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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance -

Print Post Publication Number 381667 00258

Vol.32, No.12

April 4th, 1996

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: "As a result of the international nature of finance, we find that in varying degree the present economic crisis is a world crisis, and because finance is in a position to control mass publicity ... we notice a general suggestion in the inspired press that the international character of the crisis is inevitable, that the world is now one economic unit, and no nation can be restored to economic health except by means of a world-wide character." — C.H. Douglas in 1932

REALITIES BEHIND VICTORIAN ELECTION RESULTS by Eric D. Butler:

If democracy is measured in terms of statistics, all the superlatives about the re-election of the Victorian Kennett Government are justified. The headlines proclaim that "VOTERS ENDORSE THE KENNETT VISION . . ."; or "ELECTORS GIVE LIBERALS A MASSIVE VOTE OF CONFIDENCE". But a look at realities reveals a very different picture. A major feature of the elections, and one with far-reaching implications, was the backlash against National Party candidates in rural Victoria. The fall in the Victorian National Party vote must be assessed against the general decline in the National Party vote at the recent Federal elections. Even in Queensland, there was a substantial drop in the vote for the National Party's number one Senate candidate, Senator Ron Boswell. There was, however, increased support for Katter and those National candidates who are representing regional concerns about the threat of the programme of economic rationalism.

Rural Victoria suffered most of the economic pain inflicted by the Kennett Government with National Party Members of the Coalition being perceived as having betrayed their trust. The role of sections of the media in supporting Liberal candidates against the Nationals has given rise to the strong suspicion that influential sections of the Liberal Party want to either rid themselves of the National Party, or absorb it into one party. One of the strongest protests from Regional Victoria came from Mildura, where the Independent Russell Savage looks like winning comfortably from Sitting Liberal Member Bildstien, a close personal friend of Jeff Kennett who was being discussed as a potential Cabinet Minister. He paid the price of ignoring local concerns about reductions to community service.

While most of the Independent candidates in rural Victoria polled reasonably well, they demonstrated once again that any Independent candidate who is serious cannot start his campaign at "five minutes to midnight", and expect to be successful. But the protest vote around Victoria has been sufficiently strong to demonstrate that as the National Party continues to decline, a vacuum is starting to emerge to be filled by a new political force. Labor leader John Brumby was correct when he said that three years of a Howard Government, and another term for the Kennett Government, is going to produce a very different political climate. Naturally, Brumby hopes that this will favour the Labor Party. He also is

misreading the rapidly changing Australian economic and political climate. The coming dose of finance-economic orthodoxy which John Howard is going to administer, and the failure of the Labor Party to offer any genuine alternatives, is going to see large numbers of traditional Labor voters being attracted to the type of policies which Graeme Campbell has been promoting.

The Victorian Labor Party are, of course, the victims of their own policies, initially endorsed by many of the very shallow business community, now damning them. There was that period when the Cain Government was being applauded for the great burst in "growth". The skyline of Melbourne was changing overnight. The speculators were in their element. But the 1987 stock market crash was the beginning of the end. Treasurer Keating announced the arrival of "the depression we had to have". There were many victims, including the Victorian Labor Government.

But we are now told that the Kennett Government has got the State "back on the rails". There is much loose talk about how the Kennett Government has overcome the State's debt problem. But what is the State's current financial debt compared with when it took over from Labor? How many community assets have been sold in the process of allegedly reducing debt? And how many more community assets is it proposed to sell off? And what happens when there are no more community assets left to sell? Victorians have been subjected to an enormous confidence trick which eventually will blow up.

The reality is that the Kennett Government has taken Victoria closer to the Fascist State than any other government in Australia. Genuine representative government has been destroyed by the imposition of the forced amalgamations of Municipal Councils. The amalgamated units are now merely administrative instruments of a State Government which, under Jeff Kennett, keeps stressing that the role of government is to **manage**, not represent. The growth of the corporate structure and the abolition of checks and balances are all manifestations of the development of the Fascist State in which Big Government and Big Business unite against the legitimate rights of the individuals. A famous Western Canadian political leader said during the Great Depression, "If the people have not yet suffered enough to see the necessity for change, it is their God-given right to suffer some more."

Victorians have not long to wait.

WILL HOWARD REPEAL RACIAL DISCRIMINATION ACT? by David Thompson:

When Malcolm Fraser was elected with a "landslide" majority in December, 1975, he was expected to turn back the tide of almost revolutionary legislation that Mr. Whitlam and his fabian colleagues had put in place. One of the most deadly of these legislative poisons was the Racial Discrimination Act 1975. However, not only did Mr. Fraser **not remove** these subversive instruments, he **continued to build upon them**.

Now, 20 years after the Whitlam Government has disappeared, the "conservation" forces of Australian politics have another chance to begin to turn back over two decades of political and social damage. In the name of such legislation as the Racial Discrimination Act, all sorts of new "rights" legislation and "anti discrimination" tribunals have been created. Minority groups of every sort have successfully sought special treatment from a succession of governments who have somehow convinced themselves that the "ethnic vote" is a powerful lobby.

It is somehow ironic that some of the new "rights" legislation would seem to actually **contravene** acts

like the Racial Discrimination Act. Constitutional lawyer Colin Howard has expressed the view that the Native Title Act, which gives effect to the High Court's "Mabo decision", contravenes the Racial Discrimination Act. It seems ironic, also, that Pauline Hanson, charged with "racism" for some of her comments concerning special privileges for Aborigines, should, in all fairness, have her comments **upheld by the Racial Discrimination Act.**

WHAT DID PAULINE HANSON SAY? While some of Pauline Hanson's comments might have been couched in slightly different language, they certainly hit a nerve with grassroots Australia. The following include Hanson's reported comments:

January 6th: *"Black deaths in custody seem to be Robert Tickner's latest outcry. Pity that as much media coverage of political grandstanding is not shown for white deaths in custody. How can we expect this race to help themselves when governments shower them with money, facilities and opportunities that only these people can obtain no matter how minute the indigenous blood is that flows through their veins, and this is causing racism?"*

March 3rd: *"Why can some people get something because of the colour of their skin and other people can't?"*

March 4th: Following the election, Hanson said she would be especially seeking to represent the interests of *"The white community, the immigrants, Italians, Greeks, whoever, it really doesn't matter – anyone apart from the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders . . ."*

March 8th: *"Why do they think they should be entitled to cheaper housing loans at such a cheaper interest rate. You know, why should they be entitled to get a hepatitis B shot because of the colour of their skin and other people out in the community can't get it? And why should there be a difference between Abstudy and Austudy? You know, different benefits are there. And I don't think all Aboriginals appreciate what is being done for them . . ."*

Does not the Racial Discrimination Act uphold Hanson's right to ask such questions? Does it not also validate many of her questions, when she asks why certain benefits should be available **on the basis of skin colour**? So what will Howard and his Ministers do about this nightmare legislation? We can see no evidence anywhere that Mr. Howard has the courage to confront such subversive legislation. In fact, with the philosophical differences inside the Liberal Party alone, we can foresee nothing but an extension of the "rights-driven" legislative madness, perhaps to provide for such absurdities as legal recognition of homosexual marriages and the like.

HAYDEN'S PERSPECTIVE ON THE RECORD: It seems quite clear that when Prime Minister Whitlam appointed his mate John Kerr Governor-General, Whitlam still regarded Kerr as "his" man. But Kerr's perspective, faced with the enormous responsibility that goes with representing over a thousand years of political heritage that comes with the Crown, underwent many subtle changes. It appears that Bill Hayden, Hawke's nominee for Governor-General, also felt the weight of the office. Widely regarded as a "republican" appointment, Hayden proceeded to largely undermine the republican movement after several years as the Crown's representative.

In his autobiography, published this week, Hayden clarifies his position on some of the issues, much to the surprise – and horror – of some of his former Labor "mates". In published extracts from the

book, Hayden **largely validates Kerr's dismissal** of the Whitlam administration, of which he, Hayden, was a Minister. Hayden writes:

"I can state, however, that if those two powerful, stubborn, conflicting personalities who led the Government and the Opposition, respectively, should have persevered with their dogged confrontation, then – at some point later than that at which Kerr acted – I would as Governor-General, have been forced to have intervened much as he did.

"Kerr allowed Australia to decide the issue of its government – that much was his right and duty and that, as much as anything else, was endorsed by the people on December 13th, 1975. Too many of his detractors forget that

"In the end, however, it was what John Kerr did that mattered. It is my view that his actions were legal and proper, although somewhat hasty. We in the Labor Party may not have cared for this fate of ours, and we protested long and loud. Our anger and the angst caused by this experience, however, does not make our removal invalid. Its rightness, I restate, was confirmed by the overwhelming public endorsement of the Governor-General's actions, implicit in the subsequent election result."

ON THE REPUBLIC: *"At the time of the 1975 convulsion, and for some time after, many people demanded an Australian republic. They claimed what occurred would not have happened in a republic where Australians controlled their own destiny, conveniently ignoring the fact the Governor-General who acted decisively then was an Australian, hand-picked by the Labor Government of the time, only accepting the position after much persuasion by the man he would later sack ...*

"The predominant objective of the republican movement is to eliminate reference to the Crown in the Constitution and with that to change the title of head of State from Governor-General to President. In this, it seems to me as if we are being asked to hand over our old car so that it can be taken away and given a fresh coat of Duco and a new brand name – all preliminary to having it sold back to us as if somehow improved. For my part, I can see no point in embarking on a spirited, time-consuming, resource-hungry hard-sell campaign to enable a bit of tarding up of a vehicle which not only do we already own but performs quite effectively.

"In my seven years as Governor-General neither the Queen nor anyone else at the palace contacted me, nor sought to reach me through any other means, to advise me or influence me in what I was doing in the discharge of my duties as Governor-General. Australia's right to attend to its own affairs was meticulously respected. The periodic contact between Government House at Yarralumla and Buckingham Palace in no way derogates from our national independence."

It is interesting to note that Hayden, in his description of the republican objectives, cites the head of State as **the Governor-General**. Perhaps the Governor-General effectively acts as head of State, but the Constitution clearly names **the Queen as head of State**.