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The Price of Freedom is Eternal Vigilance

Vol. 61 No. 47

28th November 2025

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Why the Cat Will Never Go Back in the Bag! By Neville Archibald

I see myself, sometimes, as that poor cat who has been in a bag, suffered the consequences and will never go back. I know what awaits those still in the bag. Those rounded up, caught and prepared. It is a sobering thought!

When he is let out, he literally goes like a cut cat. He scratches all and sundry about him. He hides for days under a chair or in a quiet place while he digests this new occurrence. He is forever different from that point on. Does he remain wild and upset, or does the removal quieten him down so he becomes docile and tractable.

I have known such cats, for we had farm cats of many sorts. Depending on your timing, they could be subdued and become lazy, content! They could also turn out to be totally unpredictable and harbour a serious grudge for many years. You had curtailed their rights in an unimaginable way, some remembered and continued to be scratchy, intemperate and unpredictable right into their old age.

This is why we have that line about putting the cat back in the bag! It is based on real events and observations. A little crude maybe, a little funny perhaps (not for the cat!) and meant to be a story illustrating the futility trying the same thing twice, especially when the cat is aware of the result (or can associate it with pain).

We human animals are no different at a base level. We are also conditioned by life events in a similar way. We touch a hot stove and learn, we poke at a bull ant's nest, and get stung, we attempt something stupid and life teaches us lessons or crafts our knowledge to make us alter our attempts until we succeed. We are intelligent and can hold longer memories than our poor fellow cat and in this way, we make progress (or are supposed to).

Each time we are confronted by basic lessons we are supposed to learn, the

more complex the lesson, the harder it can be to learn. If there are outside noises coming in at the same time, then like learning to play an instrument in a room full of noise, you may never hear the real lesson well enough to hear your own mistakes. It is only when you are on your own and you can hear yourself clearly that you get the full reality of what you are doing wrong or right.

Life is no different.

I have spent this past year writing of things that concern me, of observations I and others have made about our lives, the challenges set before us as a community, as a Nation. Even across the world scene, as it is all now connected, whether we like it or not. The cat and the bag is entirely appropriate. Once bitten twice shy, would also be appropriate; (and you could say that of the person trying to put the cat back in the bag for further treatment too, once scratched twice as careful next time). In a political sense, those who would be our masters, have had plenty of practice. We on the other hand, seem to be caught up in the noise and demands of everyday life and our memories don't seem to hold long enough to make the connection between bag and result. Many still go through those motions just the same. For it continues to work on those who have become comforted by the caring feeling of being wrapped securely and fed assurances. We need to learn! We need to act! We need to stop allowing those same people to do the same thing on that tired loop of party politics.

Last week Treasurer Jim Chalmers released a press statement and delivered an address where he was proud to point out how much wages had risen under his guidance. It was a huff on your fingernails then rub them on your shirt-front sort of moment. Look at me. The article is headed:

'19 November 2025 Longest run of annual real wages growth in almost a decade' 'New data released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics shows that annual real wages have now grown for eight consecutive quarters.'

Now I cannot argue with statistics, but my senses tell me, all is not being said here!. I know that my real life wages have not altered (maybe it is just poor me) but I also know that my food bill is going up far faster than I can keep up with. My Government charges and bills: rates, taxes, electricity (Mr Bowen), fuel etc, never go downwards, in fact all my bills have continued to climb faster than my wage.

So why then the gloat? Is it a gloat? Are we supposed to take this as a reason to thank him? To possibly even (and I shudder) re-elect.

Back in 20th October 2023. Mr Chalmers said much the same thing, and even Labor's beloved ABC did a 'misleading' fact check article where they said,

'So, in real terms, average weekly total earnings slipped by 2 per cent in Labor's first year.'

And

"Earnings have gone backwards, it's as simple as that," Professor Hayward said.
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-10-20/fact-check-3700-better-off-per-year-jim-chalmers/102986574>

So you can see why I won't climb back into that bag again. Why many others also are wary. Wary enough, I hope, to think about this and the myriad other presentations that fall into this, (and to use the ABC's word) 'misleading' category. I am reminded so often of Mark Twain who popularised the British Prime Minister, Benjamin Disraeli's quote *"There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics,"*

I am guessing, that as a politician, Disraeli would know best, the uses to which they were put.

Don't suspect for a moment that Mr Chalmers is alone in this. His counterpart in the UK is suffering at the moment as well as many others.

'Rachel Reeves is the UK's most unpopular chancellor in recorded history, according to a new poll.'

A recent poll has found that 71% of the British public are dissatisfied with her performance, only days before her second budget.

'It comes a year after her first Budget where she hiked taxes – but promised it was a one-off, and that economic growth was on the horizon.'

'Since then, the British economy has struggled to take off. It grew by just 0.1% in the third quarter of this year.'

https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/rachel-reeves-has-become-the-uks-most-unpopular-chancellor-on-record_uk_6919c2a9e4b0191be9d5787d

The western world has many of these moments. Australia has plenty in other forms, along many lines of thought on policy. When 'selling' a policy to us, statistics are often organised to show what the policy makers want. The public can often see it for the ruse it is and disparagingly remark on it in less than enthusiastic ways.

What the public are seeing and what they actually do about it though, are sometimes at odds with what probably should be done. You cannot deny that most are fed up and it is getting harder for these spin doctors to assure them that the cosy wrap of hessian is not as prickly as it seems, less are falling for it. The disconnect here is the crawling under the couch and hiding from it. There is no scratching back or looking for a new home for their vote. No they continue to lap up the milk given to them, it is almost like they would not feel comfortable under any but the hessian blanket of the party.

As with the spin on wages, the same could be said of the US, where despite the 'savings' made by DOGE (Department of Government Efficiency) the

people of the US are still not seeing any real time relief in their lives. Instead, the creation of division on many fronts has escalated tensions and put other problems at the forefront. The Government and its spin doctors are offering a variety of hessian bags to soothe this rise, and many are beginning to notice that same prickly feeling in all those attempts. Is it any wonder that people are losing trust in government and the establishment. The real lived life experience is becoming further and further removed from what is promised or spoken about. Governments are condemning those who speak about this, as being divisive, when it is the very actions of government that start it, continue it and divide us even further.

The next part of this article is not so much about performance or inefficiency, as it is about the final outcome. The Australian Bureau of Meteorology has been criticised by all and sundry for its cost blowout in revamping and hardening of its interactive website. There is a lot of attempted point-scoring involved with inflated costs and probably not the full story nor the full cost really coming out. Coalition members are blaming Labor, and Labor are reminding us that it all started with the Turnbull (Liberal) government. The cost, going from \$4 million to \$96 million is good for creating ooohs and aaaahs, but it is not realistic. The final cost of such a revamp was probably always expected to be higher, though who really knows how high. The revamp itself, more importantly has not yet finished as there are significant teething problems within it. What is important in this is the way these 'versions' of the truth are used to distract, divide and disguise.

They distract us from the more serious problems of digital ID, <https://blog.alor.org/fighting-albanese-labor-government-s-digital-id-billby-james-reed> Treaty (providing the UN a way to push their international intentions on us). See: <https://alor.org/Storage/Library/Lee%20I%20-%20Aboriginal%20Land%20Rights%20and%20Australia%20Sovereignty.htm>

They divide us into warring factions as we back our favourite polities in the argument.

They also, and probably most importantly with the BOM, alter existing information and put it in another form. I suggest it will change how we look at 'climate', due to variations in presentation and access to graphs and even the colours on the charts.

A change like this may seem innocuous at first, but when trying to compare old with new, unless you are a seasoned forecast watcher, any 'climate difference' may be harder to spot. In this way are many statistics disguised.

In 2011, when the bureau transitioned to the new Australian Climate Observation Network, surface air temperatures system (used for calculating the National temperature data) removed 57 stations and replaced them with

36 others. There are some that say this has altered the average temperature recorded, rather than actually experienced. Along with replacement of recording instruments and methods (mercury or alcohol thermometers with electronic probes that cycle far quicker)

I believe this will lead to larger error adjustments. In scientific terms, these adjustments may well be seen as part of the warming supposedly experienced. It is a hard thing to say with certainty one way or the other, but given the hype and tax potential, coupled with my lack of trust for the people who promote these 'statistics', I remain a sceptic.

<https://climatechangethefacts.org.au/2022/01/26/australias-broken-temperature-record-part-1/>

<https://climatechangethefacts.org.au/2023/11/26/removing-colour-for-a-sick-story/>

When people lose trust in Government, and the bodies that represent them, because of these aforementioned examples (and many more like them) is it any wonder we become timid of any change. When the science used to direct policy becomes the focus of attention and questioning occurs, then reasonable steps to prove and disprove by scientific method should be enough to dispel poor conclusions. If this cannot be settled satisfactorily then the debate is not over and policy should be put on hold. If those questioning the science predictions are silenced, sacked or just called names for their efforts, then we must come to the conclusion that something is being hidden. If policy still goes ahead, it becomes even more important to look carefully at the end result it will bring. Usually it is more control over the individual! Get used to that prickly feel of hessian.

As a continuation of who we are, the League of Rights second policy point is:

To defend the free Society and its institutions -- private property, consumer control of production through genuine competitive enterprise, and limited decentralised government.

I guess the first question becomes, what is a free society?

I see it as the right to exist as a free individual within that group we call Australian. Based on our history and culture we have advanced to a point where we have expectations of how we are to be treated and what we can do without impinging on the lives of others. This has grown from a Christian perspective and gives this power back to the individual under godly terms. It recognises that man himself is not the arbiter of our decisions but that we are beholden to a far higher order than us, a concept that allows for no earthly corruption to take hold. Our laws and conventions have been developed this way over centuries and have served us well to this point.

Further reading and discussion on this entire concept, should be the focus of anyone serious about the direction we are travelling as that 'free society'. The following is an excerpt from: *The Essential Christian Heritage*, by E.D. Butler:

"Real freedom is only possible through a knowledge and application of truth in all man's activities. An essential part of that truth is the law of love as outlined by Christ."

"The Christian Law of Love is not a mere piece of sloppy sentimentalism, but a law partaking of Truth. The logic of the Christian Commandments is that the individual must first establish correct relationships with his fellows. It should also be noted that he is told to love his neighbour as himself. A man who has neither love for God nor respect for himself, has no pride in his own people, his own country and its traditions, must always reflect that attitude in his approach to his fellows.

The fundamental problem of all civilisations has been the relationship of the group to the individual. While the Christian conception of freedom led to the freeing of the individual from the domination of the group, it also balanced this with the conception of the individual accepting personal responsibility for how he used this freedom. Freedom must be used in conformity with God's laws. Inalienable rights were held on lease from God, not from the state or governments.'

Eric goes on to talk about this and the development of the laws we have lived and prospered under to get to this point in our history. These are not things to be swept aside casually and replaced by those who believe man is his own God. We must be careful what we use as that anvil on which we forge our society.
https://alor.org/Storage/Library/PDF/Butler_ED-Essential_Christian_Heritage.pdf

Because society cannot arise from a vacuum, the roots of it's foundation must be discussed without prejudice (without pre-judging the reasons from your current perspective). The growth of any organism, be it man or his associations, are done from the soil they come from. To imagine otherwise or to try and transplant their intentions into our current soil will only contaminate their actions, the reasons for that growth. Careful reading and conclusion drawing must go along with this study.

In the first few sentences of Ted Rocks, Religious Discussion: he says:

'Social Credit, or society's credit, is that body of knowledge, and know-how, inherited from countless past generations, contributed to by equally countless and largely unknown individuals lost in the mists of time. Each generation has built on what was inherited to discover new applications of old discoveries and inventions. The sum of knowledge and know-how so available to the present generation becomes our Social Credit.

It will continue to expand to the extent that the mind of man is free from external restraint.'

https://alor.org/Storage/Library/Rock_E-Religious_Discussion.htm

The last line in bold, reminds us that to keep the improvements we have made, we must be vigilant. We must hold the reins of our society and direct it's progress as we see fit. This responsibility must be grounded in an accurate understanding of who we are and who we wish to be. That is both our reward and our penance. To ignore it and not participate at all is to be that poor domestic cat.

Private property allows us to have a secure base to work from. We can be truly independent in our actions and thoughts. We can set ourselves up to pass this ability on to our children and theirs.

Consumer control of production also allows us to be the driver of what is needed. By our money vote (our ability to purchase or not, what we want rather than what someone else decides we need) we can control excessive or damaging production, we can direct it's development (as long as we are astute enough to see through clever advertising propaganda).

And finally **limited decentralised government**. The ability to control something, depends on how close you are to it. If it is so far removed, or so big that it cannot be adequately controlled, then you risk losing, not only control, but the end destination. It becomes ripe for corruption and/or the building of empires within it. I think we have seen just how unaccountable our governments and their departments have become.

The very existence of freedom of information laws (or the fact that we need these to make our governing bodies transparent in their dealings) suggests to me that we have already lost the very basis of our control. Without knowing what is being done and by whom, we cannot even cry foul, let alone correct what is wrong.

With Government as small as possible and directly accountable to a local electorate, there should be no, 'that is a party decision, I have no say other than in the party room'. The candidate would have no loyalty to any other but himself and his electorate.

In all that we do when looking to fight for our freedoms, we must first understand clearly who it is we are. If we cannot answer that easily, then I suggest further reading and discussion must be at the top of our 'to do' list. If you are not aiming at a target, you could very well shoot yourself in the foot. Please don't be the one who does that.

To prompt you to think, I will include the first page of a book written sometime in the middle of last century (it seems old to say it that way, but around 1950-60) called *What Road Australia?*, by William Stones, much of it still fits with what we are seeing today. The whole read is only 50 odd pages and easily digestible. As food for thought, a reader new or old to this discussion is sure to find plenty to whet their appetite further.

https://alor.org/Storage/Library/PDF/Stones_W-What_Road_Australia.pdf

'World conditions are tragic and have been so for many years.

The two world wars aggravated these conditions, but were not primarily responsible for them; they were the culminating symptoms of inevitable economic crises.

Before the first world war there were serious social and industrial troubles all over the world and after it the greatest depression in history.

Going back to the beginning of the industrial era and following through to the present time we find a regular sequence of booms and slumps, mushroom prosperities and financial disasters, accompanied by a constant condition of poverty and misery for the majority of the people.

These things happened, not in the backward nations, but in the highly advanced ones, and in a period when the capacity to produce abundantly was growing greater and more effective year by year and at a much faster rate than that of the population.

Conditions such as these should have ensured complete economic security and prosperity for all citizens of these advanced nations but, instead, they produced the phenomenon of what has come to be widely known as "poverty amidst plenty."

Surely this is conclusive proof that our economic system was and is functioning very badly and that vital reform is necessary to keep pace with industrial capacity, the march of science and the needs of the people.

Why poverty and want should exist in the midst of actual wealth and abundance and in an economy capable of producing much greater wealth and abundance is a problem that economists, reformers and politicians have been trying to solve for more than one hundred years.

If the problem were academic only or a mental exercise for economists we could dismiss it. But, in truth, it is the most vital problem of our age, the modern riddle of the Sphinx which we must either solve or perish.

It involves all fundamental freedoms, all forms of government, all ways of life. Around it centre the major questions of employment, living conditions, social security, housing, industry, exports, markets and war.'

Stones goes on to discuss, Parliaments and Parties, how Independents get the short shift, Labor, Liberal and our system under which we live. He also then proposes a solution and why it is needed and the principles behind it. To create a world we want to see, our systems must allow us to do so. At present they lack that ability and no amount of manipulation under the current one will change that. ***