



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 basic battle to be fought today is the same which Christ fought with the Pharisees. Christ told the Pharisees that they refused to enter the Kingdom of God themselves and sought to prevent others from entering..."*

"During the long centuries when a Christian Civilisation was being evolved, the followers of Christ carried the standard of the cross into many arenas of combat. Those who accept Christ must be prepared to follow His example by taking the equivalent action of throwing the present-day money changers out of the Temple. Onward Christian soldiers! Let the battle commence."

– "The Root of All Evil" by Eric D. Butler 1982

For those Christians who think that the present world problems are not of concern to them. They need to be reminded that after Christ whipped the money-changers out of the Temple, before a week went by, He was crucified.

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM – THE TANGLED WEB by Jeremy Lee:

The old proverb *"Oh! What a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive"* has never been more evident than in events surrounding the World Economic Forum in Melbourne's Crown Casino. A small minority of journalists have picked up the dimensions of the anti-globalism coalition. Others, who haven't bothered to do their homework, appeared mystified.

Writing in *The Sydney Morning Herald* on September 12th, Guy Rundle had this to say:

".... The globalisers now know themselves to be on the defensive in the war for hearts and minds and their strategies have changed. President Bill Clinton set the tone at Seattle last year when he welcomed the presence of the protesters, merely wishing that he could bring them 'inside the tent'..... The globalisers have finally achieved their goal of a free-trade world, with harsh measures for tariffs and protection measures The Clinton brand, softly softly approach is designed as a holding pattern until they can think of something else, possibly a global crackdown on the lines of the new Australian laws or, something like the Blair Government's move to charge protesters under the wide-ranging Prevention of Terrorism Act, rather than through existing 'disturbance of the peace' legislation."

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"Their reaction is still that of wounded disappointment at suspicion of their motives for creating one financial world.The long-delayed establishment of the World Trade Organisation in 1994 cemented in place the final piece of a global financial architecture that had first been planned at the end of World War II"

Whichever side he is on, Guy Rundle at least has some perspective of the history behind globalism.

By September 5th – six days before the Forum opened – Dr. Simon Longstaff, Director of the St. James Ethics Centre (*The Australian*, 5/9/2000) said:

" Although there is some truth in the suggestion that those attending are part of the problem facing the world, it is also true that they have the potential to be part of the solution. The challenge then is to engage such people in debate about the things that really matter"

Which seems like debating with a burglar on the ethics of stealing!

Alan Woods, *The Australian's* Economics Editor, was much more dismissive, evening questioning the evidence on the world's poverty:

" the rainbow coalition that will gather to disrupt the meeting suits its agenda in portraying the WEF as an influential gathering of the rich and the powerful. Symbols, not facts, and emotional assertions rather than empirical analysis are the stock in trade of the diverse groups that gathered at the World Trade Organisation meeting in Seattle, and at the International Monetary Fund and World Bank meeting in Washington, and that will be in Melbourne"

Woods presented evidence accumulated by former statistician Ian Castles that poverty world wide was actually diminishing. Woods' article was headed THE POOR NEVER HAD IT SO GOOD.

The most astonishing article came from Kevin McDonald, a lecturer in sociology at the University of Melbourne (*The Australian*, 13/9/2000), who argued that the protesters were, in fact, globalists without knowing it. He then made this incredible assertion:

"Globalisation has been accompanied by the message that we can be free and discover who we are through being a consumer. The activists' language is also one of individual freedom, but it is one where we seek individual freedom collectively" Lewis Carroll could not express it better!

The Forum opened on the 13th, and it was obvious that the protesters were well organised and had done their homework. Over 200 delegates were kept away from the forum on the first day, and S11 gained plenty of publicity. The gambling side of the Casino was forced to close, and remained so for the three days, reportedly losing \$10 million in gambling revenue.

On the second day – the 14th – the Forum coincided with a major slump in the dollar, causing Alan Woods – he of the "never-had-it-so-good" article a week earlier – to ask plaintively:

"What's going on? Australia has just recorded four years of growth averaging 4.7 percent, with low inflation and, recently, a falling current account deficit.

"That is an amazing performance given our economic history, when growth like this inevitably led to an inflation blowout and a balance of payments crisis.

"Instead, wages are restrained, our exports are booming, we have strong productivity and healthy corporate profits.

"Why, then, when we are doing so well, is the Australian dollar bouncing around post-float lows?"

These are the questions from the nether-world of statistics which bear no relation to reality.

Meanwhile, back at the Forum, about the only entry into the building was by helicopter, and later, by boat. Alan Mitchell described the dilemma in *The Australian Financial Review* (13/9/2000):

" AFR editor Colleen Ryan, Stephen Wyatt, Stephen Koukoulis, I, some foreign journalists and several dozen conference delegates, spent the following hours circling the Casino precinct in a police-escorted convoy of buses in the hope that the demonstrators would let down their guard at one of the Casino's road entrances.

"It was well into the afternoon before the police finally accepted that the only way in was by boat.

"A secret wharf, a rendezvous with a little boat that looked like the African Queen and off we chugged.

"However, success was not to come easily. It soon became obvious why the police had chosen such a small boat. The tide had come in and anything much bigger than a canoe could not squeeze under Melbourne's lowest bridges.

"At first not even our boat could do it. But a rather portly European delegate and associates had also tried to get to sail up to the Casino. Their boat was even less able to get under the bridges than ours, and on our run up the river we found them sitting miserably by the banks. Our police escort immediately took them aboard. With our boat lower in the water and the tide already turned, we just scraped under the bridge and made the casino steps"

What a marvellous film it would all make – a sort of global version of Dunkirk!

INSIDE THE 'HOLY-OF-HOLIES': One result of the three-day confrontation was that those allowed to represent the anti-globalist cause inside the Forum actually received some publicity. Naturally enough the world's richest man, Bill Gates, got his share. Bill Gates, a sort of global version of Kermit the frog from the Muppets, insisted that globalisation was the answer to world poverty – a bit like saying matches extinguish fires!

Protesters outside circulated the following letter as an expression of their protest:

"The reasons for being here are many but centre on our concern for the increasingly unchecked corporate dominance which defines the world we live in The World Economic Forum does not need to be a decision-making body to affect our lives and the lives of all people round the world. The WEF represents corporate interests, not the interests of the people they employ or the state of the land and resources they exploit for their financial gain.

"We are children, mothers, fathers, workers, unemployed, environmentalists, from religious traditions, indigenous people among others. We are blockading because people across the world are suffering under corporate-defined globalisation

"We are continuing our non-violent protest today and we will be here tomorrow. We are part of a worldwide movement demanding justice before profits. We are not going away"

Inside the Forum ACTU President Sharan Burrow pointed out that 1.3 billion people round the world lived in extreme poverty, and even in Australia – a rich country – more than 800,000 children were living in poverty.

The courageous director of India's Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology, Dr. Vandana Shiva, gave clear examples how free trade was destroying village agriculture in under-developed nations. She spoke clearly, moderately and unanswerably.

In conclusion, this was one more setback for the globalists, and an opportunity to create new liaisons, circulate material and direct attention to the money system as the root cause of world unrest.

FUEL RORTS by Selwyn Johnson

Independent candidate for the Federal seat of Blair claims multinationals rorting the system – again:

"At a time when hundreds of thousands of Australian Small Businesses and millions of ordinary Australians, are struggling to understand or cope with the imposed 'Goods and Services Tax', one would be forgiven for thinking that our Government would 'give us a fair go'. WRONG!

"The self-serving party politicians are allowing the multinational Oil Companies to dictate fuel prices to an already struggling Australian population. It seems unbelievable, but, research to date has found that at least 2 (two) bulk fuel shipping tankers, with capacities of 35,000/40,000 tonnes each, one Australian registered with an Australian crew, the other an internationally registered ship with an international crew, are supplying imported diesel fuel to Australian based multinational, non-oil companies at a price varying from 10 (ten) to 14 (fourteen) CENTS per litre! YES, 10 (ten) to 14 (fourteen) CENTS per litre! And, they pay no government excise, no import duties, no taxes, no nothing, on countless millions of litres of diesel fuel.

"In some regions a multinational, non-oil company, is on-selling the diesel fuel to selected service stations at profits exceeding 400%! And no tax is payable on the enormous profits as a result of the 'International Tax Agreements Act of 1953'. The Australian Prime Minister stated on national television that he would not remove or reduce the government excise on fuel, as it would affect 'Health, Education and Defence' and that 'oil prices are out of my control as they are determined by the OPEC countries'."

Mr. Johnson calls for: "Immediate repeal of the 'International Tax Agreements Act of 1953', and immediate removal of Australia's signature from the 'OPEC Agreement'."

He is willing to make available "Details of this massive multinational 'rort', including the names of the shipping tankers and oil companies involved," the information "will be made available to an appropriate entity that is open to scrutiny and that is accountable to the Australian people."