth back-down was "a great victory for State rights". Much more important was the practical demonstration that the division of political power is vital for the protection of individual

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rights. Electors should be encouraged by the States' victory against Canberra and grasp the significance of the League of Rights' strategy of backing the States against Canberra.

THE GROWING THREAT TO THE CROWN: "Government ministers believe the next Governor-General could be Australia's last - and that within five or six years Australia could become a republic. As Australia's links with Britain and the monarchy change under the Labor Government, the choice of a new Governor-General becomes increasingly important."

-- Vincent Matthews, Canberra correspondent, The Herald, Melbourne, March 26th.

There has been considerable speculation concerning Prime Minister Whitlam's surprise visit to London at Easter to see the Queen. We have no doubt that the Matthews report is correct, and reflects the campaign by the Labor Government to "down grade" the Crown as a necessary preliminary to its abolition.

Senator Carrick asked Senator Willesee in the Senate the following question on March 15th: "Does the Australian Government regard the monarchy as outmoded and irrelevant, as stated by Mr. Whitlam in an interview on the Australian Broadcasting Commission television programme 'Monday Conference'?" We have not seen a promised reply by Senator Willesee.

This question should be taken up with all Members of the Federal Parliament. If Labor Ministers, or Members, regard the Crown as "outmoded and irrelevant", how much reliance can be placed on their oath of loyalty? The institution of the Crown, which belongs as much to Australia as to any other member of the British Crown Commonwealth, is a most stabilising influence in society, as demonstrated in three articles in the April issue of Intelligence Survey. (Copies 20 cents each)

History teaches that the Republican system of Government, with growing power struggles to elect the President, inevitably ends in anarchy and some type of dictatorship. Power-hungry politicians do not like Monarchies, because they are a check on their ambitions.

UNLIMITED INFLATION CONTINUES: "Grocery prices in the U.S. will continue to rise drastically this year, according to a special government report. The Nixon Administration will consider controls on farm prices if retail prices do not slow down." -- The Australian, March 22nd.

When the Nixon Administration imposed drastic controls in an attempt to halt the inflation flowing from Keynesian economic policies, we predicted that such controls could have no more real effect on the inflation problem than could Prime Minister Heath's controls in the United Kingdom. Controls and credit restrictions can only slow down the rate of inflation while creating major economic and social damage.

The basic feature of Keynesian-Socialist economics is to speed increasing new financial credits into circulation. Irrespective of whether these new credits come into circulation via public or private economic activities they result in an increase in costs which must be recovered through prices and taxation or rates. It is a matter of arithmetic, not opinion, that if all new financial credits are created as an interest-bearing debt, and reach the individual only through the production system, prices must continue to rise, these in turn being the justification for still further credit expansion for higher wages. Consumer credits, issued to individuals without increasing costs - consumer subsidies to replace sales tax, child endowment, and various types of pensions - are the only answer to inflation.

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