



ON TARGET

- NEWS HIGHLIGHTS
- BACKGROUND INFORMATION
- COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance—

Vol. 19 No. 26

Registered by Australia Post — Publication No. VBH 0999

July 9th, 1982

Thought for the Week: Count it the greatest of infamies to prefer life to honour, and lose, for the sake of living, all that makes life worth having."

— "Juvenal", Satires.

THE CANBERRA POLITICAL CIRCUS: Will Mr. Bob Hawke displace Mr. Bill Hayden as leader of the Australian Labor Party primarily because sufficient of his political colleagues feel that this would make a Labor victory certain at the next Federal elections? Will Premier Neville Wran move to Canberra in the near future? In a Labor Leadership challenge could deputy leader Bowen emerge as a shock winner? Will Prime Minister Fraser decide on an early election if he feels that he can exploit division in the ALP's ranks on foreign policy or uranium? These and similar questions are being discussed by the media commentators, ever eager to help create "news" so that they can then comment upon it.

In all the welter of speculation, it is conceded that there are no basic policy differences between the politicians. It was the same during the Fraser-Peacock affair. Mr. Peacock had no difference with Mr. Fraser on basic policy. After all, Mr. Peacock had been associated with all policy decisions, including the treacherous betrayal of Rhodesia. Mr. Peacock said it was impossible to work with Mr. Fraser. But Mr. Peacock will accept a position back in the Fraser Cabinet as soon as this is deemed politically expedient!

When the Victorian ALP replaced former leader, Mr. Frank Wilkes, with Mr. John Cain, this was a cynical demonstration of how the party politicians, even those who claim to be Socialist idealists, are more concerned about winning office than about ideology. Former Labor Minister Mr. Clyde Cameron has come out in favour of Mr. Hawke leading the ALP into the next Federal Elections, not because he is against Mr. Bill Hayden, but because he believes that the public opinion polls indicate that Mr. Hawke is electorally a bigger "draw"

"ON TARGET"

July 9th, 1982

Page 1 (103)

than Mr. Hayden. The question of policy is ignored. The truth is that an ALP government under Mr. Hawke would be implementing basically the same policies which Mr. Hayden would be implementing. Mr. Hayden would almost certainly be the Treasurer in a Hawke government. The only major difference between Hawke and Hayden concerns the Middle East. Mr. Hayden has made clear his sympathy for the dispossessed Palestinians and a willingness to be critical of Israel. Mr. Hawke is, of course, a dedicated Zionist and has the support of the Zionist machine in Australia.

Statements by Hawke and Hayden (and other Labor spokesmen) on finance-economics leave no doubt that an ALP government would pursue, with few variations, the same policies being implemented by the Fraser government. Electors should note that as the party political leaders wheel and deal, they make it clear that they are being completely hypocritical when they talk about the necessity of longer terms for governments - allegedly so that there is time for government strategy to be implemented. Mr. Fraser will have an election only two years after the last one - if he believes that this provides him with the best chance of holding on to office. Electors can ignore the statement that the government should run its full term. Mr. Fraser will have an election whenever he feels he can, with a double dissolution; cling to office and rid himself of a Senate he cannot dominate.

The reaction of that growing concerned minority of electors who are sickened by the Canberra political circus, must be to cast a responsible vote to strengthen the position of the Senate as a "watchdog", irrespective of who is the next Prime Minister.

ISRAEL'S STRANGE ARMS GAME: An article from The Washington Post section of The Guardian Weekly (June 6) dealt with Israel's armaments debt; "... In 1983 Israel will have to pay the United States \$910 million for past arms purchases. Some \$785 million of that will be covered by economic aid. To close that \$125 million gap, Senator Alan Cranston urged the United States to establish the principle that new aid at least match the debt repayment. This measure, if enacted, would relieve Israel of a large burden. But it would be an unacceptable precedent: It would put Israel alone in a category where, as Sen. Charles Mathias put it, "There would be no limit to the amount of debt Israel could absorb, because someone else is servicing the debt"... Israel is already the largest recipient of American aid. The yearly total approaches \$3 billion..." (Note this is over \$1,000 for every man, woman and child in Israel).

Another Washington Post article (The Guardian Weekly, June 20) confirmed the recent Courier-Mail article we quoted recently: "... In the last

several weeks, Argentina has received munitions, spare parts, and rockets from Peru and Venezuela, and French-made Exocet air-to-surface missiles, probably from Iraq via Libya ... Two Western diplomatic sources also said that Argentina had received 24 American-made A-4 Skyhawk fighter bombers from Israel... According to diplomatic sources, Argentina's most important new supplies have been the delivery of Skyhawks from Israel, and two commercial planeloads of arms that have arrived from Libya..."

But Argentina is not the only beneficiary of Israel's armament largesse. The Washington Post had reported earlier (G.W. June 6) "Defence Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel said last week that the United States was informed in detail and in advance about his country's undercover supply of military equipment to Iran during its war with Iraq. Mr. Sharon said that despite Washington's neutral stance, no objection was made by ranking U.S. officials. A senior State Department official, informed of Mr. Sharon's comments, said the United States had sought unsuccessfully to discourage the shipments, which Israel has estimated to be worth \$27 million..."

The Editorial in the same issue opened up another aspect: "Iran will be in a position within four to six weeks to mount an invasion of Iraq that could have far-reaching consequences in the strategic Gulf ... The situation in the Gulf region is very dicey. Iran is crushing the Iraqi forces that invaded 20 months ago and, while threatening to continue a military and subversive offensive, demanding both the ouster of strong man Saddam Hussein and the payment of \$50 billion in reparations. "We have very unhappy memories of the Arab-Israeli truce," an Iranian official has told the Wall Street Journal. "Once you accept a truce, you never get anywhere with negotiations." But this is only half of it. The Iranians are now looking afield to the conservative Gulf Arabs who have been backing Iraq - with an estimated \$22 billion last year. The revolutionary Islamic regime in Tehran is anticipating in particular "a much humbler Saudi Arabia. Their pretensions to power and influence in the Persian Gulf will fade very quickly," the oil minister says In any confrontation between Saudi Arabia and Iran, however, the United States could not easily stay detached. There is Saudi oil. The Saudis are an American favourite, hence Ayatollah Khomeini's warning to Saudi Arabia to "give up taking orders from the United States...." The Reagan administration, moreover, has made an explicit commitment to protect the House of Saud against internal and external foes"

There is, of course, a considerable Soviet presence in Iran, which borders Afghanistan. Over 2,000 Soviet military 'advisers' are

reported in the country; which raises the question: Why would Israel be selling arms to Iran (and Argentina), and is she using United States economic aid to build a flourishing arms-trade with regimes on which the Soviet Union is casting an ambitious eye?

FARMERS IN THE RED: The two-and-a-half million farmers in the U.S. now have an average debt of \$85,000 per farm - a combined total farm debt now exceeding \$200 billion. In 1973, \$1 of farm income in the U.S. supported \$2 of farm debt. Today's figure is \$1 : \$12.

Ralph Whitlock (The Guardian Weekly, June 20, 1982) gave the European counterpart: "A sad little report, recently published by the Milk Marketing Board, provoked for me a degree of nostalgia. The core of it was the fact (no doubt astounding to some) that the average 70-acre dairy farm in Denmark is paying nearly 9000 pounds (\$18,000) a year in interest on borrowed money, leaving a profit of only 443 pounds! Yes, 9,000 pounds for the bank, the mortgage corporation or whatever and only 443 pounds for the farmer! No wonder the report concludes that round 10% of dairy farmers there are facing bankruptcy. I would have expected a higher proportion than that .. Here is the author of that Milk Marketing Board report .. "There is one fundamental lesson we can learn" he writes. "There is no way, even with an exceptionally high technical performance, given existing product prices and interest rates, that the agricultural industry can service a substantial dependence on borrowed money ..."

Try telling that to Doug Anthony, Ian Sinclair and other valiant fighters for the family farm! Whitlock concluded: "Am I being naive in sensing deadly danger to a society in which the rewards go not to those who work hard or to those who produce the necessities and luxuries of life, but to those who are expert at the manipulation of money? ..."

BRIEF COMMENTS: Confiscatory interest rates played a major part in the defeat of the Victorian Liberal Government, and will be a vital issue at the next Federal elections. But Federal Treasurer John Howard and his "advisers" have now made it certain that interest rates in general will rise again, thus undermining still further the Australian dream of widespread home ownership. Only a major division in the ALP's ranks can save the Fraser government if it continues its policy of high interest rates.

* * * * *

"ON TARGET"

July 9th, 1982

Page 4 (106)

"ON TARGET" is published and printed by the Australian League of Rights
273 Little Collins St., Melbourne. Subscription rate \$12 p.a. posted.