



A WEEKLY COMMENTARY

ON TARGET



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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance –

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: *"There was a past time on this earth when the activities of human beings, particularly in Mother Goddess worship, were integrated into Mother Nature's grand network and were a true functional part of it... With their various priesthoods' connivance men have prostituted their caretaker-career for a get-rich-quick exploitation of natural resources and have blinded themselves to all possible consequences... Our most childish stupidity is to think that the brooding hen's spirit in Mother Nature is only a pious myth; to think that the real living world around us in its quasi-infinite complexity, is purely passive and insensitive, neutral and defenceless, meek and virginal, just waiting to be abusively deflowered.*

"Actually the reverse is true. Immanent in Nature there is... an aseistic evolutionary force-field continuum-spirit which is not only capable of recognizing and repairing damage done to itself, but which, in its expanding pressure to survive and abound, will stop at nothing to eliminate all opposition... We do not know what further surprises nature has in store for those who threaten her delicate vital sense of balance with their man-made evil positive feedback instabilities."

– Peter Lock, *"The Great Harlot"*, 2002

A MATTER OF CONSCIENCE by Jeremy Lee:

In recent weeks we have referred to the issue of conscience for elected representatives, remarking on the absurdity of one man, the Prime Minister, giving permission for the luxury of a "conscience vote" in Parliament. Somewhere between 250 and 300 bills are voted on each year in the Federal Parliament, where all party members are instructed how to vote by the Whips. And then one comes along where the Prime Minister – who, incidentally, is not even mentioned in the Constitution – gives them *permission* to use their consciences!

Immediately the standard of debate lifted, and faceless party hacks became individuals with personal viewpoints they dared express.

Shouldn't they be voting on conscience on every issue? Who gives anyone the right to instruct your representative how to vote?

Back in 1910 a British Court case defined the duty of an elected member thus:

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"Parliament is summoned by the Sovereign to advise His Majesty freely. By the nature of the case it is implied that coercion, restraint, or money payment, which is the price of voting at the bidding of others, destroys or imperils the function of freedom of advice which is fundamental in the very constitution of Parliament."

The debasement of this ideal led to the comic description in Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado*:

*"When in that House MPs divide,
If they've a brain and cerebellum too,
They have to leave that brain outside,
And vote just as their leaders tell 'em to."*

The major parties in the early days of Federation were not like this. While tied to some extent by philosophical agreement, individuals were allowed to cross the floor on matters of conscience. They did not lose their endorsement for doing so. Debate was of a much higher standard, and a better type of person sought election.

The payment of big salaries, with even bigger benefits and pensions, has corrupted, as it has in so many fields, personal integrity.

Acknowledging this sad state of affairs the Clerk to the Senate, Mr. Harry Evans, said in 1991 it was not the institution of Parliament that was to blame for deteriorating standards, but political parties which had become "factionalised, undemocratic oligarchies": *"... They have become narrowly-based, factionalised, undemocratic oligarchies Controlled by too few people, closed to public view but open to manipulation and outright corruption"* (*The Australian*, 10/3/91).

Not only does power corrupt those who have it, but also those over whom it is exercised, who become subservient.

LIP SERVICE BY THE NATIONAL PARTY: Back in the last Queensland State election, which saw the rout of the Coalition parties, the National Party published a remarkable promise called the "Electorate First" Option. In it they paid lip-service to the points made above. The statement said:

"The National Party's innovative 'Electorate First' option will help National Party MPs stand up for the people of their communities...."

"'Electorate First' means that a member of the Parliamentary National Party may exercise a free vote on any issue that impacts on his or her electorate – except on money supply and confidence. In other words, if an issue is important enough locally, a National Party MP is free to vote with his or her community instead of for the party line It means that if you have a National Party MP representing your electorate, you'll have someone in Parliament – in a major party that CAN form government – who really will be able to put YOU first...."

The statement is as much an admission as a promise. It says that, until this statement was made, NO MP could put his electorate first; which, of course is the truth.

It made no difference to the National Party's (mis)fortunes. Only one-in-a-thousand voters read pre-election promises. If they ever see them at all, they classify them as "junk mail". Voters now judge by results AFTER elections – not pre-election promises.

But the promise is a party confession about previous sins and omissions – far too late to do the National Party much good, but perhaps the starting point for a gradual awakening in the electorate about the hi-jacking over many years of their right to genuine representation.

We don't even know if that promise – made while Rob Borbidge was still leader – still stands. Whether or not it does, it means nothing until electors actually see it in practice.

BLACK CLOUDS? OR A SILVER LINING? Mesmerised as the world is by the intense global grab for power, and the strategic positioning for control of fossil fuels, we forget that thousands are turning away in the search for small communities, cleaner fuel, local decision-making and sustainable futures. Hidden in the wings are many innovations that could empower individuals and small groups, unhooking them from the mechanisms of centralized control.

The Bulletin, 12/11/02, contained an article on a new type of flying machine, the FanWing, invented by Patrick Peebles, a Britisher living in a farmhouse near Rome. Instead of wings the plane has rotating fans like the old-fashioned push lawnmower on each side, which lift and propel far more quietly and economically than a conventional plane. It can hover, or move forward, almost silently:

"... Peebles has managed to find an aeronautical solution that's eluded three generations of engineers out to create their own helicopter-aeroplane hybrids. 'The fact is that it works,' says Mike Graham, head of aeronautics at Imperial College, London, where promising air-tunnel tests were recently completed. 'People have often asked about similar techniques, but I had never seen one succeed.'...."

"Peebles talks of a time when fan-powered aircraft could shuttle commuters between airports across city skies, where noise restrictions currently prohibit helicopters. Then again, the FanWing might find a future as a crop-duster, a firefighter or an airborne truck. Peebles reckons an ultralight model would creep along at only 100 km per hour – but the latest tests suggest that with a mere 100-horsepower engine the FanWing could lift a 2-ton load, easily beating the helicopter in efficiency...."

The development of the Fuel-Cell, which produces immense quantities of hydrogen capable of powering vehicles, transport systems, small or large-scale electricity generation, or water desalination plants without pollution is now here. Commercial coaches manufactured by Mercedes Benz and one or two Japanese manufacturers are daily demonstrating the possibilities. The crisis of 'global gases' could be resolved simply by changing from fossil fuels. George Bush would not even have to annihilate Iraq!

If the money spent on huge world conferences talking about pollution and the Kyoto Protocol were diverted to opening up the already-existing alternative forms of energy and transport *on a small scale within the reach of decentralized communities*, what a world it could be.

But first, it seems, the energy-imperialist, who thinks in terms of cornering the world's energy and controlling those who need it, will have to fall flat on its face. What destruction will occur in this process is anyone's guess. Much depends on those motivated by the will-to-freedom in their resistance to those motivated by the will-to-power.

Such huge and expensive developments as the Alice-Darwin railway could be obsolete before they're up and running. Finding a new, economic freight system that travelled by air would eliminate much of the clutter and massive infrastructure of our roads.

And what could a few dozen economical FanWings, capable of carrying 2 or 3 tons, do for our Fire-fighting defences? Or for coastal surveillance? Or even for loading and unloading ships a few miles out to sea? Thinking small opens up a myriad of possibilities.

Change from disaster to regeneration will inevitably start slowly. It will never be initiated by government. The inertia of centralized thinking in the corridors of power is too strong. It starts with a change of thinking in the community. Even the most avid 'greenies' need to change direction from their belief in international treaties and more controls to small, innovative developments at local level. The most outstanding example is that of the inventor of Permaculture, Bill Mollison, who was once a demonstrator, but soon concluded he could do more good by building a practical alternative than shouting slogans.

The biggest alternative idea of all is Social Credit. It starts at ground level, with the individual. It ends by challenging the biggest monopoly of all – the Monopoly of Credit. When Social Credit meets true organic environmentalism and the small, sustainable community, great things will happen. The immense, materialistic monopoly which thinks solely in terms of control will give way to the flowering of freedom and the sanctity of the individual who can only find his true potential in communion with his fellows and with God.

The events of our times are waking many people up. Let us be thankful for that, even when we don't see many rays of hope. It's when we think there's no hope at all that the breakthroughs begin to come.

LIKE TOXIN IN THE BLOOD by John Chuckman – YellowTimes.org Columnist (Canada):

Like acrid fumes seeping from a chemical dump long thought dormant, attitudes of an unmistakably fascist nature are drifting through American society. One catches whiffs of the dreadful stuff on almost every breeze from America.

Just the day before the recent Congressional elections, the CIA laid claim to the assassination of six men in Yemen. The men were, of course, described as associated with Al Qaeda, and may, for all I know, have been so, but just when did bragging about the public murder of six people by a government agency become acceptable practice to Americans?

No charges, no trial, no evidence - just murder. That act was in keeping with the spirit of America's treatment of prisoners from its stupid, disastrous war in Afghanistan. First, many hundreds of prisoners were murdered under American auspices. Second, thousands were illegally detained and abused. Many were tortured.

Hundreds remain prisoners in cages thousands of miles from their homes with no legal rights. A scholastic nonsense about these men being held away from the rights-protected soil of America appears adequate to make their treatment acceptable.

The murder also is in keeping with the alliances and interests America has been forming abroad. Perhaps the most murderous elected leader in recent memory, Mr. Sharon, responsible literally for the deaths of thousands and for keeping an entire people hopelessly crushed into apartheid-style camps is called a "man of peace". His works of assassination and destruction are blessed and supported more cordially than I remember support for America's old friend, the Shah of Iran, who smiled at dinners in the White House while his secret police, Savak, pulled out the fingernails of screaming opponents and suspects.

Russia's Mr. Putin wages the most devastating small war of recent times, a relentless, murderous effort to hold a people who do not want to be held, reducing their towns and farms to burnt-out wasteland, and he, too, is regarded as a partner for peace and an opponent of terror.

I wonder how many Americans caught the little-noted fact that not one Chechen left the theater in Moscow alive, despite all having been knocked out by gas. I'm not objecting to an effort to free hostages, only to the clear fact that every Chechen was summarily murdered in scenes that must have recalled the old NKVD's bullet to the back of the head. I wonder was the old Soviet practice of charging relatives for a cartridge followed?

A military dictator in Pakistan is regarded as an ally against terror, as are bestial warlords in Afghanistan.

Working towards the Fuhrer – the tenor of the times: The Attorney General of the United States tells Arab Americans they are fortunate not to be treated the way Japanese Americans during World War II were – that is, fortunate not to be thrown into concentration camps and have most of their property seized, never to be returned. More disgusting yet, coming as it does carefully wrapped in robes of reasoned debate, are the words of an American lawyer on the need for establishing legal procedures governing the proper use of torture in the country.

It does suit the tenor of times in which US border officials have been routinely photographing, fingerprinting, and grilling visitors from certain countries for hours even though they may have taken up a new citizenship. Prize-winning Canadian author Rohinton Mistry, a man born in India and whose religious background is a form of Zoroastrianism, about as far removed as you can get from being a Muslim Arab, cut short his American reading tour after being stopped and interrogated every time he caught a plane...

It's the kind of activity Germans in the 1930s used to call fondly "working towards the Fuhrer", that is, guessing what action might please the leader.

There's been a lot of "working towards the Fuhrer" lately in America. It seems to come quite naturally to a significant number of people...