

# Both sides omit major issues

The exposure of a Labor think-tank's plan to tax services has given part, but not all, of the reason for the politeness of the debate between John and Kim.

It appears that, as in the past, both major political groupings want to introduce a Goods and Services Tax (GST), and the past opposition from one side was because opposition was a vote-winner.

Whether called by one name or another, and whichever major party were to get it through Parliament, a GST would not touch any raw nerves among the "Big Players," who include the billionaire companies both Australian and non-Australian, plus a large percentage of the middle class.

Only a basic charge that is impossible to evade, such as a tax of 5 to 8 per cent of unimproved land value, plus charges for resources, TV channel bandwidth, and pollution, would ever involve the Big Players in sharing the country's wealth with the rest of the people.

Skase overseas avoiding the tax man and his creditors seems immune to red-blooded government action, while Packer (using a tax haven) and Murdoch (7.5% company tax paid worldwide) are just two examples of Big Players who fly around freely but don't pay their share of community expenses.

No Coalition GST or Labor Party Services Tax will really get a fair share of the multinationals' income, which includes a portion that has been obtained by cornering a monopoly and then extorting the public by under-paying wages and over-pricing what they sell, both here and abroad.

In fact, it is possible for a prosperous person or company based in Australia to export goods or services on the condition they are paid at an overseas address, and do a lot of buying and investing with that money in no-tax or low-tax countries. Tennis star Pat Rafter has his winnings sent to a tax haven. Woolgrowers got paid in London during the 1950s wool boom.

The major parties' current election campaigns have not frightened the Big End of Town.

But what has touched a raw nerve of the Big Players are the minor parties' tax reform proposals and their policy of making the wealthy share the tax load, so the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (controlled 80% by multinationals) is now spending a huge sum to scare people off voting for the "minors."

The CCI says the "minors" would cause instability – but fear of instability is a bogeyman. For example, in foreign affairs, remember how that bogeyman was used by the Western Powers as an excuse not to prevent the illegal and genocide-causing act of Suharto seizing East Timor in 1975?

Do Indonesian farmers, workers, business people and professionals enjoy that military regime's "stability," which is based on lies, exploitation, speculation, threats, and force? In the same way, no taxation "reform" based on lies can give true stability.

And it is dishonest to issue election propaganda that does not admit the major parties' plans to misuse the Wik decision to grant billions of dollars worth of land freehold to wealthy non-Australians and Australians, and their long-running plan to take the suicide pill of the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI).

As a speaker said at a Stop-MAI meeting in WA this month, the multinationals in the Third World can keep the producers from getting their full earnings, and stop environmental resistance groups, only by the threat of force and the actual use of torture and murder.

It is not surprising, given the huge funds that multinationals and similar groups give the major Australian parties in electoral campaign donations, that both major Australian political groupings have again in recent decades come close to using guns to stop the productive part of

society from getting a fair living in a modernised computerised age.

During the airline pilots' dispute Labor's Hawke used the RAAF to ferry politicians and the elite around the country, and when the multinationals won they called in French pilots to take the jobs. The Coalition's Howard and Fischer in recent months nearly succeeded in a plan to replace our waterside workers with mercenary soldiers, trained in a foreign dictatorship's port.

Centralising economic power into fewer and fewer hands is what both major party groups have been doing for decades, in direct contradiction to party platforms, the aspirations of honest members, and the hopes of the voters.

The Grab and Snatch Tax (GST) is only a smoke and mirrors trick to take voters' minds off the underlying problems caused by the multinationals and their mouthpieces, the leading politicians.

Because the multinationals and others are not paying their share, taxes like GST are being invented to gather more money from the ordinary producers, so increasing their debt and decreasing their ability to invest.

To fix the economy, we must first let the producers keep more of what they earn.

"I would like to electrocute everyone who uses the word 'fair' in connection with income tax policies."

— William F. Buckley

"Income tax returns are the most imaginative fiction being written today."

— Herman Wouk