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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance —

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: "The West has been crippled by a corrosive and corrupt ideology-morality that causes our political-intellectual elites to declare themselves in sympathy with and in support of the very elements that boldly proclaim their goal to be the destruction of the West."

- Dr. Richard Clark, St. John's University, Long Island, New York

TURNING POLITICS UPSIDE DOWN by Eric D. Butler:

Contrary to all the speculation about early elections, it is becoming increasingly obvious that Paul Keating is not going to call a Federal Election until the latest possible moment. Not unless something unforeseen happens. Why should Paul Keating go before the electors until probably May of next year? From his point of view, the sooner the Labor Governments of South Australia and West Australia are replaced with Liberal Governments the better. Encouraged by what is happening in Victoria under a Liberal-National Coalition, the sooner West Australian and South Australian electors have a taste of the "medicine" being forced down the throats of Victorian electors, the more inclined they may be to continue supporting, however reluctantly, the Keating Government.

Last week saw further evidence of how conventional politics are being turned upside down. Premier Kennett and his Treasurer, Mr. Stockdale, went off to meet with Prime Minister Keating and Federal Treasurer Dawkins, amidst widespread media speculation that there would be a major "showdown" with Paul Keating showing little sympathy for a Premier who was implementing a programme that was completely anathema to the Labor movement. But Premier Kennett returned to Melbourne expressing goodwill towards Paul Keating who, according to Jeff Kennett, was most understanding about the serious financial plight in which his Government found itself. So understanding was Paul Keating that he agreed readily that the Kennett Government should be permitted to increase its indebtedness by over another \$1 billion! Mr. Kennett

has not explained how he can borrow himself out of debt! True, it is for "emergency" purposes only. However, it provides further striking evidence that the Kennett Government is not going to challenge financial orthodoxy. Rather than challenge financial orthodoxy, backed by centralised financial dictatorship from Canberra, they have sought the co-operation of Paul Keating, the arch-advocate of centralism, who is delighted to provide that co-operation, knowing full well where it will lead.

As it was clear at least 12 months ago that the Kirner Government was doomed whenever it went to the polls, it is logical to assume that the programme being imposed by the Kennett Government was fashioned long before the elections. It would be instructive to know something about those who prepared this programme, one which was not revealed before the elections and one which it appears very few Liberal-National Party candidates knew about. If they did, they are guilty of some of the most blatant political lying in Australian history. It now appears that Victorians are to be used as the guinea-pigs of an experiment in severe "economic rationalism", similar to that applied in New Zealand with disastrous results. Those who mouth cliches about the alleged successes of Thatcherism in the United Kingdom might consider the economic plight of that country today. Public opinion polls in New Zealand show that if an election were held today, the Bolger Government, also a supporter of "economic rationalism", would be defeated with the probable election of a mixed group of politicians known as The Alliance, headed by one of the best trained Marxists in the country, Jim Anderton. We live in incredible times with incredible developments.

Paul Keating knows that there are little prospects of any substantial improvements in the economy before the next Federal Elections. He feels that the bigger and longer the dose of Kennett medicine, the greater the prospects of being able to say to the Australian electors, "the Kennett Government is providing you with a classic example of what the whole nation will experience if you elect a government headed by Dr. John Hewson". And for good measure, Paul Keating, the inveterate gambler, has stunned most commentators with his announcement that if the Opposition was elected, his Party will not use the Senate to block the passing of G.S.T. legislation. Keating is determined to make the G.S.T. THE issue at the next elections knowing that there is growing disquiet about it. And with the assistance of the Victorian Kennett Government, he could by next May be in the position to retain control of government in defiance of what until recently appeared to be impossible political odds.

KEATING'S GREAT G.S.T. GAMBLE by D. Thompson:

"This is the principle. The Senate has no right to obstruct the principal policies of the Government in the Lower House; that is

our view." - Prime Minister Keating. (The Australian, 6/11/1992.)

Mr. Keating's high-risk strategy of refusing to oppose Dr. Hewson's G.S.T. in the Senate if the Coalition wins the election is obviously designed to further polarise the electorate. By adopting this strategy, which clearly stunned his own backbench, Keating also emphasises his deep resentment of the Senate, which he called "unrepresentative swill" in his usual abusive manner. His view that the Senate has no right to frustrate a government's "mandate" is quite clearly historically and constitutionally wrong. In the last election, over 12% of voters chose the Democrats, hoping to curb the power of whichever government was elected - "mandate" or not.

The Australian Senate is unique throughout the world as a House of Review. It was deliberately designed to prevent the exercise of unfettered power by the executive. At times it has exercised this role to great effect, the most dramatic case being when the Senate refused to pass Whitlam's 1975 budget bills, precipitating the dismissal of the Whitlam administration. It was the League that flooded the country with a specially-produced brochure defending the role of the Senate.

It is simply because the Senate is an effective check upon the abuse of power that Keating hates it. The truth is that Paul Keating would like to abolish the Senate completely, which he cannot do. This would require massive constitutional changes, which can only take place by referendum.

Mr. Keating's principles are quite flexible, as he refuses to apply his principle that the Senate shouldn't oppose a government's key legislation to the Opposition's industrial relations policy - clearly a key policy. The A.L.P. is very sensitive about this policy, as it directly attacks the institutional base of the Labor Party - the highly centralised union system.

THE "UNREPRESENTATIVE" SENATE: Keating's charge that the Senate is "unrepresentative" is also incorrect. The House of Representatives represents the majority view, which is why each electorate has approximately the same number of voters irrespective of size. But the Senate was designed to represent the interests of minority States like Tasmania. Thus, Tasmanians elect 12 Senators, as do voters from N.S.W.

There is now a proposal that Tasmania elect a Senator at the next elections who will represent their State's interests in Canberra, as Senators should. Mr. George Shaw, an Independent Member of the Tasmanian Legislative Council, is highly critical of the corruption of the role of the Senate by the Parties. Shaw is one of those calling for a 'State Independent' candidate for the Senate. There is every chance that such a Senator could be elected in Tasmania.

With his attack on the Senate, Mr. Keating degrades his office of Prime

Minister as well as insulting the Australian people. He is now the first Prime Minister to have been censured by the Senate.

However, irrespective of the attack on the Senate, it is clear that the next election will be fought on economic matters. The G.S.T., regarded with deep suspicion by a desperate electorate, will be central. Risky as it is, Keating's polarisation strategy further lengthens the odds against Dr. Hewson. When it comes to the "crunch" early next year, voters may yet decide reluctantly to settle for the devil they know, which is what the Keating strategy amounts to.

CHANGING THE GUARD IN THE U.S.A.:

Bill Clinton's election to the Presidency of the U.S.A. means that the U.S. is 'under new management', but it does not necessarily mean that the Americans will receive the kind of 'change' for which they believe they voted when electing a Democrat. The truth is that Mr. Clinton enjoyed the same kind of patronage as George Bush when he was elected, from the "Eastern Establishment". Both Clinton and Bush were espousing similar basic policies. Both are regarded as internationalists, both propose a "free trade" ideology, and both receive the same kind of advice. The U.S.A. may be 'under new management', but there is great doubt that any different policies will come from President Clinton when he comes to the White House in the New Year.

In accepting defeat, George Bush made a vain attempt to shape the historical memory of his Presidency, when he said: "I remain absolutely convinced that we are a rising nation." This is the core of the challenge that Clinton faces. Can the U.S.A. be regenerated, or will it continue to decline as it clearly has? The evidence contradicts Mr. Bush in many respects. The State of California alone may be providing a foretaste of what the U.S.A. may be like by the turn of the century.

About 600,000 immigrants - legal and illegal - pour into California every year; mainly from Mexico, South America and Asia. The demands upon the taxpayers are enormous. California must build 22 classrooms every day for the next five years to meet educational demands. And the State of California is technically bankrupt, having to pay many public servants by voucher. Downtown Los Angeles has no banks, few businesses and few shops in some areas. In such areas companies will not invest, and insurance companies will not insure, such is the urban decay.

Clinton's America is under increasing stress in all the key social areas; the family, race, education, the budget, inner cities, health care, welfare, jobs, crime and immigration. According to one college professor, rage about race from both black and white is now closer to the surface than at any time in the history of modern U.S.A. Statistics show that four out of every five American families are now worse off than when Ronald Reagan was elected. If these are signs of a "rising nation", then Australia is in more trouble than we thought!