



ON TARGET

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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance —

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: "The Prime Minister's resentment of the monarch is surpassed by his deep hatred for the Australian flag ... His attitude to the Australian flag highlights his ignorance of the role of symbols, in the life of a nation ... A mature nation lives with the past and takes pride that some of that past, lives on, as a symbol, in the present ... To a big number of Australians who know their history, or personally contributed to Australia's security in wartime, the link with the monarch is one of their links with Australia's past" - Professor Geoffrey Blainey, as quoted in The Age, Melbourne, June 25th.

THE DEBT-DRIVEN CENTRALIST DRIVE: Ever-increasing financial debt, both national and international, is exploited to create the impression that bigger and more centralised political units are not only more efficient, but are "inevitable". Federal Treasurer Dawkins has stung the State Governments by demanding that they further increase State taxes instead of looking to the Federal Government for increased funding. The Dawkins argument is that the Federal Government has a big deficit and is working towards abolishing it. Instead of making continuing demands on the Federal Government, the States should be considering ways and means of "broadening their tax base". This is a type of blackmail which, if accepted, must further erode the financial sovereignty of the States and eventually achieve Prime Minister Keating's long-time objective, the complete abolition of the States. This allegedly will lead to greater "efficiency", with the existing States being replaced by a number of Regional Councils financed in part from Canberra.

The Victorian Kennett Government is playing into the hands of the centralist strategists. While few will shed any tears for the displaced Victorian bureaucrats, in many cases they have been dismissed with generous redundancy payouts, these partly financed by increasing the State's debt. But savage assaults on a number of essential services, all justified by the alleged necessity to reduce debt, have steadily eroded electoral support for the Government. Premier Kennett has expressed surprise that unemployment figures have increased since he came to office, such surprise indicating the lack of understanding

of the realities of debt finance by the Victorian Government. Its central policy is to keep the debt merchants happy - so that they can increase the debt burden still further.

One of the more draconian of the taxes levied by the Kennett Government, was the flat rate of \$100 levy on all Victorian property owners. The impact on many low income earners and pensioners has been devastating. Originally some Victorian Councils said they would not collect the levy, but capitulated under the threat of financial blackmail by the State Government. But about 50,000 Victorian ratepayers have refused to pay the \$100 levy. It is estimated that the collection of the levy has cost Municipal Councils much more to collect the levy than anticipated, approximately \$4,000 on the average for each Council. Increasing the financial burden for Municipal Council has in turn assisted the campaign to amalgamate Councils - all in the name of "financial efficiency". One report claims that if the present number of Victorian Municipal Governments, 210, were reduced to 63, this would save \$500 million.

When the Victorian Cain Socialist Government attempted to implement a State-wide programme of amalgamating Municipal Councils, it was forced to retreat in the face of a State-wide protest movement. But now the "anti-Socialist" Government of Jeff Kennett supports an even more drastic programme of "restructuring" - all in the name of "financial efficiency". The social implications of the proposed programme are horrendous. Measured in terms of human satisfaction, bigger and more centralised political structures must progressively deteriorate. There is a natural optimum size for all human association, economic, political or cultural, from which the individual derives real satisfaction. But as the structure becomes progressively bigger, the individual derives less satisfaction, and certainly has less control over his own destiny. Genuine de-centralisation requires that the availability of financial credit be de-centralised. If the Australian States really wish to halt the centralised Federal juggernaut, they must come to grips with the subject of debt finance.

"DEBUNKING" THE LEAGUE IN THE FAIRFAX PRESS: In a sneering and condescending article which appeared in both The Age and The Sydney Morning Herald last week (22/6/93), Mr. Gerard Henderson pilloried the Muirheads' attempt to keep their Queensland properties by seceding from Australia. Claiming that Mr. Muirhead "conceded that he had the support of organisations such as the League of Rights", and peppering his argument with references to the "lunar right" and "conspiracy theories", Henderson implies that the League is exploiting economic hardship to recruit gullible people to support its shadowy agenda.

"The problem with not confronting the confused ideology of the League,"

he writes, "is that it gives comfort to even more extreme groups..... John Hewson and Tim Fischer are really letting the side down. It is up to them to debunk the various right-wing mythologies....."

Henderson is renowned for not permitting the truth to spoil a good story, and his research can best be described as shabby. The League did not support the Muirheads of North Queensland for two reasons: we were not asked to do so, and while we sympathised with their position, we disagreed with their strategy.

HENDERSON EXPOSES HIMSELF: The greatest weakness of shallow critics like Henderson, is that they come to believe their own mythology. In his "great conspiracy" article, he again derides former Senator Paul McLean and co-author James Renton (who published Bankers and Bastards in 1992) for actually believing that hoary old myth that banks create credit! In savaging McLean and Renton shortly after their book was published in another article in The Sydney Morning Herald (14/7/92), Henderson actually wrote, "In fact the role of banks is somewhat mundane - they borrow from one section of the community and lend to another."

It appears that Henderson has learned little in the last year. With the mountain of technical evidence that flatly contradicts him, Mr. Henderson would be appalled to discover, if he indulged in a little research, that McLean and Renton are right, and he is wrong. Or would he? Perhaps he suffers from an invincible atupidity. Or perhaps he prefers to be "politically correct" rather than correct.

We would welcome Mr. Henderson's suggestion that Dr. Hewson, or Mr. Fischer, should "debunk" the League. Any chance for genuine debate on the issue of banking and finance would be constructive, as long as Hewson and Fischer are better-informed than Mr. Henderson, who is the Executive Director of the Sydney Institute. As a regular critic of the League, Mr. Henderson is not unknown to us. The real question is, who is using Mr. Henderson?

Bankers and Bastards by McLean and Renton. \$20.00 posted from all League Book Services.

o David Thompson has submitted letters to editors of both The Age and The Herald, and a feature article to The Age, answering Mr. Henderson. As we go to print, nothing has been published.

BRIEF COMMENTS: Fearful of their future in a unitary State controlled by Nelson Mandela and his Communist supporters, South Africa's whites are resorting to militant action, as witnessed by events in South Africa last week, where the police were either unwilling or

felt unable to halt the mass invasion of the building in which discussions about the future were being held. The mass media resorted to its usual name calling - the white protestors are "neo-Nazis". White leaders have bluntly stated that they have no objection to sharing land, but they have no intention of sharing power. What is wrong with the Whites of South Africa simply wanting a piece of territory where they can govern themselves? But the internationals want none of this. They have even snubbed Zulu leader, Chief Buthelezi, who recommends the establishment of a South African Federation with the different ethnics having the maximum of self government in their own areas. Events in South Africa will be just as bloody as those in Yugoslavia, where Western leaders have been forced to accept that only decentralisation for the major ethnic groups has any chance of halting the violence and bloodshed.

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Press reports refer to a "surprising" finding by Britain's National Radiological Protection Board, which after five years of intensive study has warned that reports concerning increased radiation as a result of the alleged destruction of the ozone, are too "alarmist". The findings of the United Nations are particularly mentioned. Professor Ross Mackie, a dermatologist with the Glasgow University, is quoted as saying, "Scaremongering is exciting. But crying wolf and telling lies will not achieve" the aim of alerting people to possible problems in the future. All the reliable evidence suggests that the international propoganda concerning the ozone is yet another major hoax.

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Only two years ago Rupert Murdoch's media empire was threatened with a major collapse, only avoided when the international debt merchants decided to sustain Murdoch, presumably after he had agreed to terms. But like a confirmed alcoholic, Rupert Murdoch continues to be driven by the will-to-power and recent reports state that he is again spending hundreds of millions chasing his old global communication dream. We would not recommend that anyone should invest heavily in Murdoch's News Corporation.

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