



A WEEKLY COMMENTARY

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*The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance —*

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**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:** "So long as the Crown is part of the Executive, it will be difficult for any elected government to act in a wilful and high-handed way in disregard of the law or the public interest unless it is prepared to expose itself as deliberately choosing to disregard the law and the public interest; and it will be impossible for any bureaucracy to do unobtrusively anything other than what Parliament has empowered it to do."

- Sir Paul Hasluck (former Governor-General)  
in "The Office of the Governor-General"

**THE PRICE OF THE ASIAN SALVATION:** Australians received another warning about Prime Minister Keating's aspirations to become "part of Asia" last week, by the man who is credited with coining the phrase "white trash of Asia". Singapore's Lee Kwan Yew has again pointed out the philosophical and cultural differences between Asia and the West, and makes a subtle point about the rapidly-rising Asian economic ascendancy. His point is that if Australia wishes to become involved with rising Asian wealth and influence, we shall find that it will be on Asian terms, not on our own, as we have so far assumed.

In particular, Lee stressed the Asian attitude to the work ethic, which he believes the West has largely lost, and Australia in particular has downgraded, assuming that the "lucky country" is wealthy enough to carry us anyhow. By his presence and the fact that Mr. Lee is lecturing Westerners about attitudes to Asia, it is made clear that Western criticism is unwelcome. Part of the price of our acceptance by "Asia" would be that the West cease pressing Asian countries about human rights violations. Lee again makes the point that some Asian standards place a higher priority upon stability and order than the Western worship of the system of "democracy" in solving all political and social problems. He undoubtedly has in the back of his mind the Western criticism of Singapore concerning the sentencing of a young

American to be caned for vandalism when he points to Western decadence, violent crime, and the breakdown of civil society, particularly in the United States.

Another Asian visitor who reinforces some of Mr. Lee's comments is the Thai businessman, Narongohai Akrasanee, who points out that few Asians would accept Australia as a part of Asia. Geographically Australia is not a part of Asia, he said. Historically or ethnically, anthropologists could not say Australia was a part of Asia; in terms of politics, law, cultural and social policy, Australia is not a part of Asia, he says. "To integrate the social and cultural aspects, considering the differences in the systems, would only spoil the relationship," said Dr. Narongohai, although he is certain that in economic and trading terms, a close relationship is desirable and likely.

The greatest danger for Australian independence is that the "globalising" process of trade is merely paving the way for the merging of social, cultural and ethnic identities into regions, rather than the maintenance of the traditional nation-state. Dr. Narongohai also supports the proposal for an Asian free trade bloc, in which Australia and New Zealand would be involved. This was accepted by Mr. Keating when he was in Thailand recently, as an extension of the Closer Economic Relationship between Australia and New Zealand to involve the Asian "region". It is exactly the same regionalisation process that is drawing Britain into Europe, with the correspondent erosion of national sovereignty and the passing of more political and constitutional powers to "Europe".

Australia's unique constitutional structure is a strong advantage, as a monarchy, rather than a disadvantage in trading relations. Lee Kwan Yew rejected the suggestion that changing to a republican form of government would improve our Asian standing. Perhaps Prime Minister Keating may take note.

It is clear that Asian observers are somewhat bemused by the temptation by Australians to see their future in "Asia". Mr. Lee warned that Asia will be no economic saviour for Australia. And while the Asian value system is suitable for Asians, the only real answer to Mr. Lee's charge of Western decadence is for Western nations like Australia to rediscover their values, which means a re-appraisal of spiritual weaknesses and moral values that betray us.

**SOUTH AFRICA'S POLITICAL INFERNO:** With events changing by the hour in South Africa, in an atmosphere more highly charged than usual, only the basic physical realities can be expected to remain unchanged after this week's "majority rule" election. The most basic of all realities is that of African tribal differences, and Chief Buthelezi's demands for some form of self rule for Kwa-Zulu in Natal were based on such a reality. He called for a federation of disparate States of South Africa, on the American model, insisting that the Zulus wanted their own independence in their own regions, including financial independence.

It is clear that Buthelezi's decision to join the electoral process without assurances of Zulu independence can only postpone the coming struggle to the death between the Zulu and the Xhosa (A.N.C.). In the negotiations that led to the Zulu inclusion in the electoral process, Buthelezi has secured recognition of the Zulu kingdom, the Zulu King, and protection of land under the control of the (Zulu) Crown, to be enshrined in the Constitutional agreement when the South African Parliament is hastily called together for the purpose. The Zulu truce has been hailed euphorically everywhere, as a sign that peace is possible after the elections.

However, one journalist, R.W. Johnson, reported on the A.N.C. Inkatha struggle for The Times, writing: "Others point more mundanely to the very considerable strength now mustered by the South African Defence Force in Natal, whose force of tanks and armoured cars was quietly built up even before the emergency was declared there. With detention without trial and press censorship already in place in Natal, the scene is set for a draconian post-election crack-down.

"There is no doubt that many within the A.N.C. wanted to use the S.A.D.F. as a partisan weapon to smash Chief Buthelezi's forces with the same brutal thoroughness President Mugabe deployed in Matabeleland after his "liberation" election in 1980 (in Rhodesia). Certainly, observers in Natal feel that Chief Buthelezi was in effect negotiating with a gun to his head....."

Irrespective of the final election results, the basic reality in South Africa is that 8.5 million Zulus - the largest ethnic/tribal group in South Africa - are demanding some form of self determination, even though they are internally divided. Can the Communist-dominated A.N.C. accommodate this? Already there is news that the Communist element within the A.N.C. is furious that the Zulu King is to have his status and authority enshrined in the new Constitution.

**UNITED NATIONS "PEACE-KEEPING" FAILURES:** United Nations troops returning from the failed peace-keeping mission in Rwanda were so disgusted with the political restrictions placed upon them, that they publicly shredded their blue U.N. berets in protest. The policy of non-intervention in the Rwandan tribal massacres over the last three weeks meant they had to stand by and watch as thousands of Tutsi women and children were simply hacked to death by the majority Hutu tribe.

In the former Yugoslavia, the United Nations record has been very little better, with the slaughter in Bosnia proceeding despite the U.N. intervention. The Moslems in Bosnia have been offered "safe zones" in which to find refuge. The failure of this policy is now evident, given that the city of Gorazde itself is supposed to be a safe zone.

If the South African elections become little more than a pause in hostilities that resemble civil war already, what role would the U.N. be expected to play? If "peace-keeping" operations in so many other parts of the globe have been such a failure, what makes the South African situation any different? If anything, the differences between the Bosnian Serbs and the Moslems must be regarded as minor compared to the differences between Zulus and Xhosa. The concept of the U.N. as the World Government's police force can now be seen to be a farce.

**BRIEF COMMENTS:** The judgement in the N.S.W. Supreme Court last week that abortion is still a crime in N.S.W. has provoked the feminists to rage. In addition, Attorney-General Hannaford has promised that where the law is broken, prosecutions will follow, which has re-opened the whole question in N.S.W. The 1972 District Court ruling that abortion is only permitted where a serious danger to the mental or physical well-being of the mother has been used liberally to virtually ensure abortion on demand in N.S.W. After Justice Newman's decision, this is certain to be considerably tightened. Presently, more than 72,000 "terminations" take place in Australia each year. The majority of these operations are paid for by taxpayers, and as many as 30,000 are believed to take place in N.S.W. The pressure is now on N.S.W. politicians to change the law, decriminalising abortion. Perhaps murder should also be decriminalised? Perhaps the U.N. Human Rights Committee will rule that anti-abortion legislation violates a woman's privacy, as does anti-homosexual legislation? No law can transform evil into good.

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We had predicted that the Federal Liberals would be unable to defend their Tasmanian counterparts against U.N. intervention unless they were prepared to defend legislation making sodomy a crime. But we did not anticipate that the attack would come from within the Liberals' own ranks. Former Senator Chris Puplick has warned that Dr. Hewson's new policy of 'inclusion' is impossible if "gays" feel that the Liberals are "pandering to the prejudice" of their Tasmanian Party Branch. It is a measure of how low the Coalition have fallen that they now depend upon the homosexual vote.

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We note that the Victorian Department of Health & Community Services have suffered the complete collapse of their case against "The Family" and settled out of Court. The settlement terms are believed to be the same terms The Family offered in 1992. What has changed? The totalitarian nature of the Department in kidnapping children is now exposed.