



ON TARGET

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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance —

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: "Power shared is power kept safe ... and that is democracy. The Queen is a symbol of the kind of democratic government we have. She represents authority without power and leadership beyond politics. The Governor-General, our Head of State, has authority without the power wielded by the party political system."

- Dame Leonie Kramer

OLYMPIC HYPE AND THE REPUBLICAN ISSUE by Eric D. Butler:

As every student of classical history knows, the concept of the Olympic Games originated during the period of the Greek Civilisation. Athletes from all over that part of the world influenced by Greek culture, came together to compete. But there was also competition in all areas of the arts. The Olympic Games were seen as a unifying influence. Those participating were motivated by the idea of achieving excellence. What are known as the Modern Olympics were conceived as a means of emulating what the ancient Greeks had attempted, spreading goodwill and friendship among the peoples of the world. Initially it was the European peoples who responded most readily to the idea. Those who have seen the film "The Chariots of Fire", based on the Olympic Games held in Paris after the First World War, will recall how the spirit of courtesy still prevailed at a time before the gross commercialisation of sporting activities had taken its devastating grip. Today's Olympic Games are dominated by power politics and Big Business.

There is no reason to doubt the story that a French delegate to the International Olympic Committee lobbied African nations to support the Chinese bid in exchange for a promise of French trains to China. Nations fighting desperately for "export markets" feel obliged to resort to every possible tactic which will enhance the prospects of exports. The race issue has also become a major one, with the IOC votes of African delegates of vital importance. It is argued that a tour of African States by former Australian Prime Minister Mr. Gough Whitlam helped to sway some votes in favour of the Sydney bid. It is clear that there was a powerful international campaign to have China selected

to host the Year 2000 Games, those promoting this campaign no doubt looking ahead to what they felt would be favours to come. Having lost the 2000 Games, the Chinese have immediately announced that they will shortly be resuming nuclear testing and that increasing pressure will be applied to Hong Kong. The Olympic Games are manifesting a new version of the Cold War.

The hype generated by the Sydney win has produced some astonishing claims, one being that preparations for the Games in 2000 will play a major part in ending the current depression. This is similar to the recent announcement by Coles-Myer that they are embarking on a major expansion programme which will require large-scale building activities and an increase in staff. Any short term benefits will eventually be offset by the crippling effect on thousands of small-scale retailers. Preparations for the Sydney Games will generate some increased economic activity - financed directly and indirectly by an expansion of debt. There will be no physical difficulties in carrying out a major building programme at Homebush - but probably this will be carried through with some international building consortium, on which either Japan or China is dominant. Building excellent sporting stadiums is one thing, but while this is being done hospitals are being closed down and existing rail services downgraded, particularly in Victoria.

But now comes the news that the Sydney Games could be a stimulus to the building of a fast train service between Melbourne and Sydney, taking in Canberra on the way. Federal Industry Minister Mr. Alan Griffiths is waxing eloquent about the project, which would cost half the existing air fares. But he does caution that the project will only be initiated if it is seen to be "viable". The Australian rail system should be upgraded quite apart from the Olympic Games. Financing should be undertaken in Australia without any further foreign borrowing.

And, as was to be expected, Prime Minister Paul Keating has attempted to jump on the Olympic bandwagon in an attempt to push his Republican cause. With breathtaking effrontery he has suggested that it would be inappropriate for the Queen to open the Sydney Olympic Games. Mr. Keating is overlooking a major reality: He will be dead politically long before the year 2000. In fact, Paul Keating will be fortunate if he can forestall a Federal Election over the next two years. Back bench restiveness will grow as it becomes clearer that the Federal Labor Party is doomed under Paul Keating. The fact that the Hewson-led Opposition offers no genuine alternative cannot alter the reality that the Australian electors have yet to learn that there is no answer to their basic problems within the existing major political parties.

The hype concerning the Sydney Olympic Games will provide an artificial stimulus for a short period. But once the effects of that stimulus wear off, Australians will be facing their moment of truth. For this reason, the expanding work and influence of the Australian League of Rights is needed more than ever.

FISCHER SPEAKS UP AGAIN: WHO IS AN ABORIGINE? In making comments that he acknowledged were sure to be construed as "extremist and racist", the Leader of the National Party, Mr. Fischer, demonstrated rare political courage when he drew attention to the generosity of Australian taxpayers to Aboriginal Australians. Fischer, who is apparently not particularly concerned with being "politically correct" on many issues (with the exception of finance and trade) began by noting last week that the definition of "Aborigines" is quite generous by some international standards.

In taking up the question of just who is entitled to call themselves Aboriginal, Fischer takes up an issue previously only raised by the League of Rights. In a report in The Australian (24/9/93), Fischer quoted the Commonwealth's official definition: "An Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander is a person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island descent who identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives."

Fischer compares this with standards in North America, which are not imposed by governments, but by the native groups and tribes themselves. "To be a Navajo, for example, you must have one fourth Navajo blood." Cherokees require one sixteenth Cherokee blood to be eligible for any benefits for native people.

NATIVE QUALIFICATIONS: Our own research reveals that requirements for qualification as an Indian vary with different tribes, but frequently include a stated percentage of Indian blood, proof of ancestry, and registration on a base tribal roll, or proof of relationship to someone on the tribal roll. It is not uncommon for litigants to appeal to the courts in cases where individuals of mixed blood claim native status that is rejected by tribes or bands.

In Canada the Federal Government continues to maintain an Indian Register, which confers "Indian status" upon those listed. Under certain conditions, Indians can lose their Indian status in a process called "enfranchisement". A person could be "enfranchised" upon application, if he was "capable of assuming the duties and responsibilities of citizenship" and capable of supporting himself and family. Indians could be excluded from registration if their paternal mother and grandmother were not Indians, and women were excluded if they

married a non-Indian. Some of these provisions have been destroyed under the equality segments of Canada's new constitution - the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The new constitution reflects more the United Nations conventions than traditional Common Law.

Why is definition of aboriginality important? First, as Mr. Fischer points out, big financial benefits are involved. Australia spends an average of \$5,000.00 per Aborigine on 250,000 people, some of whom would struggle to meet North American standards of aboriginality. Second, the introduction of native title by the High Court last year opens the way for potentially lucrative land claims by all sorts of people describing themselves as Aborigines, or speaking on behalf of "Aborigines". In general, Australians are prepared to be generous to those of Aboriginal background who are disadvantaged. But as Fischer also points out, deep resentments are building (beginning in rural areas, where relations with aborigines are more common) at the perception that aborigines could become the new elite at the expense of others. Fischer should be strongly supported for his comments.

SLIDING TO DESPOTISM: This was an article in the Herald-Sun (Melbourne), 7/9, by Mr. Harry Evans, who is Clerk of the Senate.

He warns in this article that the "debate" over a republic (for Australia) risks giving Australians a Federal Government with very dangerous powers. This article is far too long to reprint here; we can only select a short passage for quotation:

".....If there is to be an elected head of state, the true republicans could propose that the office be provided with sufficient independence, perhaps by popular election, to provide a balance to an otherwise autocratic Prime Minister.

"Significant constitutional changes, such as citizen-initiated referendums (our emphasis - O.T.), and recall of members of parliament, may provide further safeguards against government abuses."

BASIC FUND COMMENT: Without making a major issue out of it, we warn again of an American-based high powered movement which specialises in raising funds by a telephone campaign. Several people frankly admit that they have been "caught". The League raises its funds in a completely different way. A Basic Fund is set for the coming year, one which we know is adequate to carry through the planned programme for the year. No exaggerated claims are made. The League's record over many years is clear for all to see. The Basic Fund target for 1993-94 is \$60,000. At the moment the fund has moved to \$12,840. We do ask all supporters to give as generously as they can in these trying times. All contributions to Box 1052J, G.P.O., Melbourne, 3001.

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