



A WEEKLY COMMENTARY



# ON TARGET

- NEWS HIGHLIGHTS
- BACKGROUND INFORMATION
- COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

*The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance –*

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**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:** *"A modern war is a collective prize fight, promoted by outsiders for the benefit of themselves and the destruction of the contestants, who would much prefer not to be involved and would not be if they were not 'organised'.*

*"All visible governments are mere executives of a dictated policy. The dictators of the policy are the arch-criminals and are responsible for the Misery of the Ages."* – C.H. Douglas

## **BASHING AND BREAKING** by Jeremy Lee:

I never thought I'd live to see the day when television portrayed private homes being invaded by balaclava-clad storm-troopers in Australia; without warrants and armed, along with their automatic weapons, by no more than suspicion. We might as well be in the middle of some NYPD or Chicago Police gun-battle than in one of the old Commonwealth countries noted for their high level of individual rights.

We once believed that the individual was innocent until proven guilty; that private homes could not be entered without a magistrate's warrant; that efforts were made not to distress women and children, etc. When such principles were scrupulously observed, the police were unarmed; and woe betide those who injured a policeman. The public supported all law-enforcement officials because of the way they did their duty.

Those involved in planning or co-ordinating terrorist activities deserve the full force of the law and the severest penalties. But, until convicted, if they have been accepted as Australian citizens they should have all the legal rights that go with citizenship. If we are going to argue that the situation is now too complex to allow the usual principles to apply, we should declare a state of emergency.

We have always prided ourselves, as do Canadians, Britons and New Zealanders, that we have elevated personal freedoms to a level that doesn't exist in most other countries. If we are prepared to abandon them, we become the very thing against which we claim to fight. We bow to a culture alien and inferior to our own.

Few dare say that the present situation is the result of multiculturalism – but that is what it is. The

**IN THIS ISSUE:** • *Thought for the Week* • *Bashing and Brewaking* • *Where Does Loyalty Lie* • *Latin American Underbelly To The US* • *State Of The Regions* • *Dualism? The Solution To The Problem Is Not!*



build-up of large Islamic communities in English-speaking and European communities has wrought havoc with harmony and peace. Britain, France, Holland, Italy, Germany, the United States and New Zealand, as well as Australia, have built for themselves time-bombs for future generations. It has largely occurred through the efforts of sloppy-thinking idealists who have never had to face the real, on-the-ground problems of communities where cultures clash; and by the indifference of ordinary communities which are only forced to face up when it is almost too late.

**WHERE DOES LOYALTY LIE?** A survey of the almost 2 million Muslims in Britain, carried out by *The Sunday Telegraph* (UK) in October, 2001, asked which was the most important – to be Muslim or to be British. 68 percent answered Muslim. The result is that large numbers refuse allegiance to the Queen, and will not serve in the police or armed forces.

During the same month we had a series of fires and bombs in churches in Sydney. Gareth Kimberley's excellent newsletter (now, sadly, forced to close after he was warned of possible reprisals to his family), in its October 14th, 2002, issue reviewed earlier articles as a result of the Bali bombing. One said:

"A church hall was firebombed early yesterday (Oct 9 2001) and a church under construction attacked by vandals, its altar-site covered with spray-painted hate slogans proclaiming 'Osama the Great' and 'Christianity Must Die'. Vandals set fire to prayer books in the hall which is used as a temporary church by parishioners at Lidcombe's St. Ephraim Syrian Orthodox Church. The attack is the seventh in less than two weeks on Christian Churches. Yesterday's attack was the most brazen yet as vandals showed their support for terrorist mastermind Osama bin Laden. Most attackers have smashed windows and fire-bombed churches, but graffiti yesterday backed bin Laden with hate messages like 'Bin Laden the Greatest', 'Holy War Jihad' and 'Kill Jews 1 by 1'.

The wringing of hands by politicians, and sanctimonious sentiments expressed at interfaith services will do nothing to alter the situation.

*The Daily Telegraph* (Sydney, 1/10/02) pointed out:

"Sydney's Muslim population is as diverse as it is large – a microcosm of the faith worldwide. While most non-Muslim Sydneysiders could identify with the Lakemba Mosque and its predominantly Lebanese following, Muslim communities are spread across the Metropolitan area. Suburbs including Auburn, Zetland, Sefton and Dee Why, catering to nationalities from Lebanese to Sudanese, Indonesian, Turkish and Algerian, form part of the 'rich tapestry' of the growing Muslim community.

"According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the nation's Muslim community grew by a staggering 30% between 1996 and 2001, and now numbers more than 300,000. The bulk of them lives in Sydney where there are 40 ethnic Muslim communities. But there are significant differences within the Muslim community with the two main 'branches' being the Shi'ites and the Sunnis, divided by different interpretations of the Koran ...."

At least 5,000 children attend Muslim schools in Sydney, with long waiting lists. The Noor Al Houda College at Condell Park, which charges students \$1,200 annually, also receives State and Federal funding. The curriculum, naturally, has an Islamic rather than a Christian focus.

Any possible terrorist attacks on Australian soil - and we have been warned of such a likelihood – will escalate interracial and religious feelings to a white-hot level, exposing the fallacy of a "happy,



successful multicultural society". It will create the pretext for the Government, under the thinking of men like Attorney-General Darryl Williams, to suspend further standards, rights and liberties. Innocent Australians of all persuasions will be the main sufferers.

Why on earth Australians have been led to believe they can create harmony between wildly-different races, cultures and religions when similar experiments round the world have failed dismally, is impossible to fathom. In the end we must accept that if we increase the mixture of foreign cultures further we will dash any hope of a stable future. And with the biggest Islamic nation in the world, Indonesia, directly to our north, which harbours little goodwill and friendship for Australia, it is time to face the facts.

**LATIN AMERICAN UNDERBELLY TO THE US:** Venezuela is the fifth biggest oil producer in the world. But it is currently undergoing a Castro-like socialist revolution which has seen \$US 25 billion leave the country this year, with a further \$80 billion in capital funds in offshore bank accounts. With no overseas investment the economy is expected to shrink by 6% this year.

Responding to George Bush's proposal for a "Free Trade Area of the Americas" (FTAA) Brazil's new President, 'Lula' da Silva, has remarked dryly that the US should start the ball rolling by cutting protection for US farmers.. Brazil has 50% of Latin America's population, and 60% of the continent's economic output. Its currency is wobbling, having fallen in value 30% this year, with a possible debt-default imminent.

The Argentine is a cot-case. 53% of the population is classified as living in poverty, on \$US2 a day or less. Although it can produce enough food for 300 million, a quarter of its 35 million people go to bed hungry.

The crisis in Latin America may well bring down the world's economy. The suffering nations have no love for America, which they see as the power behind the IMF and World Bank. None are supporting the possible war against Iraq.

The US is building enemies for itself day by day.

**STATE OF THE REGIONS:** An article in *The National Business Bulletin* shows the programme for regionalizing Australia, complete with the map originally drawn up for the last Labor Government by Bill Kelty, proceeding apace. At the same time *The Australian Financial Review*, 30/10/02, gave details of a special Canberra launching of the "State of the Regions Report", commissioned by the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA). Dr. Peter Brain told us what we all know, that the rich are getting richer while the poor are getting poorer. One answer, he said, was to provide local government with more resources, more responsibility and more accountability. Much of the inequality was driven by "unrestrained market driven dynamics".

Fair enough.

But if this is to be achieved by centrally-financed and directed regional governments, now dependent on Canberra for their resources rather than their home States, it is really an exercise in centralism rather than decentralization. The article concluded:

*".... Dr. Brain said redirecting GST revenue from the states to local government was one way of helping local government with their increased responsibilities ...."*



What an intriguing suggestion! Treasurer Costello is adamant that the GST is NOT a Commonwealth Tax but a State one, so he doesn't include the revenue in his annual Budget. Besides, the Commonwealth is prevented by the Constitution from directly by-passing State Governments and funding local councils. Gough Whitlam said that the creation of regional governments would provide the opportunity for Commonwealth direction.

So who would control or decide about shifting GST revenue from States to regions? The State Governments? There's Buckley's Chance of that!

Or would the Howard Government belatedly recognize that the GST is a Commonwealth Tax after all, to allocate as it wished? In which case the whole rigged Budget, which hides the fact that Howard/Costello, against their election promises that taxes would not rise, have in fact jacked them up further, would be there for all to see.

ALGA and the Regional Government programme are a deadly threat against the Federation and the Constitution, and, as Bevan O'Regan has rightly pointed out, part of the gradual move for a republic.

### **DUALISM? THE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM IS NOT!** by Anthony Cooney:

Many of us who see evil manifest in economic and political monopoly – in tyranny – are tempted to behave similarly: we speak of 'joining forces,' of raising an 'army',... each of these metaphors implies that the reality of our situation is a dualism of good confronting evil in a pitched battle; we like to think that we are on the side of the forces of good... (sound familiar?...*ed*)

Without wanting to diminish the importance of the danger, I wonder if this is not giving the devil more than his due? Certainly, in Christian terms it is. We have often observed that, in Christian doctrine, evil – far from being an autonomous 'power' – is a privation or defect of good; evil has no reality, except in so far as it feeds on good.

The question is, then, can evil be obviated by 'fighting' it? Can a defect, or privation, be destroyed in battle? Or must it be 'made up'? Is wholeness not the answer or solution to privation? Can perversion be eradicated? Or is the solution to perversion straightening?

When we direct our energies towards warring against evil, are we not using a technique (a means) dissociated from our policy (end), which is the expression of a philosophy?

Is not a dualistic technique in the pursuit of "Christian policy" a failure to integrate means and ends?... If, on the other hand, evil is merely privation or perversion, we subscribe to it by devoting our energy to 'fighting' it.

Correct response to the distortion of reality:

The solution to this kind of evil (the only kind?) is wholeness or integrity; the correct response to the distortion of reality is the discovering of and conforming to reality – in whatever ways we can. Our problem is to conserve energy creatively, how to remain or become sane (whole, healthy, balanced). Can we solve this problem by subscribing strategically to the disintegrative principle of dualism? Or can we really overcome evil with good? How?

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