



A WEEKLY COMMENTARY

ON TARGET

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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance –

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: *"They (the Australia Council) are creating an Australia that is exclusive, multicultural, they call it. But they are discriminating, they exclude. 'They' are not just the Australia Council, they are the ruling elite of today's Australia: the cultural bureaucrats, the academics . . . They are excluding people like me from their Ausrralia – the country people, the rednecks, the Anglo-Celts, the farming people . . . They act as though they despise. . . We Old Australians, not always Anglo, but having no other country but this one, are now mostly caught and silenced between the indigenous and the multicultural."*
– Australian Poet Les Murray, quoted in *Among the Barbarians*

WHY I FEAR FOR THE FUTURE OF ONE NATION by Eric D. Butler:

History provides a number of examples of political movements with the most laudable objectives eventually self destructing because of a failure to understand the nature of the battle they felt they were waging. C.H. Douglas referred to the question in his pre-Second World War address, **The Tragedy of Human Effort**. Professor (later Judge) C.W. Keeton dealt with the problem in his classic, **The Passing of Parliament**, published after the Second World War. Every objective commentator agrees that the basic cause of the One Nation vote at the Queensland State Elections was the result of a revolt by electors who were determined to record a protest vote against what they perceived to be a betrayal of the traditional Australia they had taken for granted. Paul Keating made the fatal mistake of believing that the Australian electors had voted **for** him when he defeated Liberal leader John Hewson. The reality was that the electors voted **against** what they saw as but another form of taxation, the General Services Tax (GST) strongly recommended by the International Monetary Fund. Ignoring the basic political truth that politicians are generally changed, not by voting a new government **IN** but by voting a government **OUT**, John Howard has managed in less than one term to dissipate the big majority he inherited primarily because a great majority of Australians had come to detest Paul Keating. They felt that conditions must improve under a Liberal-National Party coalition. But they have discovered the truth of an old French saying – that the more things change the more they remain the same. There has been a growing feeling of betrayal; betrayal about many things. Large numbers of decent, law abiding Australians felt that they had been turned into criminals with John Howard's draconian gun controls, which in practice have turned into bureaucratic nightmares.

If, and when the real history of Australia is written, the Pauline Hanson phenomenon will be seen as a manifestation of a revolt, not only by the rural community, but a big section of the Australian people who not only resent the destructive policies imposed upon them, but the manner in which those policies have been imposed. In two by-elections, one in rural Victoria and one in suburban Victoria, Victorian electors have made it clear that they reject the style of government imposed upon them by Premier Jeff Kennett, often described as a cultural vandal, a man who blatantly broke a promise that he would not tolerate compulsory council amalgamations, who aggressively fostered multiculturalism and what he felt would be a gambling led economic

recovery. The backlash against the Kennett Government at the next Victorian elections will be as strong as the backlash which swept the Labor Government from office and left Victorians with a government lacking in any restraints. *"All power tends to corrupt; absolute power corrupts absolutely."* If the two dominant figures in the One Nation movement, David Oldfield and David Ettridge, have heard of this truth, they obviously do not think it applies them, as witnessed by the type of structure they have been attempting to create. It is not surprising that the **One Nation** movement is starting to be split by complaints that members have no say in policy making. Unless those involved with the **One Nation** Party can ensure that the Party is re-structured to ensure that it does not become like other parties, it can be predicted now that eventually it will prove to be but one more example of a failed attempt by people to obtain genuine representation through the party system.

Those who, by various methods, have progressively centralised power, are not going to relinquish that power voluntarily. They will use every possible tactic to hold on to power. Modern party politics have developed into a type of political warfare, and those who wish to make a realistic effort to decentralise power must learn to understand the nature of what is involved. Members of **One Nation** will not be assisted by the views of National Director David Ettridge, who handles the finances of **One Nation**, in such a way that members have no way of understanding what is being done. David Ettridge frankly admits that members are kept in the dark. There are many unanswered questions concerning David Ettridge, who has been responsible for claiming that the League of Rights is a fascist movement. Judging by his claims, David Ettridge is an authority on fascism, the essence of which is the centralisation of power over the individual. I write of what I know. David Ettridge's claim about the League of Rights being a fascist movement was first brought to my attention by an old friend and League supporter who attended Pauline Hanson's Geelong dinner meeting. My friend was greatly impressed with Pauline Hanson and her manner, but when David Ettridge came to his table he suggested that **One Nation** would be making common cause with movements with the same philosophy, mentioning Graeme Campbell, there was little enthusiasm. But when my friend mentioned the League of Rights there was a violent verbal explosion, the League being described as a fascist movement. Upon being told by my friend that he was surprised to hear this, as he had known me for many years, David Ettridge said that evidence for his claim would be provided in a book which was about to be released by the David Syme College. This movement is, as all well informed political observers know, an offshoot of the La Rouché movement.

It would be instructive to learn why David Ettridge was aware of the coming publication, which, incidentally, **One Nation** made available for a period. David Ettridge will no doubt recall the Sydney businessman who originally was a generous contributor to **One Nation** funds until he heard the charge about the League of Rights being a fascist movement. He challenged David Ettridge about the question, pointing out that there would be no more contributions; he had been a friend and supporter of mine for many years!

If, as they claim, David Oldfield and David Ettridge are loyal and patriotic Australians, why do they keep at arms length fellow patriots? Why the failure not only to co-operate with Graeme Campbell, but to urge that **One Nation** supporters have nothing to do with him or his Australia First movement? Genuine patriots would at this critical time in Australia's history be making every endeavour to foster co-operation between all genuine patriots.

Not surprisingly a number of supporters of **One Nation**, whom they always associate with Pauline Hanson, have sought to invite well known lecturer and author Jeremy Lee to address meetings. Because of his experiences, with cancelled meetings, Jeremy Lee subsequently insisted that **One Nation** supporters get written approval from **One Nation** headquarters in Manly, New South Wales. Such approval has always been refused by David Ettridge or David Oldfield. No doubt their explanation for this refusal is that Jeremy Lee was at one time an official of the League of Rights.

Party politics is, at best, a rather sordid business which brings out the worst in many. As the old saying has it, *"Everyone wants to be the boss"*. Even allowing for this fact of life, last week's revelations concerning the

internal operations of **One Nation** under David Oldfield and David Ettridge cannot be brushed aside. First came the charge by Pauline Hanson's former private secretary and close confidante, Barbara Hazleton, that **One Nation** had been "hijacked" by David Oldfield who was running his own agenda. There is some evidence that Barbara Hazleton was critical of the League of Rights. A professional who had worked for other politicians, it is legitimate to ask was her resignation, and subsequent revelations, governed by her failure to gain a Senate nomination? However, Pauline Hanson was on record of how much she valued Hazleton's close friendship and support. Much of what Hazelton records has the ring of truth about it, confirmed by the action of David Oldfield in having Pauline Hanson's friend and biographer, Helen J. Dodd, removed from Pauline Hanson's office by a security officer. Helen Dodd was a volunteer worker only. The removal of Helen Dodd appears to confirm Hazleton's claim that Oldfield was determined to exercise complete control over Pauline Hanson. Last Sunday's 60 Minute TV 9 programme tended to confirm the widespread view that there was, or had been, an emotional attachment between Oldfield and Pauline Hanson. Pauline Hanson correctly responded to a question by Paul Lyneham that her private life was her own business.

David Oldfield is clearly a most ambitious man. There is nothing wrong with that. But the public is entitled to know if his ambitions extend to becoming the sole controller, along with his friend David Ettridge, of the **One Nation** movement. My own concern, which I have expressed on a number of occasions, is that if eventually the movement fails to halt Australia's slide towards disaster, it will have a demoralising effect on large numbers of good Australians. Pauline Hanson cannot be blamed. She deserves every support for what she has achieved. But the realities of politics must never be forgotten.

ONENATION AND THE LEAGUE:

Last week National Party Senator Ron Boswell attacked the League in the Senate, with the accusation that One Nation is virtually a front of the League of Rights. Others, like Treasurer Costello, have made similar allegations. A feature of the reporting of such issues is that the journalists involved are either following an agenda of their own, or are lacking in competence. As a result, reports of the League's involvement with One Nation have been garbled, at best. The following is the text of a statement issued by the League last weekend, in order to clarify our position as much as possible:

"The public record shows that the Australian League of Rights has been in basic agreement with Independent Member for Oxley, Pauline Hanson MHR, on the issues she has raised in the Parliament. The League hailed her maiden speech to Parliament on May 10th, 1996, as a type of turning-point in Australian politics. This address was seriously misrepresented by an antagonistic – almost malicious – press, and we did much to encourage the nationwide distribution of this historic speech, including re-publishing it in its entirety, so that Australians could judge for themselves.

"When the formation of the One Nation political party took place, the League declined to offer support. At that point, it was unclear what **policies** One Nation would propose, who would administer One Nation, and what its structure might be. As an educational and service organisation, the League does not support political parties, although we recommend support for those espousing constructive policies.

"Although supporting Pauline Hanson almost without reservation in her instinctive ability to identify issues which have alienated people from the mainstream parties, the League has never been confident that Pauline Hanson or One Nation could offer constructive alternatives. This has been demonstrated in the wake of the Queensland election. While the League agrees with the proposal to provide low-interest credit for home owners, primary producers, etc., it is clear that no-one within One Nation can competently articulate this policy, nor understands the issue in any depth.

"It has long been the view of the League of Rights that Mrs. Hanson has received poor advice from her One Nation leadership. For example, there was never any useful explanation of why One Nation forbid the distribution of the important book, *Pauline Hanson The Truth*, which was clearly endorsed by Mrs. Hanson, and originally purported to be written on her behalf.

"For many months the League, in the course of its work at the grassroots of politics, has identified widespread

dissatisfaction among One Nation members and supporters concerning the autocratic administration of the party. It is clear that One Nation's policy of requiring signed (but undated) resignations from all candidates and office-bearers has caused resentment and demonstrates a lack of trust. Further, many donors have remained unacknowledged, as confirmed by Mrs. Hanson's former personal secretary and friend, Barbara Hazleton.

"The League's reservations about One Nation were further confirmed by the fact that One Nation has refused to co-operate with other groups with whom they have much in common on matters of policy and objectives. For example, when it was suggested that One Nation exchange preferences with Australia First for the Queensland election, the One Nation reaction was one of horror. Party administrator Mr. David Ettridge appears to be determined that there be no co-operation whatever.

"Mr. Ettridge's motivation is not clear to us. His background as a fundraiser, his attitude to party finances and the undenied allegation that he receives 12.5% of all funds raised, leads to the conclusion that he does, as Mrs. Hazleton alleges, regard Mrs. Hanson as 'a product' to be marketed rather than as the focus around which genuine change in political policy can be achieved.

"Mr. Ettridge, in common with his colleague Mr. Oldfield, appears to regard One Nation members and supporters with a certain contempt. His reported comment that, although they want power, One Nation members 'don't have the intellectual capacity to handle power' is most significant. It implies that others, like he and Mr. Oldfield, 'know best' and their views should prevail on all matters. It even implies that they 'know better' than Mrs. Hanson, and are therefore justified in 'managing' her as well.

"The administrators of One Nation may well be brilliant in their fields. There is no question of Mr. David Oldfield's extraordinary talents. But the administrators of One Nation exhibit the signs of the 'will to power', which will always destroy a genuine political party seeking to challenge the centralisation of power. Following the resignation of Barbara Hazleton and the forced departure of Dr. Helen Dodd, who have both expressed the deepest reservations concerning the administration of One Nation, Pauline Hanson's future may depend upon whether she can survive her own political party.

"The suggestion by National Party Senate Leader Boswell that the League has somehow stage-managed the emergence of One Nation is contemptible. Senator Boswell can provide no evidence for this suggestion. The fact that One Nation have adopted ideas that the League also promotes, like low-interest credit for primary producers, home owners and small business, does not make One Nation a 'front' for the League of Rights. It should be noted that in 1971 **this was National Party policy** as enunciated by Sir Robert Sparkes.

"Senator Boswell's assertions deserve no more serious attention than former Prime Minister Fraser's allegation that the emergence of Pauline Hanson was 'masterminded' by the League of Rights. Boswell's attacks on the League, usually described as 'courageous' by a servile press, have never been supported by credible evidence. He has never accounted for his assertions. Indeed, when pressed to do so, has failed to account for his allegations, leading to the conclusion that the Boswell attacks on the League have not been Boswell's work, but the work of others by whom he is content to be used.

"If Senator Boswell, Mr. Costello, Mr. Fraser, or the rather lazy journalists reporting on this matter wished to provide evidence of the League's 'infiltration' of, or influence over One Nation and Mrs. Hanson, surely the truth of the matter could easily be established by an interview with Barbara Hazleton or Dr. Dodd. They appear to be in a position to answer with certainty.

"So far as the League is concerned, we continue to wish Pauline Hanson well in her attempt to achieve a substantial change in political direction, even while we doubt her capacity to provide answers. If she were able to co-operate with others to this end, like Kalgoorlie's Graeme Campbell. We believe Mrs. Hanson would become much more effective, and would be able to offer her endorsement to competent candidates throughout the nation even without the One Nation party structure."