



ON TARGET

PER

- NEWS HIGHLIGHTS
- BACKGROUND INFORMATION
- COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance —

Registered By Australia Post — Publication No. VBH 0999

Vol.26, No.8

March 9th, 1990

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: "...the democratic idea has real validity if it is separated from the idea of a collectivity. It is a legitimate corollary of the highest conception of the human individual that to the greatest extent possible, the will of all individuals shall prevail over their own affairs. Over his own affairs, the sanctions of society must be restored to the individual affected."

C.H. Douglas in The Brief For The Prosecution (Emphasis in original.)

WHY BOTHER VOTING? Assuming that the public opinion polls are reasonably reliable, a very big percentage of the Australian electors is "turned off" by the current elections. The Hawke-Keating Government has so bruised the Australian electors that any type of a reasonable Opposition would sweep to victory with a massive electoral swing against the Government. But there is no genuine Opposition, with alternative policies to those of the Government. Andrew Peacock is perceived to be a man without any real substance; Liberal strategists are so concerned about this perception that efforts are being made to project John Howard a little more. Howard was defeated because it was felt that Peacock had more charisma! Clearly charisma is of little substance.

While the media are attempting to create some interest in the election campaign, seizing upon quite irrelevant issues, articles have been appearing reflecting how a growing number of electors feel. It is difficult to point to any substantial policy differences. Professor Geoffrey Blainey has attempted to highlight the foreign debt problem, claiming that it is a disease that "could become an epidemic", a view countered by Reserve Bank's Bernie Fraser, who argues that some foreign debt is good for the economy. The Fraser view is, of course, welcomed by Prime Minister Hawke and Treasurer Paul Keating. The best that the Opposition can suggest is that Australians increase productivity and become more competitive in the battle for exports.

As on so many issues, the Opposition appears to be unable to present a clear-cut policy on the subject of high interest rates. Originally

Andrew Peacock was talking of "massive" cuts in interest rates, only to be contradicted by Mr. John Stone, former top Treasury adviser, and Mr. John Howard, who have adopted a more cautious stance which in essence means that they are unable to give any firm assurances that there will be any substantial reductions in interest rates under a Peacock government. Mr. Peacock has now retreated from his original glowing prediction. The truth is that the Opposition is wedded to the same financial policies being pursued by the Government. Perceiving that the Opposition only offers to administer more competently the same policies being imposed by the Hawke-Keating Government, it is not surprising that many electors are indicating that they will vote for the devil they know rather than trust the devil they either don't know, or don't trust.

Several Federal elections ago someone drew attention to a manifestation of brilliant wit, highlighted by the fact that it appeared amidst the graffiti filth which covers the walls of public toilets. The graffiti artist scrawled, "Don't vote for any of the b.....ds; it only encourages them". We were reminded of this as we read an article by Dr. Verity Burgmann in The Herald, Melbourne, of February 19th. The article was headed, VOTING JUST HELPS ENCOURAGE THEM. Dr. Burgmann reminds his readers that under the system of compulsory voting, first imposed in 1924, the Australian people are denied the right not to vote. Dr. Burgmann points out that in spite of the basic similarities of Government and Opposition policies, electors are denied the right to let the politicians know their lack of enthusiasm for any of them.

If voting were voluntary, we have little doubt that a big percentage of the Australian voters would not bother to visit the polling booths. They would thus make their attitude clear. Supporters of the Australian Democrats will quickly respond that their party is offering an alternative. We have no doubt that the Democrats will poll heavily, their votes increased by many disillusioned Labor voters who cannot bring themselves to vote for either of the Opposition parties. But a close study of the Democrats' platform reveals that it offers nothing basically different from those of the Government or the Opposition. The only value of the Democrats is that they help to fragment power in the Senate, while they do support in part the Swiss concept of the Electors' Veto.

We have no hesitation in recommending that where genuine Independent candidates, pledged to represent the requirements of their electors, and supporting the Swiss concept, are offering, they should be given every support. In the current political climate with the party disease still deeply rooted, we would regard the election of even one independent candidate in the House of Representatives, as an inspiring miracle. But we feel confident that there is the potential for a massive protest vote which could shake all the political parties. Contrary to the carefully fostered view of the party addicts, a vote for an Independent of integrity is not a wasted vote. On the contrary, a vote for any of the political parties, all with basically the same policies, is the real wasted vote. This point should be publicised as widely as possible.

Electors should only bother to register a definite vote if they have a candidate for whom they feel confident will work to represent his or her electors, and to help restore Australia to a genuine democracy in which every individual's rights are secured. Otherwise, vote informal.

JOHN LANE REPORTS FROM THE WEST:

"ANTI-PARENT CHARTER WORRY": This was the heading to an article which appeared in the Perth Sunday Times on January 28th this year. The article began, "The United Nations Organisation is being used to impose back door changes on the way WA parents raise their families, says a Perth mother". The article referred to Mrs. Judith Byrne, president of Perth-based Parent-Child Forum, an organisation formed to monitor and debate government policies affecting minors. Since then the PCF has run a number of successful meetings to expose the threat of 'The Convention on the Rights of the Child', a UN convention apparently intended to completely eliminate parental authority. The most recent was a meeting of over five hundred concerned parents and others who gathered to hear Dr. David Mitchell speak in Perth on February 14th. Dr. Mitchell's address, typically succinct and lucid, left many people stunned as they heard for the first time how such UN conventions could affect them so profoundly. The PCF campaign seems only to be just beginning. Watch this space.

WORLD HERITAGE LISTING: The Australian Conservation Foundation has revealed last year that Shark Bay is its top priority for Listing in 1990. Senator Richardson is using the financial carrot to encourage the WA Government to push the process through by suggesting that WA will have greater access to funding for "research and planning for the North-West sanctuary". Surely the good Senator and the saintly folk at the ACF haven't heard about the considerable mineral resources in the area, including what are described as 'massive' Gypsum deposits?

BRIEF COMMENTS: During the recent tram strike which paralysed Melbourne for weeks, there was constant reference to the "public transport system". Premier John Cain and Treasurer Jolly have been reluctant to admit that one-third of the State transport system is foreign owned. Some information has started to become known, but Cain and Jolly decline to provide details. Transport Minister Jim Kennan was recently asked on radio 3AW, "Is it true that the Victorian Government has sold off the Met system to an overseas buyer and is leasing it back?" Mr. Kennan responded, "Well, we own it." Premier Cain has been embarrassed by questions on the subject. Victorian taxpayers should start to ask some searching questions.

* * * * *

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher continues to adopt a cautious attitude

towards developments in Europe. President Bush has sided with the West Germans by calling for swifter integration of the EEC. It is known that this statement has irritated Mrs. Thatcher, who is hope-fully beginning to see what The Big Idea is all about. One objective is to force a complete surrender of British sovereignty.

* * * * *

The Sunday Herald, Melbourne, of March 4th, claims to be in possession of documents showing that the Federal Government has already made a decision on the Multi Function Polis, and that plans have already been received from a public relations firm on how to sell the concept to the Australian people. Federal Science Minister Barry Jones is making every effort to "play down" the issue, attempting to create the impression that the Japanese will only exercise a minority say in the project. As documented in the March issue of The Intelligence Survey, the Japanese will be the major factor in the proposed futuristic city. Slowly but surely the truth is being brought out. The silence of the Federal Opposition on the most horrendous threat to Australia's future is deafening.

* * * * *

Mr. Alex Campbell, Senior Vice-President of the WA Farmers Federation, has criticised the Australian Conservation Foundation over misleading pronouncements. The ACF claimed that Albany Shire has severe salinity problems, whereas the truth is that only 299 hectares were salt affected, representing 0.7% of the agricultural land in the Shire.

* * * * *

BASIC FUND TARGET IN SIGHT: Further magnificent and inspirational support has moved the League's Annual Basic Fund forward by another \$3,500, bringing the total to \$63,809.

What we want now is a massive final push that will take the Fund well past the target of \$65,000. As the future of Australia is being fought out, let us all make the maximum effort to ensure the financial stability of the League.

All election comment authorised by
Eric D. Butler, 145 Russell Street, Melbourne.

"ON TARGET" is published and printed by the Australian League of Rights, 145 Russell Street, Melbourne. Subscription \$25 p.a.