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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance —

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die." John 11:25-26.

THE RESURRECTION INSPIRES HOPE: If press reports are correct, and there is every reason to believe they are, not only were the Christian Churches packed for Easter Services throughout the Soviet Eastern bloc of nations, but there was a new feeling of hope. Faced with realities unknown to those living in a morally flabby West, Christians behind the Iron Curtain have for nearly half a century maintained a faith which has brought them to the point where they possess a hope that the long dark night of Marxist oppression may be ending. It is too early to say with certainty what lies ahead. But it is certain that there is a new spirit abroad.

Theologians may argue, as they have, concerning the Resurrection. But the central message of the Resurrection remains clear: it has over two thousand years remained as a symbol of hope for Mankind, a hope based on the belief that life is eternal and does not end at the grave. Fear is the absence of faith. Traditional Christianity is a religion of hope. Because God made man in His own image, man therefore partakes of the very nature of God. The Kingdom of God is within, but must be sought. The Christian revelation gave the individual a value previously unknown, while the Law of Love, still imperfectly understood after two thousand years, revolutionised relations between individuals.

Christ went to the Cross because of Love in a most realistic sense. But death was not the end. Life and death are part of an eternal process. The seed that falls to the ground must die before there can be new growth. In spite of the materialism of this century, the religious instinct has not perished. A quarter of a century ago, the pseudo-intellectuals, the rationalists, were boldly proclaiming that God was dead. But all the secular gods, including Science, are now increasingly seen to have failed. That most fashionable God of the

"Enlightened", Marxism in all its forms, has been seen for what it really is. Simple peasants groaning under the Soviet yoke, understood this long before the intellectuals of the West were forced to forsake their God.

The creative force of traditional Christianity manifests itself in the great glories of Christian European culture with the promise of still greater glories to come. At the beginning of this century Western Europe appeared to be poised on the eve of an even greater explosion of individual creativeness. The Industrial Revolution had made this physically possible. But the Industrial Revolution coincided with the rationalist attack on the Christian Faith, and the rapid growth of the debt system of finance. The Church faltered at a time when bold Christian leadership of the calibre which produced Magna Carta was needed, and progressively retreated as Western Europe and its Christian culture were reduced to ruins in two World Wars and a Great Economic Depression.

But the dedicated Christians sustained their Faith, always believing that a resurrection and regeneration was possible. It may be a symbol of what is taking place when the Marxist Hammer and Sickle has come down in Hungary to be replaced by the traditional Christian Crown of St. Stephen. Life is starting to assert itself after the crucifixion of a whole Civilisation.

In spite of multi-cultural and other nonsense, Australia's roots are deep in Western Christian culture. Regeneration in Australia requires the restating of those Christian values upon which our relatively young nation was erected. There is growing evidence that younger Australians are realising that they have been betrayed by their so-called educators, and are groping for that which they feel is missing.

Inspiring Christian leadership is required to offer Australians the essential Christian heritage with its message of love and hope.

THE DECLINE OF PARLIAMENT: Senator Boswell and other politicians who have been attacking the League of Rights, claim that the League has denigrated the role of politicians and the status of Parliament. But as Greg MacIntosh, a political science fellow in the Parliamentary Library, Canberra, points out in an article on the education page of The Age of March 21st, the role of parliament as a meaningful representative and legislative body has been declining for years. MacIntosh asks is the Australian Parliament in its "death throes".

"... increasingly it seems that Parliament (and the House of Representatives in particular) is nothing more than a mere formality that exists primarily to keep the government of the day in power."

Early this century, about the time the Australian parliament was starting to operate, two distinguished Members of the British House of Commons, the well-known British writer Hilaire Belloc, and Cecil Chesterton, resigned their places in parliament, protesting that the party system was eroding the traditional concept of parliament, and wrote The Party System. The situation has progressively deteriorated until Australians have what Sir Marcus Oliphant, former Governor of South Australia, described as an "elected dictatorship".

Labor leader John Curtin made a prophetic statement about the decline of parliament as far back as 1938: "Parliament is a sounding-board for Federal Cabinet. That is how I see the trend in present-day parliamentary machines. Sooner or later, unless the march towards that position is arrested, we shall see the Commonwealth Parliament merely a register of Cabinet's views and decisions to go out to the people through the Press and Radio, and then in due time, to be given effect to (should the reaction be favourable) by legislative processes which, in themselves, are rapidly becoming mechanised."

The position has badly deteriorated in the half century since John Curtin's warning. Speaking in the Federal Parliament on March 24th, 1988, the Liberal Member for Lyons, Tasmania, Mr. Burr said: "In theory the Government must be accountable to the Parliament for all its actions; however, in practice it is the government which dominates Parliament. My comments are not a criticism of the present Government or past Governments ... Though such a state of affairs was not intended by our founding fathers; it has evolved because of the rigid party discipline applied by all political parties ... It is the discipline exercised by the parties that allows the governments of the day to maintain superiority over the Parliament." (Emphasis added)

If Parliament is to be restored to an institution representing the Australian people, one in which there is free and unfettered debate, a genuine legislative assembly, not a rubber stamp for the Executive and the unelected bureaucracy, a start must be made to permit the electors to have the opportunity to veto legislation, to initiate legislation and, if necessary, to recall unsatisfactory Members of Parliament. The principles embodied in the Swiss Constitution would, if applied in Australia, make a major contribution towards bringing all parliaments under the control of the electors. Nothing could be more important at this time than the vigorous promotion of the concept of the Electors' Veto.

BRIEF COMMENTS: Dr. Gerard Henderson of the N.S.W. Institute of Public Affairs, in his weekly column in The Australian of March 27th, laments the fact that the Thatcher Government has prevented John Elliott from extending Elders IXL's brewing empire in the United Kingdom. One would have thought that enough is enough, and that John Elliott should be satisfied with the international empire he has put together with the backing of those who provide the vast financial credits essential. But clearly John Elliott is a power man. It was not proposed that he was going to offer British consumers a new or different kind of beer; by financial manipulation he was attempting to obtain control of breweries already developed. This is what is called "free enterprise", and Dr. Henderson objects to any interference with this concept. There is no place in a genuine economic democracy for what in fact is a programme of Monopoly advanced by financial manipulation.

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Buried in the mass of comment concerning the drama of Victoria's National Safety Council, is a statement by the State Bank of Victoria, which faces a potential loss of \$104 million, approximately equal to the Bank's profit for last year. But State Bank depositors are assured that no depositors will lose one cent as a result of what has happened. This raises an interesting question: What about the hoary old myth about banks only lending their depositors' money? The truth is that banks create the credit they loan - at interest, of course. (See The Money Trick, \$6.00 posted from all League addresses.)

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The Hawke Government's weakening electoral situation may be judged by the fact that the Prime Minister's loyal wife has been virtually instructed by party strategists to have a facelift, for appearance sake, while Bob Hawke himself introduces a diversionary tactic by a public confession, with suitable tears, that he was for many years unfaithful to his wife. This fact has been well known for years, and widely publicised. But Prime Minister Hawke must create the impression of a very human, but honest man - one people can relate to. This impression is necessary as it is now beyond argument that the Hawke-Keating economic policies projected in last year's Budget have been overtaken by events.

The Hawke Government dare not go to the polls with interest rates at their present level. Under financial orthodoxy there are no prospects of them coming down for some time. For this reason we do not visualise an early Federal election - not unless the pathetic Opposition hands the Government a possible winning issue.