



ON TARGET

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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance—

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Thought for the Week: "In order to understand the unquestionable failure of present democracy it is necessary to understand its nature, what it can do from its nature, and what it cannot do. The literal meaning of the word is, of course, 'rule by the people', but I would prefer to call it the will of the people. It is not rule by the majority, an important distinction to note. The idea of party government is comparatively modern, probably not ante-dating the Wars of the Roses, and contains in itself a subtle perversion of the democratic idea.... the most cursory examination of the slogans on which elections are fought is sufficient to show that the machinery (of making the will of the electors prevail) has been completely perverted."

- C.H. Douglas in "The Nature of Democracy".

SIGNIFICANT STRAWS IN THE POLITICAL WIND: Modern elections contested by highly organised party political machines, with slick public relations organisations attempting to "sell" parties like some detergent, have increasingly degenerated into a type of civil war. Mr. Bob Hawke reveals that in order to contest the campaign the ALP had to obtain overdraft facilities approaching \$1 million. Without this type of credit support the Labor Party machine could not operate. The Liberal Party obviously far-exceeded the Labor Party's expenditure during the latter stages of the campaign, resorting to desperate fear-advertising through the print media which must have cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. Even though one of Treasurer John Howard's own financial advisers dissociated himself from the claim that inflation would increase to 20% under a Labor Government, Mr. Fraser could not be pinned down to stating how this figure was arrived at. And neither would he respond to the question of what his prediction was for an inflation rate under his Government. It is probable that the highly publicised threat of a wealth tax in the Government's saturation advertising did result in a last minute swing back to the Government parties. Generally overlooked is the fact that Australians already are experiencing a wealth tax in the form of escalating local government rates: these rates, based on property values,

are a reflection of the financial policies imposed by the Federal Government.

The conventional way of assessing political contests is that the Fraser Government "won". But if perhaps as few as 30,000 electors in approximately 15 electorates had voted differently, Mr. Bill Hayden and the ALP would have been described as "the winners". If the dogma of "majority rule", so strongly advocated for Rhodesia by Mr. Fraser, had been applied Mr. Fraser would have been defeated. But what about the electors in all this? What real choices did they have? And will anything fundamentally change as a result of a most expensive political civil war? Contrary to the outward satisfaction expressed by Mr. Fraser about the election results, those results have already sent shock waves through the Liberal and National parties. As we have foreshadowed, a completely new political situation is developing in Australia at the same time that the inevitable disruptive effects of present finance-economic policies are starting to intensify. The basic feature of the new political situation is a fragmentation of power.

Mr. Fraser cannot dispute that the most disastrous losses in the elections, were in what has been regarded as the major base of the Liberal Party, his home State of Victoria. There was a major swing against his own Deputy, Mr. Phillip Lynch. Those back-bench Members who did survive, some by only a handful of votes, are going to be increasingly restive and tend to demand a greater say. Mr. Fraser no longer could govern without the National Country Party, which means a division of power between the Coalition parties. The Coalition Government lost effective control of the Senate, which could pave the way for far-reaching Senate reforms which would help further the growing process of elevating the status of the Senate to a genuine House of Review. The manner in which many electors voted differently in the Senate from how they voted in the House of Representatives, reveals an encouraging development towards more responsible and discriminating voting.

Premier Joh Bjelke Petersen has made the significant post-election comment that the Fraser Government is now on trial, and that it will be in much greater trouble if it does not deal with the taxation and other basic questions. Claiming in his first post-election comment that he had got the message that "Our policies certainly need adapting" Mr. Fraser immediately followed up with a direction to Sir Geoffrey Yeend, head of his own Department, "to begin work on a new plan to provide jobs for young people" During the election campaign Mr. Fraser had berated Mr. Hayden for advocating exactly the same policy! Which reminds us of how, following the famous 1961 elections, Prime Minister Menzies, who survived with a majority of one, immediately applied the very deficit financing policy advocated by Opposition

leader Calwell. Our view is that the new political situation, particularly after July of next year, when the new Senators take their seats, offers far greater opportunities for the development of League concepts.

WARNING SHOTS FROM MRS. FLORENCE BJELKE-PETERSEN: Although there was a drop in the Queensland National-Country Party's vote in the House of Representatives, the massive Senate vote for Mrs. Bjelke-Petersen, mainly at the expense of the Liberal Party, contains a message for the Fraser Government. Even though she was "rubbished" by some of her own party colleagues, Mrs. Bjelke-Petersen made the taxation issue a major one in her election campaigning. She has already sent a warning shot to Canberra, that in her maiden speech she is going to raise the issue. Clearly her policy of a substantial reduction in taxation had the support of Queensland electors, irrespective of political affiliations. And her strong "Queensland First" note also proved most successful. Our reports indicate that the widely circulated literature by the non-party "Queensland First" Movement, headed by a group of distinguished Queenslanders, made a big contribution to the Florence Bjelke-Petersen campaign. If the distinguished Senator Glen Sheil does manage to survive, it will be as a result of the strong campaign waged in support of Mrs. Bjelke-Petersen and her policies.

While Mrs. Bjelke-Petersen stresses that she does not see herself as being a messenger to Prime Minister Fraser from her husband, it is clear that Mr. Fraser is going to be confronted with a "Joh-Flo" pincer movement. Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen has commented, Florence is going "to be a tremendous asset to me, the National Party and the whole of Queensland. But one thing I am going to say here and now is that Malcolm is going to have to smarten himself up if he wants to stay in Canberra. Unless he does something about petrol prices in rural areas there is no way in the world that he is going to get back next time. No way. I'm sure Florence will have something to say about that when she gets to Canberra."

If Mr. Joh Bjelke-Petersen survives the coming State elections, preserving a strong base, the stage will be set for a major assault on the policy of destructive taxation. League of Rights campaigners everywhere should be greatly encouraged by the prospects.

WHAT ABOUT THE CHRISTIAN ALTERNATIVE? From a basic, long-term view, the most significant development in the Federal elections went unnoticed by the political commentators. In a short preliminary comment on the election results, Mr. Leon Ward, Chairman of the Christian Alternative movement, said that he was confident that the Christian

Alternative "will be a force to be reckoned with in the future". Mr. Ward said, "Starting from absolute basics, with an inadequate lead time, minimal finances, and no organisational structure, the Christian Alternative candidates were welcomed all over Victoria and South Australia."

Mr. Ward continued and said that when it was considered that the Christian Alternative candidates were without even the benefit of how-to-vote cards, the recording of approximately 11,000 votes "clearly there is an enormous responsible vote seeking alternatives to the present political party machines." Every one of those votes was a deliberate responsible choice.

Mr. Ward stressed that the 1980 campaign was but the beginning and that a statement concerning its future would be made shortly. We understand that in both Victoria and South Australia the campaign resulted in large numbers of new contacts vitally interested in becoming involved in future activities.

A measure of the Christian Alternative potential may be judged by noting that the total vote in Victoria exceeded that of all the Independents and was not far behind that of the Retired Persons Federation, which had the former well-known Victorian Liberal Member, Mr. John Jess, as its main candidate, and was nearly one-third of the well-established and better organised Democratic Labor Party. While conceding that the position of number one on the ballot paper is (unfortunately) of some assistance, the 105,000 votes recorded by the Rev. Fred Nile in N.S.W. under the label of "Call To Australia" group was further demonstration of the tremendous potential for the fostering of political movements firmly committed to the restoration of Christian values. The right-to-life groups which supported Mr. Nile also caused a shock in Victoria with their special campaign against Mr. Barry Simon, Liberal Member for Macmillan. Also united against Mr. Simon were all League of Rights supporters. Even if Mr. Simon manages to survive, extremely doubtful as we go to press, a valuable example has been provided of Christians uniting to make their will prevail.

If these developments can be now fostered into the future, then clearly the 1980 Federal Elections saw the emergence of a completely new concept of politics in Australia.

THE BASIC FUND: As the stage is being set for the decisive battle for Civilisation, the League urges all supporters to ensure it has adequate funds. A full report next week.

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