

Australia: Four Decades – Full Circle

Travelling along with me on the journey outlined in this book, was this great country we call Australia.

As this book developed, it became clear to me that human action by Australians, in response to good and bad political policies, has created an interesting case study.

Australia entered the 1970s with a sense of adventure, fresh from a resource boom, nickel and iron ore, with a sense of exuberance. Our spirits were completely flattened in the 70s as we were firstly Whitlamized⁽¹⁾ and subsequently Fraserized,⁽²⁾ so looking back on the 70s I regard it as a lost decade.⁽³⁾

Surprisingly we were rescued by the Hawke⁽⁴⁾ / Keating⁽⁴⁾ / Howard⁽⁴⁾ eras when policies meticulously devised by a small and ignored group within the Fraser Government, called the 'Dries'⁽⁵⁾ were picked up by the newly elected Hawke Government. We then saw a remarkable resurgence of the nation as a result of deregulatory reforms being enacted.

These gains are possibly being squandered as we reach the end of the first decade of Century 21. (This theme covered in later chapters.)

Australia may change, for better or for worse, from time to time, we understand this, but many Australians are now looking on with alarm as future generations are being plundered and burdened with debt.

The 'Dries' were inspired by a remarkable individual called C.R. "Bert" Kelly.⁽⁶⁾

Where is the modern day group of 'Dries' who are developing policies that may be found useful by future governments? Politicians will again grasp the concept that a productive population with incentives to produce, can really stimulate the economy in a far more sustainable fashion than loading more layers of debt and tax onto an increasingly cynical band of Australian voters and taxpayers.

Who can they look to for leadership?

ENDNOTES:

1. Gough Whitlam, Prime Minister, December 5, 1972–November 11, 1975.
2. Malcolm Fraser, Prime Minister, November 11, 1975–March 11, 1983.
3. The ASX All Ordinaries Index was 408 in June, 1970 and at 410, virtually the same, in 1979.
4. Bob Hawke, PM, March 11, 1983–December 20, 1991; Paul Keating, PM, December 20, 1991–March 11, 1996; John Howard, PM, March 11, 1996–December 3, 2007.
5. John Hyde's book 'Dry': In Defence of Economic Freedom <http://www.mannkal.org/bookshop.php>
6. Refer Bert Kelly, Appendix www.heroicmisadventures.com