



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:** "The animals in a barn may be all very well feed and comfortably lodged. But for all this they do not live in a democracy but in a dictatorship. It is the farmer, their master, who decides everything for these animals; what they shall do; how they shall be fed, what kind of lodging they shall have.

Is not democracy commonly presented to us as the contrary to dictatorship? And does not dictatorship consist in the exercise of absolute power, by a chief or a party, over all the population, leaving no right of choice whatsoever to the individual? Consequently, it can only be in the decreasing of the government's power in order to increase the power of the individual, that the move towards dictatorship can be arrested and true progress made towards an authentic democracy; towards the power of the people. "The people" is not a pure abstraction; it is composed of individuals. Thus it is the power of individuals which makes the power of the people."

– From a paper by "The Union of Electors", September 1962

**WITHOUT A STUDY OF MAMMON (MONEY) – HISTORY IS BUNK by Betty Luks:** It would appear behind the scenes Coalition members of parliament are in disarray and frantically grabbing at straws that might offer them lifelines for their political salvation. A more traitorous bunch against their fellow Australians it would be hard to find – except in the Labor camp.

My accusation of treachery may appear harsh to some but there are historical threads, which, when earnestly traced to their origins, lend support to this accusation. One or two of these threads came to light in David Flint's "History re-invented" *Opinion Column*, 13/9/07, but I feel sure Professor Flint would be amazed to hear that it is so.

The good professor took former PM Paul Keating to task for referring to Stanley Melbourne Bruce, as "that dreadful old fop who used to wear spats". In 1929, Bruce became the only Australian *Prime Minister* to lose his seat. Professor Flint thought that when Keating read Alan Woods' defence of Stanley Bruce in *The Australian*, 12/9/07, he would through embarrassment withdraw such comment.

To be fair, Bruce fought at Gallipoli, was twice wounded, invalided out of the services and awarded the Military Cross and the *Croix de Guerre avec Palme* by the French.

But what took my particular attention was Woods' reference to Bruce as a "figure of substance both in Australia and on the international stage, not the figure of fun of Labor mythology," but as "a man of his time and class: the prosperous merchant class". These words sent me scurrying to re-read

**In this issue:** • *Thought For The Week* • *Without A Study Of Mammon (Money) – History Is Bunk*  
• *Widening Chasm Of Distrust In Multicultural Belgium*

portions of Eric Butler's "The Enemy Within the Empire" and Jack Lang's "The Great Bust: The Depression of the Thirties".

Many Australians also see Bruce as one of Australia's 'noblest sons', but I cannot. This former PM set in motion many policies that have born much bitter fruit for my fellow Australians. Measured against the untold misery and tribulations his policies unleashed upon the people of this nation, Mr. Bruce's good deeds fade into insignificance.

**The Managerial Revolution:** Jack Lang wrote of the ruling elite of the time in "The Great Bust: The Depression of the Thirties". Under the heading of "Decay of Democracy" he wrote: "The Bruce-Page government introduced into this country the idea that the best form of government for a Conservative party was one in which the machinery was handed over to a multitude of Boards. These suited the philosophy and outlook of Prime Minister Stanley Melbourne Bruce ... he had the idea that the right people to run the government of the country were business leaders and experts."

"Bruce," wrote Lang, "could see no point in the Gettysburg Address, in which Lincoln had defined Democracy. He didn't really believe that the people were fit to govern themselves. (These) were his kind of people. Bankers, men of commerce, lawyers, accountants – they were the ideal managers. Bruce was one of the first exponents of the Managerial State."

**Eric Butler also recorded historical events of that time in "Enemy Within the Empire":** "Since 1924, the Commonwealth Bank has been under the direct domination of overseas interests. Prior to that time it was used to some extent on behalf of the Australian people. Until 1923 it was controlled by a Governor, Sir Denison Miller. The bank's outstanding act was to refuse to sacrifice the Australian people in 1920 at the instigation of Montagu Norman and his international banking friends... The private bankers in this country started to restrict the nation's credit supplies and depression threatened... Sir Denison Miller foiled this move by using the Commonwealth Bank to issue £23,000,000 between June and December of 1920. This was a threat to the private banks, who then curtailed their deflation policy..."

"In 1924 the Bruce-Page administration took the first step in making the Commonwealth Bank a Central Bank, controlled by the Bank of England and the Bank of International Settlements. This was in line with Mr. Norman's policy of a chain of central banks throughout the world."

**As to former PM Stanley Melbourne Bruce, Eric wrote:** "Soon after the emasculation of the Commonwealth Bank, Mr. Bruce left for London, where he wine and dined with his financial friends. I have no hesitation in saying that no man has betrayed his own nation more to International Financial interests than "Australia's Noblest Son"; his record on behalf of the financiers since 1924 should be familiar to every loyal Australian... To make the Money Power supreme, Mr. Bruce got the Financial Agreement incorporated as part of the Constitution. This Agreement paved the way for the formation of the Loan Council to control all government borrowings."

**Jack Lang noted:** "Few Australians who entered their local polling booth on 17th November 1928 to record their verdicts on the record of the Bruce-Page Government realised that they were also closing the chapter of real self-government for their State Parliaments. They didn't realise that when they placed a simple cross against the word YES on the separate ballot paper to insert Clause 105A into the Constitution, they were sacrificing the sovereign powers of the States..."

**Keating and the Commonwealth Bank:** While Mr. Bruce betrayed his people to the parasitical rapacious system of Mammon in the 1920-30s, let us not forget former PM Paul Keating's role in the sell off of the now gutted people's bank, the Commonwealth Bank, to private banking interests, and the betrayal of whatever remains of financial sovereignty left to the nation, to the hungry wolves of International Finance.

Let's not forget, the original Commonwealth Bank was a creature of the Scullin *Labor* government! Mr. Paul Keating proved himself to be a different type of Labor politician to such patriots as Jack

Lang, former Premier of NSW who fought for (but lost) the Government Savings Bank of New South Wales, and King O'Malley MHR who fought the battle for the instituting of the Commonwealth Bank. Both men took on very powerful shadowy forces in the dark world of finance.

It is many a year since ANY politician – no matter which camp – fought for the sovereignty of the people of the Commonwealth of Australia – former senator Paul McLean ("Bankers and Bastards") being the exception.

**Essential books for ALL Australians:** "The Enemy Within the Empire" by Eric D. Butler; "The Story of the Commonwealth Bank" by D.J. Amos. Send for a list of the many books on the subject.

**WIDENING CHASM OF DISTRUST IN MULTICULTURAL BELGIUM:** Is this the trickle that will in time lead on to a flood of break-ups within 'multicultural' nations? And the article is from a 'politically correct' source at that! "The Big Question," asks, John Litchfield, <http://news.independent.co.uk>, 11/9/07: Is Belgium on the brink of breaking apart, and would it matter if it did? Why are we asking this now?

Three months after national elections, Belgium still has no government, only a caretaker administration. Attempts to agree to a coalition have tumbled into a widening chasm of distrust between the country's two main language communities, the Dutch-speakers (roughly 60 per cent) and the French-speakers (roughly 40 per cent).

The core issue is the perennial thorn-bush of Belgian politics: the future of Belgium itself. Even the relatively moderate, mainstream Dutch-speaking, or Flemish, political parties want the country's loose, federal structure to be unravelled further. French-speaking parties believe that this would hasten the end of the Kingdom of Belgium after 177 years.

The immediate problem is one of personality and trust. For 30 years, Belgium has had a procession of Dutch-speaking prime ministers who could – just about – command the respect of both communities. Despite the efforts of the head of state, King Albert, no such person has emerged to resolve the new crisis.

**Is this just another false alarm?** A "quickie" divorce of Belgium into two separate, sovereign states is unlikely. If nothing else, the country is pinned together by the conundrum of Brussels, a mostly French-speaking city which stands (just) within the Dutch-speaking northern half of the country. In the longer run, a sour but peaceful separation, on the Czech and Slovak model, can no longer be discounted. In a recent opinion poll, 43 per cent of Dutch-speakers said they would prefer to live in an independent state.

**Why this seemingly endless argument?** Belgium is a country divided historically, linguistically, culturally and economically. It straddles the fault-line between northern (Germanic) and southern (Latin) ethnic and cultural sub-continents in Europe. The French-speakers in Brussels and the southern half of the country were once social and political top-dogs and sought to impose their language and culture on the mostly rural north. Until the 1950s, the south also had most of the country's wealth-producing industry.

Since the 1970s the economy of the Dutch-speaking north has boomed and the economy of the French-speaking south has suffered the fate of heavy industrial Britain and France. (Imagine the north-south economic and social divide in England, reinforced by the fact that people either side of the Trent speak different languages. Add chips and mayonnaise and chocolate and 400 kinds of beer, and you have a cartoon version of Belgium.)

After endless constitutional tinkering, Belgium has been divided six ways into the regions of Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels and parallel "governments" for the three not quite overlapping "language communities" (Dutch, French and a small minority of German-speakers). With what remains of the national, or federal, government, that makes seven different parliaments and administrations to govern a country of 10m people.

The Flemish regional and language governments and parliaments have, in fact, been merged into one, making only six sets of Belgian legislators and bureaucrats. Arguably, this merger has already created the embryo of a separate Flemish state. Such Byzantine structures mean that French and Dutch-speaking Belgians now live almost entirely back-to-back lives. All the country's institutions, from political parties to the media to the Red Cross, are segregated on linguistic lines. Only the monarchy, the football team, the diplomatic service, the national courts and the military are still fully Belgian.

**What's caused this crisis?** Many Flemings have complained for years that they would be much wealthier if they did not have to lug around the "bag of stones" which is the Walloon economy. Unemployment in Flanders is 9.3 per cent. Unemployment in Wallonia is 17.6 per cent. In Brussels, with its heavy immigrant populations, it is 22 per cent. Something like 15 per cent of the income of Wallonia comes from "subsidies" from the taxes of the Flemish-speaking north.

Most of Flemish politics leans to the right (and parts of it very far to the right). Most of Walloon politics leans to the Left (and some of it very far to the Left). After carving several national coalitions out of such unlikely material, the liberal Flemish Prime Minister, Guy Verhofstad, was the big loser in the elections three months ago.

The great winner was Yves Leterme, head of the Flemish Christian Democrat party (CD and V). He had campaigned for renewed shrinkage of the Belgian state and for more fiscal and economic autonomy for Flanders. Mr Leterme wants to give the Flanders and Wallonia and Brussels "regional" governments more power over taxation, social security, economic policy, justice, immigration and nationality.

The main French-speaking parties – especially Joelle Milquet, head of the centrists CDH party (ex-Christian Democrats) – have refused these demands. Mme Milquet has infuriated even moderate Flemings by making demands of her own. She wants a majority French-speaking part of the outer Brussels suburbs transferred from Flanders to Wallonia. This would connect Brussels geographically to Wallonia and open up the possibility of the French-speakers "capturing" Brussels in some future split in the country.

**Are there any hidden agendas?** The political scandal surrounding the Dutroux paedophile murders in Wallonia has reinforced Flemish prejudices against a supposedly corrupt and lazy south of the country. The continued success of the overtly xenophobic and anti-immigrant Vlaams Belang party in Flanders has reinforced Walloon prejudices against a supposedly authoritarian and fascist-leaning north. Support for some Flemings for Nazism during the German occupation was another factor in the collapse of "community" relations after the war. (That was more than fifty years ago!...ed)

### **So is Belgium falling apart?**

Yes –

- \* There is no new government in sight despite three months of negotiations since national elections
- \* 43 per cent of people in the wealthier Dutch-speaking north of the country want a separate state
- \* The existing balkanised political system means that Flemish and Walloon Belgians are already *de facto* separate nations

No –

- \* Politicians on both sides of the language barrier expect that a deal will be reached – eventually
- \* 70 per cent of all Belgians and a crushing majority of French-speakers oppose a split
- \* The economically struggling, French-speaking south is beginning to recover, which could ease tensions