



ON TARGET

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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance —

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Thought for the Week: "Already the fallibilities in global planning are becoming obvious. At least twenty great civilisations have preceded our own. Each started from a small struggling beginning, grew, flowered, prospered and produced nobility, and then began to decay. Archaeologists have unearthed enough shards of pottery and ruins to tell their history. We have enough documentation to indicate that all collapsed for the same reason; the centralisation of power and its inevitable corruption."

- Barbara Treloar in "Fleeced".

ANOTHER FRASER CONFIDENCE TRICK: By Eric D. Butler

In a special "report to the nation" last Sunday night, November 12th Prime Minister Fraser attempted in a low-key address to create the impression that he and his Government were tackling Australia's problems in a statesmanlike manner. "Popularity polls will not tempt a change from (the Government's) set and steady course", he said. Mr. Fraser is so far out of touch with reality that he clearly believes that the Australian electorate will support his finance-economic policies, even though they are contributing to high unemployment and depressed economic activity, believing that the Prime Minister's optimism about the years ahead is soundly based. If Mr. Fraser continues with current finance-economic policies, his Government will be swept from office at the next Federal Elections. But Mr. Fraser will not face this reality, insisting that his agreement with the States last week on overseas borrowing is evidence that his finance-economic strategy is proving successful.

Although the headlines announced that "FRASER TAKES THE REINS OFF" following the meeting of the Loan Council on Monday, November 6th, a close look at the realities indicates that Mr. Fraser has engaged in yet another confidence trick. In only two hours the astonished State Premiers were given permission to borrow a total of \$1767 million overseas over eight years. Not one dollar was deducted

from what the States asked for, including \$65 million for the ridiculous Melbourne World Trade Centre. Mr. Fraser said that the projects agreed to would "strengthen Australia's industrial base, strengthen Australia's export potential and strengthen the growth and development of the Commonwealth." The decision to hold the Loan Council meeting in Melbourne, the first meeting held outside Canberra for 35 years, was undoubtedly designed to attempt to assist the desperate Hamer Government.

Now that the headlines have faded it is appropriate to look at the fine print of the Loan Council agreement. As most of the materials to be used in the various State projects will be provided in Australia, the workmen will be Australians eating Australian-grown food, and the resources to be harnessed, such as Tasmanian water for the hydro-electric and water supply projects, are in Australia, the Fraser Government could have made the necessary financial credits available. But it has refused to do this, pushing the States into the arms of international financial groups. Mr. Fraser has stressed that the Commonwealth would not assume responsibility for the loans and their repayment. This means that it will be the States which have to increase taxes or service charges in an endeavour to service the debts. Increased electricity or water charges must be reflected in the cost of living figures and a continuing stimulus to inflation.

However, even assuming that the States' loan programme goes ahead, only a total of \$158 million will be raised during the current financial year. This amount of new money will have a minimal effect upon the restrictive impact of the last budget. The higher taxation, both direct and indirect, is already starting to have its effect. Higher prices are yet to be reflected in the cost of living figures, but they will ensure that the current inflation rate is at least maintained. There could even be a slight increase. A few bright reports, such as that of an expansion by the chain store giant, G.J. Coles, do not affect the total picture of a depressed economy. A Melbourne report reveals that Melbourne's building industry is in a desperate position, figures showing a 30% reduction in building over the past twelve months. "Business confidence is returning", claimed Mr. Fraser last Sunday. Confidence is not returning and by early next year the big increase in unemployment will bring the nation to a new and dangerous period of convulsion.

In the face of the worsening situation which his Government's policies have intensified, Prime Minister Fraser now has the effrontery to urge the victims of those policies to get up and "have a go". It is only the resourcefulness of the operators of the private enterprise system which is sustaining Australia in spite of the crippling taxation and other financial handicaps. Remove the

financial barriers and Australians would soon demonstrate to the rest of the world a type of society which they would want to emulate. Early in 1976 I warned that the first Fraser Government was on the road to disaster, predicting what would happen. It has happened. And no amount of confidence tricks and publicity gimmicks can now avert even greater disasters. For the sake of Australia Mr. Fraser should be asked by his colleagues to step aside and to make way for a new leader who will constructively reverse the policies of disaster. Mr. Andrew Peacock should be firmly rejected as a successor. Members of the Liberal and National parties should be warned that unless they are prepared to make the necessary changes now, the Coalition Government is doomed. They should recall the old Chinese proverb, "When struck by a thunderbolt it is then too late to consult the book of dates."

THE WHITLAM ANTI-KERR PHOBIA: Speaking last Saturday night at a commemorative dinner on the events of November 11th, 1975, Mr. Gough Whitlam demonstrated once again that, irrespective of how brilliant he may be, he is a vain and petulant man who will not reconcile himself to the fact that he was twice overwhelmingly rejected by the Australian electors. He strives to sustain the myth that he was destroyed by former Governor-General Sir John Kerr. In his latest contribution to what allegedly happened on November 11th, 1975, Mr. Whitlam said: "A lot of people have said, 'Why didn't I defy him?' (Sir John Kerr). The answer is that this man would have called out the armed forces. There would have been divided loyalty in the armed forces. They would not all have obeyed him but there would have been chaos in this country and I decided we would appeal to the people because that's the way we always won up until then."

Mr. Whitlam has at least conceded the point that under the Federal Constitution control of the armed forces resides with the Crown. But he reflects upon the integrity and loyalty of the members of the armed forces when he suggests that some of them would have refused to obey the Queen's representative. A member of the armed forces takes an oath of loyalty to the Crown, not to the Prime Minister. Mr. Whitlam, as usual, glossed over what happened when he made his appeal to the Australian people. He could argue that in a highly emotional situation the Australian people were misled in recording an overwhelming vote against him in December, 1975. But what of the last Federal elections? By then it was clear that the Fraser Government was a disaster. The Gallup Polls indicated initially that the Fraser Government would at best survive after a serious electoral backlash. However, when the day of decision arrived such was the fear and hatred of Whitlam that the electors took no

chances by attempting to discipline Fraser. They recorded another massive vote AGAINST Whitlam. In his address last Saturday Mr. Whitlam revealed openly that he is a Republican, something he did not mention before being elected in 1972. Significantly he observes, "in Sir Zelman Cowen, we have an honourable man in Government House." Whitlam is now history. But the lessons of history should always be remembered.

BRIEF COMMENTS: A comment overheard from a National-Country Party supporter, "I never thought that I would live to see the day when Doug Anthony came back from Communist China eulogising that country as if he were Gough Whitlam or Jim Cairns." We understand the feelings of a man who believed that Mr. Anthony, Mr. Fraser and the rest really meant what they used to say about the danger of Communist China. Now there is the spectacle of Mr. Anthony leading a deputation of representatives of Big Business to offer to help the Communists "modernise" China. Mr. Anthony becomes almost euphoric about the prospects, seeing Communist China in the 21st Century "as the most significant economic force in the world." Communist China backs the Communist butchers who have already murdered at least one million, but probably many more, of the unfortunate Cambodian people. Solzhenitsyn has warned against the concept of a pact with China against the Soviet: "it is again a doomed alliance with evil." Such alliances produce a bitter end, something shallow politicians do not understand.

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Senator Georges of Queensland is a striking example of the break-down in ordinary common-sense. Queensland has become "a police State", Senator Georges told the Victorian ALP conference last weekend. He also said that Premier J. Bjelke-Petersen had introduced an "element of terror" in his alleged attempts to prevent the introduction of a Bill of Rights. In some of the more hysterical letters to the press following the recent unlawful street march in which Senator Georges was one of the arrested, it was claimed that it was dangerous for tourists to visit Queensland! The truth is, whatever one may think of Premier Bjelke-Petersen, there is complete freedom of expression in Queensland, an independent judiciary and a rule of law which protects the rights of the individual. No one is compelled to stay in the "Police State". There is adequate scope for protest.

BASIC FUND ROLLING: The 1978-79 Basic Fund of \$45,000 is rolling. The initial response is encouraging. Let us hear from every reader IMMEDIATELY. No donations too small.

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