



A WEEKLY COMMENTARY

ON TARGET



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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance -

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: *"In this first century the world was pouring out its riches and its treasures into the lap of Rome. As Dill has it: 'The long peace, the safety of the seas, and the freedom of trade, had made Rome the entrepot for the peculiar products and delicacies of every land from the British Channel to the Ganges.' Pliny talks of one meal in which in one dish India was laid under contribution, in another Egypt, Cyrene, Crete and so forth... The money possessed and the money spent was colossal... Rome's supreme sin (was) pride, the idea that she was safe, that she was so wealthy and so powerful that nothing could touch her, and that she could, so to speak, buy her way out of any situation... There is nothing in life which rouses such condemnation as this pride, this arrogance, this self-sufficiency... There is a sin which the Greeks called hubris. Hubris is that arrogance, born of wealth and prosperity and success, which comes to feel that it has no need of God, and which eliminates God from life. The punishment for that sin is ultimate abasement and humiliation. Pride always goes before a fall..."* – *"Revelation of John Vol. 2: Daily Study Bible"* by William Barclay, 1959

THE PROCEEDS OF CRIME BILL by Jeremy Lee:

Following our recent report in *On Target* about the new Bill allowing for the seizure of property without trial and conviction, one of our readers wrote to his federal member voicing his objections and asking for a copy of the proposals. The member replied with the usual line that this was aimed only at major crime figures; "I understand the proposed legislation aims to hit criminals where it hurts the most, namely in their hip pocket"

But if they haven't been tried according to the law, how, beyond suspicion, are we to know they are criminals? And what protection remains for those unjustly penalized?

According to the "Principle Objects of this Act" the following are included (Chapter One):

(f) to give effect to Australia's obligations under the Council of Europe Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime, and other international agreements relating to proceeds of crime

Chapter Two starts with this ominous "simplified outline":

Restraining orders can be made against property, in relation to certain offences, on grounds that relate to possible forfeiture or confiscation orders relating to those offenders. (There is no requirement that a person has been convicted of such an offence.)

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Action can be taken when:

(vi) *there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the property is the 'proceeds of a foreign indictable offence or an indictable offence of Commonwealth concern (whether or not the identity of the person who committed the offence is known)*

All of which flies in the face of our ancient and honourable law that each of us is innocent until proven guilty. And it is another example of international treaties overriding our domestic sovereignty.

Anyone concerned can express their objections to the First Assistant Secretary, Criminal Justice Division of the Attorney-General's Department, National Circuit, Barton, ACT, 2600, by August 31st, 2001.

Electronic copies of the Bill can be downloaded from www.ag.gov.au, click on "Recent Additions, Exposure Draft - Proceeds of Crime Bill 2001".

THE NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTIONS: We are not going to join the political and media juju men in analyzing the recent NT election. Some preposterous conclusions are being drawn. Suffice it to say that the vote for independents and minor parties totaled 15 percent, by far the biggest portion of which (10.5%) went to independents.

PITY BRITISH FARMERS: British Prime Minister Tony Blair has appointed Lord Haskins as "Rural Affairs Coordinator". The noble lord also happens to be chairman of Northern Foods, one of Britain's biggest food companies with sales last year of nearly 1.5 billion pounds (over \$3 billion).

Lord Haskins predicts that over half Britain's remaining farmers will have left by the year 2020. He has also expressed his irritated disagreement with the recent claim by Prince Charles that the average farm income was now 100 pounds (Under \$200) per week. But Prince Charles' figures were correct and have been supported by the National Farmers Union.

THE WAR ON DRUGS: In the middle of this month Mr. Gary Crooke QC, chairman of the National Crime Authority, released the *NCA Commentary 2001 – Organised Crime in Australia*. At the same time he appeared on television with the claim that Australia is losing the war on drugs.

The figures are startling. We now have more than 200,000 heroin users in Australia. Interpol and the UN estimate that the international drug trade is worth \$400 billion a year – about 8% of world trade – with Australia's share being somewhere between \$7 billion and \$9.6 billion. Australia now spends \$500 billion on drug law enforcement, but only detects a fraction of the trade. Counting all drugs, 23 percent of the Australian population is involved in illicit drug use, including cannabis analgesics, hallucinogens, amphetamines and tranquillisers.

It is acknowledged that, even with increased seizures, we are only detecting a small part of the drug trade coming in from overseas. A major report in *The Australian Financial Review* (17/8/01) said:

".... If you talk with most experienced operational police, they will tell you that they are aware of only a fraction of the drug trade at any given time. They will also tell you that, notwithstanding operational difficulties, they successfully arrest only a small percentage of offenders and seize a small fraction of all illicit drugs. The Australian Customs Service, charged with preventing border penetration, manages to inspect perhaps as few as 2 or 3 percent of all incoming containers"

Drugs are probably now the biggest single spiritual problem in Australia. It would seem that only a

stern increase in penalties for those carrying out this 'death-trade' – including the death sentence for the bosses – can do anything to stem the flood.

THE BRUTAL SIDE OF MULTICULTURALISM: We have only just caught up with an article which appeared in *The Sydney Morning Herald* (29/7/01), three weeks ago. Under the heading CAUCASIAN WOMEN THE TARGETS – BRUTAL SEX ASSAULTS LINKED TO RACE GANGS IN SYDNEY, John Kidman, police reporter said:

"Police examining more than 20 brutal sexual attacks on teenage girls in just 10 months believe they have uncovered a frightening new crime associated with race. Hospital records and police data show that at least another 50 similar incidents have been reported in the Bankstown area of south-west Sydney over the past two years. The victims, one as young as 13, were allegedly lured to meetings then gang-raped and horrifically humiliated.

"All of those suspected of perpetrating the acts come from the same cultural and religious backgrounds. Now police are concerned that the acts may become culturally institutionalized. They are now planning a social research program to examine the phenomenon and help them decide how to eradicate it. Fifteen youths and men have so far been charged with more than 3130 offences relating to matters since mid-2000. They are all of Middle Eastern extraction. None of those involved is presently before the courts. Their alleged victims have all been Caucasian, aged between 13 and 18. The attacks are continuing.

"In the most recent, up to two dozen offenders are suspected of taking part in the repeated violation of a teenager in a schoolyard in Guildford three weeks ago. In a chilling postscript, several of the group allegedly scrawled degrading slogans on her body."

The report went on to say that police work was made much more difficult because possible witnesses were afraid of reprisals.

It would be too much to say that all Middle East residents would be anything but horrified by such acts. Nor that there is any link with Middle East refugees being released from detention centres in our capital cities. Nevertheless, it is true that the small but influential multicultural lobby has much to answer for in creating an environment for such conflict, against the wishes of the great majority of Australians.

The biggest shock is how few media channels have reported this news accurately and in depth. *The Sydney Morning Herald* is a courageous exception.

KOREA BACK INTO CRISIS: Alan Greenspan's latest interest-rate cut – the seventh in a year – is because the biggest economy in the world is in recession. So is Germany. Argentina will default as Mexico did a few years ago unless the International Monetary Fund can piece together a 'rescue' package, with the usual draconian and unworkable conditions.

Now it looks as though South Korea, Australia's third largest trading partner, is heading towards a Mexico-type crisis

"....'Korea could go the way of Mexico and some other Latin American countries', warned McKinsey & Co's Seoul office head, Dominic Barton, in a recent presentation that was splashed across the front pages of Korean newspapers." (The Australian Financial Review, 20/8/01)

MORE PRESSURE FOR A 'COMMON CURRENCY': As if New Zealand did not have enough troubles it has just been blessed (?) by a visit from former PM Paul Keating. In an article from *The Otago Daily Times* (3/8/01) it was reported that Mr. Keating was one of the keynote speakers on the opening day of the "Catching the Knowledge Wave Conference", organized by the Auckland University and the Government to promote ways New Zealand can improve social and economic prosperity.

"An insular approach by a New Zealand apparently wary and resentful of Australia had cost this country chances for economic prosperity, saidPaul Keating yesterday. Mr. Keating told the conference that New Zealand should leap at the opportunity to pursue full economic integration with Australia, a market five times bigger than its own. About 450 delegates, mainly representing business, education and financial consulting companies were at the conference. Almost 100 protesters picketed outside"

One would have thought that "Banana-Republic" Keating was hardly the man to advise on ways to prosperity in other countries.

THE RURAL REVOLT by Antonia Feitz:

Whether the major parties are aware of it or not, there is now a very quiet but historically significant revolution underway in Australia. Simply put, Australia's family farmers have had enough. Perhaps because they are literally 'grounded' in reality farmers are traditionally among the most conservative people in society, but they're now unifying and taking a very determined stand.

The apple and pear growers and the dairy farmers weren't the first to kick up a fuss but their anger has really put the regions into the media spotlight. The fireblight fiasco and the dismal fall-out of dairy deregulation which forced so many of the world's best practice dairy farmers off their farms resonated strongly in the wider non-farming community.

Since then farmers in the NSW Nyngan area have threatened to begin a campaign of civil disobedience over the impossible bureaucratic burdens imposed by the Native Vegetation laws which are preventing them from managing their farms.

Hundreds of Victorian farmers have refused to pay massive local government rate increases and are facing court proceedings. Is it likely that the courts will fine and/or gaol 'hundreds' of farmers? If they do there will be protests; if they don't the courts will lose authority. Either way it's a win for the people and a loss for the government.

Inspired by those 400 Tasmanian potato growers who recently blockaded the McCain's potato chip factory, Victorian potato growers have united with them to form the Australian Process Growers Action group. McCains, the processor, hasn't given them a rise in 10 years.

Now Tasmanian brassica growers – producers of broccoli, cauliflower and brussel sprouts – have joined potato and pea producers in demanding higher prices for their contract crops from the processor, Simplot. They claim what the multinational has offered doesn't even cover the cost of production. This can't go on.