



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.38, No.3

February 1st, 2002

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: *"No problem can be solved from the same consciousness that created it."* – Albert Einstein

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM MEETS AGAIN by Jeremy Lee:

By the time this is read by readers the Australian Prime Minister will be in New York at the annual gathering of the World Economic Forum, which has been shifted from the traditional meeting place at Davos, Switzerland to Manhattan in New York. The meeting is scheduled for January 31st to February 4th. As though the September 11th disasters were not enough, citizens of New York must suffer further. The Waldorf Astoria is booked out, except for the glamorous Saturday night soiree, which will be held at the New York Stock Exchange. The names of those attending are familiar – America's Colin Powell, Israel's Shimon Peres, Germany's Gerhard Schroeder, Jordan's King Hussein, South Africa's Thabo Mbeki, Microsoft's Bill Gates, etc., etc. And, for the first time, John Howard.

We doubt that there will be any representative for the war-ravaged Balkans or the pulverized Afghanistan. Or for Ruanda and Burundi and the earthquake-damaged Congo. But this does not mean that policy for these areas will not be mapped out, as it will for the European Union and the Pacific.

Last year's gathering at Davos was marked by huge protests, and it is certain that the opposition to the "global-map-makers" will be even more intense this year, however it expresses itself.

THE 'EURO' IS IN PLACE: The massive replacement of national currencies in Europe has been accomplished. Britain has still retained its own pounds and pence, and the Queen has ordered that the Euro will not be accepted in any of the commercial shops and enterprises associated with Buckingham Palace. The countries that have forfeited their national currencies are Germany, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Italy, Austria, Finland, Holland, Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain.

Describing the implications of the change in *The Australian* (15/1/02) Alan Wood commented:

"While currency notes and coins account for less than 10 per cent of the money supply in the eurozone (or anywhere else – Ed.) they are a powerful symbol of national sovereignty and identity."

IN THIS ISSUE: • *Thought for the Week* • *World Economic Forum Meets Again* • *The 'Euro' is in Place* • *The Queensland Constitution* • *Household Debt* • *Detention Centres – A Rod for Australia's Back* • *The Enron Collapse* • *State Elections in South Australia*

"The President of the European Commission, Romani Prodi, recognized this in 1999, when he said: 'The Euro was not just a bankers' decision or a technical decision. It was a decision that completely changed the picture of the nation-states. The pillars of the nation-states are the sword and the currency and we changed that.'.....

"It dramatically marks the subordination of individual states to a collective power"

It could not be expressed more clearly. As the founding Rothschild said, *"Permit me to issue a nation's money and I care not who makes its laws."*

So those behind Europe's Central Bank and the new common currency knew, and know, exactly what they are doing. Whether Britain will resist the overtures to do away with its own currency remains to be seen. If Tony Blair has anything to do with it, Britain will follow the rest into the global trap. As Alan Wood continued: *"Both the proponents and critics of the Euro seem to agree that, over the long haul, a successful monetary union will require political union – a European federation with some sort of central government. By putting monetary policy in the hands of the European Central Bank, the members of the eurozone have put themselves in a straitjacket of a one-size-fits-all monetary policy"*

The English Channel has, for hundreds of years, kept British sovereignty and independence intact against all European predations. But will it be sufficient against the stealthy designs of the money-power? Is there a leader in Britain still unrecognized who can rally the people at the last moment? Who, in Newbolt's words about Francis Drake, "When the Dons strike Devon, I'll quit the port of Heaven, and drum them up the Channel as I did so long ago".

Even sadder, what of a country like Australia, which still technically has the constitutional right to issue its own credit, but which has been intimidated against doing so?

THE QUEENSLAND CONSTITUTION: Many forget that each State in Australia has its own constitution, each of which preceded the Australian Constitution. The Crown is part of each State constitution, exercised through State Governors. This was severely compromised by the 1986 Australia Act, but still tentatively exists.

Queensland is in a particularly vulnerable position in that it has no Upper House, which was lost in a grubby episode in the early part of the 20th Century. During the Goss administration the Premier started a process to bring all parts of the Queensland Constitution into a single document, and a Commission was set up. The Beatty Government has now produced a final document which has been pushed through the Queensland Parliament and comes into force in June.

Under original provisions in the Queensland constitution a State referendum was necessary to effect any change. By this provision it is doubtful whether the Australia Act was legal. No referendum was held. Now the new constitution-to-be has large areas where the necessity for a referendum has been eliminated. The politicians can make what changes they feel necessary at the time. As a constitution is primarily to keep politicians in check, the new provisions are akin to enabling prisoners to make the jailhouse rules. Such things as the future of local government, land titles, etc., can be changed without reference to the people.

With no house of review, no opposition in any sense of the word, and politicians in a position to grab extra powers, Queensland is in a precarious situation. People in that State should immediately contact their State members, asking for a copy of the new Constitution, and seeking as much information as possible about the way it was enacted and the loss of safeguards.

HOUSEHOLD DEBT: Following our report last week about the dangerous levels of household debt in Australia, the Federal Treasury Department has issued a statement that is even more alarming, in its Economic Roundup.

".... Some commentators have suggested that the rising debt levels of households are a concern Considering household debt in isolation is misleading: the higher debt levels are more than offset by the growth on the asset side of the household balance sheet Those household assets provide a support base for the debt held by households Total household liabilities, mostly debt, are around 40 percent of the value of household financial assets...."

All of which is based on the fallacy that house values will keep rising. But, if in a depression such as Japan, house and property values collapse, household debt will not drop one cent. A proper comparison should be between debt and income levels, rather than arbitrary asset values.

DETENTION CENTRES – A ROD FOR AUSTRALIA'S BACK: The upsurge in emotional comment about conditions in refugee detention centres has reached farcical and damaging levels. It is absolutely true that the Australian people will not continue to accept hunger-strikes, lip-sewing, child abuse and the like. If there is an answer at this late stage it lies in resolute action by Australia on the international stage. We cannot continue logically to beat ourselves to death with refugees from countries against which we are applying economic and military sanctions. Australia should take a lead in halting sanctions against Iraq, where some 5,000 deaths of women and children are still taking place each month. If we are to offer financial aid to Afghanistan, such aid should be tied directly to repatriating and providing for Afghani refugees currently in Australia. Instead of paying large sums to keep refugees in New Guinea and Christmas Island, the money should be applied to providing reasonable housing and conditions for refugee families in the countries from which they have fled.

So far the Australian Government has refused to provide detailed costings on all the events since *Tampa*. Some estimates go as high as \$500 million. Such a sum could have provided housing and sustenance for the Afghanis back in their own country. If, as President Bush claims, the Taliban has been defeated and the Afghanistan rebuilding process has begun, there is no reason why such a policy could not be introduced forthwith.

But we fear for Afghanistan's financial future. The man who will administer the financial system will be Abdul Qadir Fitrat (doesn't that sound like an Orc from Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*?) who has been in America for some years. *The Australian* (15/1/02) said:

"Since the head of Afghanistan's Northern Alliance, Burhanuddin Rabbani, asked him to come back to his old job, Fitrat has held meetings with the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the US Treasury.

"He arrived in Kabul a week ago carrying a 1997 IMF publication, 'Banking Soundness and Monetary Policy', copies of the banking laws from Tajikistan, the United Arab Emirates, India and Iran, and his dry cleaning from Virginia. By the end of the month he expects a team of IMF officials to help him map out a plan to rebuild the bank. The Government, in consultation with the IMF, is developing alternatives to the afghani – such as adopting the dollar or the euro as the country's currency"

THE ENRON COLLAPSE: The fall-out from the collapse of the world's biggest energy trading company, Enron, is only just beginning. Enron was one of the biggest contributors to the Republican Party's election campaign, which installed President Bush in office. It contributed a lesser amount to

the Democrats. Executives from the accounting firm Arthur Anderson have taken the Fifth Amendment when avoiding questions in court as to who ordered the shredding of documents relating to the collapse.

The Australian (15/1/02) neatly summarized the affair: "... It contains elements of a classic political scandal. A huge company based in Bush's home state of Texas and led by his biggest campaign contributor files the biggest bankruptcy in US history. A small group of top executives sell shares before it collapses. At the same time, thousands of employees are barred from selling, and lose not only their jobs but their life savings and pensions as well. Meanwhile there are revelations of frequent contacts between the company and top administration officials"

So what's going to get Bush and his mates off the hook? Another "jolly good war for truth and justice?"

STATE ELECTIONS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA: Saturday, February 9th, is the day South Australians will go to the polls. As noted in *OT* last week, South Australians will continue going down the same track the politicians are taking them – unless the people jack-up and say enough is enough!

The League insists, freedom is a right that must be exercised to be retained. In this case, unless there is a satisfactory candidate in their electorate, South Australians should stop choosing the lesser of the evils presented to them. What about announcing they will not be voting for any of the party hacks, but will vote for an acceptable candidate – on certain conditions.

The conditions to be spelt out and a signed response requested from the candidate. The response should then be published and circulated within the electorate concerned, as a means of keeping the candidate to his word.

AN EXAMPLE: In the south-east electorate of MacKillop a group of actionists are presenting the following questionnaire to all candidates. The replies will then be circulated as a public service. As water is very much a concern in this rural region, the actionists have sought clarification of the candidate's policies on the water issue. Each region will have particular issues of concern. Use the following as an example of what you can do.

QUESTIONS TO ALL CANDIDATES FOR MACKILLOP 2002:

• Will you agree to place the wishes of your electors ahead of any other group or party? **Yes or No. Comment.**
Surface water on farmland from either rainfall or lateral flow:

- Is the property of the farmer? **Yes or No. Comment.**
- Should attract a financial levy/rate? **Yes or No. Comment.**
- May be stored above or below ground? **Yes or No. Comment.**
- Such stored water to be free from any levy/rate? **Yes or No. Comment.**

Underground water:

- All unallocated water in any zone should be distributed at the optimum level of sustainability, on a pro rata basis, to all landholders in that zone. Landholders with a current allocation in excess of their pro rata entitlement, receive no additional water, but may keep their current allocation. **Yes or No. Comment.**
- Water allocations may be exercised at any future time? **Yes or No. Comment.**
- If for any reason, it is considered either an increase or decrease in water allocation is necessary, then every allocation in that zone, whether exercised or not, be adjusted on a pro rata basis? **Yes or No. Comment.**

Water allocations:

- May be sold? **Yes or No. Comment.**
- May be leased? **Yes or No. Comment.**
- Will remain with the land title? **Yes or No. Comment.**

Further questions:

- Will you introduce Citizens Initiated Referenda? **Yes or No. Comment.**
- Possible advantages from Genetically Modified Organisms are acknowledged but until guaranteed protection exists for farmers choosing not to use GM plants/crops, will you oppose legislation enabling application of this technology? **Yes or No. Comment.**

At the end of the questionnaire the candidate is asked to sign the following pledge: If elected, I undertake to promote these policies according to my answers, at all opportunities, especially on the floor of the Assembly. Name, Signature, Date.

Election comment authorised by B Luks, 145 Russell Street, Melbourne

"ON TARGET" is printed and published by The Australian League of Rights, 145 Russell St., Melbourne.
Postal Address: GPO Box 1052, Melbourne, 3001. Telephone: (03) 9650 9749, Fax: (03) 9650 9368.