



ON TARGET

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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance –

Print Post Publication Number 381667 00258

Vol.31, No.5

February 17th, 1995

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: "Only in liberty will the flower of civilisation unfold."

– Michael Sartorius

BEHIND THE PARTY POLITICAL FACADE by Eric D. Butler:

Students of psycho-political warfare are aware that if an individual is subjected to artificially created tension, with horrendous threats to his safety and security, with suggestions that even his life is in jeopardy, and that if the tension is reduced by offering an alternative which is far less threatening, the threatened individual will thank the aggressor profusely for having been so kind and understanding. There are good reasons for believing that the current controversy concerning alleged "leaks" to the Opposition parties about possible major spending cuts seriously affecting lower income earners, and those receiving welfare payments, have been deliberately fabricated as part of a "softening up" process before the coming Federal Budget. We have it on the authority of a former senior Cabinet Minister of the Keating Government, Graham Richardson, that sophisticated lying is one of the finer arts of modern governments.

Aided by the media, Opposition leader John Howard, and his colleagues, are contributing to what is a major political charade, by attempting to frighten electors by claiming that the "leaks" prove just how ruthless the Keating Government can be. The reality is that under current financial orthodoxy, **to which John Howard also subscribes**, the Keating Government proposes to do what all the "experts" recommend: increase taxes and cut government spending, thus reducing the deficit – a type of sacred cow – easing the balance of payments and, most importantly, demonstrating to the International Bankers that Australia has a "responsible" government which makes them worthy of continued debt-financing. The problem for Keating and his strategists is how to appease the International Debt-merchants and their local hirelings without creating an electoral backlash which could continue until the next Federal elections. If electors can be terrified with the threat of a "Horror budget", which turns out not to be quite as bad as projected, and with John Howard and the Opposition being forced to agree with the general thrust of the budget, then the Keating strategists hope to further the widespread public perception that there are no basic differences between the Labor Government and the Opposition and claim that, based on his past record, John Howard can do no better than the Keating Government.

It is as certain as the sunrise that when the budget is introduced, it will not be quite as bad as currently predicted. There will be a sigh of relief with the feeling that "It might have been worse". Anyone who thinks that what has been presented is a little too Machiavellian, might consider another significant development: the backflip by the Opposition parties on the Mabo issue. The conventional view is that the Opposition has done this to deny the Government a "trigger" for a double dissolution and a full Senate election. Both the Government and the Opposition fear a full Senate election because they know, as the public opinion polls show, that a large and growing number of Australians, **including young Australians**, are alarmed about an immigration policy which has the support of both the Government and the Opposition. A series of by-elections has demonstrated that a realitively amateur and poorly funded political group like Australians Against Further Immigration could in a general Senate election, with the smaller quota required, elect at least several candidates holding the balance of power in the Senate.

If the Australians Against Further Immigration could broaden their objectives and find a high profile figure like Labor Member Graeme Campbell to lead them in the next Senate campaign, the results could be dramatic. Anyone who has read Graeme Campbell's New England University Address must agree that it clearly enunciates the basic requirements for an effective national survival programme. While large numbers of Australians are openly cynical in their attitude towards the major political parties, and this cynicism will deepen as the result of the phony Budget "debate", they are desperately seeking the type of leadership which only a politician of Graeme Campbell's standing can provide.

It is a fact of history that it often takes a major national crisis to see the emergence of a leader with the capacity to act as a catalyst. The potential for a genuine grassroots Australian movement was never greater: And it would be most appropriate if it started in the Senate, which originally was designed to represent the founders of the Federation – the sovereign States.

FARMERS "GET BIG, OR GET OUT" by David Thompson:

Over the last 25 years the decline of Australia's rural areas has been dominated by a single economic policy that appears to remain in place even now, as primary producers struggle to emerge from drought with sufficient equity in properties to continue farming. That policy, articulated by the Marxists and Fabian sympathisers in the economic faculties of the major universities, has been one of using debt-finance to wipe out the independent primary producer.

The policy, summarised as "get big, or get out", was invoked as a mantra to eliminate thousands of family farming enterprises, and is vested with the aura or "progress" so that it can never seriously be challenged. It has even now been accepted by the peak rural lobby group, the National Farmers Federation, so that less effort is now made to help primary producers to retain their properties than that made to help them to leave their properties.

The "get big or get out" philosophy emerged again at the recent annual Outlook Conference, held by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics (ABARE). Dr. Steve Beare

warned that the clearly emerging "trend" was for farms to continue to get bigger, with fewer farmers surviving into the next century. Dr. Beare produced figures, showing that this was inevitable. Observers are reminded of George Orwell's propaganda pig, "Squealer", in *Animal Farm*, who was always ready with a new set of figures on the back of the barn door to demonstrate how conditions were "improving" since the farmer had been banished, no matter how the evidence before the eyes of the other animals suggested otherwise.

Mr. Barry Buffier, of Westpac, noted that farm debt had reached \$18 billion by June last year, and that the total debt had approximately doubled in the last 10 years. Much of this increase reflects inability to finance existing debt, with more debt raised to service existing debt. Although Mr. Buffier claimed that the banks have "enormous confidence in the rural sector" he was forced to concede that most banks were charging a risk margin to farmers of between 1.5 and 8.5 percent in interest.

A CONSTRUCTIVE FINANCIAL POLICY: The recent rain in many areas of drought-hit N.S.W. may, ironically, increase the pressure on struggling farmers. Now that stock-feed is beginning to grow again, banks are considering another round of mortgagee sales to eliminate those in the worst financial position. The N.S.W. Rural Assistance Authority, which is incapable of keeping up with pleas for assistance, estimates that almost 20 percent of N.S.W. farmers risk losing their properties.

The truth is that no elaborate allocations of Commonwealth or State drought assistance can preserve a healthy rural sector. Only a financial policy designed to assist primary production is of any long-term value. Ironically, at various times, each major political party espoused such a policy. Before Whitlam was elected in 1972, the A.L.P. spokesman on rural policy, Dr. Rex Patterson, produced a rural policy which advocated long-term, low-interest finance, to be made available utilising the Commonwealth Bank. But under the present Labor administration, not only would this policy be unheard of, but they are even selling off the Bank!

To match this policy, the Liberal Party's Federal Rural Committee urged the Liberal Party offer "substantial and unlimited" long-term loans to farmers. There is no long-term future for the traditional family farm, the original backbone of the nation, until such policies are adopted. Perhaps Mr. John Howard might take an interest?

PUSH FOR THE DEATH PENALTY: Independent M.P. Tony Windsor, of Tamworth, has prepared a Private Member's Bill proposing a referendum on the death penalty. A group of Coalition Backbenchers have vowed to support the Windsor bill, and demand the death penalty for murder in N.S.W. The Backbenchers, led by former Minister Gerry Peacocke, also propose to hand a submission to Premier Fahey if the Coalition survive the election calling for tougher minimum penalties for serious crimes, including a minimum five years imprisonment for "home invasion" crimes.

Mr. Peacocke indicated that the Rural Alliance, a group of conservative, mainly rural, M.P's., would be prepared to cross the floor of the House to achieve more conservative policies on a range of issues.

BRIEF COMMENTS:

As we have warned for several years, "privatisation" is a buzz word designed to confuse the innocent into believing that they will benefit from the selling of public assets. The truth is that public assets pass under the control of multinationals financed by the International Bankers. Distinguished Roman Catholic commentator B.A. Santamaria has rendered a national service by using his column in *The Weekend Australian* to warn that "Privatisation is a minefield". In *The Weekend Australian* of February 11th-12th, Santamaria points out what has happened in the U.K. under privatisation, commenting, "In a more forthright age, the character of the 'new capitalism' might be described as a system of grand larceny, legitimised by the hocus-pocus of economic theory." Well-known commentator Terry Lane has joined the growing chorus of protest against privatisation of public assets, stating in *The Sunday Age*, February 11th, that "Victorian water charges are being increased to increase the profits (of Melbourne water) so that some Japanese plutocrat will fall over his cheque book to buy our waterworks...". Lane points out that 92 percent of Victorians don't want foreigners to own the State electricity system, and quotes a letter in his local paper asking, "Please tell us what in our constitution gives temporary employees (the people in government employed by the people...) the right to sell our assets without our permission (that is, a State referendum)?" As demonstrated by his abolition of Local Government in Victoria without consulting the electors, Premier Kennett (and his minders) believe that they have some divine right to ignore the people, a fact which Victorians should bear in mind before the next State elections.

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Non-Aboriginal Australians, the overwhelming majority of the population, should reject the carefully fostered view that they should feel guilty about the appalling health problems of many Australians of Aboriginal or part-Aboriginal background. Even the former radical Pat O'Shane, in a letter to *The Age* (February 10th), stresses that more money is not the answer to the problem, pointing out that "A good deal of ... money has been wasted on excessive bureaucratic requirements...". The fraud probe of the Aboriginal Health Service confirms what many informed people have known for a long time. But it was politically incorrect to say so. In his book, *Healing A Divided Nation* (\$6 posted from all League addresses) the Rev. Cedric Jacobs outlined what was necessary for his fellow Aboriginals.

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In his 1978 Budget speech, Mr. John Howard expressed his regret that in order to reduce the deficit, "it was necessary to raise substantial additional revenue...". But the increases were only going to be "temporary"! Now Treasurer Willis says what Howard was saying. And yet there are some naive people who believe that a change from Willis to Howard will improve the state of the economy!