



A WEEKLY COMMENTARY

ON TARGET

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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance -

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: *"Those who make wars generally know how to give them a good name."* – William Cobett, sometimes described as the greatest Englishman of the last century.

DOES AUSTRALIA HAVE A REALISTIC FOREIGN POLICY? by Eric D. Butler:

The Howard Government's policy gamble concerning the proposal to airlift Kosovo refugees to Australia raises the serious question of whether the Government has a coherent and realistic foreign policy. Generally speaking, foreign policy is not an issue which excites much interest among Australians, but with the possibility of Australian troops being committed to play a major role in the Timor situation, which could lead to major convulsions between those Timorese who favour a complete break from control by the Indonesian Central Government and those who don't, whom it is alleged have been armed by the Indonesian Government to threaten those seeking complete independence. It is to be hoped that those advising Foreign Minister Alexander Downer have a realistic understanding of what could be involved if Australian troops are committed in any way to what some fear could prove to be another Vietnam for Australia. Events have not confirmed Downer's early optimism concerning the long-running conflict in Bougainville, where it is now clear that those described as rebels by the Papua-New Guinea Government are not prepared to end their armed struggle for what they visualise is independence. Genuine authority on Papua-New Guinea, men like Sir Raphael Cilento, warned of the long-term dangers inherent in granting premature independence to people of different backgrounds with deep tribal conflicts. But the realists were swept aside by idealogues who insisted that Australian foreign policy had to accept something called "world opinion". In what is now termed the global village, world opinion is created by those international groups who have the power and influence to dominate the mass media of the world.

The problems of Yugoslavia are rooted in a long history reaching back to when most of the Balkans were under an empire controlled by Turkey, one of Germany's major allies during the First World War. It is worth recalling that the First World War was triggered by an incident in the Balkans which eventually engulfed the whole world. It was at the Versailles "Peace Conference" that the promoters of internationalism, manipulating the idealistic idealogues, insisted that world peace could only be achieved by re-drawing the map of the world.

The Balkan States were told that they had to be amalgamated into a Federal System known as Yugoslavia. But basic differences between the different peoples remained, differences which Hitler's Germany

sought to exploit during the Second World War, a war which saw the elevation of Marxist-Leninist Tito as the dictator of Yugoslavia. Some of the fiercest resistance to the Germans was provided by the Serbian people led by General Mihailovitch. RSL leader Bruce Ruxton has recently defended the right of Australians of Serbian background to march in the coming Anzac March. The Australian Serbs have their own branch of the RSL, reflecting the historic fact that the Serbs fought alongside the Western Allies during the Second World War. The Serbs still remember that their leader Mihailovich was betrayed by the Allies, while Tito was supported later to become a type of saint because he allegedly broke with the Soviet Union. Even some anti-Communists swallowed the myth about Tito. It remained for the distinguished Serb, Dr. Slovan Drascovich, to expose Tito in one of the most scholarly anti-Communist books ever written, describing Tito as Moscow's "Trojan Horse". I worked closely with Drascovich when he lived in Chicago, USA, and met with him again when he visited Australia to meet with fellow Serbs.

While it is true that Australia is not involved militarily in the current Balkan conflict, the Howard Government has endorsed the NATO bombing assaults on Yugoslavia. The driving force behind the NATO assault is the USA, a nation whose foreign policies are Zionist dominated. It was one of the more flamboyant American military leaders who announced that American forces were going to bomb Iraq "right back to the Middle Ages". Iraq's dictator Saddam Hussein is no angel, but the American led campaign against Iraq is creating a wave of anti-American feeling right throughout the Islamic world.

Rather than blindly echoing American-Zionist policies in the rest of the world, Australia would be better served by adopting an independent foreign policy. But such a stand is complicated by acceptance of economic globalism. Currently Australia is trying to ensure that it does not lose its valuable lamb export to the USA. An independent foreign policy requires an enlightened national economic policy.

As a few independent observers are pointing out, the truth about a Serbian dominated Yugoslavia is far from clear. If it is true that Prime Minister John Howard's wife helped to persuade the Howard Government to abruptly change its policy concerning Albanian refugees, like all civilised people Mrs. Howard has no doubt been deeply moved by the spectacle of refugees shown on television. But a nation's foreign policy, with long term implications, should not be made on the basis of mass media reports. It now appears that large numbers of the refugees from Yugoslavia do not want to be moved to Australia or elsewhere, but back to their own homes. Presumably American policy makers believe that once the Yugoslavian Government has been crushed by mass bombing, a devastated country can be policed by NATO or other troops and that the basic problems of the area will be solved.

It is a chilling thought that Australia's foreign policy advisers appear to accept this view. What are required are economic and military policies which enable Australia to survive into the future as a genuine independent nation.

THE RIGHT DIRECTION by Jeremy Lee:

The Clerk of the Senate, Mr. Harry Evans, is a man with a lot of sense. His views are worth considering as Upper Houses in England and Australia – an integral part of our parliamentary system – come under attack.

In 1997 he delivered a paper to the Samuel Griffith Society, saying the only way our Parliament could

be made to work properly would involve reforming the parties. He said: "...The real need for reform is not so much in institutions of government as in political parties. They have become narrowly-based, factionalised, undemocratic obligarchies . . . controlled by too few people, closed to public view but open to manipulation and outright corruption . . ." *The Australian* (10/3/97) quoted him as saying: "... the Senate still ensured a fair geographical spread of political representation which prevented domination by the larger States. He criticised any proposed reform of the Senate based on the 'historical and theoretical misconception' that it was not operating as the 'States' House' envisaged by the creators of the Constitution."

He has now spoken out again. Laurie Oakes quoted him in *The Bulletin* (23/2/99) as follows: "Governments always want to remove any obstacles to their power, and the more power they've got, the more they try to remove the residual obstacles. You've got the Victorian government dismantling the auditor-general, for example. It's got a majority in both Houses, but it's not willing to put up with even that residual check. Governments just naturally drive for absolute power, they're constantly trying to dismantle limitations on their power, and people just have to be awake to that and resist it because unless you have checks on power then you go down the slippery slope."

Tens of thousands of concerned Australians would fervently agree!

Mr. Evans has now put forward a plan which deserves consideration. Laurie Oakes, in the same article, elaborated: "...He has proposed a radical solution to the potential problem of legislative gridlock which would avoid changes to the powers of the Senate or the way it is elected. Evans' suggestion is that governments should have the right to present disputed legislation directly to the voters. Under the Evans plan, when legislation is blocked by the Senate, a government would be able to put it to a referendum at the time of the next federal election. . ."

Well, it would be a start towards the best solution of all – the right of the electorate to demand its own referendum over issues of concern, the result being binding on BOTH Houses. Mr. Evans is to be commended. His views are much closer to what is needed than those of the major parties.

BRIBING US WITH OUR OWN MONEY: The Premiers' Conference was a farce. An extra handout and every tail wagged. Prime Minister Howard and Treasurer Costello hailed the gathering as the final endorsement for the GST, which – for the time being – will be handed over to the States as a reward for their compliance. The last stumbling block is the Senate, and enormous pressure will be put on Tasmanian Brian Harradine and the one-time pariah Mal Coulston to "bow to the inevitable".

The annual pilgrimage by State Premiers to Canberra for a feed from the Federal table is something Australia's founding fathers never envisaged – although Alfred Deakin in a moment of prescience foresaw the break up of federalism through the central monopoly by Canberra over the money system. He warned: "... Our Constitution may remain unaltered; but a vital change will have taken place between the States and the Commonwealth . . ."

The same argument is taking place in Canada. Reporting on a major conference on federalism in Canada, the *Canadian Intelligence Service* for March reported: "... Social policy – medicare, education, welfare, etc. – is a provincial jurisdiction and responsibility. But the federal government today sucks such a volume of taxes out of the provinces that they don't have enough tax revenue left in the provinces to discharge their responsibilities . . . The key to solving the 'Quebec Problem' is a return to the constitution division of powers spelled out in the BNA Act, which has served as our

Constitution for 132 years but which has been shamelessly ignored and violated by the federal governments these many past years. Indeed, a return to this constitutional basis would give – or, more accurately, return – to Quebec, and to every province, the jurisdiction and sovereignty that rightfully is theirs under our Constitution . . ."

Both in Canada and Australia it is the old story of central governments ruthlessly extending their own power by any means – as warned of by Mr. Harry Evans.

Financial crisis and pressure has helped both governments consolidate their power. Canada's public debt is frightening. Australia has kept its public debt at a more modest level by the expedient of selling a huge range of valuable assets and utilities, delivering Australia's productive process into foreign ownership in the process.

The *Canadian Intelligence Service* (March) gives this picture of Canadian public debt: ". . . When the Trudeau regime came to power in 1968, after 101 years of confederation, our federal debt was less than \$20 billion. By the time the Chretien regime came to power 25 years later in 1993, the Trudeau and Mulroney governments had run our federal debt up 2,000 percent to over \$400 billion! And in the past six years the present federal government has run the debt up to nearly \$600 billion – that's \$20,000 of debt for every man, woman and child in Canada; or for a family of four, \$80,000. And that's for only the federal government!"

"And by far the largest single factor in the escalation of this huge federal – and provincial – debt has been medicare costs, which are now running at about \$80 billion a year or \$10,000 (\$200 a week) for a family of four . . ."

Australia's public debt is more modest. The net debt of Commonwealth, States and local Governments in Australia has actually come down: 1995 – \$163.8 billion; 1996 – \$156.9 billion; 1997 – \$148 million. (Source: 1999 Pocket Yearbook)

The price Australia has paid is "selling off the farm". Figures for foreign investment in Australia are: 1996 – \$458.9 billion; 1997 – \$510.3 billion; 1998 – \$562.3 billion. (Same Source)

Among those who have done "very nicely thank you" out of this huge Australian garage-sale has been Goldman Sachs & Co. with Malcolm Turnbull heading its Australian arm.

THE LADY'S NOT FOR TURNING: Telstra's half-yearly profits have surged by 16 percent to a net \$1.8 billion in the six months ending in December. It is now set for an annual profit of about \$3.5 billion. The Howard Government is more than ever set on selling the whole of Telstra. Tim Fischer and the bulk of the Federal Nationals aim to tag along. But Queensland National Deanne Kelly is the fly in Fischer's ointment. She has defied Fischer, supporting a Queensland National resolution that 51 percent of Telstra should remain in public hands. *The Courier-Mail* (10/4) reported: "She said she did not care that she had opposed the Federal National Party, claiming her primary responsibility was to members of her electorate and her State party."

A National responsible to her electorate? Unheard of!