



ON TARGET

- NEWS HIGHLIGHTS
- BACKGROUND INFORMATION
- COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance –

Print Post Publication Number 381667 00258

Vol.31, No.21

June 9th, 1995

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: "There is only one sane objective of government and that is to make it easier for everybody to do those things that are possible. That is the only justification for government – that by doing things according to certain rules you can do things more easily and comfortably. To imagine that we are born into the world to be governed by something not inherent in the cosmos is one of the most outstanding pieces of hypnotism that has ever afflicted the world."

– C.H. Douglas in *The Approach To Reality* (1936)

SOMETHING ROTTEN IN THE STATE OF VICTORIA by Eric D. Butler:

While the Soap Opera performance of senior Victorian Liberal Minister Ian Smith in the Victorian Parliament last week, seeking to explain his relationship with his former lover and chief-of-staff, Cheryl Harris, was like manna from heaven for a sensation hungry mass media, like many such "sex scandals" it tends to divert attention away from more fundamental questions. The affair will do the Kennett Government no good electorally; Ian Smith played a role in helping Kennett to regain leadership of the Victorian Liberal Party from a lack-lustre Alan Brown and when Kennett won an election which even the proverbial Drover's dog could have won, Ian Smith was appointed as one of Kennett's senior ministers – Minister of Finance. Unlike many Liberal Members, who have had no say whatever in fashioning Victorian Government policy, Ian Smith has been directly involved in helping to fashion the most revolutionary programme in Victorian history. Like the Premier himself, Ian Smith is not noted as a deep thinker. In seeking an answer to why the Kennett Government has pursued a programme with such far-reaching implications, not only for Victoria, but for the whole of Australia, it is essential to locate if possible the identity of the forces which, for example, resulted in Jeff Kennett so enthusiastically adopting the policy of forced Municipal Council amalgamations which he, as leader of the Victorian Opposition, had so vigorously opposed. Why, for example, was Roger Hallam chosen to spearhead the assault on Municipal Government in Victoria?

While it is true that Hallam, as a member of the Kennett-led Victorian Opposition, adopted the

official attitude of opposition to forced Council amalgamations, there is evidence to support the view that he, in fact, supported the broad thrust of the Labor Socialist legislation. Several newspaper editors are of the opinion that Hallam has always been in favour of forced amalgamation. Credence for this view is given by Hallam's public performance. He has not bothered to disguise his contempt for the "hillbilly" type of Victorian Councillors of the past. As one moves around Victoria one already sees the evidence of far-reaching changes as non-elected Commissioners provide a facade behind which a new managerial class is emerging. There is going to be decreasing scope for the application of the voluntary principle in society. It is not surprising that worship of the god of efficiency is being extended by the Kennett Government to that unique Victorian organisation, the Country Fire Authority. A combination of factors have made Southern Victoria, in particular, the most bushfire prone area in the world. The development of the Victorian Country Fire Authority was the practical application of the principles of voluntary association, with individuals accepting the necessity for an organised structure in which they were prepared to accept a military-type discipline. Such has been the success of this organisation the firefighting organisations from around the world have come to study how it operates.

But now the centralist philosophy which underpins the Kennett Government threatens the C.F.A. The centralist disease feeds upon itself with the Government proposing the expenditure of billions of dollars on a grandiose road transport system for Melbourne, an overgrown city whose problems can only multiply as more resources are poured in, in a futile attempt to make the unworkable work. With a complete monopoly of power, the Kennett Government passes increasing legislation denying individuals access to their common law rights in the courts. One Liberal Member, challenged by some of his electors on the undemocratic policy of destroying local government, responded by saying that democracy had to be "put on hold" for the time being. In the meantime the proposed sale of Victorian power and water assets is advanced in the face of overwhelming opposition from Victorian electors.

While the sordid Ian Smith affair with his chief of staff does little credit to either the former Minister or Cheryl Harris, it would be a disaster if the Victorian Government, headed by a man who now endorses euthanasia, were brought down by a sex scandal. The restoration of some semblance of democracy in Victoria requires the election at the next State election of a number of candidates challenging the centralist philosophy of the Kennett Government. Failing this another Government will merely carry on where the present Government finishes off.

BRIEF COMMENTS: The latest contribution to the long list of pseudo-academic literature on the League of Rights comes from Dr. Andrew Moore, a senior lecturer in Australian history at the University of West Sydney, Macarthur. *The Right Road*, subtitled "A History of Right Wing Politics in Australia", published by Oxford University Press, is in essence a major hatchet work on the League of Rights, and will no doubt be required reading for coming generations of Australian students. In his conclusion Moore states, "It is easy to see why the League of Rights is concerned about the (racial vilification) legislation. It could mean that the League would be prosecuted for publicising its racist views."

We have no doubt that if the Keating Government's totalitarian race hate legislation, still waiting to be debated in the Senate, is implemented, every effort will be made to prosecute the League, even if only to divert its resources and activities from its long term activities.

A recent article in *The Australian* canvasses the question of whether Anzac Day can survive in a multicultural Australia. Writer Christopher Bantick writes that "Anglo-Celtic Australians who hold the day dear must be prepared for change. This may mean facing the fact of sharing the day with former enemies. Certainly the way Anzac Day is perceived in Australia will most likely be different, and properly so." The Anzac tradition grew out of the achievements of predominantly Anglo-Saxon-Celtic Australians who at the time felt strongly associated with other members of the old British Empire. Legends associated with an event which has led to the development of a truly national day of celebration are the stuff of a tradition. Anzac Day is not the celebration of a great military victory, but of the manifestations of values even greater than military victories. If would-be migrants to Australia do not feel they can participate in furthering the traditions for which Anzac stands they should not come to Australia. Migrants who reject the traditions out of which Australia grew are indicating that they are not the type of migrants Australia requires.

"REGIONAL" REVOLUTION ROLLS ALONG by David Thompson:

News leaked out last week that the Commonwealth is continuing to promote its blatantly unconstitutional programme to regionalise Australia by forming an even closer relationship with local government. Under a new agreement to be negotiated with the Australian Local Government Association, it is proposed that local government will act as the Commonwealth's agent to provide childcare, housing and other services like computer linking of libraries, to give all Australians access to the information "super highway".

This extraordinary proposal is blatantly aimed at replacing the States. Finance for the library computer system is to come from Canberra, and previously such services as childcare, housing, libraries, etc., were all State Government services. In return for Commonwealth assistance, local government is expected to submit to a "performance benchmark" to make it more accountable. Accountable to whom? To ratepayers? Accountable to the Commonwealth.

It is significant that this proposal has come out of Deputy Prime Minister Brian Howe's Department of Housing and Regional development. This is also where the development work was done for the system of Regional Economic Development Organisations (R.E.D.O's.), of which the first 19 are now established around the nation, irrespective of State borders. These Organisations depend upon the regional co-operation of local councils for their political base, and economic measures have a habit of developing into political measures. The European Economic Community eventually became simply the European Community, as a sovereign entity in its own right. This is clearly what is proposed for local government.

EASTLINK AND THE NATIONAL GRID: The proposal to build a high-voltage power line from northern N.S.W. to southern Queensland over a distance of 850kms has alarmed and enraged many of those who live in its path. The "Eastlink" proposal is explained away as necessary to be able to make up a shortfall of power in Queensland, following the "privatisation" of the Gladstone power station, which is now generating power for Alcoa. The logical alternative is to simply build a couple of small coal-fired power stations in Queensland where electricity is required. Coal is plentiful.

However, the Eastlink proposal is really much more complicated. It fits the pattern of "privatisation" of the States' utilities under the new Hilmer reforms. While the bureaucrats who propose Eastlink claim that at this stage, the line may never even be built, nevertheless, planning to acquire the land for an easement is proceeding in case the line is necessary. The truth is that only the State can acquire the easements, and when the whole electricity system is privatised, a private company can buy the easement, and build the line. But no private company can acquire the easement.

Meanwhile, in northern N.S.W., the North West Electricity County Council is threatened with being sacked, in order to be amalgamated with other counties. This would provide a more "efficient" economic unit to offer for sale. The Eastlink proposal is necessary to complete the national power grid, which, when privatised, is supposed to provide a competitive, efficient power supply, at a lower cost to the consumer. However, the General Manager of Pacific Power (N.S.W.) is reported as saying that this competitive market is a "..... theoretical model that has not achieved lower prices and improved reliability anywhere in the world".

THE IMMIGRATION DEBATE: As N.S.W. Premier Bob Carr refuses to retreat from his call for a revision of Australia's immigration patterns, others are supporting him, and widening the scope of the debate. He has helped create a climate where the immigration issue can be discussed with less threat of intimidation, and charges of "racism". This is important, as many who hold views about the issue are reluctant to risk the thought-police, and express them.

Even many migrants have reservations about Australia's immigration programme, and institutionalised multicultural policy. For example, at a Greek festival in Brisbane late in May, a number of Greek-born Australians who were interviewed by *The Courier-Mail*, expressed preferences for a change in immigration policy: "We would like to see more Europeans here if we could...."

The ideologues who support the multicultural experiment are critical of Carr's comments because of this type of result; it invites expressions of criticism of multiculturalism. Some, like Immigration Minister Mr. Bolkus, attempt to cast the debate in economic and trade terms, claiming that from a trade point of view, we must suffer multiculturalism. "In this era of globalisation, we can't say to the rest of the world we want your money but we don't want you," he claims.

However, as many Australians instinctively understand, becoming "a part of Asia" not only means that we hope to enjoy the alleged benefits that this offers, but also share the obvious tensions that are growing in the "region". A few weeks ago Malaysian Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir, warned that the conflict over ownership of the Spratley Islands could conceivably lead to nuclear war in "Asia". Do we then wish to be "a part of Asia"?

TED MACK SPEAKS UP: Criticism of the immigration debate from the professional ethnics is a new form of "racial McCarthyism", according to Independent M.P. Ted Mack of North Sydney. Mr. Mack, who accused the ethnic lobby of "seeing racists under every bed", said that their reaction simply confirmed that the Government's Racial Hatred Bill threatened freedom of speech. Mr. Mack accused the lobby of standing in the way of rational debate, and of going "right over the top" on the issue.