

## We The People

Program 72

Omelets and Wagons



I have called today's narrative Omelettes and Wagons and if that sounds strange then hopefully in a few minutes you will make sense of it. In fact Omelettes and Wagons may be the most important two words for Australia's future and certainly the Gold Coast.

One of the biggest dinner table debates at present is the situation in Australia regarding welfare and all the people who are reliant on the public purse for support. I believe most Australians want to work and earn a respectable living which builds self worth and is a noble thing to do. After a war having a job is a real privilege but as time passes and peace prevails we get complacent and lazy and a malaise sets into our communities. I believe this concern is well founded as the cost of welfare rises and more people expect a hand out who otherwise shouldn't have one. The wonderful thing about Australia is that we have enough money to help those in genuine need and so we should. However getting on the government welfare wagon now seems to be a sport and some believe it's their right and not simply a privilege. Welfare in its many forms should be reserved for those in genuine need and that includes people out of work for a time to help them through a difficult patch. Some may need longer term help and in the case of the proposed national disability scheme it will cost about \$22 billion each year with one in 20 Australians receiving a benefit. Once welfare schemes are in place then some become addicted to the benefit and getting them off it is very difficult thus the term welfare state. As a nation we need to be careful that those on welfare are not automatically demonized and affordable tight controls should be applied to ensure people are not on a scheme because they want a free ride. These benefits and schemes are like scrambling the eggs for an omelette because if you get it wrong it's impossible to unscramble the omelette and the country is left with welfare machinery it can't afford.

Now paying for all this welfare falls to the tax payer who doesn't want that money wasted. Put simply, we have to live within our means and we must demand that of politicians. So this can be likened to a wagon being pulled along with some people pulling the wagon and some folk riding inside. Those pulling the wagon are the tax payers and those in the wagon are the people on welfare. Some deserve their place in the wagon and some do not. I guess given a choice we would all like a ride in the wagon and in a way you can earn that right when having paid Australian taxes all your life and you finally retire. A percentage of the population will always be passengers in the wagon and that's ok if they deserve their seat but what if the amount of people in the wagon exceeds the amount of people pulling. Indeed we reach a point where we are so out of balance that those still pulling the wagon are simply over loaded. This is a fact that no amount of bleeding hearts can overcome nor can the self righteous explain away and choose to simply dismiss the commercial realities as though the balance sheet doesn't exist.

President Regan prophetically said.... "The days of democracy are numbered once the belly takes command of the head. When the less affluent feel the urge to break a commandment and begin to covet that which their more affluent neighbours possess, they are tempted to use their votes to obtain instant satisfaction. Then equal opportunity at the starting line becomes an extended guarantee of at least a tie at the finish of the race. Under the euphemism "the greatest good for the greatest number," we destroy a system which has accomplished just that and move toward the managed economy which strangles freedom and mortgages generations yet to come". We need a government which will ensure there are not too many riding in the wagon and that we are not faced with unscrambling the omelette of welfare. There are too many aboard the wagon and it's not fair to those straining at the yoke. "A government that robs Peter to pay Paul can always depend on Paul's vote" How on earth do you unscramble that omelette. **Until next time this is Kent Bayley**