Newspapers by ancestry
https://www.newspapers.com/image/122671976

Printed on Feb 19, 2020

TOMORROW: INTO THE 90s SPECIAL

The Sydney Morning Herald

Late Edition | 50 cents* | 70 Pages | No 47,590 | First Published 1831 | Editorial 282 2822; General 282 2833; Classifieds 282 1122 | Tuesday, March 13, 1990

20-PAGE LIFTOUT TODAY

YOUR CAREER CHOICES

PM wants control of US base

By PILITA CLARK

PERTH: Australia has told the United States it wants to take over and operate the North West Cape naval communications station near Exmouth in northern Western Australia, but there are doubts over the economic and strategic value of such a move for Australia.

The announcement in Perth yesterday by the Prime Minister is clearly aimed at winning back the support of the anti-nuclear movement, particularly in WA where the US base has been a long-running source of dispute.

It also appears to contradict the conventions that governments refrain from making major announcements during election campaigns.

Mr Hawke's bid to win back support in WA coincides with the announcement by the Democrats yesterday that they will direct preferences away from sitting MPs in that State, jeopardising Labor's chances of retaining six marginal seats (Report, page 6).

Anti-nuclear activists reacted sceptically to the move because even if the base was controlled here, Australia would still be denied access to the secret US communications transmitted there.

The Minister for Defence, Mr Beazley, said yesterday: "We would still stand in this facility, as we do in others, prepared to transmit encrypted messages of the United States."

He could not say what would happen to the so-called "secure areas" on the base, in which only US defence personnel are permitted, saying that such matters would have to be negotiated with the US.

There were also questions about why Australia should now foot the bill for the 27-year-old base — which is primarily used for communicating with submerged submarines — when US use of the base will be unchanged.

Opponents of foreign bases have long argued that North West Cape makes Australia a nuclear target, since it could assist in giving the US a first-strike nuclear capability.

They also say it is unfair for Australia to host such a base, virtually rent-free, when our defence officials are denied access to the coded messages and "secure areas".

Senator Jo Vallentine (Ind, WA) said yesterday: "The reality is that nothing significant has changed and that North West Cape will cost Australia far more to run when we don't need it."

Mr Hawke made the surprise announcement during a visit with Mr Beazley to the Garden Island naval base outside Perth for the induction ceremony for the HMAS Westralia, a recently acquired British fleet auxiliary vessel.

Continued Page 8
PAGES 6, 7, 8 and 9: Election '90. PAGE 16: Editorial.

CAMPAIGN NOTEBOOK
ROBERT HAUPT

Why Stone says we're all doomed

I have just come down from a mountain-top, bearing tablets inscribed not by Moses but by another severe prophet: John Stone, the Sage of Buderim.

Hawke and Peacock may promise prosperity; Keating (when he speaks at all) may decry talk of recession; Haines may dangle the keys to the tart shop all she likes. None of that impresses my Sage.

His eyrie on the edge of Buderim — a picturebook town, all orchids and frangipani — is high above Maroochydore on Queensland's Sunshine Coast. From there, you and I would see only the sea, the sea and the deep blue sky. Sage Stone, however, sees a storm — dangerous, unavoidable, imminent. Since he paints in colours no other politician is using at the moment, and since he is an accredited economic seer, let me lay his picture before you: at least it gives you something to think about, disagree with and — most important — subsequently disprove.

The recession that lurked within the last Budget was now under way, said the Sage over a cup of tea. Dole numbers were rising sharply. It would be surprising if unemployment hadn't risen in February. Even in prosperous Buderim, workers were being asked to take their holidays to avoid being laid off.

So far, so bad. But wasn't this, I asked him, evidence that all was going to plan? "Look," he replied impatiently, "I've been trying to get the media interested in this for three months. I really believe, (slowing down to a mere 150 words a minute for emphasis) WHOEVER IS IN OFFICE AFTER THIS ELECTION, come June they are going to be dealing with this scenario."

In the garden, the sun was shining and birds were singing. The Sage returned to full speed. "Inflation still running at 8 per cent. Unemployment quite definitely rising, and perhaps rising quite fast, I don't know.

"Balance of payments? Heavy deficit. Even on the most favourable measurement, we will still be running a deficit of $12 billion a year. I personally think that will be a very optimistic outcome — it will probably be well above that — but, all right, say the deficit comes down to $12 billion."

The Sage paused, as if overcome by this attack of animism.

Continued Page 9

ELECTION '90

Mortgage gloom: fixed loan rates up

By KAREN MALEY
Banking Writer

The Federal Government's hopes for an imminent fall in home loan interest rates were set back yesterday when the Commonwealth Bank and the State Bank of NSW raised interest rates on new fixed-rate home loans by more than half a percentage point.

Both banks have lifted the interest rate on their popular five-year fixed-rate home loans from 14.9 per cent to 15.5 per cent. The increase will mean, for a person seeking a $100,000 loan, an increase in monthly repayments of about $50.

The rise in rates reflects the recent increase in longer-term interest rates, which in turn reflects the jump in overseas interest rates and concerns about Australia's inflation outlook.

While the increase does not affect the majority of home owners on variable-interest mortgages, it will be seized upon by the Opposition to refute claims by the Government that interest rates are on the way down.

The managing director of the State Bank of NSW, Mr John O'Neill, said the rise in the fixed home loan rate reflected the jump in longer-term market interest rates.

"Funding is a little more expensive than it was a few weeks ago," he said.

The Commonwealth Bank's head of retail banking, Mr Murray Wengarth, said: "The bank is still providing fixed-interest home loans at 14.9 per cent, but the product has been restructured to take account of the additional volumes that have been written in recent times."

The Commonwealth's 14.9 per cent fixed-rate loan was so popular that more than 60 per cent of the bank's new housing approvals were in that form. The bank will now offer two rates — 14.9 per cent for first-home buyers and 15.5 per cent for other borrowers.

Several weeks ago, the Advance Bank lifted its five-year fixed-rate home loan rate from 14.95 per cent to 15.5 per cent.

A spokesman for the Treasurer, Mr Keating, said he was not aware of the banks' decision.

The Beaumonts, Kirste and Joanne: the mystery may be over

Jane, Grant and Arnna Beaumont … Evidence may explain how they disappeared without trace in January 1966.

Kirste Gordon … disappeared from Adelaide Oval.

Joanne Ratcliffe … last seen with Kirste in 1973.

By PETER HUGHES

ADELAIDE: After 24 years shrouded in mystery, the disappearance of the Beaumont children may be close to a solution following evidence given to an Adelaide court yesterday.

A witness, known only as Mr B, told Adelaide Magistrates Court that a man charged with the murders of two Adelaide teenagers had said he had killed the three children.

Mr B, who is from Sydney, also said the man, the 44-year-old Adelaide bookkeeper Bevan Spencer von Einem, had told him he had killed two other children who disappeared from a football match in Adelaide.

Mr B is appearing at a hearing to determine whether von Einem should stand trial for the murder of Alan Arthur Barnes, 17, in June 1979, and Mark Langley, 18, between February 26 and March 9, 1982.

Von Einem is serving a life sentence for the 1983 murder of a 15-year-old Adelaide boy, Richard Kelvin, one of a number of young men alleged to have been abducted and murdered in a similar way.

A sketch of the man sought after the Beaumonts vanished.

Nine-year-old Jane Beaumont, her sister Arnna, 7, and their brother Grant, 4, disappeared without trace from Glenelg Beach on January 26, 1966.

On August 25, 1973, 11-year-old Joanne Ratcliffe and a companion, Kirste Gordon, 4, disappeared during a football match at Adelaide Oval.

The two cases are among the most baffling unsolved abductions in Australia.

At yesterday's hearing, Mr B, who has been granted immunity from prosecution, said that a few weeks before the murder of Alan Barnes, von Einem had told him about the Beaumont children and two children von Einem had picked up from a football match.

Von Einem had said he had picked the Beaumonts up at Glenelg Beach, "connected them up", "did some brilliant surgery on them" and one had died. He had dumped the bodies at Moana or Myponga, south of Adelaide.

"He also told me he picked up two children at the football," the witness said.

Mr B — who has told the court he was with von Einem the night Alan Barnes was picked up, but was not involved in Barnes's death — said he had been talking to police about von Einem and von Einem's activities since a few days after the abduction and murder of Barnes in 1979.

The detective he had given his first statement to then, but not "all the information I knew", did not seem to believe anything he said.

One reason for giving more information to another detective four years later, but not telling everything, was to "stop the murders happening".

After therapy for drug abuse in Sydney last year, when he had spoken to counsellors about how the von Einem matters had affected him and had been advised to "offload as much as I could", he had told police about the Beaumont children.

Mr B told the court von Einem had not told him where the Beaumont children had been taken when they were alive. He had been told they had been taken to Moana or Myponga when they were dead.

South Australian police have not completed a search of the Myponga Reservoir, south of Adelaide, where they are believed to be looking for any remains of the children.

COLUMN 8

□ A CANLEY VALE reader has a Janice Crosio election sign in his front yard. Last week, a man approached him and asked, in broken English, "Your house for sale? How much?"

□ A PENNANT HILLS estate agent had a small celebration on Friday afternoon because the road works on Pennant Hills Road, which have been "going on for the last six years", were finally completed. He saw the last section of concrete being laid on Friday morning and hoped this meant the end of the noise and the dust. Yesterday morning, he saw the same stretch of concrete near his office being dug up again.

□ *ELECTION fever. An advertisement for drivers in The Daily Mirror yesterday said they must "pass written and political tests designed to assess their proficiency as drivers".*

□ AN EPPING reader phoned her brother in California to check that all was well after the recent earthquake there. He is a fireman and told his sister that at the moment the quake hit, he had been teaching a course in earthquake preparedness. Once he had assured himself that his students were safely taking cover under their desks, he managed to laugh about it.

□ A CHATSWOOD reader bought two cheap raffia doormats some time ago. One of them was exposed to the rain for some time and hardly used. At the weekend she discovered that this mat was covered with black toadstools with white hair. She moved the mat further outside into the rain and claims that they grew about six centimetres in two hours. Upon looking at the second mat more closely, she noticed spores in it and is expecting more toadstools soon. She is concerned that this type of toadstool may be harmful to the environment because she assumes the mats were imported.

□ *HANS HEERING, of Neutral Bay, discovered one of his clocks was still on daylight saving time at the weekend. He then realised he'd changed 20 clocks around his home since daylight saving ended: five clock radios; three watches; three wall clocks; two heater clocks; two car clocks; one microwave clock; one VCR clock; one house alarm clock; one fax machine clock; and one on his boat.*

□ TOM YOUNG, of Balgowlah, had an old friend from Canada visit him for the first time recently. They were both pilots in World War II. They were walking along the Bicentennial Walkway last week when they came across the man who asked for directions. The four got chatting and it turned out that the other two were also WW II pilots — one was Australian, the other Scottish. It was also the Scot's first visit to Australia.

INSIDE

Agenda	19
Arts	25
Bridge	47
Business	39
Comics, Crosswords	47
Editorials	16
Entertainment Guide	35
Features	17
Law Notices	47
Lottery 1'Pot No. 3795	38
Lottery 2'Pot No. 3796	46
Lotto	3
Mails	47
Obituary	10
Personal Notices	37
Puzzles, Shipping	47
Sport	48
Stay in Touch	28
Television	28
Today's People	28
Classified Index on back page	

WEATHER

Metropolitan Cool and mainly cloudy with showers. Temps: City 16-22, Liverpool 14-23. Pollution: low. Yesterday: City 17-20, Liverpool 15-21. Pollution: low.
NSW Showers on the coast and adjacent ranges. Mild to warm and sunny in the interior.
The Sea Very choppy on a low to moderate swell. Tides: Low 3.17 am (0.4), High 9.24 am (1.5), Low 3.31 pm (0.4), High 9.47 pm (1.5).
Sun Rises 5.53, sets 6.17.
Moon Rises 6.52 pm, sets 7.17 am.
Full details, Page 47.

Moscow gets the message as Lithuanians hear of the independence proclamation.

Defiant Lithuania alarms Gorbachev

MOSCOW, Monday: The Soviet President, Mr Gorbachev, said today he was alarmed by Lithuania's declaration of independence last night.

"The information that is coming in from there is rather alarming," he told the Soviet Parliament, opening a session which may vote him wide new executive powers.

"The decisions which are being taken there affect the fundamental interests and destiny of the republic itself, of the people and of our entire State."

He opened the session of the Congress of People's Deputies just hours after Lithuania's Parliament approved unanimously a declaration proclaiming the republic sovereign and independent, as it was between the world wars.

Mr Gorbachev said parliamentary commissions and the Soviet Government would begin immediate studies of the Lithuanian decision which could soon be matched by the two other Baltic republics, Latvia and Estonia.

Deputies from the Baltic republics, some of whom said originally that they would not take part in the debate on the new presidency, changed their strategy and were arriving in growing numbers, presumably to argue against the plan.

Mr Gorbachev, who is Communist Party chief, already holds the title of President as chairman of the Parliament but his powers are limited and largely formal.

The new post of "President of the Soviet Union" would carry powers similar to, and in some ways wider than, those of United States and French heads of state.

The new Soviet President would have the power to impose a state of emergency, rule by decree and to appoint and dismiss ministers.

The measure needs the support of two-thirds of the 2,245 deputies to be carried. There are about 140 deputies from the Baltic republics and radicals opposed to the new presidency claim the support of several hundred more members.

"I will only have the kind of president I want when the people in the streets choose him," said Mr Vitaly Korotich, a member of Parliament and editor of the liberal weekly *Ogonyok*.

He said he and members of the 400-strong inter-regional group in Parliament had urged the Baltic delegates to come and debate the presidency measure, under which the chief of state will initially be chosen by Parliament. Only after his first term will he be elected by universal suffrage.

The radical historian Mr Yuri Afanasyev, presenting the inter-regional group's arguments, told the deputies: "We still believe a hasty attempt to institute the presidency at this session is a grievous error."

He said his group could accept the presidency only if there were direct elections, a real multi-party system, a separation of party posts and the presidency, a new relationship between the presidency and the republics, and a truly competent parliament.

Mr Yuri Boyarin, a Latvian deputy, said his delegation "cannot vote for it unless we know how the president will act in emergency situations", a reference to the proposed power to rule by decree which could allow the new president to suspend parliaments in any of the 15 Soviet republics.

Mr Gorbachev and his supporters say it is essential to strengthen the presidency to give him the powers to push through his perestroika reforms.

Continued Page 13
PAGE 15: How Estonia clamours for Independence. PAGE 16: Editorial.

Sturgess may give evidence

Mr Chester Porter, QC, counsel assisting the Blackburn Royal Commission, said yesterday he would consider whether to call Mr Gary Sturgess (pictured) director-general of the NSW Cabinet Office, to answer questions on the source of information the crime writer Mr Bob Bottom gave to him last year.

A briefing by Mr Bottom to Mr Sturgess, dated October 16 last year, was tendered into evidence. It contained allegations by Mr Bottom against two policemen who reinvestigated the brief against the former police superintendent Mr Harry Blackburn.

PAGE 2: Full report.

Copyright © 2020 Newspapers.com. All Rights Reserved.
POWERED BY Newspapers.com