



A WEEKLY COMMENTARY

ON TARGET

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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance —

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: "The Crown is designed to unify and unity is something even the republican movement cannot do without. A solution to these problems lies in satisfying as many Australians as possible, and in alienating as few as possible. Even from a technical point of view, because of the rules for referendums on the Constitutions, there can be no solution unless a large majority of the population can be drawn together within a single circle of agreement."

- Alan Atkinson, in Muddle-Headed Republic

THE GROWTH MIRAGE by Eric D. Butler:

The key to understanding what is happening, or likely to happen to the Australian economy, is that under present financial rules, industry does not over any given period distribute sufficient purchasing-power to meet the total prices of goods and services created over the same period.

This is one of the basic truths dealt with in the League of Rights Social Dynamic Seminar.

Attempts to overcome this deficiency makes it inevitable that there will be a growing burden of total debt. The greater the growth of the economy, the greater the growth of total debt, even though vast amounts of debts are constantly being written off by the banking system, which creates debt.

The concept of a faster rate of economic growth is as fallacious as the concept of overtaking a mirage on a hot day by driving faster. The faster one drives, the faster the mirage fades into the distance. It can never be overtaken. The astronomical explosion of debt in all industrialised nations is irrefutable confirmation of the truth that a major economic and social collapse can only be delayed by expansion of debt.

The flood of advertising to which Australians are currently being

subjected reveals that there is an overwhelming abundance of consumer goods, ranging from washing machines and other household appliances, to lawnmowers and motor cars. Potential customers are urged to buy these consumer goods immediately, with assurances that this can be done by the mortgaging of future incomes. The rising tide of consumer debt, itself the by-product of bank loan transactions, is a measure of the reality of the situation. While the rate of inflation has been reduced by the depression which Paul Keating said Australians had to have, it still continues to erode the purchasing-power of wages. In an attempt to overcome some of the erosion, the Trade Unions are now demanding a wage increase of \$10 per week. But such an increase which will require a further expansion of debt-finance cannot overcome the basic finance-economic problem.

An examination of the front pages of many newspapers and other financial pages is revealing. For example, The Age (Melbourne), March 17th, carries the headline, "Recovery Races Ahead", but the financial pages report a number of bankruptcies, and the news that one of Australia's biggest building and construction companies, viz. Jennings, "slipped back into the red". Another reports that the restructured Greyhound Coach Company has had "another disappointing year". The Australian coal industry knows nothing about "recovery" as the Japanese force lower prices and cut imports. A few of the bigger retail organisations have increased sales and profits, at the expense of smaller retail businesses. But Prime Minister Keating urges Australian businesses to increase investments in industry so the "recovery" will be sustainable. But business leaders are making it clear that they are reluctant to invest in greater production because of uncertainties about the future. Slavishly following orthodox financial dogma, the Government has at least, for the time being, rejected any attempt to stimulate the economy by a government programme of capital works.

But irrespective of whether capital works are undertaken by the private sector or by government, such a policy can only worsen the overall problem.

Only a direct issue of debt-free credits to consumers can avert growing disasters. In the absence of such a policy, mass unemployment and growing social breakdown are inevitable.

LESSONS FROM BONYTHON BY-ELECTION: While the swing against the A.L.P. in the South Australian by-election for the seat of Bonython last weekend was enough to offer a temporary relief of leadership pressure from Dr. John Hewson, all is not what it appears. Dr. Hewson is claiming that the drop of 9.9 percent in the A.L.P. primary vote in an A.L.P. "heartland" seat was a disastrous result for Labor, and

that the seat had to be decided on preferences for the first time in 30 years.

After preferences, it appears that the A.L.P. dropped 8.2 percent to the Liberals, but the significant figures are the primary vote. Although the A.L.P. dropped 9.9 percent in the primary vote, the Liberals only gained 3.5 percent. Who picked up the rest of the swing away from the A.L.P.? Greypower and Australians Against Further Immigration, who, between them, took over 14 percent of the primary vote. Press reports now describe Australians Against Further Immigration (A.A.F.I.) as an "emerging party" when they bother to mention them at all. But the A.A.F.I. vote of approximately 6.9 percent is a significant performance, which outstripped the Democrat vote, and repeats a similar result in the Werriwa by-election near Sydney. The result is all the more significant in that the candidate for A.A.F.I., Mr. Dennis McCormack, comes from Melbourne, and spent less than a tenth of that spent by major parties, running his campaign from a friend's home.

The lessons to come out of Bonython reflect what also came out of the Werriwa by-election; the issues of immigration and multiculturalism still bubble away at the grassroots of politics. As an issue they are largely unseen, inasmuch as press and major parties can conspire to ignore them. Occasionally such issues find expression in the form of by-elections, but attempts to permanently ignore the poison of multiculturalism will eventually result in violent expression, of which we have recently had a foretaste in the friction between the Greek and the Yugoslav/Macedonian factions. In an attempt to crack the pre-election media blackout, A.A.F.I. candidate McCormack led a demonstration of support to the offices of the Adelaide Advertiser, where he presented the Editor with a white feather, symbolising craven cowardice.

GRAEME CAMPBELL IN TROUBLE AGAIN: The strength of the A.A.F.I. vote in the two N.S.W. by-elections in Mackellar and Waringah this weekend will also be of great interest. Since the A.L.P. is not running candidates in the blue-ribbon Liberal seats, the showing of minor groups could be significant. In view of the fact that no A.L.P. candidate is being fielded, the Labor backbench Member for Kalgoorlie, Mr. Graeme Campbell, has recommended a vote for A.A.F.I. Not only has he provided his written endorsement of A.A.F.I. policies of cutting non-European immigration, and encouraging integration rather than multiculturalism, but Mr. Campbell is appearing personally to campaign for A.A.F.I.

Campbell's letter, which is being widely distributed in the form of a brochure in both electorates, is strongly critical of A.L.P. policy in the immigration and multiculturalism fields. Describing multiculturalism

lism as 'corrupt', Campbell says that existing immigration policy is bad for the nation economically, environmentally and socially. "It is turning our country into a nation of tribes, it is enriching unrepresentative lobbyists at our expense," he wrote.

QUEEN'S PAWN TO BISHOP'S ABBOTT? One of the most interesting candidates in the current round of by-elections is Mr. Tony Abbott, standing for the seat of Warringah this weekend. Abbott is a former Hewson advisor who left Hewson's staff following a number of clashes with Hewson over such issues as strategy, and policies like economic 'rationalism'. Abbott then served as the executive officer of Australians for Constitutional Monarchy before becoming the Liberal candidate. Described by friends as a "rugged (Catholic) Christian", Abbott once studied for the priesthood, where he found his Christian convictions and political activism did not fit current fashions in the seminary.

Abbott appears to be a man of passionate convictions and articulate, persuasive ability. But does he "fit" into the Liberal Party any better than he fitted into a seminary? In last week's edition of The Bulletin Abbott argues that it is intellectually and morally lazy to simply write off Liberal and Labor Parties as equally bad, are mostly concerned with "managing" the economy, and that it matters little which is governing. He is impatient with this attitude, as it denigrates the relatively good along with the relatively bad, and implies that democracy is a charade at best if such attitudes are true, which he denies.

But can Abbott explain why the National Party has finally begun to show signs that they want independence within the Coalition, if it is not because they are only too aware that the major party groups are propounding similar policies? National M.P.'s. like Mr. Bob Katter Jnr., of Kennedy, are calling for conditions upon their Coalition membership because it is increasingly clear that they have chained themselves to a dying animal with the Liberals. It goes much beyond merely leadership issues.

And can Mr. Abbott explain why Graeme Campbell is defying the A.L.P. to go into Abbott's electorate to campaign not for the A.L.P., but for the A.A.F.I.? Neither A.L.P. or Liberals are prepared to risk press odour by offering genuine choices on such issues as multiculturalism or immigration. The A.L.P. have denigrated the Crown and Flag, but have the Liberals come out unequivocally in support - apart from John Howard and a small minority of others? Have the Liberals rejected the disaster of economic rationalism? Have they nailed their colours to the mast on the issue of the family, and supported income splitting for tax purposes? No, they have not, and Mr. Abbott needs to take care that he becomes nothing more than an apologist for the Liberals, rather than a genuine, rugged, committed backbencher, who is prepared to boot some sense and courage back into the Liberals, and remind them that they once believed in something other than simply power.

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