



ON TARGET

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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance —

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: "It is not too much to say that the practical aspect of all modern social problems is bound up with the over-riding problem of an effective democracy. If we cannot face the issue squarely, we cannot hope for anything but the succession and multiplication of crises, which now are almost our normal existence..... whatever the risks of democracy may be, they are preferable, and, indeed, insignificant, as compared with those to which we are submitted under the control of our taskmasters. A democratic Parliament is therefore from its inherent nature an assembly of representatives, not of delegates. It is concerned with impressing the will of the people upon the institutions of industry, agriculture, and commerce, and that will can only be concerned with results. Methods are for experts, and popular election is an unsound method by which to appoint an expert."

- C.H. Douglas in The Alberta Experiment.

IMPORTANT CORRECTION: In last week's front page article by Eric D. Butler, the meaning was distorted at one point with the statement that "Gorbachev insists that there is going to be decentralisation of power along the lines advocated by his main political opponent, Boris Yeltsin". This should have read that "Gorbachev insists that there is going to be NO centralisation of power....."

THE PALESTINIAN TIME BOMB STILL TICKING by Eric D. Butler:

There are a number of short-term winners of the Gulf War: President George Bush, presiding over the worst American economic situation since the Great Depression of the 'thirties, and heading for political annihilation before the Gulf War, may be carried to victory at the 1992 Presidential Elections on the euphoria generated by the Gulf War ending. The economic crisis in the USA is so deep that, in the absence of a major turnaround, it is by no means completely certain that Bush will win in 1992. But his chances are much better now than they were before the Gulf War.

Zionist Israel has achieved one of its stated objectives, the complete destruction of Iraq as a major military force in the Middle East, while securing favourable publicity as a result of its policy of "restraint" in the Gulf conflict, and a flood of international financial and military aid.

Another winner, generally overlooked, is President Assad of Syria who, while probably a more intelligent man than his arch-rival Saddam Hussein, has used the same methods as the Iraqi dictator to build a brutal, totalitarian State. Before the Gulf War Assad was regarded as the worst of the despotic leaders of the Middle East, providing sanctuary for notorious international terrorist groups.

But such is the power of psycho-politics, much of it exercised through control of the mass media, that Assad was sanitised in order to bring him into the war against Saddam Hussein, although there appears to be no evidence that Syria made any significant military contribution to Iraq's defeat.

President Bush has stressed his great concern about the crimes committed by the Iraqis against the Kuwaitians. Judged by Western standards, these crimes have been horrendous. But President Bush is very selective about whose human rights concern him, as witnessed by the complete silence about what his new-found allies, the Syrians, have been doing to the Lebanese Christians, who had developed the only type of democratic government operating in the Arab world. Assad's ruthlessness has matched that of Saddam Hussein. And in his takeover in Lebanon, Assad has had the blessing of the Bush administration, with congratulations for his puppet Hrawi. Prominent Lebanese have been massacred. Having moved into Lebanon with the backing of the Bush administration, Assad is in the position to expand his own empire and will certainly attempt to fill any vacuum created by the disintegration of Iraq.

The Gulf War has destroyed one Arab tyrant while elevating another. Anyone who believes that the Bush administration can create peace and stability in the Middle East is divorced from reality, as the future will show.

The main losers of the Gulf War are the desperate and disorganised Palestinians, whose plight has been temporarily forgotten during the Gulf War. The fact that the Palestinians and some of their leaders deluded themselves about the capacity of Saddam Hussein to offer them assistance, does not alter the truth that ever since the Palestinian refugee disaster was created by the Zionist terror of 1948, followed by the 1967 war and then continued by the Israelis ever since, has been like a time bomb in the volatile Arab world. It is an issue

which affects the whole of the Moslem world. The longer Zionist Israel is permitted to ignore the type of UN resolution used to justify force to remove Saddam Hussein from Kuwait, the greater will be the detestation of the West throughout, not only the Arab, but the whole Islamic world. If Western troops are required to stay in the Middle East for any length of time, it is preferable that they be British and French. Both Britain and France had had a longer and generally more understanding relationship with the Moslem world than have the Americans.

BRIEF COMMENTS: If there are to be "war crime" trials following the Gulf War, it is to be hoped that charges will also be laid against those who were accessories before the crime, namely all the Western firms and financiers who provided much of Iraq's sophisticated military equipment. Western politicians who gave aid and comfort to Saddam Hussein during his long assault on Iran might also be listed. As a major supplier of arms and thousands of military advisers, will the Soviet Union, particularly Gorbachev, be indicted? We doubt it.

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The guns had not stopped firing in the Gulf War when another type of war started to emerge, a trade war. In order to hold Egypt in place in the alliance against Saddam Hussein, the USA wrote off an enormous amount of Egyptian Debt owing to the USA and started to provide heavily subsidised grain supplies. It now emerges that the USA is going to expand its programme of subsidised wheat exports into the post Gulf War Middle East, with Iraq a major target. An Australian delegation is being rushed to the USA to stress Australia's fears. Before the Gulf War, Iraq was Australia's fourth biggest wheat market.

The Australian delegation, headed by Dr. Blewett, will convey Australia's "grave concern about the damage being done to our farmers by the Export Enhancement Programme".

The Australian delegation will naturally stress Australia's loyalty to the USA-led coalition during the Gulf War. But it might as well save its breath. American Congress have to placate their own grain growers, who have votes. Trade wars poison all international relations and are the result of finance-economic policies which sustain the export-or-perish madness.

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Remember all the propaganda before the Gulf War concerning the grave threat to the West if Saddam Hussein had control of Kuwait's oil supplies? Well, for nearly seven months, the sanctions programme ensured that no oil came out of either Iraq and Kuwait. Iraq has been one of the biggest oil producers in the Middle East. But there

was no suggestion of oil supplies running short. And after an initial increase in oil prices, they then started to fall.

An ominous report from Israel, quoting "a senior Israeli official" says that the Israeli Government was prepared to use "draconian" measures to prevent a resurgence of Palestinian protests and riots. The two-year popular uprising - intifada - ended when the nearly two million Palestinians living in Israeli-occupied territories were placed under an almost constant curfew at the start of the Gulf War. A number of Palestinians have been shot over the past two years. Israel's threatened "draconian" measures can only further inflame the Arab world.

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Using his far-reaching powers, Soviet President Gorbachev has appointed a hard line economist Vladimir Orlov, to his new cabinet and maintained orthodox Communist defence and KGB chiefs. President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Boris Yeltsin, has criticised Gorbachev's new Cabinet, charging that it is a further step towards dictatorship. Yeltsin is calling for Gorbachev's resignation. It is not surprising that Yeltsin is feared by the centralisers; he is not only calling for the Russian Federation to have greater freedom to administer its foreign trade but now threatens to print his own currency as a last resort.

Centralisation versus decentralisation is emerging as the central feature of the struggle taking place in the Soviet Union.

ACT FLUORIDATION REPORT: In a shock decision in 1990, the ACT Government passed a bill to stop fluoridating the ACT water supply. Such was the uproar (mainly from the Federal politicians) that the ACT hastily turned the fluoride back on again, while an Inquiry into fluoridation was held. The Report from the Inquiry was presented last month, and is distinguished by the fact that the Dissenting Report is larger than the Majority Report. The Majority Report recommends fluoridating the water supply; the dissenters list massive evidence against fluoridation. 141 submissions against fluoridation were received, and only 10 in support. Mr. Dennis Stevenson, a dissenter on the Committee, said that evidence before them showed that fluoridation is ineffective, causes adverse health effects, disregards individual rights, is an environmental pollutant, and that dental cavities are not caused by a fluoride deficiency.

A BLAST FOR THE LEAGUE: In the Majority Report, the League of Rights is given a strong blast as being the main group to campaign against the compulsory mass medication of the water supply. While the League is roundly condemned, no fair assessment is offered for the true reason that the League has opposed fluoridation. The reason? Because it is not primarily a medical argument - it is an argument of freedom of choice.