



ON TARGET

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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance —

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Thought for the Week: "It is all too clear that we are traversing now one of those ages in which freedom is in full retreat, that a whole combination of forces exist which seem intent on making for its ruin, and that unless humanity is on its guard it may find itself tomorrow in a state of servitude in comparison with which that known by antiquity If freedom is now withering and threatened with extinction, we know the reason It is because it is impossible for it to live in a materialistic climate where there are no moral principles."

- Daniel Rops in "Christianity and Freedom" quoted
by Eric D Butler in "The Essential Christian Heritage".

THE POLISH DRAMA: Pope John Paul's open endorsement of the Solidarity Free Trade Union Movement in Poland, and his meeting in Rome with Mr. Lech Walesa and other Polish Solidarity leaders, has moved the Polish drama to a new dimension. Perhaps for reasons of prudence, the Pope said that the Solidarity movement did not have a "political character". Responding to the Pope, Walesa said that "Political problems as such do not interest us," continuing, "We are interested in the rights of man, the rights of society, and the rights of faith. That comes from our 1000 year civilisation." But the rights of man, as understood in a Christian Civilisation, are a gift from God. This concept of rights is diametrically opposed to the Marxist concept. It is certain that the Soviet is most apprehensive about developments in Poland. The challenge of the Solidarity movement could, in spite of protestations of not being political, reach the stage where Communist rule in Poland could be in jeopardy. The Soviet is not prepared to let that happen. Politics are about power, and the Marxists are adamant that power should be a monopoly of the State - that State, of course, being run by Marxists.

Generally unpublicised about the Polish situation is the astronomical debt owed by the Polish Government to international banking groups. This debt carries the high interest rates which inevitably contribute

to inflation. To some degree the strikes in Poland are an attempted revolt against the very policies generating industrial unrest in the West. There are other similarities between what is happening in Poland and the West. Western workers urging a shorter working week, primarily to try to offset unemployment, are denounced as acting against the "national interest". The Polish workers responsible for a new wave of strikes in favour of a 40-hour working week in Poland, are also being denounced in similar terms. Less production in Poland means less exports to the Soviet Union. In a free society, with individual initiative fully rewarded, more than adequate production to meet all genuine requirements is easily possible with less working hours. Only a change in present financial policies is necessary to make this possible.

If the Polish strikers are to achieve their stated objectives, they must destroy not only the Communist Government, but the financial policies used by that Government. What remains to be seen now is whether the international bankers will pour more millions into Poland in an attempt to avert a major national uprising, or whether the Soviet leaders, assured of no real action by the West, will send in the tanks. Whatever the outcome, the Polish Solidarity leaders have provided an inspiring example of the power of Christian Faith. It is that type of power which, correctly used, can bring crashing down the totalitarian threat now looming over the whole of mankind.

A FALSE DEBATE ON EMPLOYMENT: Following a report that the Federal Government was considering cutting off social welfare payments for unemployed under 18, a heated national debate has broken out, with the Labor Party naturally attempting to make major political capital out of the question. The Government attempts to defend itself by claiming that it is concerned that present social welfare payments to the young may act as a disincentive to continue studies. If young people can be persuaded to stay at school for one or two extra years, this obviously helps to ease the problem of growing youth unemployment. But attempting to keep young people at school, even if they are not interested, is but one more manifestation of the many absurd schemes to keep the unemployment figures down.

The \$36 a week payment to those under 18 who cannot find paid employment, could hardly be described as lavish, particularly as it is losing its purchasing power at over 10 per cent annually. And there is the long wait before school leavers can claim the \$36. All the evidence indicates that the overwhelming majority of young people, after leaving school, do seek paid employment. Finding it relatively difficult to obtain, increasing numbers then drift into accepting the situation - and the \$36. Escalating juvenile crime is a measure of a growing demand to obtain part of the abundance which can be seen on

all sides. Youth unemployment is world-wide in all industrialised nations. It varies between nations, but the overall situation is clear. The only real problem is the failure of politicians to face the truth that there are only two basic premises for the conduct of society. The first is that individuals must, in essence, be treated as conscripts, forced to do what they may not want to do. The second is that individuals make their maximum contribution in any field of endeavour, when they have freedom and incentive. Conscripts can never reach the achievements of free people.

If the truth about the true purpose of the production system is accepted, that it is both sensible and desirable for the individual to co-operate with his fellows to use technology to produce his requirements in the shortest possible time, unemployment ceases to be regarded as a problem, but as a partial measure of genuine progress in the production system. If adequate production is taking place without those described as unemployed, then clearly their services are not required. Bearing in mind the social implications, the commonsense way to approach the question of how best to operate the production system, is for more people to be encouraged to retire earlier from the work force so that the young may have every opportunity to obtain paid employment. The young require the discipline of regular economic activity, and an outlet for their tremendous energy. Those who reject the concept of adequate financial social dividends for those prepared to retire earlier, to provide greater scope for the young, should not be surprised if the growing number of young unemployed turn increasingly to crime and violence.

BRIEF COMMENTS: The revenge mentality of many Socialists has been demonstrated once again following Sir Zelman Cowen's invitation to the former Governor-General, Sir John Kerr, to have lunch with him. Typical of some of the critical comments was that of Labor front-bencher Senator Walsh, who said "Cowen has smeared himself with Kerr's guilt. I can only assume Sir Zelman Cowen was heavily leaned upon by Kerr in his (Kerr's) desire to attain respectability." This vulgar type of comment comes from those who can never bring themselves to admit that it was the Australian electors who threw Whitlam out of office in 1975.

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The people of Venezuela, South America, are not quite as silly as Australians, and therefore do not pay "world parity" prices for their own oil. The current price of petrol in Venezuela is 30 cents (American) a gallon. Yes, that's correct, 6 cents a litre! Western Canadians are still paying much less than Australians. Before the last Federal Elections, Prime Minister Fraser did promise that increased Government revenue from rising oil prices would be passed

back to the taxpayer. Government members should be asked when will this start to happen.

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Britain's Industry Secretary, Sir Keith Joseph, and one of the main architects of Mrs. Thatcher's "monetarist" policies, admits that he is a "bitterly disappointed" man. He says that the Government has lost the first year of its battle to get the economy right. Sir Keith says the Government will have to adopt tougher measures to reduce public spending. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Geoffrey Howe, claims, however, that his strategy is working. Inflation was being reduced. But Government borrowing is soaring at a time when large numbers of British industries are being bankrupted and unemployment soars. Sir Geoffrey Howe admits that sacrifices are being made. He does not explain why it is necessary to have sacrifices in a nation with Britain's enormous productive capacity.

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The 70 Australian teachers who are to teach in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) will learn about African realities. Many liberal do-gooders who have gone to Africa have subsequently had to admit that reality was rather different than theory. Already in Zimbabwe there have been charges that the Australian teachers were "culturally unqualified" to teach. One of the teachers said, "Quite a lot of the teachers have very little knowledge of the political situation or cultural habits. We were not given enough information about the country before we left." The teachers will have the chance to study how Mr. Robert Mugabe has demoted Mr. Joshua Nkomo, depriving him of any position concerning security. Mr. Mugabe knows that at an appropriate time, Mr. Nkomo and his supporters are likely to try to seize complete power.

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KEEP BASIC FUND MOVING: A South Australian supporter rang us last week. He wanted to assure us that he and his family were right behind the League "at this historic moment when we cannot afford to weaken our work. I am pledging \$1,000." Thank you, J.C. Tremendous spirit. Since our last published figures on December 19th, 42 supporters have contributed or pledged a total of \$6,744, taking the total to \$32,894.50. If this flow of support can be sustained our target will soon be reached.

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