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*The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance—*

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Thought for the Week: "A people which no longer remembers has lost its history and its soul." - Alexander Solzhenitsyn in "The West's betrayal of Civilisation".

HOWARD REMOTE FROM REALITY: Federal Treasurer John Howard's bland claim that he does not know of one case of people forced to walk away from their homes because of his Shylock-like interest rates, is a classic demonstration of what the rarefied air of Canberra can do to Government Ministers. Mr. Howard may honestly be out of touch with reality. But for a relatively young man who appeared before entering politics to be destined to be another mediocre solicitor, Mr. Howard has done quite nicely, financially. And the prospects for the future look rosy, with little prospect of Mr. Howard being forced to sell either his Sydney or Canberra home because of difficulty with mortgage payments. One estimate of how the present scandalous super-annuation scheme assists the retired or defeated politician, shows that if Mr. Howard can survive a few more years, he could finish obtaining \$11 million. We are aware that this amazing figure has been doubted, but as far as we know, Mr. Howard has never attempted to dispute it. But with even a fraction of that type of money, Mr. Howard may be a little detached from the realities of life as they affect all those Australians battling to maintain their mortgage payments.

We are not keen admirers of Victoria's Minister for Housing, Mr. Jeff Kennett, who has said some silly and dangerous things about immigration, but he has demonstrated how far from realities Mr. Howard is on the housing question. Mr. Kennett certainly hit Canberra in a very tender spot when he took full page advertisements in the Melbourne daily press to write a blistering Open Letter to Prime Minister Fraser. Mr. Kennett laid it on the line: Hundreds of Victorian families are walking away from or selling their homes

because of the Fraser Government's high interest rates. Mr. Howard claimed there was no evidence to support this statement, denying what is a matter of common knowledge. Mr. Kennett came back with some hard facts. He described his meeting with the Boronia (Victoria) family who were forced to sell their furniture to meet high interest rates on their mortgage. The family will probably have to sell out in a few weeks. We are aware of a number of cases of people being forced to sell their homes at greatly reduced prices because they cannot keep up interest payments. Large numbers of others are holding on by cutting down on food. Family stability is being eroded daily, adding to the nation's growing social problems.

Australia as a nation is physically capable of housing all Australian families. The building industry, making use of modern technology, is more efficient than ever. What is physically possible, and socially and morally desirable, should be made financially possible. Credit for housing could be made available at a fraction of those now being imposed, probably as low as 2 per cent. This suggestion is, of course, anathema to Mr. John Howard and his bureaucratic "advisers". A Treasurer who has had to admit under pressure that it is going to cost the book-publishing business much more to collect the proposed Sales Tax on books than the tax itself, is not only anti-social; he is too dangerous to be allowed to continue as Treasurer. A massive revolt against his Sales Tax legislation could assist him on his way.

LEFT-WING IDEOLOGUES HOWLING FOR SENATE "REFORM": "The Federal Government will do no service to Australian democracy and parliamentary government if it rejects out of hand the proposals for constitutional reform which the A.L.P. has presented this week to the Senate."

- The Australian, November 13th.

What the above really means, scraping away the journalistic humbug, is that The Australian (meaning the person, or persons, who control The Australian) thinks that the Australian Senate should be "reformed". By "reformed", read vitiated, weakened, attenuated.

The long Editorial of above date highlights the events of Remembrance Day, 1975, exaggerates the political controversy which followed, in our opinion; and strongly advocates what was stated above, viz. Senate "reform". The Editorial plugs the undesirability of citizens being in the dark on important matters of governmental procedure; e.g., "The very fact that an elected prime minister (Mr. Whitlam) could be ejected from office for reasons that were far from clear to most electors, is enough in itself to arouse concern. It is essential for a democracy that the average interested citizen should know how the system works. If people cannot understand the rules of the game it is not to be wondered at if some of them wish to abandon the game altogether and try to attain their political goals by other, unconstitutional means." (end of quote).

Now, how about this? We do not consider, at all, that Mr. Whitlam's ejection from office was misunderstood by most electors. We are

confident, in our judgement, that Australians were alarmed by the political excesses of the Whitlam Cabal, and couldn't get them out quickly enough. This is dealt with quite proficiently in the book - "The Witless Men" by competent political commentator and journalist, Don Whittington (Price: \$3.50 posted from G.P.O. Box 1052J, Melbourne). Furthermore, we consider the writer(s) of the above Editorial in The Australian to be guilty, wittingly or unwittingly, of arrogance.

The man and woman in the street are not fools, and they don't have to be patronised by editorialists and political commentators. We agree that it is desirable for electors to have a proper understanding of the "rules of the game", and if some people do not, then the correct remedy is not to alter the "rules of the game" to the detriment of good government (our opinion) but to ensure that those uninformed people do understand the rules of the game. For example, in earlier times this century in Australia, pupils at school were required to have a grasp of CIVICS; the principles of government, role of government, machinery of government, etc., etc. The sooner that CIVICS are retaught in Australian schools, the better - in our view. They were phased out some fifty years ago.

We mention "Left-Wind Ideologues" in the heading above, and have in mind those members of parliamentary A.L.P. who are always railing against the Senate, and who strongly support the Bill newly introduced by Senator Gareth Evans, to provide for a referendum for the alteration of the powers of the Senate. We have had quite a deal to say about fixed parliamentary terms, and 4-year terms in these pages in recent months, and we won't go over those again. What has taken our notice is an article in "The Canberra Times" sent to us by a Canberra actionist. Mr. Bill Hayden, Leader of the Opposition, here-in really sounds off against the Senate. We consider that Mr. Hayden has got it all wrong! He says:

"Stability will continue to be threatened so long as the rules as contained in the Constitution allow the Senate to have equal authority with the House of Representatives: the people's House...."

The whole idea of the Westminster system of government, thrashed out over many bloody centuries, is to divide and balance political power. Under this system the power is divided three ways, Crown, Upper House, Lower House. The Upper House (Senate) is every bit as much the people's House as the House of Representatives (Lower House). All legislation must have the Royal Assent before it is enacted into Law: another "brake" on legislation. When Mr. Hayden states that "the Government had reduced itself to a 'pathetic rabble' aggravated by its failure to control the Senate", he misses the bus. It is not the function of the Government to "control" the Senate. The Senate is elected by the people to put a brake on legislation passed in the Lower House. It particularly guards the interests of the States (also disliked by the Left-Wing ideologues) - but Senators are elected by the people, to do a particular job, and the Senate is doing this

job pretty well, really. Politicians - and particularly ideological ones like Senator Evans and Mr. Hayden, become victims of their ideology, so seeing the Upper House as some sort of barrier to the rapid implementation of their pet political convictions. The Senate is there to stop such ideological convictions from being  rushed  into legislation - and then into law. If the Constitution is also in the way, then the Constitution must be altered; even scrapped. The ideology becomes the Reality. We do not agree with Mr. Hayden with his comment: "When the two Houses of Parliament have equal authority, grave instability is the inevitable and logical result. We saw this in 1975, and we're seeing it now."

We are also sure that Mr. Fraser and his colleagues would differ: they consider that their Government is very stable. We know that the Socialists want the Senate out of the way so that socialistic legislation can be rammed quickly through Parliament into Law.

Conservative Speakers' Club (Sydney): Next Meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 24th., at 7.30 p.m. Venue is the Commonweal Centre, 114 Castlereagh St., Sydney. The Guest Speaker is Mr. Charles Weyman, President, SOLIDARITY; The Association of Free Poles in Australia. He will be speaking on "The Solidarity Movement in Poland".  
Tariff, \$2.50 per person, includes supper at 9.30 p.m. League books on sale, tapes of recent addresses by Guest Speakers. Enquiries:- 89.1776. Bring friends.

Conservative Speakers' Club (Adelaide): Next Meeting on Friday, Nov. 27th. Assembly from 6.15 p.m., Dinner at 6.50 p.m.  
Guest Speaker to be Mrs. Belle Harris, widow of the late Pastor Leo Harris: she is a gifted musician.  
The title of her address is - "Subversion Through Music". Venue is Adelaide Railway Dining Room. League books on sale. Tariff is \$5.25, drinks extra. Bookings on - 278.6780...381.5495...383.0114.  
Adelaide and environs supporters please note that there will be NO meeting in December, and possibly not in January. Advice to be given.  
SPECIAL PRE-CHRISTMAS ADDRESS: Mr. Eric Butler, National Director of the Australian League of Rights, will address the last Melbourne Conservative Club meeting for 1981, on Wednesday, December 2nd. This will be a special pre-Christmas address, entitled, "How Relevant Is Christianity Today?" This will be a challenging and thought-provoking talk. Start inviting friends now.

BASIC FUND ADVANCES: Over the last week 15 supporters contributed \$1865, taking the total to \$13,115. One supporter pledges to find \$1000 if necessary early next year. We have also been notified of a number of pledges. But the Fund is not moving as rapidly as we would like. The need was never greater. Get YOUR donation away TODAY.

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