



A WEEKLY COMMENTARY

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ON TARGET

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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance -

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: "If God is to save the world, it must be **through** saviours, their faith and works."

— Dr. Bryan Monahan, July 17th, 1965

REGENERATION STARTS WITH SMALL BEGINNINGS by Eric D. Butler:

As the great Roman Civilisation was already starting to show the first signs of its decline, on the periphery of that Civilisation, in the Roman province of Judea, a small obscure movement was being born. If there had been a media at the time, it would hardly have rated a mention. Only years later did the message of Christianity start to be heard in Rome. Port Lincoln, South Australia, is relatively unknown except to a few tourists. Students of Australian history know that because of its deep harbour, it was at one time suggested as a possible capital for the new State of South Australia. But in more recent times it has become known, not only for its lucrative tuna industry, but for having elected a Mayor, Mr. Peter Davis, who has dramatically demonstrated that he is far from being politically correct. He first burst into the national news when *The Advertiser*, Adelaide's morning newspaper, discovered that he had chaired a Port Lincoln public meeting which I had addressed. There was nothing surprising about this as the meeting was concerned with the subject of compulsory Municipal Council amalgamations. Like many Municipal Councillors, Mayor Davis was opposed to the concept. However, Peter Davis's real "crime" was that he had chaired a meeting for a senior official of the League of Rights. Like Pavlov's dogs, most party politicians start to twitch when the League is mentioned. They recall what happened to the young "star" of the Liberal Party, Alexander Downer, when it was publicised that years previously he had addressed a League Seminar. The Seminar dealt with Constitutional issues.

Unlike Alexander Downer, who cut a pathetic figure as he tried to twist and turn as he was lashed by Prime Minister Paul Keating and his media friends, Peter Davis bluntly said he had been a supporter of the League for many years. The epithet "racist" was now being used with Labor Senator Bolkus stripping Peter Davis of the right to conduct naturalisation ceremonies. There was not a word of protest from John Howard or any Liberal Party Federal Member. More political storm clouds swirled around Mayor Davis when he made it publicly known that he was a supporter of West Australian Independent Graeme Campbell, former Labor Member. Later he expressed support for the views of Pauline Hanson, Independent Member for Oxley, Queensland.

It was no secret that while there clearly was an unholy alliance between the Labor Party and the Liberal Party concerning the anti-Davis campaign, locally it was the Liberals who were the main driving force and were responsible for the snide attempt to destroy Peter Davis by a majority of Port Lincoln Councillors resigning. But the Local Government Act prevented the State Liberal Government from moving to close down the Municipality as long as at least one Councillor declined to resign. He and Mayor Davis carried on.

By-elections had to be held to replace the Councillors who had resigned, allegedly in protest against some of the alleged comments by Peter Davis. The by-elections were held last Saturday, December 14th, with the anti-Davis forces completely routed. When told of the shock results, Senator Bolkus said this was a "black day" for Australia. John Howard declined to comment, saying he had not had a chance of analysing the voting. In a number of radio interviews, Peter Davis stressed that the results suggested that the major political parties would be wise to heed what mainstream Australia was thinking. The front page headlines in *The Sunday Age* of December 15th said the Port Lincoln election result was a blow against multiculturalism and an endorsement of Pauline Hanson. While it is true that Peter Davis has endorsed the views of Pauline Hanson, he makes it clear that it was his opponents who were responsible for making multiculturalism and immigration the major issue of the Port Lincoln elections. They had sought to make the election a mini-referendum on these issues, and could not dispute the electors' decision. There is no doubt that the Port Lincoln election result on December 14th was a "black day" for all the multiculturalists and will send shockwaves nationwide. The Australian political scene is clearly changing.

The continuing Pauline Hanson phenomena confirms my view that it is more than a "flash in the pan", as multiculturalist Premier Jeff Kennett and others are suggesting. Pauline Hanson obviously is the unsophisticated amateur against the professionals, as witnessed by how she was cut down by John Howard when she touched yet another deep nerve in the Australian psyche – the question of foreign ownership. Aided by the jackals of the media, John Howard was able to sneer at the "simplistic" suggestion that Australia could survive without foreign capital. For the record I have never met Pauline Hanson nor have I made any effort to do so. While Peter Davis and Graeme Campbell have demonstrated that any association with the League of Rights is not the kiss of political death, I have made it clear to the media that I would not wish to add to Pauline Hanson's problems by suggesting that she is associated in any way with the League. She is acting as a type of lightning rod on those issues which the League has been in the vanguard of promoting over many years. Whether she can "stay the distance" remains to be seen. Much will depend upon the quality of the advice she is getting and prepared to take. There is little doubt that the Senate offers the best means by which Australia can be shifted off its present disaster course. As yet there are no clear signs of the emergence of a coherent coalescing of the many emerging groups which are challenging both political and economic orthodoxy. Graeme Campbell appears to be going about developing such a structure in a much more methodical manner than anyone else. We can only wish Pauline Hanson and her supporters well, but I see dangers ahead for her.

What is now clear is that Australia is entering a new historical situation. Port Lincoln is a long way from the centre of political power in Canberra. But what happened there on December 14th could prove in time to have been a sign of things to come. Regeneration of a dying civilisation must start with decentralised activities served by men and women of complete integrity. Mayor Davis of Port Lincoln has provided an example of that type of integrity. His example of what can be achieved by such integrity offers real hope for the future. It is a Christmas present of real inspiration.

NEW ZEALAND FIRST IN THE TREASURY HOT-SEAT by David Thompson:

After negotiations that took two months since the election, Mr. Winston Peters, leader of New Zealand First, has announced that N.Z. First will enter a coalition with the National Party. After hard negotiating, Mr. Peters will emerge as the New Zealand Treasurer, which was an extraordinary concession from the Nationals. How will Mr. Peters handle the economy? Will he do anything different from the orthodox Keynesian approach of the Nationals? We doubt that he will, as Mr. Peters has little understanding of any useful unorthodox financial proposals to our knowledge.

Winston Peters campaigned hard on the question of immigration (particularly Asian immigration) and a number of economic issues, such as foreign investment, N.Z.'s high exchange rate, and a range of "rationalist

economic" issues. He campaigned against the National Party, and was highly critical of National Party policies. It now remains for Mr. Peters to achieve results as Treasurer, a task for which he appears, superficially, to be unequipped. Have the National Party handed Mr. Peters a poisoned chalice, hoping that after a period of indifferent financial management, N.Z. First's support base can be eroded, and Mr. Peters pushed aside?

For example, how will Peters deal with the question of foreign ownership of New Zealand? Does he have well-developed proposals for alternative sources of credit? This is the type of question Pauline Hanson has yet to come to grips with in Australia. She asked the Prime Minister, *"Is it true that if every Australian averaged \$50 per week buying our products, we would save \$20 billion a year on foreign debt, and perhaps create half a million jobs?"* To which Mr. Howard replied with a lecture on conventional economics, without answering the question at all. Howard said that without large amounts of foreign investment *"we would now have a lower and not a higher living standard . . . the notion that you can close the doors of this country to foreign investment and continue to have a high standard of living and continue to generate jobs is simplistic . . . the reality of the situation is that, if we do not want large foreign investment in this country, what we have to do is boost our own savings and also lift productivity. They are the twin goals of the government's economic policy"*.

This is clearly nonsense, because banks do not depend only upon the savings of Australians to expand the credit available to the Australian economy. If it is essential to have "large amounts" of foreign investment in order for Australia to function, then John Howard is admitting that Australia is no longer a sovereign nation.

What is Mr. Peters' answer to the same argument from New Zealand? Earlier this month a policy adviser for the Institute of Policy Studies in N.Z., John Goulter, insisted that not only is foreign investment essential for N.Z., but that N.Z. "cannot afford to turn its back on **Asian investment**". Mr. Peters will be getting plenty of advice like that from the Treasury.

If he was ever to find himself in a similar situation, what would Graeme Campbell do in Australia? Could he offer a comprehensive answer to the question of an alternative to foreign investment? Can Pauline Hanson? Obviously not.

On questions of social policy, will Peters continue to pursue his campaign objectives on questions of immigration and multiculturalism in New Zealand? Only time will tell, but it is clear that Mr. Peters has accepted a huge political task in New Zealand. In the weeks and months to come, he may wish that he had resisted the lure of political power of the magnitude that he now holds, for another role.

W.T.O. LAYS DOWN THE ECONOMIC LAW: Deputy Prime Minister, Tim Fischer, emerged from World Trade Organisation negotiations concerning tariffs, etc., congratulating himself on a satisfactory result for Australia. In reality, the powerful World Trade Organisation (W.T.O.) is in the process of re-making the world in an economic, and thus, financial sense. This means political power is being transferred from nations to the W.T.O. Why else would an Australian Deputy Prime Minister be up in Singapore negotiating hard for **concessions** that would benefit Australia?

The W.T.O. proposes to set the trading conditions for the entire globe, based on the dogma of "free trade". This means that Australian industries cannot be offered any form of assistance by governments here, or else we are likely to be transgressing W.T.O. regulations on trading conditions by equipping our industries with an "unfair" advantage over those in other nations. Like the Americans have been doing to us for years in producing agricultural products under the Economic Enhancement Programme. The U.S. has taken the rather quaint decision that it wants to keep as many as possible of its farmers on their properties, producing food. Australia has long ago abandoned that objective.

It becomes more and more obvious that under conventional economic rules, Australia is doomed as a sovereign nation. So long as we depend upon, 1) foreign investment to fund our production system, and 2) exports to fund our domestic consumption, we remain at the mercy of foreign banking groups, and increasingly at the mercy of international bureaucratic bodies like the W.T.O.

SLAVE LABOUR IN AUSTRALIA: One feature of the "Singapore Agreement" of the World Trade Organisation, regarded as a "victory" by Mr. Fischer, was to have the issue of labour standards mentioned only in passing at the W.T.O. Singapore Conference. This issue belongs only within another International bureaucracy – the International Labour Organisation (I.L.O.). One of the major agreements of the W.T.O. meeting was to continue to free up trade in textiles. As a major wool producer, this should be of advantage to Australia. But the profits in wool production are not to be made by growing it (as recent years have demonstrated) but in **processing it**.

Australia will continue to lose its textile industries under the W.T.O. agreement, unless we are prepared to suffer a reduction in living standards here, or perhaps the **exploitation of child labour**. It has been reported in last weekend's Sunday press that Australia already depends partly upon child labour to maintain its textile industry.

The Senate inquiry chaired by Ms. Jacinta Collins (A.L.P.) has found that there are between 50,000 and 330,000 full or part-time "outworkers" with children who assist in garment production for well-known Australian labels. Many of these families are Asian migrants, who do not quite see the use of child labour in the same way as Australians. In many cases, the inquiry has found, parents and children work together for long hours because they can be together, because they cannot find other work, because they do not speak English, and do not mix well with the Australian community. Weekends and school holidays, as well as evenings, are often spent at sewing machines. Thus Australia is in danger of doing what we specifically decided **not to do** at Federation 100 years ago: depend upon cheap foreign labour to underpin our standard of living. Labourers from the islands who came here as canecutters in Queensland, for example, were encouraged to return to their own country, as Australians would cut their own cane, or invent technology to do it for them, as we ultimately did.

If Australia's answer to the W.T.O. directives concerning tariffs on the textile industry is to exploit child labour to survive, then it is the most hollow of victories. Mr. Fischer would be much better advised to spend a little time understanding the rudiments of money and banking (which he steadfastly refuses to do) than haggling with the international bureaucrats, where Australia has **one voice in 127**. It is only when Australia can return to a policy **based upon** (but not exclusively relying upon) economic self-sufficiency, as well as financial self-sufficiency, that we can defy the international bureaucrats. Some say that this path cannot be taken, as it leads to war. But so do disagreements concerning international trade. And if the future of Australia is not worthy fighting for, why not surrender now? Perhaps we already have!

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS: In this, our last issue for 1996, we extend Christmas Greetings to all our readers. Our next issue will be on January 17th. A limited book service will operate over the Christmas-New Year holiday period.

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