



A WEEKLY COMMENTARY

ON TARGET

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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance –

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: *"The protective system of our day is conservative, while the free trade system is destructive. It breaks up old nationalities and pushes the antagonism of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie to the extreme point. In a word, the free trade system hastens the social revolution. It is in this revolutionary sense alone ... that I vote in favour of free trade."*

– Karl Marx in 1948

HOWARD GOVERNMENT FEELING ELECTORAL HEAT by Eric D. Butler:

American President Franklin Roosevelt was often quoted as saying that it was the task of politicians to yield to pressure. The statement did not imply that it was the duty of politicians to attempt to represent electors; the **task** was to yield sufficiently to ensure that the politicians survived electorally. Prime Minister John Howard and his colleagues are at present desperately seeking to heed the Roosevelt advice. The polls clearly indicate that support for John Howard and his Government is slipping badly. A personal experience is illuminating: A lady with a cultured voice rang as a result of receiving the brochure, "Pauline Hanson and Her Enemies". "Would I transmit a message to Pauline Hanson?" The lady refused to identify herself, the explanation probably being that she eventually said she was a member of a Liberal Party branch. Her language was quite lurid concerning Federal politicians. And she was all for Pauline Hanson. But also were the majority of the members of her Liberal Party branch. There is evidence from right around Australia that there are many supporters of Pauline Hanson who have not relinquished their memberships of the Liberal or National Parties.

Last week the Howard Government made two major decisions which, in spite of protests to the contrary, are clearly an effort to reduce the damage threatened by the Hanson factor. The cut in immigration, although minimal, is designed to create a **perception** in the electorate that the Government is concerned about fears. John Howard says that he has felt for some time that there is a relationship between immigration and high unemployment. Before the last Federal elections, when he promised that his Government would be dealing constructively with the unemployment issue, John Howard made no suggestion that there would be a reduction in immigration intakes as one means of dealing with unemployment, the reason being, of course, that John Howard had been making every effort to placate the multicultural and ethnic lobbies that he no longer held his previous views concerning Asian immigration. He was terrified of the mass media applying the dreaded "racist" tag. Ironically, it was fear of the "racist" tag which resulted in Pauline Hanson, endorsed Liberal candidate, being removed from the Liberal Party ticket. Pauline Hanson has now emerged as a major threat to John Howard's Government. The Hanson threat was reinforced last weekend in the Queensland by-election in the safe Labor electo-

rate of Kurwongbah, where Independent candidate Moran recorded 15 percent of the vote. Although not endorsed by Pauline Hanson's party, the Independent had publicly supported Pauline Hanson's views. It is estimated that most of the 8 percent lost by the Liberal Party went to Independent Moran.

Already the representatives of the multicultural and ethnic lobby groups have turned upon John Howard because of the cut in immigration. As have some business groups who cling to the view that increased migration is good for business. Clearly there is growing ferment in the ranks of the Coalition Parties. It would be instructive to know if there is any truth in the rumour that in Cabinet Immigration Minister Ruddock pressed for an even bigger reduction in the number of immigrants. Having been forced to claim that he has believed that there is a link between immigration and high unemployment, John Howard is faced with the dilemma of explaining to the growing number of unemployed why the cut in immigration should not even be much greater, or was delayed.

While the news about the maintenance of present tariffs on cars will be welcomed in Geelong and Adelaide, this again the result of the work of Graeme Campbell, whose long record on the issue is well known, and that of Pauline Hanson, it helps to add to the growing perception of John Howard as a weak and indecisive national leader. The question is being increasingly asked, "How can John Howard be trusted on any issue when he keeps shifting his position?" Under pressure from the internationalists, he now says that tax "reform" in the shape of a GST is "back on the political agenda". The long record of Australia's most senior professional politician shows that his main consistency has been in supporting whatever he feels will keep him in office.

The Hanson factor has been but the lightning rod carrying the pent up feelings of Australians who have become distrustful of all major political parties. Suggestions that Pauline Hanson can be defeated in Oxley by the major parties uniting against her, and that the electoral boundaries might be "adjusted" to make Oxley a completely safe Labor electorate, merely fuel the widespread community discontent. John Howard's immediate problem concerns that of land rights, stemming from the Mabo and Wik High Court decisions. And he has the problem with a Senate he does not completely control. John Howard and several of his Senior colleagues have raised the possibility of the Government calling for a double dissolution. But this would be an act of desperation, making it easier for Hanson, Campbell, or Independent candidates, to win positions in the Senate. One can confidently predict that while the Howard Government stays in office, Australia is faced with a turbulent situation. Anything could happen, with major gaps developing in all the major political parties. The steady influence of the League of Rights was never more urgently needed.

THE "STOLEN GENERATION" IN PERSPECTIVE by David Thompson:

The widespread sympathy for Aboriginal people who were forcibly removed from their families between 1910 and 1970, is understandable. It is impossible to deny that such a policy would leave massive psychological scars on the victims, and that bureaucracies the world over are notoriously impervious to the impact of political policy on the individual.

But the special report on the "stolen generation" of Aboriginal people to be released this week, obviously needs to be placed into proper perspective before discussion of formal apology, or financial compensation is demanded. While personal trauma of those removed and their families is granted, it is also true that many of those "removed" went on to make spectacular successes of their lives. One such person is Rev. Cedric Jacobs, of Western Australia.

Cedric Jacobs lived a semi-tribal lifestyle until the age of 9 when, in 1952, the Department of Native Affairs took him from his parents suffering from malnutrition, and placed him in the Mogumber

Mission settlement, where he first slept in a bed. Here he was given a basic education, taught the rudiments of European culture, and went on to graduate as dux of an agricultural college. An outstanding Australian rules league footballer, Jacobs managed to put himself through university, qualify as a Uniting Church minister, and become a respected Aboriginal leader, being elected to the National Aboriginal Conference. Although regretting never again seeing his parents, Jacobs otherwise has no regrets about his treatment.

By the exalted standards of today's exaggerated "human rights" codes, the removal of Aboriginal children is regarded as barbaric, but set in the times it took place, other issues are relevant. The **motive** for removing children has been described as "racist" in that the intention was to eliminate Aboriginal people entirely by assimilation. Even if this were true, it was certainly not the only, or perhaps even the dominant motive.

City Australians, with little or no contact with Aborigines, can be very self-righteous about this, but the fact is that the situation of "half-caste" children throughout this period was desperate. The truth is, as Cedric Jacobs outlines in his book *"Healing a Divided Nation"*, full-blooded Aborigines regarded "half-castes" with complete contempt, while Europeans regarded them as, at the very least, not socially acceptable. Being neither "Aboriginal" nor "European", part-Aborigines faced a miserable lifestyle, of being unaccepted in either society.

Facing this problem, the States concluded that they had a duty of care for such children, and faced it as best they could. In many cases, part-Aboriginal children were fostered by European families out of a sense of Christian charity for the disadvantaged, risking the social obloquy and the alienation from their peers in doing so. Much of the burden fell upon the Christian churches, whose role has been unfairly dismissed as paternalistic or even "racist". This is an outrageous slander on those missionaries sent out by churches like those that now make up the Uniting Church. It is very significant that the voices of the large proportion of Christian Aborigines are not being heard in this matter.

It may be indelicate to say so, but some of those like Cedric Jacobs, Lois O'Donoghue, and others removed from their families, have enjoyed the best that Australia has to offer. For them, the alternative may well have been years of deprivation, prostitution, alcoholism and malnutrition, leading to early deaths.

Selective Sympathy: For all its alleged faults, the policy of assimilation of Aborigines into the mainstream did at least begin from the positive motivation of inclusiveness. In contrast, the recent policy of "self-determination" ends with a form of segregation from the mainstream, a type of self-imposed "apartheid" – **separate development**.

Talk of a formal apology demeans the sacrifices of those who did their best for a generation of part-Aboriginal people facing a desperate future. It is relevant that Australians from a European background do not keep demanding that Aborigines show gratitude that it was the British that colonised Australia, rather than, say, the Chinese or Japanese, who show little sympathy for indigenous peoples. And it does not go unnoticed that those with Aboriginal heritage are quick to capitalise on this when racially-determined welfare is available, but prefer the lifestyle introduced by the European, rather than a tribal lifestyle.

It is also difficult to dismiss the suspicion that sympathy for Aboriginal people is being deliberately generated for other purposes. While the "stolen generation" is being highlighted, little attention is given to the thousands of non-Aboriginal people removed from single mothers at birth. The shame of out-of-wedlock childbirth was routinely assuaged by forced-adoption, but the pain and grief experienced

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can have been no less for the victims. And what about the thousands of British children, who were settled in Australia on the (sometimes false) understanding that they were orphans? Will a formal apology be made to such people? Will compensation be paid to the victims? Or is sympathy for such a plight to be reserved exclusively for Aboriginal victims?

The suggestion that the "stolen generation" of Aboriginal people are being callously "used" by revolutionary forces cannot be dismissed. Available evidence indicates that Aborigines are being manipulated to place international pressure on Australia, with economic sanctions a possibility.

Recommended Reading: *"Healing a Divided Nation"* by Rev. Cedric Jacobs, \$7.00, or \$8.50 posted. *"Hasluck Versus Coombs – white politics and Australia's Aborigines"* by Geoffrey Partington, \$17.50 or \$20.00 posted. From all League Book Services.

IMMIGRATION POLICY CHANGE: It is significant that some of the most outspoken opponents of last week's reduction in immigrant places for the next year has been **the business community**. On the face of it, this is odd, given that it was not the category of skilled migrants that was reduced. But it begins to make sense when we hear that big business deplores the impact that a cut in immigration will have on the building industry. More immigrants mean more houses, which means more work for construction companies and their suppliers. More jobs, you see. Houses are no longer built because **people need them**, but because industry needs economic activity. **More people** are necessary to fill up (and pay for) all the new houses industry can build. Doesn't matter what kind of people, where they come from, or their cultural background, so long as they live in houses! In other words, the role of **people** is to serve the interests of **industry**.

It is this type of thinking that demonstrates the nature of future disasters facing Australia when the "business" types set policy. Such thinking is known as "economic rationalism", no matter how irrational it sounds to those without a degree in business management. Under such thinking, we propose to "privatise" (that is, sell to foreign corporations) things like our power stations, water services, communications and transport systems, etc. If Australia is insane enough to form economic policy on the above basis, then let us encourage the birth of more Australians to begin to fill up all those new houses, instead of importing foreigners to do so.

WOULD 1967 ABORIGINAL REFERENDUM PASS IN 1997? In this week, the 20th anniversary of the historic referendum to place Aboriginal policy in Commonwealth (as opposed to State) hands passes, a number of Aboriginal leaders have shocked the white (small "l") liberal do-gooders in areas like the media by announcing that a referendum that passed with 90.77% support in 1967 **would likely fail today**. How could this be? Have we become a nation of racists?

The sympathy for Australia's Aborigines has eroded for one simple reason: instead of making progress towards being **Australians**, Aborigines have been forced further into a separate identity as **Aborigines** first, and Australians second. While at first additional assistance was regarded as necessary and just, the separate status thrust upon Aborigines has resulted in increasing resentment toward what is regarded as a type of special status that is routinely abused. The resentment is further increased by the tendency of those with Aboriginal heritage to exaggerate this, while despising their (often predominant) European heritage. There now exists a conviction that Aboriginal status qualifies one for all sorts of special welfare and territorial (land) benefits unavailable to others. Pauline Hanson simply articulated this resentment.

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