



# ON TARGET

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*The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance –*

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**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:** "To change society, the imagination and the will must be fired, but in a money starved society the imagination is devitalised and the will is sapped. To revive the faculty of resolute imagination economic-social conditions must be changed, but to change them, to get rid of their present drugging influence, requires resolute imagination. Without will there is no change; without change the will lies drugged."

– Gorham Munson in *Aladdin's Lamp* (1945)

## PRINCE CHARLES AND THE FUTURE OF THE MONARCHY by Eric D. Butler:

The distinguished Jewish writer and philosopher, Dr. Oscar Levy, wrote in *The Idiocy of Idealism* that "The ideal is the enemy of the real". Some of the sick media comment concerning the Prince Charles' television documentary is more revealing about the media commentators than about Prince Charles. There was no suggestion anywhere in the interview that Prince Charles was a wimp looking for sympathy. It would be instructive to learn how many of the Prince's critics could claim to have led impeccable private lives. The mass media reflects much of the hypocrisy and double standards which are so prevalent today. The basic commonsense and decency of most people has been reflected in the wave of public support for Prince Charles following the television programme. The Prince came across as a man who understood the importance of duty concerning his position as heir to the Throne, and he made no secret of the anguish he had suffered because of his marriage breakdown. He made no attempt to apportion blame, merely referring to what now is clearly obvious: that his background and that of Princess Diana were so different. His comments concerning the media served to confirm the view of those observers who said that any chance of the marriage being successful was damned by much of the media.

Interviewer Jonathan Dimpleby says that his interview with the Prince was a "Warts and all" one. "The Prince saw a working version of the programme a couple of weeks ago. He sucked his teeth here and there inevitably, but he believes in people's freedom to do what they want. At no point did he say you must not film this or drop that." Obviously the most painful part of the interview, producing the biggest headlines, concerned the question of whether the Prince had been faithful to his wife. The answer was clear: he had been faithful until the time that he realised that the marriage had irretrievably broken down. Yes, he had then committed adultery. He made no attempt

to excuse himself. The modern Pharisees have of course seized on this admission to ask the hypocritical question, "Does this not prove that Prince Charles is not fit to become King?" If strict standards of moral purity were to be applied to all applicants for public office, how many would pass such a test? Church leaders who condemn Prince Charles have no difficulty in urging that compassion should be shown – as of course it should – to homosexuals.

The Dimbleby interview did bring out the fact that Prince Charles is a deep and thoughtful man. He has shown considerable courage on a number of major issues, even directing attention to the question of whether the special position of the Church of England should not be re-considered. As C.H. Douglas has pointed out, there is a vast difference between the Church of England, and the Church **in** England. The independence of the Church has been undermined by making it virtually a creature of the State. Prince Charles has raised other important questions concerning the future of Britain. There is little doubt that Prince Charles is the best informed and most thoughtful Heir to the Throne produced for hundreds of years. He does not see the Monarchy as some inflexible institution, but as one which must grow in keeping with unfolding events. This was made clear in his television documentary. But while supporting change, he also stresses the importance of stability and continuity. He comes across as a balanced man.

Having sat through the Charles television interview, I was more convinced than ever that he is a remarkable man, one who has made up his own mind on some fundamental questions. He is determined to fulfil his responsibilities as heir to the Throne. Australians who turn against the institution of Constitutional Monarchy because of what they perceive to be an unforgiveable moral act, are depriving themselves of the opportunity to obtain the type of public service and leadership being denied them by their political party hacks. I am not surprised that the Charles television documentary has seen the British public uniting behind him.

### ABORIGINAL LAND FUND CAUSES FURTHER FRICTION by David Thompson:

In the next session of Parliament, the legislation for an Aboriginal Land Fund will be introduced. This is proposed as a means of providing benefits for Aborigines who will derive no benefit from the Native Title Act passed last year following the High Court's dubious Mabo decision, and like the Mabo decision, is expected to provide more cause for friction than reconciliation. How is the Land Fund to be administered? Many Aboriginal groups fear that income from the Fund will be administered through the Aboriginal Land Councils – some of the most radical Aboriginal organisations, from which pressure for an Aboriginal State is coming. For this reason, some Aborigines are **against** the Aboriginal Land Fund, as they fear the influence of the Land Councils.

So far, the record of Aboriginal administration of taxpayers funds has not always been impressive. The Queensland Criminal Justice Commission, after a four-year enquiry into Aboriginal and Islander Councils' financial administration, has found that **no Queensland Council** complies with State financial management standards. The C.J.C. is challenging the Queensland Government to prosecute some Councils or individuals where criminal misuse or embezzlement of funds is suspected. The Aboriginal Councils have been a regular target of Queensland's Auditor-General, and a general "culture of unaccountability" prevails, according to a Queensland Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee. If this is true in other States, there is every chance that the billions of dollars to go into the new Land Fund could be wasted or stolen.

**THE A.T.S.I.C. ELECTIONS:** Part of the problem of accountability in financial matters is the result of almost complete political unaccountability of many Aboriginal "representatives". The 1993 elections for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (A.T.S.I.C.) demonstrate the problem, and we recall the Member for Wide Bay, Mr. Warren Truss, detailing the election results.

From an estimated 147,500 Aboriginal and Islanders eligible, 573 Regional Councillors were to be elected to A.T.S.I.C. According to Electoral Commission figures, only 45,820 voted, and of these votes, nearly 6,000 were rejected, and another 2,000 were declared informal. According to National Party M.P. Mr. Truss, the voter turn-out fluctuated widely, with about 8.5 percent turn-out in Sydney, and an amazing 106.2 percent at **Mornington**.

In the electorate of Nhulunby South in the Northern Territory, 489 out of an estimated 845 voters actually voted. 477 of these votes were rejected, and two were ruled informal. This means that the four A.T.S.I.C. Councillors elected for this region were elected **with a total of 10 votes**. Three other regions (Brisbane, Roma and Rockhampton) elected 54 Councillors on woeful voter turn-outs, with a high proportion of rejected or invalid votes; each Councillor was elected on around 78 votes. The cost of the "election" was \$4 million, which amounted to **over \$100 for every vote received** – many of which were 'rejected' or ruled invalid. With less than 46,000 votes to count nationwide, it took at least six weeks to count them in most electorates. In Deniliquin again it took 41 days to count just 66 votes, according to Mr. Truss' Electoral Commission figures, and 48 days to count 66 votes in Coober Pedy. And this, notes Mr. Truss, is the Electoral Commission that was sent to South Africa to advise on how to run an election!

It is not surprising that allegations of voting irregularities are widespread, and that 10 of the results are being challenged in the courts. However, the point is that such electoral procedures **cannot produce accountable representatives** for the Aboriginal people, and cannot lead to any useful financial accountability. Australians are justified in calling for an end to such an expensive, farcical situation, **without** being accused of racism. The only apparent answer is for all Australians

to be governed together, as **one** nation, rather than a collection of tribes producing further friction and division. There is no possible doubt that the Aboriginal Land Fund will cause deeper and yet more bitter divisions, irrespective of how well it is administered. The old demand of "no taxation without representation" immediately becomes relevant.

### ALEXANDER DOWNER ON THE REPUBLICAN RACK:

It is quite clear that the Liberal Party is in serious political trouble on the republican issue. The divisions emerging in Liberal ranks on the issue, together with the undoubted political skills of Mr. Keating, could not only destroy Mr. Downer as Opposition Leader, but could even destroy the Liberal Party itself. As Mr. Tony Abbott points out, this was a Party that originally included loyalty to the Crown as a primary plank in the manifesto. Their position now is quite extraordinary.

To a large extent, the Liberal dilemma is an illustration of how the Party has become a victim of its own neglect of the vital educational process. While the A.L.P. is a thoroughly 'centrist' party which is reflected in its own structure, the Liberals were traditionally more of a State-based party, with the Federal contingent growing out of this. Thus the Liberals had the chance – especially in Victoria – to ensure that an understanding of the Crown and Constitution was well taught to every generation through the education system. They neglected this duty, and now suffer the consequences: the **very ranks of the Liberal Party have forgotten** why the Crown is so vital.

Even where the **knowledge** of the constitutional heritage survives, without a permanent education programme, **genuine understanding** of that heritage, including its spiritual dimension, has atrophied. As a result the Liberals are now succumbing to the republican seduction. It now appears that the rot within the Party is more akin to a cancer, and Downer is in the impossible position of attempting to scourge the cancer without fatally exposing himself to the merciless assault of those such as Keating.

The key to the importance of the Constitution is **the Crown**. Where an **obviously** independent monarch occupies the throne, the division of powers is much more certain, and political accountability much more certain. It is not good enough to dismiss the Royal Family as Mr. Downer attempts to do: They are part of the equation, although the person of the monarch is not as important as the office of the Crown.