



ON TARGET

- NEWS HIGHLIGHTS
- BACKGROUND INFORMATION
- COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance –

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: ".....each human entity is a creation of God – 'a child of God' – and all humanity are 'children of One Father'. To the extent that the individual – the inner human personality – can bring his mind into harmony with the Universal Mind – with God – he will gain a realisation of reality."
– L.D. Byrne in *Faith, Power and Action*

BEHIND THE REGIONAL REVOLUTION:

When the Kennett Government was swept to office in 1993, primarily because of the disastrous Cain and Kirner Labor Governments, there was no reference to the most revolutionary programme for Local Government in Australian history. There were 210 Local Councils in Victoria when the Kennett Government took office. Unless there is an effective revolt by backbench Members of the Victorian Coalition Parties, which appears highly unlikely, from early next year there will be only 78 of the original 210 Councils left. The final reports from the Local Government Board will be presented to the Victorian Government on December 22nd with the State Government expected to finalise its amalgamation programme. When this happens, with the exception of Queenscliff, the elected representatives of the ratepayers of the whole of Victoria will have been sacked and replaced with highly paid Commissioners, these appointed by the Victorian Government. There is considerable speculation as to why Queenscliff was the only Local Government to have escaped the amalgamation revolution. It cannot be argued that Queenscliff is a small and well-run Municipality; there are many of these around Victoria who have felt the amalgamators' knife, some with a better record than Queenscliff. Can it be that there is some truth in the allegation that some of the high-powered elitists backing the Kennett Government have their holiday homes in Queenscliff?

Whatever the answer, what is starting to emerge is a clearer picture of a long-term strategy to use Local Government to subvert the Federal Constitution. As stressed in the explosive video, "Your Council The Target!", by Councillor Bevan O'Regan of Narrabri, N.S.W., the programme for

amalgamating Local Government is but part of a long-range strategy for by-passing the Federal Constitution in order to create a centrally planned Australian Socialist Republic. In order to understand the concept of regionalisation one has to go back to the thinking of Fabian Socialist Australian Attorney-General, Dr. H.V. Evatt, who was forced to accept the fact that when given a clear choice, Australians would never vote to increase the power of the Federal Government at the expense of the States – and, of course, the Australian people.

Those who may feel that we are being unduly fanciful about this matter might care to consider a report in *The Age*, Melbourne, of December 1st. The report, headed DIVIDING A NATION THE NATURAL WAY, starts by saying that "the first stage of a plan to split Australia into 40 'Transborder' regional economies will be launched at Warrnambool today with the south-west of Victoria being bonded to the south-east corner of South Australia. A new umbrella body called the Greater Green Triangle Regional Economic Organisation will plan and co-ordinate regional development in an area defined by common natural resources".

The Age provides a map of the area designated for Regional planning across the Victorian and South Australian borders. It takes in much of the Western District of Victoria, including cities like Warrnambool, Hamilton, Ararat, Horsham and Warracknabeal, and Mt. Gambier and areas north in the South East of South Australia. Mr. Peter Dryden of the Deakin University, Geelong, is quoted as saying that what is planned "would become a blueprint for cross-border development organisations throughout Australia". *The Age* report states that the Federal Government has set aside \$150 million over the next four years to help regions to build the necessary organisational structures upon which to build for the future. The Federal planners are making effective use of money power to erode any possible Local Government opposition to the centralist strategy. Ironically, it is the Victorian Liberal Government with its ruthless amalgamation programme which has paved the way for the long term Fabian strategy to destroy the Federal Constitution.

A study of all the information available on the Regionalisation strategy leaves no doubt that once Regional governments crossing existing State borders are established, they will be empowered to levy taxes and also become increasingly dependent on the Federal Government. The ultimate objective is, of course, to by-pass and eliminate the States. Fortuitously, the one State which is best equipped to thwart the Fabian strategy, West Australia, does not share common State borders across which a regional bridge can be built. Tasmania is, of course, in the same situation. On the face of what is being done, the Federal planners are in direct violation of the Federal Constitution. Can the West Australian and Tasmanian Governments be encouraged to mount a constitutional battle. It would bring the whole question of regionalisation to the attention of all Australians.

SENATOR FAULKNER DEMONSTRATES ABUSE OF POWERS:

Environment Minister John Faulkner's messy intervention in the Port Hinchinbrook development near Cardwell in far north Queensland fits a new pattern in an increasingly fragile federation.

The spectacle of a Commonwealth Minister intervening in State Government responsibilities is relatively new in Australian politics, because until recently this was constitutionally impossible, except in narrow, clearly-defined areas.

Senator Faulkner is said to have used "his constitutional powers" to over-ride the Queensland Government's responsibility for the development, in which mangroves were cleared as part of site preparation for a new resort. But where do these "constitutional powers" come from?

There is nothing in the written Constitution which gives Senator Faulkner **any powers** to intervene in the Oyster Point development. As in the case concerning Federal intervention in Tasmanian laws regarding homosexuals, Mr. Faulkner relies upon the High Court's interpretation of the "external affairs" power to intervene in the Queensland dispute, because of a nearby World Heritage area possibly affected by the resort development.

The fact that Senator Faulkner's intervention at Cardwell was such a messy operation simply emphasises the abuse of power. The scare tactics of a number of "scientists" predicting environmental disaster effectively panicked Faulkner into intervening. Several environmental studies had already concluded that bulldozing the mangroves would have little impact on sea grasses. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority concurred, and a government-appointed scientific panel, headed by the Commonwealth Chief Scientist, eventually found that the panic was unjustified, and not matched by the evidence.

The irony of Faulkner's position is that **by far the greatest wreckers of mangrove swamps are governments** – particularly the Commonwealth. While developer Keith Williams has bulldozed four hectares of mangroves, it was the Commonwealth Federal Airports Corporation that destroyed around **600 hectares** of mangrove swamp to extend the Brisbane airport. In order to expand Darwin port facilities, **another 1,000 hectares** of mangroves will need to be cleared – by the Commonwealth.

GROSS ABUSE OF POWER: The "founding fathers" who produced the Constitution were actually aware of the dangers of centralised power, which is why the powers of the new Commonwealth were **strictly limited**. The protests at Cardwell over Faulkner's intervention have been volatile – even violent – but protesters have shown a good grasp of the basic issues: that **international conventions have been used to interfere in local issues**. Perhaps it is best summed up by the question: does a mangrove tree belong to the United Nations, or does it belong to the people of north Queensland?

As usual, it is only the unfolding of events that produce political pressure. The interference in State affairs by **the application** of the "external affairs" power is providing graphic demonstrations of the dangers involved in centralised power. A simple demonstration of how centralised power unjustly influences the **relatively powerless individual** is worth more than a decade's warning about the dangers.

DOUBLE STANDARDS OVER ABORIGINAL LAND FUND:

When the Western Australian State Government challenged the Native Title Act in the High Court, which produced the original "Mabo" ruling, a number of Fabian doyens, including Mr. Gough Whitlam, sanctimoniously demanded that they withdraw the challenge. Not only was the Commonwealth not to be challenged by a State, but since such a challenge clearly discriminates against Aborigines, it flew in the face of the 1975 Racial Discrimination Act.

Little attention is given to the proposition that the spirit of the Racial Discrimination Act should prevent special treatment for **any racial group**, even if it is Aboriginal or part-Aboriginal. The tension that has been generated by the Bill to provide an Aboriginal Land Fund in the Commonwealth Parliament is a result of resentment to special treatment for Aboriginal groups.

The Land Fund is designed to compensate those Aboriginal descendants who are unable to take advantage of the Native Title Act to claim title to traditional lands. The spectacle of urban Aborigines, who may be disadvantaged, qualifying for huge financial hand-outs, while non-Aborigines who may also be living in poverty do qualify for such largesse, naturally leads to massive resentment. As an exercise in reconciliation, it is a failure, and a public relations disaster.

ABORIGINES DIVIDED: One reason that the Land Fund legislation has been delayed in the Senate, is that Aboriginal groups themselves are deeply divided over the Fund. Rural Aborigines, who were never consulted over the Native Title Act or the Land Fund, reject both measures. In particular, many rural Aborigines fear that the groups who will be in receipt of the money from the Land Fund, will use it for a blatantly political agenda **not shared by all Aborigines**. For example, in Western Australia, the strongly radical Kimberley Land Council, which has campaigned strongly for a black state, is demanding access to the Fund.

The majority of Australians who oppose the creation of the Land Fund do not dare publicly speak out, for fear of the social stigma of "racism". The Commonwealth, especially the Prime Minister, is counting on this fear to ram the legislation through the Senate. The Green Independents from Western Australia may be intimidated by the Government to vote for the fund in the same way that they were intimidated to vote for the Native Title Act in 1993.

ELECTION TIMETABLE:

Prospects of an early Federal election are clouded by inconvenient political obstacles. Two of these occur in N.S.W., where an election must be held on March 25th. The N.S.W. A.L.P. strongly opposes a Federal election close to this date. The other factor concerns the third airport runway, which is a Commonwealth responsibility. Aircraft noise is so severe, that this is now a major issue, and could jeopardise **at least four A.L.P. seats**, unless a solution is found. A rally at Leichardt Oval last weekend was attended by **10,000** angry and abusive residents. The Sydney Airport has now become a major factor in the election timing; it will not "go away" over the holiday period, but will intensify as each jumbo jet blasts its way over suburban Sydney.

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