



# ON TARGET

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*The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance —*

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**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:** "Man has been the victim of a disastrous illusion - the illusion of our ability to emancipate ourselves from natural laws. We have forgotten that nature never forgives. In order to ensure, society, as well as individuals, should conform to the laws of life."

- Dr. Alexis Carrol in Man, The Unknown

**THE GRAEME CAMPBELL TRAGEDY** by Eric D. Butler:

It is always a tragedy when any human being who lifts the hopes of his fellows by creating the firm impression that he is going to take a firm stand on fundamental issues, eventually capitulates when the time comes "to stand to be counted". Federal West Australian Labor M.P. Graeme Campbell brought a breath of fresh air to the Federal political scene, insisting on taking a completely different attitude on a number of issues, to that of Prime Minister Paul Keating. He made it clear that he felt that the MABO decision by the High Court was disastrous, and that the proposed MABO legislation of Paul Keating would plunge the nation into a deep crisis, one in which Australians of Aboriginal background would suffer along with other Australians. Graeme Campbell left no doubt that it would be impossible for him to support the MABO legislation of Paul Keating. But when the moment came to vote Graeme Campbell cast his vote for the legislation he had so strongly criticised. It would be easy to agree with those critics, and they are numerous, that Graeme Campbell has demonstrated that he is no more than just another Party hack with no real integrity, and that it is dangerous folly to accept the promises and statements of any party politician, but the writer disagrees.

Graeme Campbell is a man who in the past has displayed considerable courage and independence of thought. Having over a lifetime seen a number of politicians wilt when subjected to the standard anti-League of Rights smear tactics, I was well aware that Graeme Campbell had shown extraordinary courage in appearing on a League of Rights' plat-

form. No one could charge the West Australian Member with a lack of courage. He used that platform to attack a number of sacred cows, ranging from "economic rationalism" to multiculturalism. It was a magnificent address in every way and has already enjoyed growing national support. Why then has Graeme Campbell, who has lifted the morale of large numbers of demoralised Australians, acted in a way which he must know himself has badly undermined his credibility? One must sympathise with a man who publicly says he is "ashamed" of what he has done. Even though he describes himself as non-Christian, which probably explains in part the tragedy he is suffering, Graeme Campbell is generally regarded as an honourable man. He clearly has a conscience and feels deeply that he has failed large numbers of his fellow Australians. He said in one radio interview that it was the pressure of his friends, not the opposition of his enemies, which resulted in him voting for what he had so scathingly criticised. If these friends are fellow Members of the Labor Party who support, at least in part his views, they may well argue that by ensuring that he was not expelled from the Labor Party, he was better placed to help affect changes inside the Party.

Graeme Campbell indicated that he was being influenced by this line of argument when he referred to Independent Ted Mack, whom he admired, but who had little influence in the Federal Parliament because he had been isolated. He felt that as an Independent he would also be isolated. If Graeme Campbell genuinely believes this, he is merely highlighting the reality of modern party politics, which has undermined the traditional system of representative government which has evolved in Britain. Every student of the undermining of genuine representative government has observed that the thrust towards totalitarianism has relied upon reducing the individual Member of Parliament to little more than a rubber stamp of the Executive. The breakdown of responsible government is highlighted when even a man of Graeme Campbell's status is forced to vote against his own stated convictions. The title of Graeme Campbell's League of Rights' address was appropriately described as "The Flight From Responsibility". Graeme Campbell should not be surprised if many are asking if he himself has not abdicated his responsibilities.

However, it would be too harsh and uncharitable, not to mention non-Christian, to judge Graeme Campbell in this way. A politician who publicly admits that he has changed his views on some basic issues, and who says that he is ashamed of feeling he had to vote as he did on MABO, has the capacity to recover his standing. Politicians of the calibre of Graeme Campbell are so rare that every effort should be made to encourage him to understand that he can recover the high moral ground by refusing, whatever the arguments, to compromise his

own integrity by declining to vote for what he does not support. There is no necessity for Graeme Campbell to be isolated by expulsion from the Labor Party. He should use his secured electoral base to establish a high national image. Australian electors are looking for someone like a Graeme Campbell to provide genuine leadership. It would be a national tragedy if he fails to grasp what is necessary at the most critical moment in Australian history.

**DEMANDS FOR "RIGHTS" INFLAMES ANTI-MABO BACKLASH:** The progress of the Native Title Bill through the Senate will be closely watched by growing numbers of ordinary Australians who are deeply uneasy about the "MABO" issue, and increasingly apprehensive about its ultimate effect. Such apprehension will not be salved by the demands from the "Aboriginal industry", which are made in language almost calculated to be offensive to the majority.

Last week Aboriginal Social Justice Commissioner, Mr. Mick Dodson, released his first Report, in which he called for 'self determination' for Aboriginal people, as the key to restoring their human rights. Exactly what Mr. Dodson is demanding is not immediately clear, but it appears that he is insisting that certain standards of living and the provision of certain services constitute fundamental "human rights". Mr. Dodson, like Ms. Pat O'Shane, and other professionals in the Aboriginal industry, claims that the human rights of Aborigines have been denied because Aboriginal groups are still forced to contend with atrocious housing and living conditions, inadequate quality and supply of water, sanitation and health services, etc. It should be pointed out (as gently as possible) that Captain Cook and most of the other early European arrivals also had to contend with exactly the same problems. In fact, large numbers of today's rural dwellers supply their own water, sanitation, roads on properties, etc., with little assistance from their metropolitan cousins.

The truth is that prior to 1788, the Aboriginal people enjoyed "self determination" without enjoying anything like today's living standards. It should be noted that the Aborigines effectively lost control of their "immigration policy" after 1788, and European arrival has had a massive impact on their lifestyle. Large numbers of Aborigines have chosen to abandon their traditional lifestyle to take advantage of the European innovations; they have effectively voted with their feet.

Even with the best of intentions, neither the 'land rights' legislation, nor the Native Title Bill, will provide a single Aborigine with a single acre of property that he can call his own. The statistics show (see Intelligence Survey for November) that the massive welfare handouts provide enough money for the average Aboriginal family to

buy a new \$100,000 house every four years, if the grassroots Aborigine in need was ever the recipient of the funds.

Native Title Act cannot improve conditions for individual Aborigines. "Self determination" cannot provide employment, health services, etc. Only the European innovation of private property and individual ownership can provide the basis for personal security for Aboriginal or any other kind of Australian. It is farcical that any Australians should have to endure sub-standard living conditions in a country of such natural wealth. It is also certain that continuing demands for Aboriginal sovereignty will continue to inflame the anti-Mabo backlash.

**C.I.R. IN CANBERRA:** This interest seems to have been prompted by a bill on C.I.R. before the A.C.T. Legislative Assembly, which has received the support of the A.C.T. Liberals. While the Liberals are taking the credit for introducing the Bill, it was actually introduced by Mr. Dennis Stevenson, of the Abolish Self Government Coalition. Nevertheless, Mr. Reith is touting the probable passage of this bill as an historic breakthrough for Australian politics, with Canberra as the "birthplace of direct democracy". Mr. Reith's only reported reservations about the Canberra bill is that the required number of supportive signatures to trigger a referendum, set at four percent of voters, is too low.

**MR. REITH'S POSITION:** As far as we are able to determine, Mr. Keith's proposal would make referendums binding upon governments. However, he favours a "trigger" of five percent of voters registered at the last election, or a petition of about 500,000 voters to force a referendum. He proposes that referendums be held on the same day as elections to eliminate the claim that they are too costly. He also favours the requirement for a majority of voters in a majority of States for a referendum to pass, but that this would exclude Constitutional amendments being initiated by voters. Reith does not advocate regular referendums, but rather as a safety valve for electoral disgust with the performance of their politicians. He points out that the mechanism for changing the Constitution is an adoption of the Swiss model, but that "Since then most Australian politicians have recoiled like Dracula from the stake at the suggestion of actually giving the public a say on the big issues that confront our society".

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