



ON TARGET

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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance—

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Thought for the Week: "The word of truth is always an explosive issue, but coming at the right moment, its consequences are incalculable." - W.D. Chalmers in "The Conspiracy of Truth"

CAN THE UNITED STATES SURVIVE?: The following report was prepared by Mr. Eric Butler after a short visit to the State of Washington, U.S.A. before returning to Australia.

Middle class Americans, most of them instinctively conservative, many still taking Christianity seriously, are now openly concerned about the future of their country. As well they might be. The nature of the failure of the attempted release of the American hostages in Iran came as a sickening body blow to American pride and morale. The blue collar worker summarised the frustration of patriotic Americans with his outburst, "What the hell has happened to us as a nation? Can't we make things that work any more? Please will someone tell me where my family is going to finish?" The brilliant success of the British in handling the hostage crisis in London merely increased the feeling of frustration amongst Americans. Americans generally are a most generous people, which is one of their major weaknesses, and following the success of the Canadians in saving some of the American officials from being taken hostages in Iran, and later smuggling them out of the country back to the U.S.A. Canadians were warmly welcomed right throughout the U.S.A. "Thank you Canada" signs are still up at all the U.S.A.-Canada borders. Naturally enough, many Americans raised the possibility of sabotage concerning the ill-fated project to release the hostages. But at the moment of writing no one has produced any evidence to support this view. The most ominous rumour from President Carter's point of view, is that at best a long-shot chance of success was attempted by the President in an attempt to increase his own prestige. The short-term effect has been to rally support for the President - "At least he tried something" is a general comment.

But November and the Presidential Election is still months away. The American economy is now starting to feel the full impact of the credit restrictions. The massive loan to prevent America's third biggest car manufacturer, Chrysler, from going bankrupt, clearly was as much a political decision as an economic one. But it graphically demonstrated that the creation and control of the credit of a nation is the "key" factor in governing an economy. Credits are not being made available to assist the thousands of smaller business organisations going bankrupt.

Middle class Americans are feeling the major impact of the Carter Administration's financial policies. Hidden taxation in the form of an inflation rate now running at over 18 per cent is taking a heavy toll. Nearly as destructive is the Carter policy of deliberately increasing the price of petrol. Middle class Americans are in the main still driving cars they have owned for several years, and these older models were bought when petrol was relatively cheap and fuel consumption was not a major item. Such cars are now a major liability. Even the economic "experts", who have a variety of theories concerning the deepening American depression, are generally agreed that there is no prospect of the American inflation rate being reduced below the current 18 per cent over the next twelve months. After a massive increase in the interest rate to nearly 20 per cent, a fractional reduction in the rate is hailed as "encouraging".

Adding to the growing concern of patriotic Americans is the assault on the nation by that new type of warfare foreshadowed by Jean Raspail in his chilling novel, "Camp of The Saints": invasion with refugees. First came the "boat people" from Vietnam. This has been followed by the wave of refugees from Cuba, Castro enabling some Cubans to leave Cuba so long as others - the insane, criminals and, of course, the inevitable Communist agents - went with them. As this is written President Carter has tried to call a halt. Haiti is also providing its share of the invasion of the U.S.A. by refugees. Large numbers of illegal immigrants have managed to gain entry into the United States, some estimating that as many as 12 million of these immigrants are now in the country. Following the programme of compulsory busing of children as part of the anti-segregation programme, with its disastrous results, there is now an attempt to force all public services such as the police and firebrigades to take non-Europeans, not on merit, but on a basis determined by the percentage of non-Europeans living in any community. This, of course, discriminates against the great majority, the Europeans. The real America is being destroyed by the programme so brilliantly outlined by Wilmot Robertson in his great classic, "The Dispossessed Majority".

But while it is true that the U.S.A. is facing the greatest internal crisis in its history, one which is affecting its foreign policy,

it is also true that the very crisis is producing a grass-roots upsurge of all that is best in the nation. At this time American patriots need every ounce of moral support possible from their friends around the world. They are standing in the front line in more ways than one.

THOSE PARLIAMENTARY SALARIES: In a special survey of the real purchasing power of salaries for white collar workers, executives, public servants and politicians, the National Times (May 11 to 17) examined the position for the period December 1974 to December 1979. Under a number of headings, the survey examined the relative positions of 76 different job classifications. The headings were : N.S.W. State Public Service; Commonwealth Public Service; Professors, N.S.W. High School Teachers; Victorian High School Teachers; Personnel and Business Relations; Banking; Engineering and Technical; Manufacturing and Operations; Tradesmen; Journalist; Aviation; Production; Australian Broadcasting Commission; Welfare; Judiciary; Politicians; Clerical; Marketing and Sales; Finance and Administration; Data Processing.

Of the 76 job classifications only three had had a significant increase in the real purchasing power of their salaries. One of these was that of cost accountant; the second was that of Senior programmer/analyst under the classification "Data Processing"; the third was that of a Federal back-bench Member of Parliament, with an increase in purchasing power of 12.5 percent.

In December 1974, the back-bencher's basic salary was \$14,500. By December 1979 this had increased to \$27,575 (\$530 per week basic). However, when you look at "perks", the politician leaves the rest of the field for dead!

A politician representing a city electorate receives an electoral allowance of \$9,000 (tax-free), which increases to a maximum of \$13,500 for a rural electorate. A rural politician receiving the maximum could spend \$30 on motel accommodation every night of the year, and still have just under \$3,000 of his allowance in hand.

Each member can spend \$10,000 annually on an electoral secretary. There is nothing to stop him employing wives or members of his family in this position. In addition, he has \$9,755 to spend on a personal research assistant.

An M.P. gets all travel - by road, rail or air - free within Australia - 1st class, of course. His wife can travel free to Canberra six times a year and interstate once. His children can travel to Canberra twice a year, again at the taxpayer's expense. He gets free government transport between his home and the nearest airport, up to 150 kilometres. Government transport is also provided in Canberra.

In addition, he gets a free round-the-world ticket every session of parliament. He gets free postage and two free telephones. His superannuation is generous, to put it mildly. Once he has survived

eight years in parliament, he gets 50 percent of his basic salary as a pension for life (currently he would get \$260 per week) which rises automatically with inflation. The longer he stays after this, the larger the proportion he receives.

This modest bundle of benefits allows him to travel from platform to platform, proclaiming that Australia can only "turn the corner" by a policy of rigid restraint and belt-tightening.

Mr. Enoch Powell, now an Ulster Unionist M.P. at Westminster, in an article headed "The M.P. as a Salaried Employee" in May's Illustrated London News, pointed out how the vast hand-outs to politicians had severed any responsibility by the Member to those who had voted for him. He pondered as to how such members could still claim to be called gentlemen, sooner than "paid government employees". He added:

"The term gentleman, with its echoes, leads to the heart of the matter. The essence of gentlemen as constituting the membership of an assembly is financial independence - independence, that is, so far as membership of the assembly is concerned. That independence, albeit reduced, is not destroyed by receipt of an honorarium - though the larger the honorarium the greater the reduction - provided always that the honorarium is in no way related to services performed, and that whatever the expenses the recipient thinks fit to incur, he does so at his own discretion and his own cost. True, a gentleman thus defined will still be vulnerable to the leverage of ambition and of vanity; but he will not be a paid servant, nor will he be what old Cobbett used to call a "tax-eater": he will be able to look his electors and his fellows in the face. Such was the Assembly by which, for good or ill, England in its greatest days used to be represented. Such was the Assembly which installed Peel and dismissed him. Such is not the assembly which England is likely to have in the future if things go on as they are going."

It could be added that the salaries of British politicians are modest in comparison to their Australian counterparts.

BASIC FUND FILLED: As confidently anticipated, a flurry of last-minute support for the League's Annual Basic Fund, has swept the Fund past its minimum objective of \$45,000. Two contributions of \$500 each from veteran supporters made a valuable contribution to the latter stages of the campaign to raise the Fund. In our next issue, and in other League journals, we will be reporting on the League's programme. All further contributions to the 1979-80 Fund will be allocated against the 1980-81 Fund. We thank all those who made yet another Annual Fund a success.