



# ON TARGET

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*The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance —*

Registered By Australia Post — Publication No. VBH 0999

Vol.28, No.32

August 28th, 1992

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**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:** "When sexual license and perversion are accepted by society, then things have gone too far to be remedied."  
Seneca, Letter 39 of "Epistolae Morales"...

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**NATIONAL FARMERS FEDERATION BETRAYS RURAL AUSTRALIA:** While financial conditions for Australian farmers have begun to improve with a general reduction in interest rates, rural Australia could be yet to face the worst of the rural crisis of the last five years. Enormous rural debt still exists and with approximately 70 percent of N.S.W. agricultural areas afflicted by drought, as well as large parts of Queensland, the agony in the bush appears to be intensifying, rather than abating.

Perhaps the greatest tragedy facing country people, is the fact that the one organisation responsible for defending farmers has resolutely failed to face its responsibilities. Instead of vigorously and intelligently campaigning to defend even the smallest primary producer, the National Farmers Federation has done exactly the opposite - prepared to sacrifice another 10 percent of farmers.

Some primary producers responded with disbelief when the President of the N.F.F., Mr. Graham Blight, declared that the N.F.F. would be making no effort to save 10 percent of farmers. Addressing the N.S.W. Farmers Association in March, Mr. Blight is reported as saying:

"We should not be putting resources into saving these people when most are beyond the point of saving. If they have to leave, they should leave at a time when they have enough equity left to start a new life, and I am personally involved in seeing they are able to leave the industry with some equity and a certain dignity."

**FARMERS CONFRONT BLIGHT:** Early in August, Mr. Blight ran a series of meetings in Western Australia in which he appealed for unity among farmers. The W.A. State Director of the League, Mr. Robert Nixon, prepared a list of searching questions on the N.F.F. record, which was distributed at all the W.A. meetings. (See On Target, August 14th.) Mr. Blight was confronted by disillusioned farmers, who charged that it was grossly irresponsible for a farm leader to tour

the country proposing to eliminate another 10 percent of his constituency. Blight was unrepentant, asking where was he expected to draw the line, given that the income of some farmers was now pathetic. The truth is that Mr. Blight's job is to defend even the smallest primary producers if they wish to stay in the industry. Their income is none of his affair!

There is no possibility of "unity" among farmers, unless there is agreement on basic rural policy. The N.F.F. has no long-term rural policy; there is no agreement about how many primary producers Australia needs, nor about financial policies required to achieve a stable rural population.

N.F.F. BECOMES A FABIAN HANDMAIDEN: In 1969, the League published a booklet by Mr. Eric Butler, They Want Your Land, in which he warned that the progressive elimination of farmers from their own properties reflected the Fabian programme of centralisation. Financial policy was identified as the administrative tool for this process. The response was dramatic, with the League being bitterly attacked by rural advisers, like the W.A. agricultural economist, Dr. Henry Schapper. The centralising process ("get bigger, or get out") was defended as "inevitable" - the same language used by Mr. Blight when he said it was inevitable that the bottom 10 percent of farmers would leave the industry in the next two to three years. The truth is, that 13 years later, the N.F.F.'s rural policy is "get bigger, or get out"! What has proven to be a disaster for rural Australia is still being pursued by the N.F.F. In this respect, the N.F.F. continues the Fabian policy of rural centralisation and the elimination of private ownership of land. Presumably another 10 percent of farmers will also have to be sacrificed in the next phase of the rural crisis!

N.F.F. IS UNACCOUNTABLE: The League has long maintained that the only successful organisations are those in which the individual can associate with others to achieve that which he could not achieve on his own. Two essential sanctions are necessary for the successful organisation: the ability to discipline office-holders if results are not satisfactory, and the right to withdraw completely if all else fails.

As an organisation, the N.F.F. fails both the tests of a successful organisation. Individual farmers cannot join the N.F.F. - its membership is made up of State and Industry organisations, like the N.S.W. Farmers Association and the Cattle Council. The individual may try in vain to discipline or even influence the leadership of the N.F.F.; he has absolutely no sanctions. Farmers are not even able to withdraw from the N.F.F. (who claims to speak for them), because they are not members individually. Mr. Blight can afford to spurn demands that he defend all farmers, because primary producers are unable to discipline him.

Any questions concerning the N.F.F. Fighting Fund, raised in 1984/85 to "fight" for farmers, are met with a blank refusal to answer. It appears that the funds, believed to be still in excess of \$10 million, are certainly not to be used to campaign on to keep farmers on their properties!

When pressed for the reason that the N.F.F. refuses to pursue even slightly unorthodox financial policies to assist farmers, Mr. Blight insists that in the senior councils of the land, among bureaucrats and M.P.'s., the N.F.F.'s best asset is its "credibility". So important

is this that Mr. Blight is prepared to sacrifice more farmers rather than risk "credibility". This is obviously a manifestation of false pride, as it is quite "incredible" for farmer leaders to sacrifice their own. The N.F.F. has become an end in itself, rather than a means to a useful end.

The only course available to primary producers is to abandon their own State organisations, who are members of the N.F.F. Where groups like Bankwatch, the Rural Action Movement and the new Union of Farmers are appearing to offer farmers an action programme in their own defence, the State organisations are losing members quickly. This was the reason that the W.A. Farmers Federation invited Mr. Blight to W.A.

N.F.F. PART OF THE PROBLEM: The recent record of the N.F.F. on issues of national importance demonstrates that it is part of Australia's problem, not part of the answer. When Hawke and Keating were deregulating the financial system in 1984, this was supported by the N.F.F. Although Mr. Blight is very sensitive about the issue of "free trade" (the N.F.F. supports "fair trade") it is clear that he supports the elimination of industrial protection for Australians on a "level playing field" philosophy. But he provides no answers to the huge volumes of food imported into Australia every year. Much of this food could be produced by Australian farmers. Mr. Blight claims that much of the cost of protecting manufacturing industry is unjustifiable. He ignores the social cost of not protecting industry. There is also a financial cost, when unemployment forces up welfare payments, and rising crime rates need increased law enforcement, etc. And now the N.F.F. proposes to campaign for the Coalition in support of the G.S.T., which has proven to be a disaster (for taxpayers) wherever it is used.

The only conclusion that can be reached concerning the N.F.F. is that it is simply another expensive burden for rural Australia to bear. Australia needs more farmers, not less farmers. We need financial policies designed to keep farmers on their properties, and to attract more farmers, thus beginning a programme to rebuild rural Australia. Strong and viable rural districts can contribute to a strong nation. The reverse is also true.

THE SAMUEL GRIFFITHS SOCIETY: As even Governor-General Bill Hayden has noted, the recent establishment of the Samuel Griffiths Society is a most significant development. Under the Presidency of the former Chief Justice of the High Court, Sir Harry Gibbs, the Society has made it clear that it is going to campaign in favour of what might be termed traditional Australia. The Society supports retention of the present flag and the Constitutional Monarchy. It is opposed to any further extension of Commonwealth powers; in fact wants existing Commonwealth powers reduced. Named after the first Chief Justice of the High Court, Sir Samuel Griffiths, the new society can certainly have a big influence on Australia's future if it recognises the importance of providing basic educational material which can reach and influence younger Australians.

ASIA-FIRST POLICY EMERGING: Driven by the same finance-economic philosophy which has brought Western nations to a deepening crisis, the Asian nations are now moving towards establishing an Asians-only trading bloc. This type of trading bloc was first proposed back in 1990 by Dr. Mahathir of Malaysia. At the moment it appears that the

Japanese, well aware that because of their past history most of their fellow Asians still distrust them, are not making any moves which would suggest that they are trying to lead such an all-Asian trading bloc. The Japanese strategy is to create the impression that they are waiting to be invited to join what is being proposed.

Writing in The Australian of August 19th, Richard McGregor, in Tokyo, says that "...intellectually, economically and politically, the momentum in Japan is away from the U.S. and towards Asia". There is a growing view in Japan that the U.S.A. is a spent force, while in an increasingly isolationist U.S.A. there is a strong antipathy to Japan because of Japanese trade policies.

Those misled Australians like Paul Keating and others, who continue to insist that Australia's future is in Asia, might stop for a moment to consider the possibility of an Asian Common Market, excluding Australia, being eventually formed. Australia's tragedy at present is that it lacks statesmen who can take the longer view and see that Australia's best hope of survival into the future is to concentrate upon becoming as independent as possible. An Asian Common Market can only result in the same type of problems afflicting all centralist programmes. A constructive Australia First movement is badly needed.

**BRIEF COMMENT:** According to national affairs columnist Michael Gordon, writing in The Sunday Age (Melbourne), August 23rd, Paul Keating has backed off from pushing "The Flag" issue this side of the next Federal elections. The same most probably goes for a referendum on 4-year terms of office for the Federal Government: a referendum is needed because a 3-year term of office for the Federal Government is written into the Australian Constitution. The Fabians haven't yet found a "treaty" on which they can legislate on terms of office to circumvent the Australian Constitution, which belongs to the Australian people, not to malevolent, scheming politicians. Some of the States can have 4-year terms of office for their Governments where there is no State constitution to circumvent. Our opinion is that Paul Keating was urged by his minders to "drop" the Flag issue back in May, when one advertisement in The Australian on this issue (inserted by the League) resulted in an avalanche to support for the retention of our Flag; and the warmest appreciation of the League of Rights for allowing ordinary citizens to do something constructive. Had the issue been pursued by the Keating Government, then the League would have had to recruit and train a large staff of volunteer helpers to service this Flag campaign. We could have done it. Indeed, the day may come, sooner than we think, when we may have to do just this.

The Australian "Labor" Party intends, it seems, to remove the Australian Flag from its emblem (logo). This is at least a more honest move. The Fabians are internationalists: their loyalty is to an international ideal, not to Australia. They think they are loyal Australians because they (fallaciously) hold that Australia will best be served by being a member of an international community with World Government. The Road to Hell is Paved with Good Intentions.

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"ON TARGET" is printed and published by the Australian League of Rights, 145 Russell Street, Melbourne. Subscription \$30 p.a.  
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