



ON TARGET

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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance—

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Thought for the Week: "Words may show a man's wit, but his actions show his meaning." - Benjamin Franklin.

WHY MAKE SIR JOH THE SCAPEGOAT?: Rather than face the reality that the primary reason for the failure of the Liberals last Saturday was their own pathetic ineptitude, Liberal spokesmen, supported by Mr. Ian Sinclair, have united in a campaign designed to make the Queensland Premier, Sir Joh Bjelke Petersen, primarily responsible for the re-election of the Hawke government. We were sceptical of the "Joh for Canberra" movement, masterminded by Queensland National Party chairman, Sir Robert Sparkes, from the beginning, and recommended a more statesmanship-like role for the Premier. Sir Joh had the potential to head a national movement with a major objective being the necessary constitutional changes to permit electors to exercise the right to veto unpopular legislation. But Sir Joh's credibility was damaged by what was perceived as political party in-fighting. And bringing Sir John Stone in to the Queensland National Party Senate team certainly upset many Queenslanders. By the end of the election campaign, the "Joh factor" had been badly eroded, particularly in Victoria.

The reality is that the Hawke strategists, aided by most of the media ran a highly sophisticated and expensive campaign which cynically ignored the possibility of some type of electoral backlash among traditional Labor voters in safe Labor electorates, while concentrating upon the marginal electorates. The overall result was that while the ALP vote fell by more than 1 per cent nationally, Labor representation in the House of Representatives has probably increased. If democracy means responsible voting, then the dominant role of television was most disturbing. Mr. Bob Hawke was packaged and sold like a soap powder. He answered few questions, because the media generally were given few opportunities to ask them. His appearances at different places were primarily for the purpose of filming the Prime Minister in carefully posed situations. But, even so, it was incredible that a government which had cynically

broken so many promises, and had imposed record debt, crushing taxation and usurious interest rates on the Australian people, was not swept from office. The basic reason was failure of the Liberal Party to offer anything different.

It may be true, as the image-makers claim, that if the Liberals had been led by Andrew Peacock, they would have won. But a Peacock government would have continued down the same road being followed by the Hawke government. And a Howard government could not, under financial orthodoxy, have made any contribution towards solving Australia's real problems. Mr. Howard continued to insist that, given the incentive, Australians could "work their way" out of their problems. With the exception of houses, there is no shortage of essential production in Australia. Lower interest rates and longer-term credits, would quickly solve the housing shortage. But what are desperate wheat growers and other primary producers expected to do in response to the "more-production" theme? And what about the thousands of coalminers now threatened with the loss of jobs, and incomes, not because of a shortage of coal production, but because of excess production in relationship to available markets? The papers are full of advertisements for every type of consumer goods.

Australians generally are being conditioned by the witchdoctors of the black magic known as debt-finance, with all the party politicians accepting what the witchdoctors say, that irrespective of which set of politicians they send to Canberra, they are governed by international factors beyond their control, and that "restraints" - lower standards of living - are essential. Typical of the many comments on this issue is that of well-known political commentator, Mr. Paul Kelly of The Australian, who wrote as follows in the Weekend Australian of July 11-12, that "The missing factor in the 1987 campaign is the recognition that Australia, as a middle-ranking power reliant on commodity prices to generate export revenue, will live or die on the dynamic of world growth..." Which means that if the rest of the world disappeared tomorrow, Australia would die. This view implies that Australians are so devoid of commonsense that they would, in the absence of somewhere to send exports, die rather than make use of their enormous productive capacity.

Just as the true purpose of production is consumption, so the true purpose of exporting is to pay for required imports. But to insist that a nation's internal economy must be governed by increasing exports, is to put that nation at the mercy of international policies over which it has no control. Australia must put its own internal house in order first before it can deal realistically and constructively with other nations. This requires a challenge to financial orthodoxy, including debt-finance. Mr. Howard has made it clear time and time again that he has no intention of making such a challenge. When Prime Minister

Hawke probably won himself a few extra votes in the marginal electorates by suggesting that interest rates should come down, and probably would, Mr. Howard foolishly claimed that Mr. Hawke should not be talking like this, instead of boldly stating that the government had failed to use its constitutional power to order the Reserve Bank to lower interest rates and that, if elected, this would be one of his first actions.

Following the failure of the Howard-led Liberals and the Nationals, there are calls from people like Sir Robert Sparkes for a re-grouping of the conservative parties. But any such re-organisation will not alter finance-economic realities and again divert the attention of concerned Australians into the sterile bog lands of more high-powered party politics. Instead of blaming the Queensland Premier, or anyone else, Australians must grasp and act upon the truth that they have just suffered a phony election based on phony issues. Some of the Independents fought brave and valuable campaigns but helped to demonstrate that in today's Australia, where Big Money and television are key factors, it is virtually impossible for electors to exercise any real sanctions. They are not consulted on basic issues.

The way has been cleared for a massive expansion of the work pioneered by the League of Rights. Irrespective of what the party politicians and their manipulators say, it has been demonstrated that there is one proposal which readily unites electors - the introduction of the necessary constitutional change to provide electors with a means of vetoing unpopular legislation via a national referendum. This is the type of reform which will lift Australian morale, currently at a low ebb because not even those who voted for Mr. Hawke have any real confidence in his promises. And many who voted for Mr. Howard feel the same way about him.

In his summary of why the Opposition parties lost, NSW National Party chairman, Mr. Doug Moppett (vide Financial Review, July 13th) blamed what he termed "the New Right" and went on to say that "Rat-bags like the League of Rights and other subterranean societies producing self-proclaimed policies must be told to get lost". We have news for Mr. Moppett: so far from getting lost, the League is planning to expand its activities in order to provide a lead for a nation which has been betrayed by self-seeking party politicians. What upsets Mr. Moppett and his colleagues is that the League's exposure of the influence of the Fabian Society, linked with Big Finance, has been widely circulated throughout NSW.

Elections are but incidents in an on-going battle as far as the League of Rights is concerned. Those attempting to blame Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen for what happened last Saturday, are merely demonstrating their own failures.

BRIEF COMMENTS: Former Labor Prime Minister Gough Whitlam commented on election night that "It is extraordinary that there was no argument on the Australia Card, which, after all, was the basis of the dissolution of the Senate and House of Representatives. It is a difficult argument to explain. We would have had an argument on our hands." But Mr. Hawke did not have an argument on his hands because the Opposition failed to make the ID card an issue. Mr. Hawke can now make the false claim that he has been given a mandate to go ahead with the ID card. In one statement he rejected the suggestion that there should be a referendum on the issue, making the revealing statement that he does not believe in government by referenda. But as Mr. Hawke must hold a referendum on his proposal for four-year parliaments, it would be a simple matter to hold a referendum on the ID card at the same time.

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Multinationalist John Elliott is at least consistent in his view that bigger is better. He has called on the Liberal and National parties to amalgamate and "get their act together." Political centralisation would make it more difficult for any effective challenge to the growing party tyranny.

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Mr. Holmes a Court, who recently said that he had ready access to up to \$10 billion of credit, continues on his progressive take-over activities. Last week he raised his stake in embattled Texaco Inc. to more than \$US1 billion with stock purchases totalling \$US225 million. He now controls 9.5 per cent of the oil giant's stock.

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During his recent tour of Victoria, Mr. Chas Pinwill, author of the booklet, What Has To Be Done, effectively demolished the claim that a lowering of interest rates - he suggests no more than 5% - would mean a loss to investors. Assuming that a person is obtaining 15%, he in fact is only obtaining approximately 6%. With inflation resulting from the complete abolition of Sales Tax, and the re-introduction of the consumer price discount system during the war, and a lower tax rate, 5% interest would be a better real return than 15%. Inflation has a subtly mesmerising effect on any people, who believe they are better off because they are handling more money. Price is an essential feature of money, as stressed recently by a woolgrower who said that recent publicity about high wool prices were misleading. The woolgrower listed rising costs, a manifestation of money inflation.

Election comment authorised by Mr. Eric D. Butler, 145 Russell Street, Melbourne.

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