



A WEEKLY COMMENTARY

ON TARGET

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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance –

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: *"Two hundred years ago a farmer was hard pushed to farm up to ten acres on his own. Today one farmer can farm hundreds of acres, not because he is capable of more labour than his forebears (he may be less capable) but because his tractor, for example, is a concrete expression of the cultural heritage, embodying the 'know-how' in bringing metals and other materials into the correct relations, produced on the assembly line (the division of labour) and powered by oil taken from the earth and transported by the application of the same cultural heritage..."*

The problem of producing man's physical requirements has been solved, primarily by the discovery and application of Truth. Why then is the individual not gaining full access to his heritage? The question can only be answered by examining the vital role of money in society."

"Social Dynamics" by Eric D. Butler

A GREAT AUSTRALIAN PASSES ON by Jeremy Lee:

With the death of Sir Mark Oliphant at the age of 98, another of the "old-school" Australian statesmen has passed on.

Tribute has been paid to his work as one of a small team of scientists who changed history with the splitting of the atom in the Manhattan Project. Sir Mark was greatly affected by the subsequent results at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As Governor of South Australia he demanded from politicians both standards and behaviour, and is reputed to have sent the late Don Dunstan (he of the pink shorts in Parliament) home with the suggestion he was not properly attired.

What is not so well known is that Sir Mark Oliphant took a keen interest in financial issues and Social Credit.

In a prophetic statement in 1984 (*The News*, Adelaide, 4/12/1984) Sir Mark was quoted as follows:

".... It is not necessary to read much to realise that international indebtedness, including our own, has made all virtually bankrupt. The scale of international debt is astronomical and can never be repaid As the pressure of mounting interest payments on international trade grew, something was bound to give way. It was possible international trade could be halted.

"If this happened, Australia 'which has allowed itself to degenerate into a colony of Japan and other vigorous manufacturing nations' would become a backwater. Yet, of all the nations in the world, Australia was best equipped to set its own goals, retain dignity, and be powerful without enormous armed services. 'There is almost nothing needed for the good life which cannot be produced within the island-continent, if we so desire,' he said."

A year earlier he pointed to the monetary system itself (*The Advertiser*, 26/1/1983):

".... Provided that a development project involves no large component of imported materials, equipment or know-how, a nation such as Australia should be able to complete it with little or no debt accruing. In return for the efforts of Australian workers, a valuable asset can be created which will continue to contribute to the economy for a long time. If the project is not as successful as expected, coming generations do not face intolerable debts which they cannot meet. In a sane world this would be logic"

Being a man of integrity, Oliphant could see the truth that eludes so many politicians. Australia is poorer for his passing.

ANOTHER INTERMINABLE G-8 MEETING: Almost as if in unacknowledged tribute to Sir Mark Oliphant, leaders of the G-8 meet this week in Tokyo. Nobody is holding their breath for any positive results. One Tokyo bureaucrat, carried away by euphoria, claimed the conference would "set the stage for world peace, development and harmony for the next 25 years"

Meeting will be Clinton of the US, Blair of the UK, Chirac (France), Schroeder (Germany), Mori (Japan) Putin (Russia) Giuliano (Italy) and Chretien (Canada). Also attending will be Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission.

Among issues expected to come up are trade liberalisation, the agenda for the next W.T.O. conference, infectious diseases, It and genetically-modified food. Differences are already so great that nothing is expected beyond debate.

But the Japanese are taking no chances, 22,000 police are being flown into Okinawa, where the conference is being held.

ALEXANDER DOWNER AND FIJI: The world is castigating George Speight, the rebel coup leader in Fiji. Why is it that when he and Australia's Foreign Minister Alexander Downer pour scorn on each other, Speight rings more genuine?

One reason is Downer's patently double standards. He does not apply the same principles to all our neighbors. If he did, Australia would be taking limited sanctions against Indonesia, Malaysia and Burma.

Events in Fiji confirm, if confirmation is needed, that the 'multicultural' idea is ultimately incompatible with democracy. The inexperienced insist that Australia is a successful example of a multicultural society. The racial enclaves we are building - now hastened with the uncritical acceptance of growing numbers of illegal immigrants - will ultimately cause as much breakdown and animosity as in a host of other countries.

In a thoughtful article in *The Australian* (18/7/2000) Tony Kevin of the A.N.U. offered some arguments not generally considered in the sanctimonious condemnation of George Speight. Of Speight's constituency he said:

".... His group clearly speaks for the values and interests of the mass of poorer indigenous urban and rural Fijians who have been abandoned by the Fijian elite - read Council of Chiefs, who were comfortably involved in mutually profitable deals with moneyed Indian citizens to the detriment of their peoples' long-term interests"

".... In the most recent election, Mahendra Chaudhry gained government on far less than a majority of first-preference votes The fear amongst ordinary Fijians of a progressive expropriation of their sovereign landrights as Fiji is drawn increasingly into the global economy, seemed real and justifiable. The Chaudhry government's brief tenure was bringing such anxieties to a head."

"The demands vigorously articulated by Speight's group for a rock-solid political weighting in favour

of protecting the indigenous community's rights have strong international precedents. For example, in Malaysia the Malay people (the bumiputra, or sons of the soil) were given entrenched preferential political and economic rights over non-indigenous communities after the shock of the serious racial violence of the mid-1960s. Malaysia, however undemocratic it may be in terms of the one-person, one-vote principle, has worked as a stable civil society since. Fiji has the right to consider such a solution"

Oh, for an Australian political leader prepared to fight against the dispossession of the Australian people by foreign multinational intruders! Or one who understands that democracy is more than one-man-one-vote without any choice on issues one-at-a-time!

In our book, Speight has it all over Alexander Downer.

KIM BEAZLEY AND THE G.S.T.: There are extraordinary attempts being made to suggest that Beazley has "lost the plot" over the G.S.T., and that Australians now endorse the new tax.

Beazley is right about the G.S.T. It is a tax that will produce turmoil and misery in the months ahead. Preliminary polls suggesting otherwise are a case of "whistling in the dark". The pain - and the vengeance - is yet to come.

Peter Switzer, *The Australian* (17/7/2000), said:

"Anyone who thinks the G.S.T. has been a piece of cake or, worse still, another Y2K beat-up would have to be a consumer or an intellectual who did nothing to get G.S.T.-ready and is now feeling oh so smug.

"The Della Bosca hoo-ha this week added unwarranted credence to the view that the G.S.T. is just another Y2K

"Try telling this to businesses facing court and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission for price exploitation, or the hundreds of thousands of businesses which have changed all their shelf-prices and now have 15 days to change all prices on the actual products. Then there are those businesses bound to wind up with a cash-flow problem come November 11 when the first business activity statement is due"

There followed a daunting description of the obstacle-course still ahead for Australia.

Beazley's weakness is not his opposition to the G.S.T. That will be shown to be right before long. His weakness his refusal to do anything but fiddle with it round the edges.

RING-OF-FIRE ROUND AUSTRALIA SPREADS: Indonesia continues to dissolve, with heavy fighting in the Maluku, where an estimated 4,000 have been killed in the past eighteen months. This time it is between Christians and Muslims.

President Wahid has suggested that some form of international assistance might be needed to resolve the conflict. More probably, it would escalate the Islamic reaction. Fighting also continues in Ambon.

Meanwhile, news reports indicate that the militia which caused such loss of life in East Timor is being established in West Papua, named the Satgas Merah Putih, with the same leadership that operated in E. Timor. The Governor-General is Musiran Darmiosunito, an intelligence operative from the Indonesian Airforce, who was vice-governor in East Timor in the period leading up to the referendum. So what will Foreign Minister Downer have to say about West Papua? We wait with bated breath!

WHAT HAPPENS TO DEAD COMPUTERS? Computer technology is progressing so fast that computers are out of date almost as soon as they appear. Two years is the average operative life.

In figures produced by the US National Recycling Coalition, 20.6 million personal computers became obsolete in 1998. The figure is expected to rise to 300 million by 2004 and possibly 500 million by 2007. Each computer contains between 2 and 4 kilos of lead, plus smaller amounts of copper, iron, bromine, tin, nickel, cadmium, tantalum, mercury, silver, gold and platinum.

What happens to all this when half-a-billion software and hardware programmes go to join the great computer in the sky?

Malign viruses are also on the increase. Virus attacks on networks have increased 75 per cent in the last 12 months, and are getting more sophisticated and dangerous. 69 per cent of Australian businesses were affected to a greater or lesser degree.

At the risk of sounding facetious, the following lines commend themselves:

"Oh dear! Oh dear! What shall I do?
My hard-drive's caught the Asian flu!
I hope it isn't going to die
And take its cyber-space on high!"

If it meant the end of the Australian Tax Office and the G.S.T., we could probably just bear it!

LAND USERS' REVOLT IN THE U.S. by Antonia Feitz:

Fed up with the U.S. Federal Government's ever-increasing powers to regulate land use, a group of American protesters has started fighting back – with shovels. Their target was a rock barrier constructed by the Forest Service to block access to a one and a half mile stretch of dirt road damaged after a washaway in 1995.

Though the road near the Nevada-Idaho border doesn't go anywhere, it has become the "line in the sand" for protesters because for years Federal authorities blocked all efforts to re-open the road. They claimed any work would damage the stream-bed and threaten the Nevada bull trout population which they estimated might number as few as 700. Using the environment as an excuse to restrict humans' access to the land has been a very effective tool for governments so far.

As the protesters faced jail or fines if they violated clean water laws or disturbed the trout's habitat, they built a straw barrier to protect the stream bed from erosion. Then organised in work-gangs of 40, they went in to level the rock barrier and to dig around a huge boulder blocking the road.

Demar Dahl, president of the Shovel Brigade said, "I think this is a great day for local government and it is a step in the right direction of us in the West who are tired of the [Federal] government telling us what is best for us."

Showing just how angry people are, protesters from several western states came to help. Scott Traudt, a commercial fisherman from Rhode Island said, "Their fight is my fight ...". Commenting that loggers, ranchers and people like himself who make their living from the land are frustrated by increased government regulation he added, "We've had enough. We're all getting unified." (A.P.) May it be true!