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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance –

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: "It is not possible to see what our society is today except by looking at it from a distance; and that distance is provided by the past, by history. We must see the present with the eyes of the past. We can learn to see with the eyes of the past by entering into the world of our forbears by reading their writings and regarding their works."

– Michael Lane, American Social Crediter

KEATING PREPARES GROUND FOR EARLY ELECTION by Eric D. Butler:

A fundamental principle of warfare is that one never underestimates one's enemy. Prime Minister Keating is a declared enemy of traditional Australia. But he has demonstrated that he is a master of psychopolitical warfare. Last week's address to the nation on the Republican issue was primarily concerned, not with reaching his ultimate objective of completely revolutionising the present constitutional form of government, tearing down the flag and neutralising the influence of the Senate, but with winning the next Federal elections. Having achieved this, he can move onto the next step in his programme. Paul Keating's address was designed to project an image of a statesman: a reasonable man only concerned with the long term interests of the nation. The usual anti-British bias was missing, while references to Her Majesty the Queen were respectful. There was no reference to the highly emotional issue of the Flag. Yes, Australia would remain part of the association now known as The Commonwealth, presided over by the Queen. The Keating vision included a President with basically the same powers as the Governor-General, a point which grated on some of the Republicans. Serving politicians would be excluded from the Presidency. Keating and his advisers were not concerned about any muttering in the ranks of Republicans claiming that he had not gone far enough: he knows that they will be voting for him anyhow, and that he must influence those instinctively opposed to change, showing that he appreciates their views and that he is basically a moderate and reasonable man.

The greatest political asset of Paul Keating is the fact that there are deep divisions in the ranks of his political opponents, and the strong support he has in the mass media. His address on the Republican issue was carefully designed to exploit this fact. The editorial policies of all major

dailies praised, with few reservations, the "constructive initiative" of the Prime Minister, proclaiming with one voice that the establishment of a Republic was "inevitable". Even columnists who felt that Keating was using the Republic issue as a diversionary political tactic were forced to concede that Keating was dramatically successful last week. Writing in *The Financial Review*, John Stone commented, "That one should be wasting ink on addressing the Prime Minister's republican fantasies is ... chiefly remarkable for the fact that I am doing precisely what he wants the media generally to do – namely, allow themselves to be diverted from the practical issues to an evanescent issue of some time well into the next century....."

The Keating initiative forced a response from John Howard which, whatever its merits, achieved what Keating and his strategists sought: a demonstration of the deep divisions inside the Opposition ranks. By the end of the week John Howard had been openly deserted by every State Liberal Premier, with the exception of Richard Court of Western Australia. Even Premier Ray Groom of normally conservative Tasmania joined the chorus of those Liberals proclaiming that a Republic was "inevitable". Even Tim Fischer of the National Party which, to its credit, is the only Opposition Party to issue a positive defence of the Constitutional Monarchy, feels that he has had to compromise his position. The Liberal Party is unable to produce any document similar to that of the Nationals for the simple reason that numbers of the Federal Liberal Party are Republicans. John Howard is faced with the impossible task of attempting to lead a Liberal Party which is deeply divided on basic issues. Paul Keating knows this and his Republican strategy is carefully framed to exploit those divisions.

During the events of last week, John Howard temporarily gained the initiative when he stressed the importance of the exploitation of the External Powers. But the prospect of turning this issue to political advantage was lost with what can only be described as treachery in Liberal Party ranks. This type of treachery demonstrates that even if he can defeat a Keating now riding high, he would be leading a government without a coherent philosophy. The good news is, of course, that irrespective of what happens in the Republic debate, the wisdom and foresight the framers of the Federal Constitution makes it possible for the electors to defeat all centralist programmes. That Constitutional framework is one of the greatest heritages derived by the Australian people from the British. Not even the multiculturalists can deny that this constitution was framed by people of predominantly British stock and voted into existence by the same kind of people.

It has been left to the Australian League of Rights never to falter or compromise in defending that heritage. The decisive battle has yet to be fought and every effort must be made over the coming years to prepare, by education and encouragement, the Australian people to reject at referendum a final betrayal of that heritage. Paul Keating may well be remembered as the man who made this possible.

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WHAT'S THE TRUTH ABOUT THE MABO AFFAIR?

The defacing of the Eddie Mabo tomb was a disgraceful act and must be strongly condemned by all decent people. But even more disgraceful has been the manner in which this affair has been exploited by the media and radical Aboriginal activists and, as usual, by mealy-mouthed hypocritical politicians. As we go to press no one has been charged with the defacement of the Mabo tomb. But this has not prevented the charge being publicised that white racists were responsible. How convenient that this deplorable affair has taken place at a time when desperate efforts are being made to ensure that the totalitarian anti-racial vilification legislation is passed into law. We have had a long experience with the use of the agent-provocateur. And we are most interested in an item which, after a brief appearance in both the print and electronic media, suddenly disappeared. The items suggested that a group of Aboriginal children was responsible for the act of defacement. Until proper charges are laid by the police, common decency demands that loose charges of "racism" cease.

THE "TREATY POWER" AND THE COMING ELECTIONS:

Masterful as his performance might have been in setting the political agenda and out-manoeuvring an internally-divided Opposition, Prime Minister Keating's address to the nation proposing his republic relied partly upon the Keating version of history, and a number of simple lies. His attempt to make a virtue of the assertion that the Constitution *can only be changed by the Australian people at referendum*, while correct in theory, is in fact a gross misrepresentation of the truth.

The truth is that the "external affairs power" of the Constitution has been abused and used to adopt all manner of agreements and treaties for domestic purposes without consulting the Australian people at any time, either at referendum, or through their Parliamentary representatives. What has perhaps been overlooked by the republicans is that many who oppose the republic do so not primarily because they are monarchists, but because they distrust the Prime Minister's attitude. He proposes to carefully stage-manage the changes by committees made up largely of republican sympathisers. He claims that changes can't be made without our approval, but his whole record is one of avoiding public consultation whenever possible. Stealth is used to achieve ends which are dubious, so why should we permit people with such a record to set the political and social agenda?

Mr. Howard and his colleagues are missing a golden opportunity to seize the political initiative if they fail to develop his proposal for Constitutional change to limit the abuse of the external affairs power. Mr. Howard could make a virtue of the fact that he is prepared to offer genuine participation in Constitutional change by proposing to limit the powers of the Commonwealth. Dr. Colin Howard, respected former Hearn Professor of Law at Melbourne University, agrees that the Commonwealth's use of the external affairs power *"has gone far beyond the reasonable"*, describing such use as "illicit", and causing "widespread disquiet, especially in some States".

Dr. Colin Howard has drafted his own proposed change to the Constitution to limit the federal abuse of these powers, and is of the opinion that such a referendum with a "simple and attractive message to the electorate would have a better chance (of success) than people usually assume.....".

Even the Coalition has fallen into the trap of regarding a referendum on the republic as "inevitable", when this is not so. Mr. Keating's opportunity to hold a republican referendum depends upon his first winning the next election, which, while it may appear increasingly likely, is in itself not inevitable. What Mr. John Howard and Co. need is an issue with which they can seize the political initiative, and give themselves a decent chance to win the election. The "treaty issue" is tailor-made for this purpose. Will Mr. Howard grasp the nettle?

CORPORATISING PUBLIC UTILITIES IN N.S.W.:

The State Labor Government of N.S.W. has begun its massive programme of amalgamation of electricity generating and supply authorities by setting out to sack every County Councillor serving on the power boards. As yet, those being sacked are largely aware of the overall picture, with local councillors in such areas of the North-West of the State complaining bitterly that their service record is excellent, and that they have been arbitrarily sacked.

The reality is that the sackings are the prelude to the amalgamation of the existing 25 electricity distributors, to form a small number of "viable efficient" corporations to handle distribution and retail supply of power. This opens the way for the entire public power system to be "privatised" under the Federal Government's Hilmer national competition reforms.

However, the Carr Government in N.S.W. proposes that this is only the beginning. Thirteen key government agencies are to be "corporatised", including the three regional port authorities, the T.A.B., the Lotteries, Freight Rail, State Forests commercial pine tree operation, irrigation schemes, the Public Trustee, the Waste Recycling and Processing Service, and the Dairy Corporation. There is obviously scope for private enterprise to compete in some of these fields, but this is not what is proposed. "Corporatisation" means exactly that: swapping the State monopoly for a private corporate monopoly. State monopolies may be bureaucratic, lazy and relatively inefficient, but at least some public official is accountable for their operation – usually a Minister of the Crown. How is it proposed to hold corporate monopolists – whether domestic or foreign – accountable for the services they provide?