



# ON TARGET

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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance -

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**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:** "Power does not vary quantitatively. It either belongs to the individual in the sufficiency needed, or is taken by others. When retained by the individual and not used to destroy the power of others, it will be used to both develop the resources and strengths of the individual, and to serve others. Conversely, if power is transferred from the individual by either force or deceit, then the individual is subject to power opposed externally and he loses control of his own destiny."

— Edward Rock, Chairman Christian Alternative Movement

## JOHN HOWARD DOES THE KOW-TOW by Eric D. Butler:

Matured students of politics know that when an Australian Prime Minister visits a foreign country like Japan, he is hopeful that what he says or does will feed back via courtesy of the media to increase electoral support at home. Those who have read that remarkable book, *The Asian Mind Game*, by an American of Asian background, will find confirmed the view that most Asians approach business dealings from a different perspective of the European. Business is conducted as a type of warfare. What is termed fairness and decency in Western culture is not understood in Asian culture. Not known for deep philosophical thinking, John Howard would not understand that there is a basic cleavage between Western European culture and Asian culture. Himself part Asian, Rudyard Kipling put the matter succinctly in his famous comment, "*The East is East and the West is West, and never the twain shall meet*".

Japanese leaders had carefully assessed John Howard long before he arrived in Japan. Thus they were able to tell the smiling John Howard of his splendid leadership concerning gun controls in Australia. And they expressed their great pleasure after John Howard had informed Japanese business leaders of his industrial reforms, these making it possible for the Japanese to be certain of an uninterrupted flow of raw material from Australia. The coming de-regulation of the Australian shipping industry will make it possible for ships registered in Third World nations to ply freely in Australian coastal waters. With his eye on Australian primary producers, John Howard did suggest to the Japanese that the concept of free trade in the Pacific required that the Japanese permit Australian rice exports into Japan. Any concessions made by the Japanese, the Chinese or any other Asian nation will be primarily to benefit themselves. Australia is regarded primarily as a source of raw materials, with holiday resorts for visiting Japanese. In a real sense, Australians are threatened by a globalism which, unless challenged, will reduce them to being beware of wood and carriers of water. Or perhaps some of them will find an occupation waiting on their foreign visitors.

In order to further please his Japanese hosts, John Howard also told them that he would attempt to use



his influence with the Americans to cease being so aggressive in their trade dealings with the Japanese. Perhaps the most courageous thing John Howard did during his Asian tour, although this was probably designed for domestic consumption, was to draw attention to Australia's Western culture. But he did not get many marks from the media scribes for what some of them suggested was evidence that he still suffered from that "racist" tinge which got him into trouble a few years back. Some of the media hatchet men felt that their lingering suspicions about John Howard were confirmed by his failure to publicly rebuke Pauline Hanson for her famous "maiden" speech. Last week's *Australian Jewish News*, both in an article by Canberra correspondent Freedman and editorially, expressed concern about the "Hanson factor". There was the fear that it might produce a "runaway" result in the coming Federal by-election. Then came John Howard's address to the Queensland Liberal Party, where he claimed as a result of the change of government, there was a "new found" freedom to speak out on "sensitive" issues like race relations.

Michael Gawenda of *The Age*, Melbourne, who can always be relied upon to back the Zionist Jewish line, devoted his column of September 23rd to an examination of John Howard's "toleration" address. Gawenda first eulogised John Howard for his "statesmanlike" handling of the gun control issue. He then went on to criticise Howard for failing to take a firm stand on the Pauline Hanson factor. Some commentators even suggested that by failing to rebuke Pauline Hanson publicly, John Howard was by inference at least condoning what she said. The truth is, of course, that when Pauline Hanson, an endorsed Liberal candidate for Oxley at the last Federal elections, thought that she had the freedom of speech, now eulogised by John Howard, to speak out on issues which previously had been regarded as **verboden** by the thought police, she was promptly disowned by the Liberal Party. Pauline Hanson's stunning electoral victory as an Independent sent shockwaves right throughout Australia. The shockwaves have continued to spread following the massive public support for the views expressed in Pauline Hanson's "maiden" speech. They have clearly caught up with John Howard, and he is frantically ducking and weaving in an attempt to prevent future electoral disasters. Prominent members of the Aboriginal industry like Mr. Mike Dodson have also joined in a campaign designed to depict Howard as a man lacking in real leadership qualities. Dodson has claimed that Howard is attempting to be a "populist", which can only mean that the Prime Minister is finding it politically necessary to try to accept the reality of a rising tide of opposition to present immigration and multicultural policies, along with Aboriginal land claims.

The Howard Government is also faced with an unemployment question which is becoming more acute. But while trying to shift his position to cater for what the Pauline Hansons and Graeme Campbells have created, John Howard is doomed to eventual electoral failure because of his dogged kow-towing to the current finance economic orthodoxy as represented by economic rationalism. The Howard industrial reforms, which John Howard says will provide the type of competitive society operating in the U.S.A., will, as in the U.S.A., drive down still further the standard of living of the great majority of the electorate while enriching the relative few operating the developing multi-nationals. John Howard boasted that he is willing to go down the same road when it leads to a cut-throat society in which the weak go to the wall. There was a time when Australians had a much more caring society than the one now emerging. But this is being eroded by the internationalism which John Howard and his "advisers" strongly recommend, as did Paul Keating before him.

While John Howard tells us that he is now a firm devotee of free speech, it should be used in a spirit of toleration. But this spirit does not extend to the League of Rights, which John Howard has accused of "racism", "bigotry" and "anti-Semitism" and other evils. His continued kow-towing to the Zionist Jewish lobby is not going to save him from what is now a definite "sea change" in Australian politics.



## NATIONWIDE FIREARMS LEGISLATION STILL NOT IN PLACE by David Thompson:

The gun control lobby is scathing about the fact that, five months after the Port Arthur massacre, Mr. Howard's much-vaunted national firearms controls are still not in place. This is a situation condemned by their spokesmen, who berate the tardiness of politicians who express the best of intentions. Mr. Howard, of course, is quite willing to bask in the praise of the Japanese for his firm action on gun controls, although he was careful not to inform his Japanese hosts that as yet the new laws are not in place.

We are fully aware that while Mr. Howard and his colleagues remain publicly fully committed to the new nationwide gun controls, in private they are extremely nervous about them. The nervousness is accounted for by a number of factors: 1) It is now clear to even the dimmest of politicians that the new regulations **just will not work**. How long until this must be admitted? 2) Legislation in each State is quite different, and while it might deliver "nationwide gun controls" on paper, how many outrageous loop-holes can be found by shooters? 3) Shooters are also voters, and by-elections will occur. The by-election in Lindsay (Blue Mountains), N.S.W., will have a Shooters' Party candidate. There has been strong support for the Party here previously. Will the shooters' votes strip this seat away from the Liberals? Almost certainly yes. 4) **The legislation is not yet in place** in Western Australia or Queensland. There are obviously other factors, but the combination of the above make for what one barrister has described as a "Chinese Parliament" – everybody is anxious not to lose face.

**THE QUEENSLAND DILEMMA:** As we have previously pointed out, nothing is certain in politics, and in our view, events in Queensland are making it increasingly unlikely that the new gun controls will be debated by the Queensland Parliament in the near future. The finding by the Criminal Justice Commission that the Minister for Police, Mr. Cooper, should face charges of corruption over an agreement with the Police Union before the Mundingburra by-election, which delivered Government to the National Party, has destabilised the Government completely. Will Mr. Cooper be forced to step down as a Minister? If he is charged, and convicted, Mr. Cooper will be ineligible to sit in the Parliament, making a by-election for his rural seat essential. How would the National Party campaign on gun controls in the bush, with a Bill that Cooper's constituents find abhorrent before the Parliament? If forced to a general election, how would the National campaign? It might be suicidal for the Nationals to rush new gun laws through the Parliament **prior** to a general election.

The National Party cannot afford to lose a single seat in the Parliament. As it is, they cling to Government by the goodwill of the Independent member for Gladstone, Liz Cunningham. Initially, Liz Cunningham rather favoured tighter gun controls. However, having attended public meetings in her electorate – usually both large and stormy – she has changed her position. It is now most unlikely that Liz Cunningham would support Queensland's new gun laws. Having had over 1,000 letters opposing the firearms laws (and only a few supporting them) she has declared that in her view, Queenslanders **should have the right to firearms for personal protection**. This goes right against the Prime Minister's "agreement" with the State Police Ministers.

*"By both belief and custom, people have established the view that self defence and defence of one's family are valid reasons for responsible possession of weapons,"* she said, in a dissenting report from the committee set up to examine the Weapons Amendment Bill. *"The majority of Queenslanders would continue to be of the view that responsible gun ownership should continue and the references to repealed rights in this section of the committee's report cannot, in my view, be sustained"* (**Gladstone Observer**, 6/9/96). As a dissenting member of the committee, Cunningham has been ostracised by other committee members from both National and Labor Parties.



The only obvious prospect of getting the new gun controls through the Queensland Parliament without the National Party sustaining serious damage, is a Labor election victory. In Western Australia, the Court Government is beset with divisions within on many issues, including gun controls. Mr. Court must soon face an election campaign, in which he and his colleagues will be tested on this issue. It is impossible to predict what may occur, but it is quite premature for Prime Minister Howard to be taking the "credit" for tight, nationwide gun controls. As yet, he doesn't have them.

**NATIVE TITLE AND OWNERSHIP OF PRIVATE PROPERTY:** The passage of the Keating Government's Native Title Act was regarded with horror by most of the State Governments, but even more so by the W.A. Government. Under Premier Richard Court, W.A. contested some provisions of the Act in the High Court and, not surprisingly, were defeated. W.A. has vast mining and pastoral interests, and is the State with the most land vulnerable to Native Title claims. Much thought was given in W.A. to measures by which the Native Title threat might be blunted. But the one instrument that seemed to prevent W.A. from evading the provisions of the Federal Native Title Act was the Racial Discrimination Act 1975. It is impossible to legislate in such a manner that may be construed as "discriminating" against a racial or ethnic group, like Aborigines.

The W.A. answer was to pass the Acts Amendment and Repeal (Native Title) Act 1995, which gives the W.A. Government **unprecedented powers over all land title**, not just land that may be vulnerable to Native Title claims. Jeannine Purdy, a lawyer who has worked for the Native Title Tribunal, produced an article for *The West Australian* (17/9/96) in which she notes that not one square inch of land has been delivered to Aborigines under Native Title, however.

*"What native title has delivered to the State Government, however, has been the opportunity to confer upon itself unprecedented powers over the ownership of property. Under provisions of the Acts Amendment (Native Title) Act of 1995, what had been the limited power of compulsory acquisition for the purposes of public works was extended radically.*

*"Although certain forms of land tenure are exempt from native title claim, no form of land tenure in W.A. is beyond the reach of a resumption order of the State Government . . . . the Government can now resume land to give it to anyone else it considers to be more socially or economically acceptable.*

*"How was it that such a radical change to the security of land ownership in W.A. came into being with so little public outcry, as was noted by the Opposition during the passage of the bill through Parliament? Perhaps it had to do with the image of the Coalition Government as a "defender" of private property; or perhaps it had to do with the Government's claim that it was doing only what had to be done to deal with native title in this State . . . .*

*". . . the point remains that the newly renamed Land Acquisition and Public Works Act allows the compulsory acquisition of any land for the purpose of granting it to other private groups or individuals. It does not require the consent of the current owners, no matter whether Aborigines or non-Aboriginal people hold title to land, and no matter whether that title is native title, leasehold or any other form of ownership. . ."*

It is quite clear that this new Act was passed to circumvent the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 when preventing native title claims from proceeding. Indeed, the Government apparently said as much in the Parliamentary debates. But even if the Coalition stands by its intention of only using such provisions in order to prevent native title claims, **what use might a future government make of such draconian provision?** There is every reason for serious concerns about legislation that is more reminiscent of a totalitarian state than a government that traditionally holds to a stout recognition of the ownership of private property. The legacy of Whitlam (Racial Discrimination Act) and the legacy of Keating (Native Title Act) is enough to suffer, without the legacies of the Coalition being every bit as damaging.