



A WEEKLY COMMENTARY

ON TARGET

- NEWS HIGHLIGHTS
- BACKGROUND INFORMATION
- COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS



The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance –

Print Post Publication Number 381667 00258

Vol.36, No.32

September 1st, 2000

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: *"...the IMF could have an enormous influence on the economic (which is to say political) choices of its heavily indebted clients if it chose to do so, for the simple reason that money talks. If the Fund believed, which it patently does not, that economic growth can also result from greater social equality, access to education, health care and other basic services, fairer income distribution, etc., it could perfectly well make such objectives part of its programmes. On the contrary, exactly those countries that have most insisted on maintaining social objectives (for example, Tanzania and Jamaica under The People's National Party) have had the greatest difficulties in coming to terms with the IMF..."*

– "A Fate Worse Than Debt: the World Financial Crisis and the Poor" by Susan George, 1988

MIS-USE OF ARMED FORCES? by Jeremy Lee:

With a number of major international events taking place in September, obviously including the Olympic Games and also the World Economic Forum at Melbourne's Crown Casino, security is a major factor. There is community concern in New South Wales where a number of country towns will be left without police protection as officers are deployed to Sydney for the Olympics. In Victoria, there will be a major police presence in Melbourne, and all police leave is being cancelled.

All of a sudden the Defence Legislation Amendment (Aid to Civilian Authorities) Bill has appeared in the Federal Parliament, raising big questions about the use of the military.

Under the Australian Constitution the States are denied the right to raise their own armies, leaving this responsibility to the Commonwealth, which may respond to requests by the States to repel outside invasion (Section 114).

The Defence Forces, under the command of the Governor-General, are for the defence of the realm. They are not to be used to control or police the citizens of Australia. That is a matter for the police forces in each State. Australia has been careful in its constitutional development to keep such powers separated, so that politicians can not accrue to themselves unnecessary power.

The proposed amendment, if it becomes law, will allow the Armed Forces to be used as police, with powers to arrest and, if necessary, kill citizens in the course of a police action. Such powers would normally only be possible by the declaration of a state of emergency, in which civil liberties are suspended.

If the Governor-General believes that the international events occurring in Australia in September warrant security concerns sufficient to include the Armed Forces, he should publicly announce a state of emergency for the period, spelling out the nature of the emergency so people know the situation.

There has been a considerable expression of concern throughout Australia at the proposed Amendment Bill, and on August 21st the Attorney-General, Daryl Williams and Defence Minister John Moore, wrote the following letter to *The Australian*:

"Contrary to media reports, the Defence Legislation Amendment (Aid to Civilian Authorities) Bill does not change the circumstances under which the Defence Force can be called out on Australian soil to aid police.

"State, territory and commonwealth governments have always had the power to request call-out of the Defence Force in Australia in rare situations where police need help to deal with an extreme emergency, such as a terrorist incident. The public would expect no less.

"However, there is currently no legislation outlining the process governing call-out by the commonwealth to protect its own interests. Existing legislation governing call-out at the request of a state or territory to protect that state or territory from civil unrest or domestic violence is antiquated and unworkable.

"The bill will for the first time set out the commonwealth's call-out process in legislation. It will clarify the state and territory process and include significant safeguards and accountability requirements on the exercise of powers under the bill.

"This bill does not allow the Defence Force to break strikes or to quell protests. The bill's powers are not applicable to industrial changes or to matters which can be handled by the police.

"The bill requires three commonwealth ministers to be satisfied that police cannot deal with the situation. It also requires the Defence Force to co-operate with the police.

"Media reports have linked the introduction of this bill to the need to provide security for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. The Government has been working on this bill for some time and believes that the measures are desirable regardless of the impending Games."

DARYL WILLIAMS, Attorney-General; JOHN MOORE, Defence Minister, Canberra

A glaring omission from this letter is any description of the circumstances which might warrant the new powers in this Bill. Is there, for instance, any evidence of subversive terrorism being organised in Australia? Or is there any evidence that outside terrorist forces, too large for the police to handle, may seek a presence in Australia during the Olympics or the World Economic Forum? If so, the public should be told. If not, the most detailed explanation for the introduction of these new powers should be provided to all Australians. Such an explanation was absent in the letter by Williams and Moore.

STOP PRESS: As the above article was concluded, an ABC news report said the Bill was being put on the back-burner. Temporarily? Indefinitely? Australians deserve much more information.

INTERNATIONAL BACKLASH ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND "WOMEN'S BUSINESS":

Among other international forums the annual get-together of women dealing, under the heading "Human Rights", with the place of women in society, abortion, feminism, work, wages and the family was, for many years dominated by a strident, well-organised feminist coterie. In recent years there has been a swing in favour of the traditional family, pro-life and acknowledgement of distinct differences between the sexes. The backlash has included a lot of leadership from the Third World, where women do not see feminism as being among their top priorities.

The following article is from our sister publication, the Canadian *On Target* (July/August, 2000):

"'Motherhood, Bibles on feminist blacklist at United Nations' is the heading of an NP report, June 6. Its subhead is 'Federal Agency provides \$98,000 for survey of rightists'. Here are excerpts:

"United Nations – A federal funding agency has paid for a study aimed at helping feminist organisations strategize against 'pro-life and pro-family' lobbyists at the Beijing + 5 conference on womens' equality under way this week at the United Nations.

"Among the transgressions of the targeted groups are not following proper procedures at a meeting, wearing buttons reading 'Motherhood', lobbying governments and carrying Bibles.

"A 40-page paper entitled 'Right-Wing Anti-Feminist Groups at the United Nations', produced by some academics at the Institute of Feminist Studies at the University of Quebec in Montreal, describes lobbying tactics of conservative groups and recommends to womens' organisations 'ways and means of responding'....

"The project received a three-year, \$98,000 grant from the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Council of Canada.

"'Right-wing anti-feminist groups have developed multiple strategies for participating in United Nations meetings,' the study states. 'These groups seem to have made important gains on the international scene.'

"The paper came about because feminist groups had expressed unease at the presence of 'right-wing, anti-feminist groups' at the United Nations, the introduction states" (end of quote)

A number of tradition, pro-life womens' groups in Australia have also been working conscientiously and with self-sacrifice in international forums to counter the feminists. It looks as though their persistence and faith is being rewarded.

NEW ZEALAND STUDENTS AND THE THREE R's: University of Canterbury academics are complaining their students cannot read, write or even spell properly. Responding to a questionnaire, 150 academics said they regularly found poor grammar, careless spelling, an inability to read significant amounts of material, and a lack of critical skills in their students.

Canterbury's dean of undergraduate studies, John Freeman-Moir, explained they could not insist on higher entrance procedures or some kind of proficiency test before students were accepted into university. "Current legislation did not allow universities to exclude students because they were ill-

prepared. Raising entry standards would not be realistic under the current funding regime." Where have we heard this before? *The Press*, Christchurch, August 16th, 2000.

THE MEANS AND THE ENDS by Betty Luks:

When we talk or write about an 'economy', what are we talking about? The word *economy* is derived from two Greek roots: *Oika*, house; and *nomos*, rule. The 'economy' therefore, is about the regulation of a house; it is about the order in the use of the goods of a house.

We could define *domestic economy* as 'the management of *domestic* affairs'. But what about a nation's economy? We would then be talking about managing the affairs of a nation – we would be talking about a *political economy*.

You will judge whether the management is good or bad by what you believe to be the purpose of a nation and its systems and institutions.

If you believe, as does the present Labor Party, that the purpose of a production system is to 'make work' (they continually push for 'full employment'), or, if you believe what the Liberals believe, that the system is not only to 'make work' but also 'make profits' (especially for the money power and the multi-nationals), then you would say that the economic affairs of the nation are in reasonable order.

Both parties regard labour as an *end* of production. If they considered labour as a means of producing and the *goal*, the *end* of economic activities, the satisfaction of human needs, they would formulate policies to attain those ends.

What if you believed that the system was meant to serve Mankind? Then you would have to say that the present system is managed very badly.

But what is 'good' management? When can the management of the affairs of a small or large home (the family or the nation) be called good? Surely the answer to that question is: they are good when they attain the results for which they were intended!

The true *end* or *goal* of the production system should direct the *means*, instead of which, it is the money power that now controls and directs the *ends* and the *means*. The true end of a production system, the goal aimed at, is the satisfaction of human needs.

Hunger, thirst, weariness, bad weather, illness, ignorance, create for man the need to eat, drink, clothe himself, find shelter, warm himself, rest. These are all human needs.

Food, drink, shelter, clothing, wood, coal, water, bed, health remedies, teaching books – these are all necessities that must be present to fulfil the needs. To join those necessities, those *goods*, to *needs* – that is the goal, the end of economic life. How that is achieved is another matter.