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A WEEKLY COMMENTARY



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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance —

Registered By Australia Post — Publication No. VBH 0999

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OF VICTORIA

Vol.26, No.14

April 20th, 1990

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: "Faith is power in a very real sense. Though the term is used loosely, Faith is not mere belief or trust, although these can be evidence of Faith. Faith is the 'knowledge' of Reality acquired by an inner spiritual experience. It is this knowledge of Reality that brings the human mind into communion with the Universal Mind and the One Source of ALL POWER. Thus Faith is a dynamic - a power with limitless potentialities depending upon its quality and conscious realisation."

- L.B. Byrne in Faith, Power and Action.

BETRAYING THE ANZAC SPIRIT by Eric D. Butler:

The Sunday Age of April 15th carries an article by the Australian writer Phillip Knightley entitled "THE ANZAC MYTH", which concludes as follows: "The historic truth will always be there, one to be proud of, but it no longer needs the halo and falsification of myth. This should be the last official pilgrimage to Gallipoli and the last Anzac Day; the time has come to let them really rest in peace."

Knightley's reference to "The Anzac Myth", coming at a time when the A.B.C. sunk to a new level of vulgarity by using the Easter Season to present Dr. Barbara Thiering's interpretation of the traditional Christian story as allegedly revealed by the Dead Sea Scrolls, raises the generally misunderstood nature of myths and their vital role in the human drama. What needs to be grasped is the nature of myths and the use to which they are put. There is, for example, the "Chosen Race" myth, which treats people as a collectivity to be used by "leaders" against the best interests of the individual.

Any realistic discussion of the subject of myths must start with a definition of the term. An examination of the Greek derivation mythos shows that the word simply means a story, neither an untrue nor a "true" story, but just a story. Christ's use of stories in the form

of parables was a method of conveying an understanding of truths at that time. A generation brought up on Aesop's stories will testify to the great benefit they derived from the wisdom and values conveyed by these stories.

Now it is certainly true that from a strictly military point of view, Gallipoli was a disaster of the greatest magnitude. The bungling was appalling. There was a tragic loss of life, not only of Australians and New Zealanders, but also of British and other Empire troops. Gallipoli was one of Winston Churchill's many military blunders. But what did the epic of Gallipoli, the manifestation of a type of reckless courage, of incredible resourcefulness, leave behind? The legacy of Gallipoli was that of the spirit, affecting a nation, helping to illuminate the eternal values.

What was apparently Christ's ignominious death upon the Cross also appeared to be a complete defeat. But two thousand years of Christianity demonstrated that Christ's teachings so partook of Truth, of Reality, of God, that death was followed by life. Even some of the world's prominent agnostics have said that the world would have been a poorer place without what they believed to be a myth.

The story of Gallipoli has, of course, been embellished over the years. But the embellishments are based upon historical fact. In 1914 tens of thousands of young Australians of predominantly Anglo-Saxon Celtic background flocked to heed the call of an Empire, which, with all its faults, appeared to be the harbinger of a better world. Many of these volunteers were British immigrants, like the legendary Simpson Kilpatrick, who with his donkey led a charmed life for 23 days bringing scores of wounded men down the deadly Shrapnell Gully. "Greater love hath no man than this that he would lay down his own life for his friend." The legend of Simpson and his donkey has been an inspiration to those who have heard it. Yes, the legend has taken on a mythology of its own, but to debunk it is a wounding of the spirit.

A nation which forgets its past has no future. Anzac Day is a time to remember, to reflect on the past, with all its mistakes as well as its great achievements. It is an appropriate time to recall that Australians who served in the First World War were all volunteers, and that in the middle of that conflict Australia's politicians permitted the Australian people to have a say about whether or not they would accept conscription to provide more manpower for the murderous trench warfare in Western Europe. Not surprisingly there were bitter divisions at a time when Australian casualties were running high and the end of the conflict did not appear to be in sight. But the politicians did agree that the Australian people should have a say in this matter. Today's

politicians refuse to let the Australian people have a say on the life or death issue of immigration. One of the less-known stories of Gallipoli is the alleged comment by the Turkish officer who, during a short armistice to allow both sides to bury their dead, said, "Curse all politicians who make wars in which good men die."

The only way to assess any myths is by looking carefully at the purpose they serve. Any myth which requires constant organisation to sustain it, obviously is not true. If myths are to be disturbed, what about starting with the money myth, one of the most deadly of all myths? I do not anticipate the A.B.C. spending hundreds of millions of dollars providing a programme on this type of myth!

As a national symbol, Anzac Day offers an inspiring message concerning free men offering their lives in defence of an ideal far superior to that offered by those who, unless checked, will continue to attempt to drive Mankind towards some type of a World State. This is a time to say, again, "Lest we forget", and to remember that "The price of liberty is eternal vigilance".

BRIEF COMMENTS: A report from Jerusalem states that it is estimated that 100,000 Soviet Jews will migrate to Israel this year. This mass exodus from the Soviet, financed in the main by the international Zionist movement, has been hailed by former terrorist Israeli Prime Minister Shamir, as "the fulfilment of the biblical prophecy..." In his carefully documented work, The Thirteenth Tribe, the famous Jewish writer, the late Arthur Koestler, documents from the great majority of people described as Jews, particularly those from Russia, cannot even trace their origins back to Biblical times. Koestler's book is now difficult to obtain. In his classic work, The Zionist Connection, the American Jewish expert on the Middle East, Dr. Alfred Lilienthal, predicted that the Zionist leaders regarded Russian Jewry as a type of reserve force to be used when necessary to strengthen Israel. Such a policy can only lead to further friction in the Middle East, with Palestinian fears further increased by the act of Jewish settlers taking over Christian shrines in Jerusalem during Easter.

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Former Queensland Senator John Stone is a man who exudes confidence in himself and his abilities, and no doubt felt that his election to the House of Representatives was so certain in what was once a safe National Party electorate, that he was quite safe to promise that if not elected he would not seek to return to the Senate. John Stone's subsequent verbal gymnastics seeking to explain why he should not keep his original promise, do him no credit. It is appropriate to recall that John Stone was the man who seconded and endorsed the outrageous

smear of the League of Rights by fellow Nationalist Senator Ron Boswell on April 27th, 1988. One of Senator Boswell's more absurd claims was that the League of Rights was denigrating the democratic system. It would be instructive to hear what the good Senator thinks of John Stone's contribution towards improving the image of party politicians.

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Generally unreported was the massive electoral swing against Prime Minister Hawke in his own electorate of Wills. Although Mr. Hawke continues as Prime Minister, he has not as yet been formally declared the winner in Wills, which will be the last to be declared in Victoria. At last count before Easter, Mr. Hawke needed five sets of preferences to pass the 50 percent plus one required for victory, without having to draw upon the preferences of the Australian Democrats. The swing against Hawke was approximately 11 percent.

NOW FOR THE "NICE CHAPS" OF THE OPPOSITION: In terms of conventional politics, new Federal Liberal leader Dr. Hewson has probably made the best of the talent available to him for his Shadow Ministry. Dr. Hewson presents a new face with a fresh style and is claimed to be a "nice chap". We wait with interest, but little confidence, to see what Dr. Hewson and his fellow "nice guys" like Mr. Ian McLachland offer as constructive proposals for moving Australia off the economic disaster course on which it is moving at an accelerating rate.

But to his credit Dr. Hewson has already raised the basic immigration issue with an appeal for a "rational" and "open" debate on the economic implications of Australia's present immigration policy. Mr. John Howard, new Shadow Minister for Industrial Relations, also took up the same theme last weekend, but being careful to steer clear of his remarks about Asian immigration when he was leader of the Liberal Party.

However, it was left to the new leader of the National Party, Mr. Tim Fischer, to go further with a statement that social as well as economic aspects of immigration should be debated. In a refreshingly blunt statement, as reported in The Age of April 15th, Mr. Fischer said, "Australia has the absolute right to decide who comes here, and we would be absolutely crazy if we did not have an eye to the need to maintain cohesion and harmony within Australia and to take into account all other factors."

Generally described as a "surprise" choice of leader for the National Party, hopefully Mr. Fischer will make some more surprise statements similar to that on immigration. We strongly support "open debate", but much more important would be a direct say for the Australian people.