



A WEEKLY COMMENTARY

ON TARGET

- NEWS HIGHLIGHTS
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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance –

Print Post Publication Number 381667 00258

Vol.38, No.6

February 22nd, 2002

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: *"The process of weighing the precious metals in each transaction was indeed a nuisance for everyone concerned, but these ancient arrangements had one great advantage that would vanish once coinage arrived upon the scene. When money was just pieces of metal of varying weights, it had no nationality..."*

"Thus, while our ancient forbears functioned with the one form of money that was acceptable everywhere, modern experts - having experienced the original sin of national monies - dream of a supranational currency but have no idea how to implement it."

– *"The Power of Gold: the History of an Obsession"* by Peter L. Bernstein, 2000

THE QUEEN'S MESSAGE TO THE AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY: "Prince Phillip and I have been deeply touched by the many kind messages about the Golden Jubilee.

"This anniversary is for us an occasion to acknowledge with gratitude the loyalty and support which we have received from so many people since I came to the Throne in 1952. It is especially an opportunity to thank all those of you who help others in your own local communities through public or voluntary service. I would like to think that your work will be particularly recognised during this Jubilee year.

"I hope also that this time of celebration in the United Kingdom and across the Commonwealth will not simply be an occasion to be nostalgic about the past. I believe that, young or old, we have much to look forward to with confidence and hope as we have to look back on with pride.

"I send my warmest good wishes to you all." Elizabeth R.

PLEDGES OF LOYALTY: It was with much pleasure Mrs. Maureen Burton, loyal and hardworking Secretary of the Australian Heritage Society passed on to us the above message from Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. The message was in response to the many Pledges of Loyalty already received at Buckingham Palace, the first of which went out with the Christmas/New Year edition of the *Heritage* journal. We also include the note from Mrs. Deborah Bean, Chief Correspondence Officer at Buckingham Palace, for your interest. Copies of the Pledge of Loyalty went out with last week's *On Target*. We ask our readers to get behind the initiative.

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"ON TARGET"

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To The Secretary of the Australian Heritage Society:

"The Queen has much appreciated receiving the many Pledges of Loyalty which the Australian Heritage Society has organised and which have been signed by hundreds of Australians.

"Although it is not possible for her Majesty to reply personally to each of the signatories, she hopes that you can arrange for the enclosed message to be made known within your society."

Mrs. Deborah Bean, Chief Correspondence Officer, Buckingham Palace. February 7th, 2002.

INSURING THE NEW WORLD ORDER by Jeremy Lee:

Among other reports flowing back from the recent World Economic Forum, those of Robert Gottliebson who represented *The Australian* are interesting. On February 6th he reported discussions he attended dealing with the financial fall-out from the Twin Towers disaster and other collapses as far as the insurance industry was concerned:

".... For decades two strategies have underpinned the business community – greater economies of scale and the willingness of the insurance industry to insure many of the increased operating risks so created at lower premiumsthe World Trade Centre payout will absorb most of the capital backing of the insurance industry. If there was another major disaster this year, then the insurance industry would not be able to pay, so effectively insurance cover does not have the same certaintyFor many US enterprises, the September 11 repercussions underlined their vulnerability to a systems breakdown..."

Nothing is more certain than the fact that, as financial debt and economic conflagration escalate round the world, the demand for insurance of all sorts will burgeon and premium costs will put insurance beyond the reach of a growing number.

This is merely a repeat of events in the Roman Empire, where the State argued it could protect citizens against every hazard, until it became so burdensome that it broke down. The old saying *Caveat Emptor* (Let the buyer beware) came out of the breakdown. Each person had to take responsibility for himself, and bear the consequences of failure.

The huge litigation industry, where everyone sues for every real or imagined injury, cannot be sustained much longer. It's all part of the breakdown of civilization.

CENSORSHIP AND SUSPENSION OF FREE SPEECH: Like his counterparts in the US, Britain and the European Union, Attorney-General Daryl Williams is introducing more draconian legislation in which tradition rights are eliminated. One or two journalists are speaking up.

The Australian Financial Review (7/2/01) carried a full-page report by Brian Toohey, giving a history of Security legislation from August 1914, when Billy Hughes introduced the Crimes Act into Parliament. The legislation remained essentially unchanged through World War II, until 1995, when the then Attorney-General Gareth Evans tried to toughen up the Act.

Toohey wrote: *"...The then Opposition leader, John Howard, vigorously condemned the proposals as authoritarian. When it was clear that Howard would not let the changes through the Senate, the proposal lapsed. Nothing further happened during the first five years of the Howard Government. Then an about-turn occurred on the last parliamentary sitting day before the 2001 election, when the Attorney-General, Daryl Williams, introduced the Criminal Code Amendment (Espionage and Related*

Offences) Bill It covers all official information, whether or not it has anything to do with national security.

"Williams now acknowledges this is the case, but denies it will be used to plug politically embarrassing leaks on topics such as the misuse of ministerial entitlements. If there is no intention to use it in this manner, however, he has not explained why he did not ensure the bill's contents more accurately reflect its title, which only refers to espionage and 'related offences'....."

"Despite his less frenetic manner, there is no doubt that Williams is following in Evan's footsteps in trying to toughen up the 1914 Act. The question is whether Howard will step in and stop him, as he stopped Evans in 1995."

In the same issue of the **AFR**, veteran journalist and former editor-in-chief of that paper, Peter Robinson, under the heading **MUZZLE MEDIA, KILL TRUTH**, commented:

"The terrorists are already on the way to winning a notable victory in Australia – and no-one seems to care very much."

"The amendments to the Espionage and Related Offences Bill are already passing through Parliament It is not exaggerating to say that this represents a serious attempt to limit the dimensions of Australian democratic processes since no democracy, let alone a true, multicultural one, can function properly if the voters are not aware of the truth about government activities."

"The excessive attempts to muzzle disclosure of material that the Government wishes to be kept secret have been dressed up as a natural strengthening of anti-espionage measures in an uncertain world and a tightening of controls over so-called whistleblowers. This is flummery of the most self-seeking kind."

"Yet it is being implemented under the cover of the 'war on terrorism', an emotional term which is steadily being escalated by governments to the status of a 'war on open information'. After some 50 years in journalism, I believe this is the most serious assault on the essential base of the democratic structure in Australia since World War II"

"In a state of total censorship at source, rumours will flourish, and denials will be discounted, imagination will be rife, conspiracy theories will proliferate, governments in such a fetid atmosphere will be desperately grasping at truth as their salvation. But like the boy who cried 'wolf' once too often, no-one will believe them. No-one will believe anything."

"Is that what we want?"

Like the current leaders in the United States, the unsmiling Attorney-General, Daryl Williams appears to believe that he and his colleagues are competent to decide what the rest of us should or should not know; "in the national interest", of course.

WHEN IS CONSPIRACY NOT CONSPIRACY? A few years ago anyone who suggested that the European Economic Community was an embryonic super-state, designed to remove national sovereignty from its members was laughed off as a 'conspiratorialist'. Now it's openly touted as fact.

Stephen Hall, from the Faculty of Law at the University of NSW gave details of the secret planning behind Monetary Union in ***The Australian Financial Review*** (Weekend, 9-10/2/02)

"Jacques Delors was the driving force and the main architect of the single currency."

"For Delors and his followers, every economic development in the EU is but a step in the direction of their Holy Grail: a federal European super-state. This goal is not shared by many Europeans, if opinion polls are any guide.

"Therefore, stealth is required and Europe's peoples must be made gradually worthy of the shimmering future long desired by the Euro-federalists. The single currency is not so much about economics as politics Politically, the Euro is the Trojan horse from which a federal Europe can be sprung on an unwilling public as an unavoidable necessity. The euro is the only currency in the world which does not have a government. This will expose it to enormous pressures as a single interest and exchange rate policy cannot long survive a fiscal policy fragmented among numerous member countries, many of whom have a culture of fiscal incontinence"

To see such sentiments expressed in a mainstream newspaper shows how far we have come along 'conspiracy road'.

EVEN THE RANKS OF TUSCANY: Commenting on Her Majesty the Queen's Golden Jubilee the Editorial in *The Australian* (7/2/02), unashamedly committed to the republican cause, nevertheless paid some personal compliments to the Queen:

"During her reign, the Queen has seen nine British prime ministers come and go and a succession of 30 corgis. She has outlived all other monarchs reigning at the time. At the age of 75 she is still going strong ... The fact that after 50 years she still holds the respect of many people and remains a symbol of their faith in the monarchy says a great deal about her charm and determination – not to mention her ability to remain above politics".

It might be added that she has also seen 10 Australian prime ministers come and go. The office she holds has never been subjected to the tawdry and corrupt struggle for power that typifies republican elections in the US – or anywhere else for that matter.

What is more, the institution of the Crown does not depend on the quality of the individual who temporarily holds it. The coronation and the oath taken on that occasion symbolize a value system largely spiritual in content, whose passing represents a step backward rather than forward. It is a value system still supported by countless people in Canada, New Zealand and Australia and envied, without necessarily knowing why, by detractors of the Monarchy. Included among such detractors is the young generation which has never been introduced to the real reasons for keeping the head of nations beyond the reach of politicians or popular and money-directed elections.

How fortunate Australia is to forego the distasteful farrago seen in the year-long "Bush v. Gore" scramble for power, which cost billions of dollars and divided the nation. The crowning of a monarch is infinitely more seemly than the election process. The monarchy may shine more, rather than less, brightly as the corruption of the republican arrangement becomes evermore self-evident. When this happens, the personal dignity of Queen Elizabeth II will have had something to do with it.

Like Australia, Britain is moving towards its own final moment of destiny. The majority, according to the polls, appear to reject monetary union and the European super-state. But whither will Britain go if she can resist the financial allure of Europe? To the values of her own history, enshrined in her parliamentary system, symbolized by the Coronation oath? Back to her old alliances in the Commonwealth? There is nowhere else to go. Pray that Britain – and Australia – stand firm!