



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.37, No.46

November 30th, 2001

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: With America the matter is simple. America has existed, and does exist purely on the basis of its complete faith and utter dependence on the principles and concepts of pure and uncompromising capitalism, which, at bottom, is nothing else but pure materialism based on money and nothing else. What has been ironic in America in the last few days, has been the demonstration of the underlying weakness of their whole system which, as the leading exponent of world capitalism - now representing falsely the One World concept – was brought to a state of near collapse and market failure by a bunch of chaps with beards and white nightshirts who gave their lives for what they believe in without a second thought. No amount of frantic boasting, waving the Star Spangled banner, and military threats they can't make good, is going to hide the fact that their fundamental weakness as a Nation has been exposed for all to see.

– *"Apocalypse – Exposure of Western Values"*, British *"On Target"*, October 2001

TRADE UNIONS – WHEN WILL THEY EVER LEARN? by Jeremy Lee:

Every day we now hear about 'down-sizing', mainly from the large corporations; Telstra, Optus, the Airlines, etc. Thousands of employees who have in some cases worked many years in their occupations find themselves in the 'no-mans-land' of unemployment.

At the same time, latest reports show that those still in employment are working harder, with longer hours. Why?

Talking to a small businessman in Toowoomba this week, who has reduced his staff from five down to one (himself) he told me that for every employee who received \$100 per day, it cost slightly more than the same figure to meet all the indirect costs of employing – holidays, insurance, medical, etc., etc. The extra time it cost him, apart from anything else, was prohibitive. He had reduced his operation to the point where he could cater for himself and his family, and was better off.

This story can be repeated thousands of times across Australia. Where a business is forced to employ, it is more profitable to offer one man extra hours than to employ another. The ancillary costs remain the same, no matter how many hours worked. And if existing workers can be replaced by technology, which requires no wages or holidays, so much the better. Most companies that down-size do not re-employ later.

IN THIS ISSUE: • *Thought for the Week* • *Trade Unions – When Will They Ever Learn?* • *An Old Problem Intensified* • *The Future of Work* • *Sharon Expected to be Charged with War Crimes and Genocide*

"ON TARGET"

November 30th, 2001

Page 1 (181)

Thus we have a country where there is increasing stress among those employed, both in extra hours and fear of job-loss; and an increasing number of redundancies as businesses strive constantly to get the job done with less labour. The poverty sector in Australia, which is a disgrace in such a country, is a time-bomb waiting to go off, and stretches well past the unemployed to those in the lower ranges of the wage structure.

On the whole the trade unions make the situation for employees worse. They strive constantly to maintain benefits and loadings at a high and increasing level, thus raising the bar for employers to uneconomic levels; and they now spend more and more time demanding, with menaces, redundancy packets for those 'down-sized' as a result.

Conscious of all this, the Government now massages the official employment figures so that they no longer give a true picture. The Morgan Poll has recently given examples of this deception, which we have quoted in earlier editions of *On Target*.

Marcus L'Estrange, writing to *News Weekly* (17/11/01) corrects the "official" figures, quoted by Coalition and Labor alike. He says that the full figures show more than 2 million unemployed, or under-employed in Australia:

"..... Let's look at how the more than two million unemployed are made up:

- "Official unemployed": 600,000-800,000. Then the following Australians are excluded from the monthly figures:
- 57,000: actively looking for work but not available to start work in the survey week.
- 106,500: discouraged or 'given up' workers.
- 173,000: who wanted to work but lacked childcare.
- 94,000: short-term (less than one month) health problems.
- 144,000: on short-term courses.
- 40,000: thought they had a job to go to.
- 62,000: other family reasons.
- 133,000: other, or similar reasons.

TOTAL: 809,000

To the above we can add 335,000 who are unemployed but cannot start work until the second month after the survey. And we shouldn't forget that those on work-for-the-dole are included in the fully employed. Finally, on this point we can add at least 179,000 who work between 1-10 hours who are counted as being employed. Additionally, there are another 421,000 people working between 10-34 hours, who are counted as being employed but want to work more hours.

TOTAL : two million plus unemployed (rounded figures)

Mr. L'Estrange quoted economist Terry McRann (*The Australian*, 6/7/96):

"....for want of a better term, the 'jobless problem' actually directly hits a staggering 2.5 million Australians (official jobless - 800,000; hidden unemployment - 1.2 million; 500,000 underemployed) - leading on to claims that the official jobless numbers are some sort of gigantic cover-up."

Marcus L'Estrange added in his letter: "I recall John Howard, then Shadow Industrial Relations Minister, saying to me in 1993: 'I know the real unemployment figure is 20 percent but I cannot afford to be honest. If I was honest people would become depressed and spend less, thus creating even more unemployment.'"

It is now almost seven years since the epic State of The World Forum, held in San Francisco under the chairmanship of Mikhail Gorbachev, in which leaders, bankers and economists from round the world gathered. The full story is told in *The Global Trap*, by Hans-Peter Martin and Harald Schumann. It was agreed that full employment was neither necessary nor possible in industrial nations, and that the needs of humanity across the globe could be met by 20 percent of the existing work force.

There was some speculation on what would happen to the 80% of the world's workers made redundant; and it was agreed that they would become a type of peasant underclass, eking out a living on what could be produced at serf level, supplemented by a modern version of bread-and-circuses by the feudal corporations who had all the reins of mass production and distribution in their hands.

AN OLD PROBLEM INTENSIFIED: The impact of technology on the age-old concept of full employment is not new. It has simply intensified to crisis-point.

Writing in his book "*Democracy At The Crossroads*" in 1924 Leslie Hollins commented:

"We have seen that machines can only do one of two things – i.e. increase our material comfort, or decrease our working hours. On the one hand our material comforts have been increased. This, of course, only applies to those in employment. On the other hand, the decrease in working hours is enormous. At first sight this would not appear to be correct, for we know that we have not had an increase in working hours for many years; but if we look at the unemployed, we will find the saved labour among the saved labourers...."

"We must now clearly see that, with few exceptions, the ultimate goal of all inventions is labour-saving or wage-saving. Suppose man reached his goal, what would be the result? On the one hand we would have a mountain of goods produced by automatic machinery, and on the other a multitude of people destitute and poverty-stricken. Not having worked in industry, they would not have earned money – i.e. titles to the goods – and they could not buy them. Does this not present a true picture of the conditions that exist today?"

Hollins amplified his case by illustrating the enormous increase in productive capacity in every area of industry that had occurred in a few years.

If his argument was true in 1934, how much truer is it in 2001?

THE FUTURE OF WORK: This immense issue is exercising many leaders. A three day conference on the subject was held in Western Australia from November 19-21 under the title *Working Visions International Employment Futures Conference*, attended by over 1,000 delegates from all over the Pacific region, and addressed by an array of thinkers and futurists.

To date we have not been able to catch up with the papers given. We can simply observe that one set of solutions was offered to this problem almost eighty years ago, and because they required major changes in the area of finance they were silenced and ignored.

Yet it remains clear that those down-sized by the technological age must have wages replaced by another form of income; and that simply taxing those employed to pay for the welfare of those without work cannot be maintained. In fact, taxation levels are now severely distorting any justice and equity in the social order.

The essence of Social Credit, which burst onto the scene some eighty years ago, was that with the

advent of expanding technology, society was in a position to change from a "full-employment-or-starve" society to a dividend-sharing society; and for this to happen, the banks had to relinquish their monopoly on money-creation, which would instead be credited instead of debited to society in the form of shareholders' dividends and price-reducing techniques, based on a properly-audited national balance sheet. Shareholding, in such a case, would equate with citizenship.

If we consider that Australia's money supply is increased by somewhere between \$85 to \$100 million dollars a day in a form which directly drives prices skywards, we can gain some idea of the importance of this never-discussed issue. The technique used in Alaska, where oil-revenues and royalties are paid directly to each citizen annually, is worth looking at as the sort of mechanism needed.

The day is coming where Social Credit, long-forgotten, will gain full attention once again.

SHARON EXPECTED TO BE CHARGED WITH WAR CRIMES AND GENOCIDE – BBC REPORT, Monday, November 19th, 2001: Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon is being summoned to a Belgian court to answer questions over his role in the 1982 Sabra and Shatila massacres, say Belgian media reports. Two separate claims against Mr. Sharon are being brought under a 1993 Belgian law, which allows war crimes and genocide to be tried in Belgium, even if the events took place elsewhere, and even if none of the victims was Belgian.

A hearing has been set for November 28th, and Mr. Sharon is expected to be issued with summons documents by the Belgian ambassador to Israel, says *Le Soir* newspaper. Belgian magistrate Patrick Collignon has been investigating the two cases, initially to determine whether he has jurisdiction in the case. *The first case*, charging Mr. Sharon with responsibility for the deaths, was lodged by a group of Palestinians, Lebanese, Moroccans and Belgians. *The second suit*, which alleges crimes against humanity, genocide and war crimes, was filed by 23 survivors of the massacres and five eyewitnesses. The massacres took place in two refugee camps in Lebanon which were home to thousands of Palestinians. Three months after Israeli troops invaded Lebanon in 1982, the camps were stormed by Christian militiamen.

Sharon forced to resign: They shot and killed an estimated 800-1,500 of the refugees. Mr. Sharon was Israeli defence minister at the time. An Israeli investigation in 1983 found him indirectly but "personally" responsible for the deaths, and he was forced to resign.

Le Soir says the two separate summonses have been left with the Belgian ambassador, Wilfried Green, but are expected to be delivered shortly. The case has left the Belgian administration walking on eggshells, the paper says.

Belgian diplomacy: At the same time as preparing to serve the summonses, Belgium – as European Union president – is spearheading a new diplomatic effort to restore the peace process. Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt is heading a senior EU delegation on a Middle East tour which has included top-level talks in Israel. The delegation, which left Israel on Monday, has held separate talks with Mr. Sharon and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. At the court hearing on November 28th, a Belgian grand jury is scheduled to decide whether the court has jurisdiction in the case. Mr. Sharon's Belgian lawyer is challenging the court's right to be involved, and the Belgian investigation has been suspended in the meantime. The Mayor of Jerusalem, Ehud Olmert, has angrily attacked the Belgian Government over the affair, accusing Mr. Verhofstadt of heading a 'government of bastards'.