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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance —

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: "The Monarchy has provided strength and stability to our system of government, and a sense of unity to our nation. What is more, the periodic opinion polls tell us that a majority of Australians still want to retain the monarchy. To my mind, the sad part of all this is that the majority of Australians look at the Monarchy, and at the Sovereign in particular, through the eyes of the women's magazines and the coverage given from time to time by the tabloid newspapers to the activities of members of the Royal Family."

- Sir David Smith, former Secretary to the Governor-General

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT'S "FREE KICK" TO PAUL KEATING by Eric D. Butler:

Prime Minister Paul Keating must be wishing that the Kirner Labor Government could have been pushed to the polls earlier; new Victorian Premier Jeff Kennett has lost no time in confirming the view of those who have never had any confidence in his brand of erratic politics. Kennett and his colleagues have demonstrated in a breathtaking fashion that they are firm devotees of financial orthodoxy and completely insensitive in the way in which they propose to impose their programme. Contrary to the claim by Premier Kennett that he was given an overwhelming mandate to do what he is doing, there was no reference to the most controversial aspects of what is a blatantly deflationary budget which will reduce the effective purchasing power of the average Victorian family by at least \$1,000 a year. Victorian farmers, already struggling with the ever-present problem of rising financial costs, were not told that they would be hit with a new \$100 land tax on rateable properties, that registration fees for their vehicles would be doubled, and that their electricity charges would be increased by 10 percent. John Watson, President of the United Dairy Farmers Australia, claims that dairy farmers could pay an average increase of \$300 for electricity. Jeff Kennett is on record as having said before the elections that the rural sector could help Victoria out of its economic problems. Apart from a few abject apologies, Premier Kennett's National Party colleagues are going along with an attack on a rural community already bleeding badly.

No one disputes the financial irresponsibility of the Cain and Kirner Labor Governments in running up enormous deficits, although all types

of governments everywhere operate on deficit budgets. But this type of debt-financing inevitably results in ever-increasing taxes merely to service the debt. The Kennett Government's central theme is that because of the excessive borrowing of the Labor Governments, Victoria's credit rating had been reduced by international investment groups such as Moody. They are therefore embarking on a savage programme of increased taxes in an attempt to reduce the deficit. No one appears to be asking where this much-publicised deficit has come from and whether those who in recent years have been so liberal in fostering debt around the world, might not be asked to accept some responsibility. Is there no way that the terms of this debt cannot be re-negotiated? As every authority admits most debt originates with banking institutions which have the power to create credit money. But rather than consider any approach to the debt merchants to consider any type of compromise, the Kennett Government makes it clear that its main concern is to please the debt merchants, even if this means sacrificing the Victorian people, with the heaviest burdens falling on those least able to meet the increased taxes and charges. A top professional man earning \$100,000 a year may be able without too much discomfort to pay the \$100 land tax, and the doubled car registration along with the 10 percent increase in transport and power bills. But pensioners and the unemployed will be hard hit. Clearly there is no feeling of compassion among Premier Kennett and his colleagues, as witnessed by the attempted defence of substantial salary increases which Mr. Kennett is awarding to himself and some of his colleagues.

There is a case for moderating some of the awards which have been granted to workers in recent years. Even the former Federal Labor Minister Clyde Cameron, who was responsible for the 17½ percent annual holiday loading, has admitted that in retrospect this was a major mistake. But the reality is that this loading has been accepted as part of wage awards and cannot be looked at in isolation. But apart from this, during the pre-election campaign, Jeff Kennett promised that there would be no interference with existing awards. He can argue that proposed changes in work practices were put forward. But what he is proposing is not only completely unnecessary to start to re-generate Victoria, but has made a major confrontation with the Unions certain. By rejecting a programme of gradualness, Jeff Kennett has driven all the moderate Trade Unionists into the arms of John Halfpenny.

A major tragedy is now looming with Trade Unionists being led into a trap from which they will not be able to extricate themselves without losses to themselves and to the public generally. And while these developments are unfolding, Paul Keating is gleefully warning all Australians that a vote for Dr. John Hewson is a vote for the type of programme being imposed by the Liberal-National Government in Victoria. Not surprisingly, Mr. John Howard, Dr. Hewson's spokesman on industrial affairs, is attempting to distance himself from his fellow Liberals in Victoria. It is certain that there are some turbulent days ahead with some startling developments. It would not surprise the writer to see a break in the ranks of both the Federal and Victorian Coalitions and a change of leadership as events unfold.

GUN OWNERSHIP AGAIN UNDER ATTACK by D. Thompson:

The tragic shooting of six people on the Central Coast of New South Wales this week has led to the predictable outcry for further controls on the ownership of firearms. There are a number of factors that are worth noting. The first is that the killer acted not upon impulse, but apparently according to a pre-determined programme. This means that if he did not already have a firearm, he could/would have acquired one. So even if guns had been banned from all homes, this killer could still have armed himself. It may be politically incorrect to say so, but the only thing that could have saved those who died, was some form of protection - like their own firearm. Unfortunately, the answer to this kind of crime is not less guns, but more guns.

The killings, which took place on Wednesday, October 28th, were followed last weekend by candlelight Reclaim the Night marches, organised by women's groups to demonstrate against violence against women. One of the loudest demands from feminist organisers was for a total ban on all firearms in houses. This, of course, would be an absolute godsend to every rapist, burgler or potential murderer in the country, all of whom can easily acquire a firearm of some type with which to commit crime. There is much in the American saying: "When all guns are outlawed, only outlaws will have guns."

SELF PROTECTION IS "NO EXCUSE": If Minister for Justice, Senator Tate, has his way, gun ownership in Australia will be a privilege, not a right. In some States, this is already the case. In N.S.W. and Queensland, the draconian new gun legislation changes the law in a way not previously anticipated. Now anyone owning a gun must almost be able to prove that he has a lawful use for it.

One of the advertisements published by the N.S.W. police is headlined: "Personal protection is no reason to have a gun." The ad begins: "If you own a gun which you keep to protect yourself, your family or your property, you must dispose of it legally . . . No exceptions, no excuses." The advertisement may well have added: 'If a burgler breaks in, show him the jewellery; if a rapist comes along, show him your daughter's/wife's room . . . it is illegal to resist. . .'

The truth is that, whatever the intention of the new legislation, it promotes crime, and leaves the victim disarmed and defenceless if he or she does the "right thing" and hands in their weapons.

TREAT CAUSES, NOT EFFECTS: The real reason for the banning of guns has little to do with domestic or social violence. As indicated by some of the women in the "Reclaim the Night" marches, most rapes seem

to take place at knifepoint, rather than gunpoint. Knives are not being banned. And the statistical increase in violent crime is far ahead of the statistical increase in the level of gun ownership, indicating that it is not more guns that are responsible for more crime.

The only way to bring the crime rate down, is to treat the causes of crime, not the method by which it takes place (guns, knives, etc.). A good beginning could be to sensibly limit the television children watch - particularly violence. The X and R-rated videos that pour out of Canberra should be banned. This is the filth that destabilises the individual, not guns. The answer to rising crime is to discover the motive for it, and treat the motive. We are bound to find that one of the strongest motives is poverty. The real reason for banning firearms is to disarm the population. A defenceless population can be manipulated to agree to all kinds of controls in a "crisis".

BRIEF COMMENTS: Further to our report last week that controversial British historian David Irving had been banned from Canada, where he was to address a series of meetings, we have received a report that Irving was arrested when he arrived in British Columbia late last week and ordered to leave the country. Our understanding is that Irving has returned to the United States. Zionist pressure against Irving can only result in greater publicity for him and his books. The Zionist totalitarians are, as usual, overplaying their hand.

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Mr. Rick Farley, who misleads the National Farmers' Federation, makes the foolish suggestion that Australians should try to teach the French a lesson because their farmers are rejecting General Trade and Tariff Agreement proposals. The reality is, of course, that French politicians are representing farmers who are determined to stay on their properties. We have not heard of Mr. Farley recommending any Trade Union action to prevent the flood of primary products coming into Australia under the type of policies the N.F.F. has supported. Mr. Farley also defended the present system of debt-finance and criticises those who have been protesting against this system.

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BASIC FUND: Over the week past, supporters have donated \$2,630 to the Fund, which now stands at \$11,863. Do not be embarrassed to send in even \$5 - dozens of supporters are doing so. Most of these supporters are pensioners; some suffering farmers. Yes, we appreciate large donations also: the Fund must be filled. Send to Box 1052J, G.P.O., Melbourne, Vic., 3001.