

A WEEKLY COMMENTARY



ON TARGET

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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance —

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Thought for the Week: "Politics is a terribly non-creative thing - a scrimmage and a place for second-rate talents".

- Clare Booth Luce

WHAT WILL THE FEDERAL ELECTIONS DECIDE?" There are several good reasons why Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser should have decided to hold the Federal Elections on October 18th instead of later. One is that contrary to the constant claim that the finance-economic crisis is being overcome, all the indications are that it is going to deepen. The increase in the unemployment rate is one sign of what is to come. The second is that Mr. Fraser hopes to stage a short electronic election in which the print media will have the minimum opportunity of asking Mr. Fraser any searching questions. Most electors will have to be content to see Mr. Fraser and his colleagues on television or to hear their voices on radio. Mr. Fraser will, of course, operate on the basis that the memories of most electors are rather short. Mr. Fraser will not want to be reminded that he called the last Federal election, in 1977, twelve months early, on the plea that there was so much speculation about an early election - for which he was mainly responsible - that he wanted to remove uncertainty and also to enable the electors to provide him with a firm mandate to consolidate the programme of economic recovery his Government had allegedly embarked upon with considerable success. Before the 1975 elections Mr. Fraser had given a firm assurance that within three years his Government would restore the economy. Now Mr. Fraser was in essence saying he required five years.

Capitalising on the deep anti-Whitlam feeling which remained in the Australian community, and that it is the tradition of many Australians to give everyone every chance to prove himself, Mr. Fraser had himself re-elected with another big majority in 1977. Firm promises were made that taxation would be reduced, unemployment would be reduced and that the inflation rate would continue to go down. But by the middle of 1978, increasing numbers of electors started to realise that none of the promises made were going to be fulfilled. Taxation has been increased to new record levels. We

predict now that if the Fraser Government is re-elected and perseveres with its present policies, the finance-economic situation by the middle of next year will deepen. Even some Liberals agree privately that the much-publicised mineral boom is not going to affect the overall depressed economy. Remember similar talk of a boom resulting from massive foreign investment in Australian mineral development was made before the last Federal Elections. A boom in the development of Australian mineral resources is dependent not only on massive capital investment, but also on foreign markets. The truth is, as admitted reluctantly even by the International Monetary Fund, the finance-economic outlook for the industrialised world is gloomy. Almost every day come more reports of manifestations of the growing international trade war.

Australia's basic problems can only be solved by reversing present finance-economic policies. If Australia puts its own house in order, it is then in the position to demonstrate to other nations that it does not need to contribute to the growing international friction resulting from the "fight" for foreign markets. Before the 1975 Federal Elections, Mr. Fraser, in criticising the Hayden Budget, pinpointed a basic aspect of the finance-economic problem, of which inflation is a most insidious and subversive manifestation. Mr. Fraser correctly charged that heavy taxation was a basic cause which had to be removed.

After five years in office, the Fraser Government stands condemned by its own record. It has failed badly, It has broken promise after promise. In both domestic and foreign policies it has continued on from where the Whitlam Government left off. This truth must be faced by electors as they consider what they are going to do on October 18th. If the Australian electors re-elect the Fraser government with another big majority, it will demonstrate that they are "gluttons for punishment". Also, that if they haven't suffered enough, it is their God-given right to suffer some more. But fortunately the evidence suggests that a large number of electors has had enough and that Mr. Fraser's self-righteous arrogance will at least be dented.

However, what is the alternative to Mr. Fraser? Mr. Hayden? Mr. Hayden is as much enslaved by the mumbo-jumbo of financial orthodoxy as is Mr. Fraser. Mr. Hayden offers a form of drug which could temporarily stimulate the economy but which would worsen the basic cause. Inflation would continue because high taxation would continue. The best advice that we can give electors is that they make every endeavour to contact all candidates for the House of Representatives and to make it clear that unless they can obtain a firm written contract that candidates will pledge themselves to vote against any further increase in total taxation and will work for a reduction, they must as responsible

electors refuse to cast their vote for any candidate, registering what might be termed as a "conscience vote". Those who vote for "the lesser of two evils" are allowing themselves to be used by the party political manipulators, who then claim that they have a mandate. The time has come to challenge the manner in which the party totalitarians seek to exploit electors. A start can be made at the 1980 Federal Elections.

AL GRASSBY'S BIG BROTHER APPEAL: Mr. Al Grassby, the over-paid Commissioner for Community Relations, is always trying to find some reason to justify his meddling existence. In his annual report Mr. Grassby says that "racist" organisations - he mentions 30 - have increased their activities over the past twelve months. The report was tabled in the Federal Parliament last week by the Attorney-General Senator Durack. Mr. Grassby claims that intensified "racist" activities are the result of groups "taking advantage of the arrival of Indo-Chinese refugees and of the federal election to be held later this year. The membership of the organisations remains small, yet their activities cause grave offence particularly to the ethnic and racial groups which are the subject of their attacks. The activities also cause offence to the bulk of the Australian community."

The Australian League of Rights is smeared by Grassby as one of the biggest offenders. Unlike would-be-Commissar Grassby, the man with an anti-Anglo-Saxon chip, the League of Rights believes in the natural right of the people of a nation to say who should be permitted to join that nation. Every test demonstrates that the great majority of Australians are opposed to large-scale non-European immigration. Instead of encouraging that test to be made at a referendum, Mr. Grassby now calls for sweeping powers to prosecute in what he terms cases of "racial discrimination". He also wants to be able to subpoena documents and files during "racial discrimination" inquiries. Like most of his kind, Mr. Grassby advocates more totalitarianism, more Big Brother, while uttering mealy-mouthed remarks about "toleration".

We have no hesitation in saying that Mr. Al Grassby is one of the most disliked Federal bureaucrats in Australia. It is time that his meddling, parasitic activities were closed down. The character of the real Australia was shaped over the first 70 years of Federation without a "Community Relations" bureaucracy, during which all the political parties, with the exception of the Communist Party, openly declared their support for the very immigration policy which Mr. Grassby now denounces as "racist". Mr. Grassby should be reminded that he was decisively rejected by the electors of Riverina and only holds his present position because of the jobs-for-the-boys philosophy which prevails at Canberra, irrespective of which party is in office.

BRIEF COMMENTS: There has been a continued annual increase in bankruptcy under the Fraser Government, the nearly 5000 bankruptcies for 1979-80

being an increase of 29 per cent for the year. This is an increase of 162 per cent on the 1975-76 figures, the first year of the Fraser Government. Small business organisations have been the main victims of what is described as the "fight" against inflation. The Thatcher Government is waging an even harsher "fight" in the United Kingdom, with the result that there is a rising bankruptcy and unemployment rate approaching that of the Great Depression. The brutality of this policy doomed to make no more than a dent in the high inflation rate, is producing human tragedies which statistics cannot accurately measure. The new edition of C.H. Douglas's classic, "The Monopoly of Credit", which first appeared in the Great Depression, makes clear the truth that inflation cannot be solved by policies which, if persisted with, must, as Douglas predicted, end either in war or social disintegration as efforts are made to exploit the crisis to centralise power on a global scale. "The Monopoly of Credit", with an illuminating Introduction by Dr. Geoffrey Dobbs, sells for \$6 posted.

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Mr. Miller, the Secretary of the U.S. Treasury, has recently stated that the world's economy was in a "critically difficult period". Mr. Miller's prescription for survival is that the West must subjugate itself more than ever to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. He berated those who advocate restrictive trade actions and other "beggar-thy-neighbour" policies (self-protection at the expense of other trading nations; or "I'm all right, Jack").

Allowing his slip to show a little, Mr. Miller said - "The I.M.F., World Bank, and other development banks did not have a natural constituency"...but... "our stake in a healthy world economy is large, and growing larger."

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