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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance –

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: ".....it is quite legitimate for nations to treat their differences as a sacred inheritance and guard them at all costs."

– Pope Pius XII, in Papal Encyclical, *Summi Pontificatus* (1943)

THE MAKING OF HISTORY by Eric D. Butler:

True history, observed C.H. Douglas, is not a series of disconnected episodes, but crystallised politics. When a coherent flow of events develops over a period of time, it is possible to say that behind these events there is a coherent philosophy. History is not made by "the masses", but by a relatively few exceptional individuals, who are able to attract the support of sufficient of their fellows to implement their philosophy. In retrospect the Kennett Liberal-National Government in Victoria will be seen as the most revolutionary in Australian history. Without reference to the Victorian people, the Kennett Government sacked their elected representatives in 210 Councils, replaced them with Government appointed Commissioners who are currently administering 78 regions. It has been made clear that when eventually the Victorian people are permitted to elect Councillors, these Councillors will do as required by the State Government's planners, or they will also be sacked. Not only is the Corporate State emerging in Victoria, but it has the quiet approval of Canberra, where destruction of traditional Local Government is seen as the most effective manner for destroying the Federal Constitution without the Australian people having any say.

Driven by the same centralist philosophy as that of the Kennett Government, the Cain and Labor Governments attempted to destroy Local Government and mortgaged much of the State's assets, such as its transport system, to the international debt merchants. The anger of the electors was brought about because Kennett and his advisers did not even bother to enunciate and specific policies.

There was no mention of the intention to wipe out local government. There was no mention that the debt problem would be dealt with by increasing charges and slashing services with the eventual

intention of selling off the State's assets. The media has failed to point out that the State's total debt is now approximately **\$2 billion** greater than when the Kennett Government took over from the Kirner Government.

The Keating Government should be delighted: The Kennett Government making a major contribution to the erosion of the Federal Constitution, is furthering the same "privatisation" it advocates, and creating a climate which will make it easier for Keating to hold all Labor-held electorates in Victoria. He might well even make electoral gains.

A superficial view would suggest that the future for Australia looks bleak, that exchanging one set of party hacks for another set merely consolidates centralised power. But what has happened in Victoria has demonstrated what the great Russian Solzhenitsyn pointed out: that corruption reaches such a level in the highest centralised State that regeneration can only start at the grassroots. The situation has started to result in a few exceptional and courageous individuals emerging. It is impossible to calculate the national influence of Councillor Bevan O'Regan of N.S.W., making use of modern video technology to reach his fellow Councillors. And in Victoria the former Mayor of St. Kilda, Tim Costello, a devout Christian, has emerged with the formation of a Local Government association of past Councillors. His magnificent address at a Gippsland rally late last year is a demonstration that there are men at the Local Government level who can play a vital role in saving Australia.

These few will in time prove to be the real history makers.

YOU DID NOT READ THIS IN THE MEDIA: The Sydney edition of *The Australian Jewish News* (January 13th) carries an editorial, "Banking on Yeshivah", which says, "On the Jewish day school scene in Australia, the year of 1995 has started not with a whimper but a bang. The story is of how the Yeshivah Centres in Sydney and Melbourne were able to get from under their yoke of debts totalling \$35 million."

The Australian Jewish News writes, "Together with the understanding of the A.N.Z. bank showed late last year, in writing off more than \$2 million owed by Leibler-Yavneh College, the Commonwealth Bank's moves mark a watershed in Jewish communal and educational history. Incidentally, it means these banks are now the largest 'donors' by quite a margin, to Jewish education in Australia."

The report does not state how large were the Commonwealth Bank's "large portions" of debt written off. But it says that the total debt write off was "critical" to the future of the Jewish Schools.

Desperate farmers and small businessmen might take note and suggest that perhaps they are worthy of the same treatment from the banks.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: BAIT AND HOOK by David Thompson:

Time and time again the League is considerably in advance of contemporary politics in issues of concern – not because of any kind of crystal ball-gazing, but by understanding the application of policy. For many years the League has warned of the manipulation of local government to advance the programme of centralisation. And now that programme has re-emerged in its latest and most dangerous form.

As Councillor Bevan O'Regan outlines in his new video *Councils at the Crossroads*, the Commonwealth Government has marshalled the elements of economic policy and financial clout in a startling new programme to seduce business leaders into supporting the development of dozens of "regions" around Australia. Forty "trans-border" regional economies controlled by Canberra, based upon amalgamated local government and completely by-passing the States, are now on the drawing-board.

The programme of regionalism is now emerging among businessmen as the new hope for ailing small business, and a major article by David O'Reilly appeared in the January edition of the Packer business magazine *Australian Business Monthly*. O'Reilly's article begins:

"Tucked away in a file inside the Federal Department of Housing and Regional Development in Canberra is a map of Australia. Superimposed in glossy colour over the traditional outline of the States are a series of new boundaries which carve the nation up into smaller provinces.

"The map is the result of a national plan sketched behind the scenes by senior Federal and State bureaucrats, its precise form the subject of months of negotiation. It is also shrouded in political sensitivity. "Top Secret" may not be stamped across it in red ink, but some senior people inside the Keating Government, for the moment, are denying it exists.

"Not only does it exist, but this map is the symbol of a delicate process of negotiation . . . The full implications of this process have only been grasped by a small number of people, but they suspect it could have the long-term potential to help in the re-making of Australia. . . ."

O'Reilly goes on to outline the establishment of the 40 economic regions, the funding of Regional Economic Development Organisations (REDOs) from Canberra, and establishment of Area Consultative Committees (ACCs). O'Reilly explains:

"The ACCs would comprise local businesspeople, unions, training providers and State and Federal bureaucrats, operating essentially as sub-committees of REDO. . . ."

AN ANCIENT AND EVIL PROCESS: O'Reilly acknowledges the revolutionary nature of the programme, and the impact on the States, but appears, along with many leading businessmen, to have been seduced by the idea. After all, with the cities becoming choked, and the regions starved, surely 'decentralisation' is better served by offering incentives for industry to develop outside cities? Neil O'Keefe, parliamentary secretary for transport, propounds this view, claiming that the regionalism process "passes control of the economy away from Canberra". But is this true?

A clue to the genuine nature of regionalism is provided by a close study of the proposal. Federal bureaucrats are to be stationed in regional centres on the new committees to ensure that Federal funds are spent as proposed. This is not a process of decentralisation, but the pursuit of the Fabian policy of centralism. The Commonwealth is proposing to fund and control the development of economic regions, base their administration on amalgamated local government, and eliminate the influence of the States. The bait is finance for economic development (jobs, industry, infrastructure) and the hook is control from Canberra, rather than the States. The businessmen themselves are not primarily concerned about where the money comes from, just whether they will get it. Even those who see the dangers in the programmes can turn a blind eye in the interests of more healthy balance sheets.

League supporters are among O'Reilly's "small number of people" who have understood this process in advance. To those who understand the pursuit of policy, this is not so much a golden opportunity for regional business, but an ancient and evil programme dressed up as "progress".

RUSSIA AND THE CHECHNYA CRISIS:

Russia's violent campaign to put down aspirations for some level of independence in Chechnya is a curious manifestation of freedom and 'democracy'. Mr. Yeltsin appears prepared to crush any regional or ethnic aspirations in the interests of maintaining greater Russia. Why should this be so?

Solzhenitsyn's manifesto for the rebirth of Russia from the Soviet shambles, *Rebuilding Russia*, becomes more and more prophetic. In it he writes: *I note with alarm that the awakening Russian self-awareness has to a large extent been unable to free itself of great-power thinking and of imperial delusions, that it has taken over from the communists the fraudulent and contrived notion of 'Soviet patriotism' . . .*

"But given our people's total lack of preparation for the intricacies of democratic life, democracy must be built from the bottom up, gradually, patiently, and in a way designed to last rather than being proclaimed thunderously from above in its fully-fledged form . . ."

Chechen determination for self-government is reflected in the estimated 12,000 Russian troops killed in the war so far.

BRIEF COMMENTS:

Big Brother proposes to take another step towards the State assuming responsibility (and control) of children, if an Australian Education Union proposal is enforced. The Union is reported to propose that any parents who ban their children from AIDS and HIV education from primary school level should be prosecuted for breaching human rights! Religious and cultural objections could not be considered as grounds for excluding infants, because of the life-threatening nature of the diseases. We note that the groups like the homosexuals who dominate the AIDS-HIV debate always rule out the safest strategy for containing AIDS: sexual abstinence – especially for children.

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That old 'China hand', Henry Kissinger, has been called in by the Chinese President to help avert U.S. trade sanctions over intellectual property rights violations, in the interests of world trading harmony. Mr. Jiang Zemin told Kissinger: "We should be far-sighted and view things from commanding heights to seek common interests so as to promote bilateral relations in the new world order." Perhaps the Chinese have not yet caught up with the new GATT trading rules. Beginning this month, the new World Trade Organisation begins to operate, having savage powers to wield on those who dare to protect their own industries.

