



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.39, No.29

August 1st, 2003

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: *"Out of the remnants of the Roman slave state, the Church proposed to build a social order based on the idea (1) that the humblest human being had been touched by a magic wand when God became human, so that the humblest human being was no mere draught animal but, on the contrary, akin to God and (2) that the same God being the Creator of the natural world, every human being was akin to the natural world in a new way; and (3) she proclaimed the rule of the servant, that is, the artisan, the domestic, the tiller of the soil, those dedicated to practical industry. Because it was a social revolution over against the Old Order, the medieval Church was schizophrenic... she "gestated the soul of the West in the womb of the East" and proclaimed liberty in the language of slaves - hence the dark side of her history, which there is no need to minimize."*

- "Human Ecology & Social Credit: The Legacy of Tom Robertson" by Michael Lane, 2002

AFTER CALIFORNIA - WHO? by Jeremy Lee:

As the financial year came to an end on June 30th, California officially declared itself bankrupt. With an economy bigger than Australia's - in fact the world's fifth largest economy - and a population nearly twice the size (35 million) the State is too indebted to meet its bills.

California blames the Federal Government, which has cut its budget allocation to the States so that it can expand its war programme. The Californian government refused to pass the Budget, and there is now a free-for-all as attempts are made to oust the Governor and find some new leader. By midnight on June 30th no way of balancing the Budget had been found, no area of budget cuts feasible. The State is poised to run out of money altogether by September.

Although California's budget deficit (\$US38.2 billion) is larger than all the other State deficits combined, a host of other States are in deep trouble. 46 out of the 50 States have crippling budget deficits and are attempting desperately to find ways to cut back. But California is shutting down many essential services. Legislators and the Governor have had their pay suspended. Educational establishments and other essential services have either been cut to the bone or shut down altogether. Queensland's *Courier-Mail* commented:

".... 'It's ironic that almost all states in the world's richest nation are broke, and California, the wealthiest among them, is in the worst state of all,' said University of Southern California politics expert Sherry Jeffe.

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"ON TARGET"

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"The crisis also left law-makers in Nevada and Pennsylvania unable to pass a formal budget for the new fiscal year.

"And Oregon, Connecticut and New Hampshire managed to approve only stop-gap plans that allow their governments to continue functioning while legislators thrash out a proper budget. Connecticut Governor John Rowland deployed State troopers yesterday to force state legislators to find a way out of the crippling crisis after he threatened to veto the \$US400 million 'mini-budget' passed on Monday night.

"He issued an executive order funding essential services for the next week and dispatched the troopers to deliver subpoenas ordering legislators to return to the state assembly and continue the debate until a Budget was finalized."

Only one American State that we are aware of – Alaska, the 49th – is not in immediate trouble. Since 1976 it has been squirreling part of its oil royalties away in The Alaska Permanent Fund for such a rainy day. Without State income taxes or sales taxes, the Alaska Permanent Fund now has assets worth over \$US27 billion, which, for a state population of 620,000 is not too bad! But over the period the Fund has also paid an annual dividend to Alaskan citizens over the age of six months averaging some \$US2,000 per head each twelve months.

The Alaskans made a wise decision when their Fund was established by referendum – the management and constitutional legislation prevented elected politicians getting their hands on the peoples' money!

HOW DO STATES GO BROKE? The July *New Times Survey* contains a lengthier article on the Californian debt crisis, set within the context of the overall consolidated debt crisis now facing the United States. The combination of all debts in the US now exceeds \$US49 trillion – a sum incapable of repayment. The much anticipated but totally illusory 'recovery' which all the pundits are praying will arrive within the next 12 months, can only be achieved by American exports large enough to repay debt and interest. With the largest Current Account Deficit in US history with the rest of the world this year – \$US500 billion – and an increase in unemployment of 2.1 million in the last 12 months – PLUS a rapacious and bottomless military budget as George Bush tries to be the world's policeman – the Ides do not look auspicious for America in the period ahead.

(*The New Times Survey*, July 2003 issue, \$5 posted from: The Heritage Bookshop, Box 1052, GPO Melbourne, 3001.)

One thing we can be sure of; the money-lenders will be gathering, as they do with ever-increasing frequency, and going through California's remaining assets to see what they can seize or acquire. They might even call in the International Monetary Fund, as they have done in Mexico, Brazil and Argentina. If that doesn't wake Americans, and especially Californians, to the whole question of usury and debt finance, nothing ever will.

WINNING BY A NOSE: *The Bulletin* – Australia's oldest and best-known current affairs weekly – in its issue for July 1st depicted the "coalition of the willing", Bush, Blair and Howard, in profile, each with a Pinocchio's nose about a foot long, and the heading "DID THEY LIE?". It says much that the facts published by small independent newsletters such as *On Target* are now appearing in the mainstream media. If we had a truly independent media these stories should have appeared much earlier. Journalists like Robert Fisk, Felicity Arbuthnot and John Pilger, while not necessarily always correct, have been much closer to real events than the editorial staff members in head offices who decide what is proper for their readers to be told. The media has much to answer for. But we should be thankful

that all sorts of unsavoury but essential information is beginning to reach the public. A joint-parliamentary committee, against the wishes of Prime Minister Howard, is now due to report in September on the whole mess surrounding the intelligence and the selectively biased process by which Australia went to war.

Normally, such a committee, even when government and opposition are included, can be expected to be fairly tame in its findings. But the same process in Britain and America will goad them into a much deeper investigation than usual. Polls show a growing number in each country who believe they were deceived on the arguments for war.

Meanwhile, the truth about Iraq, in contrast to any idea that the war is over and rebuilding advanced and under way, is appearing daily. Even diplomacy is all but impossible. *The Australian* (212/7/03) told us:

"Al Fahdly, the Iraqi diplomat who has just been put in charge of ties with Australia, spent much of last week trying to find an office with a chair, and knows there is not a single telephone line or computer anywhere in Baghdad's burnt-out foreign ministry A few kilometres away, the head of Australia's newly-reopened diplomatic mission, 48-year old Mules, spends hours each day wrestling with three unreliable satellite phones, and is escorted by at least one Australian army light-armoured vehicle each time he ventures into Baghdad's violent streets in his armoured BMW 'My first performance indicator is not to be killed,' he half-joked.

"We've had three car-jackings in the immediate area in the past two weeks and cars from the German and Italian embassies have recently been shot at."

"When any of the Australian diplomats venture out of their hotel at night for dinner they are flanked by gun-carrying Australian soldiers who wait outside the restaurant, then escort the diplomats home...."

Now George Bush, who so contemptuously dismissed the UN in the prelude to war, is asking with his tail between his legs for UN intervention. Obviously, this will entail the agreement of nations such as France and Germany, who were so rudely treated and insulted by Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld. The cost of the American occupation is about \$US4 billion a month – money which states like California will be eyeing enviously as they go bankrupt themselves

Errol Simper, in his column in the Media section of *The Australian*, (17-23/7/03) said what more and more are thinking:

".... It's not just the absence of those much-proclaimed weapons of mass destruction.

"Iraq also appears stubbornly resistant to the kind of democratic harmony George Bush, Tony Blair and Howard assured us would be enthusiastically-embraced post-invasion. The 'new' Iraq is about looted rubble, grieving relatives, political factionalism and armed citizenry. Australian troops were put at risk to achieve this chaos, a chaos estimated to have cost about 4000 civilian lives. (Some estimates are much higher – Ed.) Howard has described the planned parliamentary inquiry into pre-invasion intelligence as "purely political". He could well be right. Equally, some of Iraq's maimed and homeless might regard war as a shade political.

"It's a strange thing, given the massive disenchantment in Australia over the planned invasion, that Howard's reasons for the war haven't – until the past few days – been a bigger issue. The mainstream media has never really developed it into the kind of all-consuming topic as was – say – the unforgiving

onslaught on the former governor-general, Peter Hollingworth, or the focus on the Simon Crean-Kim Beazley leadership fracas..... The ease with which Howard dumped the whole thing can tempt you to believe politics in this country is easy. You pledge you'll 'never-ever' introduce a GST, then introduce one. You encourage the belief that would-be refugees throw their children into the sea, then simply concede they didn't. You tell the nation Saddam Hussein has the capability to threaten the entire globe, then move on to referendum proposals to dent the power of the Senate!

"Nice work if you can get it."

I never thought I'd see such accurate and penetrating comments in the national media.

Now, ill-trained and disillusioned American troops – 20 per cent of whom are Afro-Americans, and many women – who thought they'd be going home after a short sharp victory, are being told they will be there for another four years, being sniped at daily. Alongside them, some 1,000 Australians on constant guard duty will be there – how long? It seems highly possible that Australians may yet suffer casualties long after the war is officially over. If it happens – and pray God it doesn't – the Australian electorate will descend like a swarm of bees round the heads of John Howard and his Cabinet.

WHY DID WE PUT OUR TRUST IN THESE WICKED & RUTHLESS MEN? Such was the introductory headline to Peter Hitchens' scathing attack on the UK's Fabian Socialist Labour Government. *UK Mail* No.522.

"This Government has stunk of dishonesty since it came to office. Everything about it is false. The man who acts as Prime Minister is a hole in the air who knows little of the world or this country and understands less.

The man who pretends to be his communications supremo is the real chief executive of power; a crude class warrior and bully and a former pornographer who longs to rip down the old Britain and is happy to hide behind the bland Mr. Blair to achieve his aims. The Cabinet – with one exception – are ciphers, too scared of Alastair Campbell to think or act on their own."

And therein lies the problem: Whether the 'New' Labour, of Tony Blair's ilk, or the 'new Liberal' of John Howard's coterie, both are *philosophically internationalist* and the people, as a rule of thumb, are *nationalist*.

At long last Australians are awake to the fact their 'leaders' do not see themselves as sharing a common bond of *nation*, with their fellow Australians. Their loyalties are not to their nation, to their own people, their loyalties are to a coterie of international industrialists, gun-running merchants and money-lenders. These people share no loyalty with any nation or peoples, their loyalties are only to themselves.

Neither the party-political 'leaders' of this nation, nor Britain, have any notion of the common bond of *mutual* dependence between their fellow Australian (or British counterpart) and themselves. They have no notion of the fundamentally important *reciprocity* inherent in the *common bonds* of a community and/or nation.

Our Lord stressed the importance of this when He stated: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."