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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance —

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: "We must recognise that one of the causes of the disquilibrium and confusion of world economy, affecting civilisation and culture, is undoubtedly the distaste and even contempt shown for rural life with its numerous and essential activities. But does not history, especially in the case of the fall of the Roman Empire, teach us to see in this a warning symptom of the decline of civilisation?... It cannot be too often repeated how much the work of the land generates physical and moral health, for nothing does more to brace the system than this beneficent contact with nature which proceeds directly from the hand of the Creator. The land is not a betrayer; it is not subject to the fickleness, the false appearances, the artificial and unhealthy attractions of the grasping city. Its stability, its wise and regular course, the enduring majesty of the rhythm of the seasons are so many reflections of the Divine attributes..."

- Pope Pius XII, 1947.

PAUL "CHEATING" STRIKES AGAIN: This comment is being written before Treasurer Paul Keating has brought down his Budget. Judging by the usual "leaked" comments, once again the "world's greatest Treasurer" will be patting himself on the back for having achieved another surplus. While budgets are merely a presentation of estimated receipts and expenditure for the coming twelve months - estimates often contradicted by reality - they do not present a true picture of the economic state of the nation. Any company presenting what governments present, would find itself severely dealt with by the proper authorities. They (companies) are required by law to present a balance sheet which reveals, among other information, what capital appreciation has taken place over the previous twelve months. The first major requirement for a basic change in a government's financial policy would be the preparation of a National Balance Sheet. That Balance Sheet would reveal that so far from being bankrupt, as is sometimes claimed, year by year Australia increases its capital assets. The real credit of the nation, its productive capacity, grows year by year. Australia is one of the wealthiest nations in the world. The escalation of debt, both private

and public, merely demonstrates that people are forced to mortgage their inheritance in order to get access to some of it. Keating's surplus budget is a deflationary budget; it is an attempt to rob the individual of that which is rightfully his. Just how much longer Mr. Keating can cheat the Australian people, with a forced lowering of standards for a large section of the community, remains to be seen. Keating requires the support of his good friend Mr. Kelty of the Trade Union movement, who continues to urge those he is supposed to represent, that they must continue to practise "restraint" for the good of the nation.

Having robbed the Australian people of tens of billions of dollars, the Hawke-Keating Government is in the position where it can offer the taxpayer a little of his own money back and anticipate that it will earn the gratitude of the taxpayer by his electoral support at the next elections. The situation reminds us of the story of the hunter lost in the Canadian wilderness along with his dog. His food all gone he cut off the tail of his dog and made some temporarily sustaining soup. He then tossed the bones to the whimpering dog, which licked his master's hand in gratitude.

But, as revealed by the much-discussed survey of Andrew Peacock in last week's Sydney Bulletin, the Liberals led by Peacock are not seen as a genuine political alternative by the electors. Andrew Peacock has been colourfully described as "a hollow man". Whether discussing taxation, interest rates or any other vital issue, the Liberals reveal that they are mesmerised by the black magic of financial orthodoxy. Hawke and Keating accept the same black magic, but use it ruthlessly in pursuit of a long-term strategy. The Liberals are devoid of any type of strategy, which means that they do not even know where they are trying to go.

The majority of people do not learn from explanations, but when they do learn, it is from the harsh reality of events. C.H. Douglas said that a nation could only save itself as a result of a process of demesmerisation. But he also said that the shock might be too much for many people. Events are now sweeping Australians towards a situation which will test whether there is enough health left in the nation to withstand the shock of suddenly seeing reality. Mr. Paul "Cheating" is making his contribution.

A REVEALING "AGE" EDITORIAL: Running true to form, The Age, Melbourne, responded warmly to the claims made at last week's meeting of Commonwealth Foreign Ministers in Canberra, that sanctions, particularly financial sanctions, were seriously hurting South Africa, and should be intensified if the evil apartheid was to be vanquished. But numbered

among the Foreign Ministers were those representing some of the most brutal and oppressive nations in the world. Marxist Mugabe of Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) makes much of condemning South Africa while depending on South Africa for the economic survival of his country. We have yet to see Prime Minister Hawke go into one of his weeping acts because of what is happening in Tanzania or other parts of darkest Africa. Not one word has he uttered about the caste system of India and the dreadful plight of the millions of "untouchables". Then there is the little problem of the continuing bloodshed in Sri Lanka - the Tamils seeking greater autonomy. The humbugs of Australia may claim that these are "internal" matters in which Australia has no right to interfere. But South Africa is different!

The Age in its editorial of August 11th gloats that a report by a Canadian "expert", presented to the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers last week, dismissed the argument that sanctions were seriously hurting the very people they were allegedly designed to assist, the Blacks. The Blacks are, we are told, now developing a sense of greater "self-reliance". The truth is that the overwhelming majority of Blacks in South Africa have always rejected international sanctions. Bishop Tutu may be the darling of the international media, but is fast losing what little support he had in South Africa.

The Age, full of that self-righteousness which characterises all dogooders, is optimistic that the "flight of capital", and the loss of confidence by "foreign bankers and corporations" can play a major role in forcing sweeping political changes in South Africa. We seem to remember this type of argument when the international revolutionaries were waging war against Rhodesia. The economy of that country was actually strengthened when foreign investments were halted. The last word has yet to be said about South Africa, which might well substantially increase the size of the Conservative Party at the coming South African elections. Complete financial sanctions against South Africa could produce a backlash similar to what happened in Rhodesia. But there would be one major difference: South Africa could operate a self-contained economy.

MONOPOLISING VICTORIA'S WATER SUPPLIES: Control of water is control of life. Up until now it has been a common law right that an individual has the right to control and make free use of the water on his own property. But that right is being threatened by the Victorian Fabian Government of John Cain, with its incurable itch to centralise control over the individual. Remember its attempts to eliminate the majority of Victorian Municipal bodies?

Under the guise of a Water Bill, now before the Victorian Parliament,

allegedly designed to consolidate a number of Water Acts and to provide additional safeguards for the quality and conservation of water resources, it is proposed to erode traditional property rights on a scale never previously envisaged in Australia.

The Cain Government has made two previous attempts to destroy property and water rights, both fortunately blocked by the Opposition parties, which have a majority in the Upper House. The new Bill bluntly states that "The Crown has the right to the use, flow and control of all water". Such a claim could extend even to water collected from roofs into tanks. Those who may feel that this is an absurd comment should note that the new Bill gives the Minister (which means the permanent bureaucracy) absolute power over all land over which water flows, with private dams, built by property owners at their own expense, being subject to metering with the owner forced to pay for water used.

One Clause in the Bill states, "The Minister may declare any land over which water collects or flows to be a waterway whether or not the collection or flow is continuous".

The clear intention to pave the way for a wholesale invasion of private property rights is seen in clause 187 of the Bill, which states that the Minister (bureaucracy) has the power to declare any land within 40 metres of a waterway to be part of that waterway. It will be argued that initially these far-reaching provisions of the Act will only apply to the catchment areas of every water Authority in the State, but the Bill indicates the intention of giving the Minister (bureaucracy) the most sweeping powers to declare other additional areas. Already there have been suggestions that property owners collecting water on their own properties should pay a financial levy to the State for the use of the water.

League speakers used to make the joke that rather than let people have access to God's gifts ("something for nothing") the planners would eventually instal state rain gauges on every property, read them regularly, and charge for the amount of rain which had fallen! The Cain Government's latest Fabian legislation moves in this direction. Eventually, of course, there could be a charge for sunshine and fresh air. George Orwell's Big Brother is alive and well.

Victorians would be well advised to protest loudly about Cain's water Legislation, and make it clear to the Opposition they expect them to oppose the legislation in the Upper House. This legislation concerns every Victorian, not only those living in the rural areas.