



A WEEKLY COMMENTARY

ON TARGET

- NEWS HIGHLIGHTS
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- COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS



The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance –

Print Post Publication Number 381667 00258

Vol.39, No.26

July 11th, 2003

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: "...get the mental attitude well established in oneself that institutions exist only legitimately to serve individuals, and it is possible to make demands on Government Departments with which their organisation cannot deal, but are yet entirely reasonable. It is not necessary, and not desirable, to organise this kind of action. The underlying idea is to call the bluff of institutionalism, and to make it deliver the goods or expose the fact that it can't... And the root of the matter is this – mind your business, and allow no man to make a business of minding you. Listen, in reason, to what advice seems to be backed by proper experience and ability, and pay no attention to windy idealists. And then – mind your own business. It is in sore need of your attention."

– C. H. Douglas in "*The Big Idea*", 1941

RAINDROPS KEEP FALLING (IF YOU CAN AFFORD THEM) by Jeremy Lee:

Section 100 of the Constitution is nothing if not succinct:

"The Commonwealth shall not, by any law or regulation of trade or commerce, abridge the right of a State or of the residents therein to the reasonable use of the waters of rivers for conservation or irrigation."

That seems plain enough. No referendum of Australians has ever eliminated that clause. Then why do we read in *The Weekend Australian* (28-29/6/03):

"John Anderson is ... using a financial lever to develop a national water plan in cooperation with the States. The National Party leader is threatening to withhold competition dividends unless there is agreement on who pays compensation to farmers who lose water rights"

Commonwealth financial blackmail is being used to overturn the Constitution.

Both government and private control over "the rain that falls on the just and the unjust" has already gone a long way. In New South Wales a new law which came in on July 1 allowed the separation of water titles from the land. New companies and banks are already offering loans to farmers with water titles as a separate security. *The Australian Financial Review* (16/5/03) said: *"The new laws will also make it possible for a farmer to rent out his water rights but keep ownership of the land. Under the old rules you needed to sell the water (because the licence needed to be attached to land). Now you*

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can go and live in a block of flats on the coast, still trade your water into that market, and keep the land"

But banks already holding existing mortgages with farmers are fearful their security will diminish once water rights are uncoupled from the land. The article continued: "... The banks were working through the first tranche of 10,000 water-attached mortgages in NSW in "a massive exercise to shore up those mortgages" ..."

Six days later *The Australian Financial Review* (22/5/03) reported: "Australia's first speculative water rights investment company was given approval by the Australian Securities and Investment Commission this week to launch a prospectus. The company, National Water Bank, hopes to raise more than \$27 million to buy water licences in NSW, which last year rose more than 40 per cent in value. National Water Bank will be the first self-declared speculator to take advantage of the new Water Management Act 2000, which takes effect in NSW on July 1 as part of national water reform due to be ratified at the next meeting of the Coalition of Australian Governments in August. The agreement will make water rights a commodity that can be traded nationally to rationalize the use of water and steer it to its highest and best use. For the first time, water rights will not be attached to a parcel of land

"Critics have argued that water trading would be hampered by the resistance of farmers and fears that entire communities would be left without water...."

But, of course, debt-ridden farmers will have their ability to fight for their rights cut to pieces by the money lenders. Cunningly, lending institutions seeking ownership of water are offering lower interest loans to entrap farmers.

And, of course, this situation cannot be divorced from the approaching GATS (General Agreement on Trade in Services). The current situation that water titles could only be traded nationally would be changed to *internationally* of Australia was foolish enough to enter GATS.

FORMER MAYOR SPEAKS OUT: With the above in mind, a statement by former Narrabri Mayor and grain farmer Bevan O'Regan deserves the closest attention of farmers throughout the nation:

"Mr. John Anderson's statement in a recent publication describing his plans for National Water and his intentions to draw up a national water policy to go to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) is an affront to Common Law and each landholder's rights.

Firstly, John Anderson is a federal minister and should butt out of State matters.

Secondly, COAG is an illegitimate body set up in 1990 by the then Labor government which has no more authority than a 'think-tank'.

Thirdly, and probably the most important point Mr. Anderson should take on board, is that Section 6A of the Land and Valuation Act 1916 says quite clearly that 'fee simple', which is an aggregation of a land-owner's right, says, 'land and water cannot be separated'.

It's about time people realized water cannot be traded from a farm because water below each farm boundary to the centre of the earth belongs to the land and not the land-owner.

This is not the case with oil, gas, minerals or coal, but it is the case with water. Water, air, vegetation and soil make up a property right.

Mr. Anderson gives recognition to the 1994 intergovernmental Agreement on Water (IAW). This again is another 'think-tank' and, like COAG, should not in any way be given any credibility by any water user.

Mr. Anderson said IAW should have offered compensation for water entitlements. We, as State landholders need to tell him that if we agree to any compensation to erode our rights in all our water, then we are agreeing to an immoral and unconstitutional plan.

Mr. Anderson says, 'it is time to fix the agreement concerning interstate water trading'. He should read section 100 of the Federal Constitution which says: 'The Commonwealth shall not by any law or regulation of trade or commerce abridge the right of a State or of the residents therein to the reasonable use of the waters of rivers for conservation or irrigation.'

If Mr. Anderson is going to use the precedent of Bob Hawke's use of the High Court judgment in the Tasmanian Dams case, then the argument in this case is flawed.

With unabated arrogance, there now is a prospectus to sell shares in water on the Stock Exchange using the National Water Bank Limited (CAN 102 723 777).

Thank goodness our forefathers had the sense to write a clause into the 1916 Land and Valuation Act to lock land and water together as a 'stratum of one'.

It is coincidental that Mr. Anderson who, as Minister of Primary Industries, had a large role in setting up a company called 'AWB Limited International' to relieve farmers of their right to manage their wheat industry is now at the cutting edge of an international company Water Bank to sell farmers water through the Stock Exchange.

Water is God's gift to the world, whether it goes into the streams as run-off or whether it filters into the aquifers as underground water, is of no consequence to the government.

If any Local Council or private person accepts money as structural adjustment or as compensation, then they have in reality agreed to a plan to have governments, through legislation, steal their water.

The Federal Government must butt out now before civil disobedience (which under Common Law is quite legal) is exercised against the repugnancy of unconstitutional legislation." (*end of article*)

SCHIZOPHRENIC ISRAEL: We have recently been regaled through the media with pictures of irate settlers in Palestinian territories resisting the Israeli army's dismantling of illegal settlements. This is supposed, one imagines, to convince us of Sharon's sincerity in following the "road-map" for peace. But an article in *The Weekend Australian* (28-29/6/03) under the heading ISRAEL CAUGHT FUNDING ILLEGAL SETTLEMENTS, reported: *"The Israeli Government is funneling money into the establishment of illegal settlements on Palestinian land in the West Bank and then paying to have them dismantled, an Israeli television station reported yesterday.*

"The funds for setting up the wildcat settler outposts were channeled through a branch of the government-linked Jewish Agency, the station revealed

"As part of his commitment to the US-backed 'road map' for peace, Mr. Sharon pledged to get rid of the wildcat settlements in the West Bank.

"But according to the Israeli anti-settlement group Peace Now, more than 60 illegal outposts have been set up since Mr. Sharon came to power in March 2001...."

Just what is going on? Is this some vast Hollywood-type set for convincing the West that Sharon is serious about giving back their territories to the Palestinians, and all the while actually increasing the number of illegal settlements? If so, it simply confirms the misgivings that sceptics feel for any actual change coming from the "road-map". Israel has a long record of promising one thing and doing the

opposite. A halt to illegal settlements was a condition of the ill-fated Oslo Accords, which Israel simply ignored.

Meanwhile, Shimon Peres, former prime minister of Israel, writing in *The Wall Street Journal* (24/6/03) has issued a strident call for the United States, Europe, Russia and the United Nations to issue a combined warning to the ayatollahs in Iran. They "....need to be warned that they are crossing the tolerance threshold of the world - a world that will not tolerate the existence of terrorists with weapons of mass destruction"

Not a word, you will notice. About Israel's own WMDs – including at least 300 nuclear warheads. There is no doubt that Iran is next on the list for Israel's and Washington's zio-hawks. But with the situation in Iraq and Afghanistan deteriorating by the day, and, under the new 'Downer doctrine' Australians deployed on what looks like a lengthy sojourn in the Solomons, it may take much more time to get round to Tehran.

DAVID IRVING'S VIDEO CAUSING A FURORE: *The Australian*, July 4th, 2003, trumpets the news of a Jewish group's bid to stop the Melbourne Underground Film Festival (MUFF) organisers from screening David Irving's video, "*The Search for Truth in History*", whilst, during the same evening, having a live telephone hook-up with the British historian. ('Outrage at Jewish bid to stop film').

There is also much ado in certain Jewish circles because MUFF also plans to screen a documentary about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict which features the American commentator Joseph Sobran and Palestinian journalist Said Arikat, a correspondent for the Jerusalem-based Arabic newspaper *Al Quds* (*Australian Jewish News*, June 27th, 2003).

According to the MUFF programme, so reports the *AJN*, Joseph Sobran "defly dissects the Israeli state's familiar pretensions and details how the Holocaust story is used to justify support for Israel." On the subject of Irving's video, Free Speech Victoria president, Terry Lane, said the legal bid by the Jewish group was a pointless demonstration of the Jewish community's lobbying power, since Irving's ideas were widely available on the internet. Quite! But, as he rightly observed, "This is another outrageous attempt by one small section of the community to determine what the whole of the community will see, hear and read."

MUFF's director, Richard Wolstencroft said it was vital to air views that many in the community disagree with, as a fundamental part of free debate. We are sure the present publicity will be a bonus for MUFF and will boost the number of patrons who attend the video showing.

The David Irving video and audio, "*The Search for Truth in History*" are readily available from the League's Melbourne Book Shop. Prices include postage.

Video: \$35.00. Audio: \$10.00. Send cheque/money order to: Box 1052, GPO, Melbourne, 3001.

The League carries the full range of David Irving's books.