

The Salisbury Review

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF CONSERVATIVE THOUGHT



The Third Marquess of Salisbury, 1830–1903

J. Enoch Powell

Roy Kennidge

J. P. Day

Nikolai Tolstoy

David J. Levy

G. H. Sisson

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Malin Sidelov

Clive Ashworth

William Rivers

Richard Coles

Daniel Johnson

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ADDRESS:
The Salisbury Review, 7 Lord North Street, London SW1

It is a matter for some astonishment that the British Conservative Party – the most important modern institution dedicated to the active conservation and renewal of given institutions – should have survived so long without an educational policy. As David Morgan points out in this issue, not only has the Party avoided committing itself in recent years to any genuinely conservative course of action; it has also refused to look squarely at the fact which now confronts it – the fact of widespread educational decline. It is a commonplace that education, because it concerns the production of a new generation, and therefore the reproduction of society, is the most important issue which any politician might face. And yet how mediocre and irresolute have the gestures of conservative politicians become in this area, and how incapable have those politicians shown themselves of treating this matter with the high seriousness exemplified by the cabinet of Lord Derby, as described here by Lord John Manners.

For those who have yet to learn what progressive education really and concretely amounts to, Roy Kerridge provides an amusing instance of modern folly. There are many schools, both public and private, which show the same jettisoning of educational ambition, the same lack of deference towards achievement and discipline, and the same whimsical sense of an adult's responsibilities towards the child, that have been displayed at the White Lion Free School in Islington. The Government may be right, in its implied assumption that private schools can be controlled by public opinion – although the survival of Dartington gives us some reason to doubt this. But what about state schools, and in particular, what about those schools controlled by such bodies as the ILEA, which have made no secret of the fact that they seek to impose an anti-traditional, progressivist, and essentially politicized curriculum upon the schools within their care? Only resolute action by the government can save such schools, and the children who attend them, from the effects of this ill-considered policy.

In all such matters, government action will be impeded by the 'new class' of state dependents – those within the civil service and official departments, who have a material interest in the propagation of ideological nonsense, and in carrying out the policies which that nonsense implies. In

this issue Antony Flew attacks one of the power-bases of this class, the so-called Commission for Racial Equality, dedicated to securing privileges for Caribbean blacks, at the cost of the white and Asian communities. As Professor Flew shows, this quango illustrates a widespread social disease: a half-baked political notion, which the Government has neither time, nor will, nor understanding to dismiss for the nonsense that it is, receives an official 'commission', in the hope that this will exorcise it. Its influence then begins to grow with the growth of the institution, and more and more enthusiasts for the original nonsense find profitable employment within the institution's walls.

It is interesting to compare this abuse of public funds with the abuse of private funds discussed by Andrew Sykes – the Trade Unions' 'political levy', upon which the Labour Party depends for so much of its financial support. In this case, institutions of undeniable public utility, which offer indispensable protection to their members, have a historical commitment to provide funds for political causes of which many of their members disapprove. Because this kind of abuse occurs outside the institutions of government, no government can act easily to remedy it. And the difficulties are compounded by the fact that both the Trade Unions and the Labour Party must, in the public interest, be helped to survive the impact of the blow which severs them.

We address ourselves again to familiar themes. Enoch Powell identifies, with characteristic precision, the real grounds for liturgical conservatism, and so provides the underlying support for the campaign reported (and lamented) in previous issues by David Martin; while Count Tolstoy, with equal precision, identifies the real ground for Britain's existing defence policies, and for the Nato alliance of which Enoch Powell is so passionate a critic. Once again, anyone who doubts which side to take on this issue, should study the observations of our Eastern European correspondent. And for those who, like Mr Powell, continue to doubt the spiritual reality underlying the Atlantic Alliance, we carry a portrait of one of the most important modern conservatives – an American, whose passionate devotion to England and its traditions, found expression in the greatest poetry in modern English.

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Conservative Journals: ELEMENTI

The shocked silence of the left in France and Italy recently caused *Le Monde* to carry a front page series of analytical articles. It was called 'the silence of the intellectuals', since *Le Monde* has never been able to believe that there may be intellectuals who are not on the left. As a matter of fact the intellectuals have not been silent. They have either changed their subject (like Derrida, Foucault and Eco), or changed their tune (like François Mitterand and Régis Debray). It is of course very hard for an intelligent Frenchman or Italian to say that he is, not merely 'against the left', but 'for the right,' even when, like so many members of his society, he sees all politics in terms of this naive division. Memories of the war – successfully mythologized by the generation which fought it – have made it difficult consciously to declare oneself as belonging to the vanquished side.

Fortunately one generation dies and another replaces it. There is emerging in the Latin world, and even in Italy, a generation that has had no reason to accept the interpretations of modern history that were so necessary to the emotions of its parents. This generation is hesitant, often nihilistic, and as often appallingly naive, frequently espousing, in its journalism, a boyish mixture of market economics and social Darwinism. Nevertheless journals have begun to appear in the Latin world devoted to the more human and serious cause of cultural conservatism, among them the eclectic *Elementi*, edited in Milan by a committee under Stenio Solinas. Subtitled '*per una rinascita culturale*', *Elementi* is published bi-monthly,

and contains theoretical articles devoted to politics, ideology and the analysis of culture. It is concerned, not with day to day events, but with ideas. It has even undertaken the Herculean task of providing ideas that would be useful to an Italian, disinherited by secularisation and by the obligatory leftism of the modern intelligentsia, in his attempt, not just to mark out for himself a space for individual existence, but also to see the Italian social world as it really is.

Writers in *Elementi* include Giuseppe del Ninno, Piero Visani, and Peppe Nanni, all of whom are haunted by the spectres of Nietzsche and Carl Schmitt. Cultural phenomena of every kind are analysed, and music in particular (from Wagner to acid rock), is given prominent treatment. The issue for spring of this year contains a symposium – introduced by Alain de Benoist – on *polemos*, the condition of battle, conceived, in the manner of Schmitt, as the ground of politics. Another symposium is devoted to the writings of the '*delinquente del pensiero*' Ernst Jünger. Such material will arouse wonderment and alarm in the mind of a liberal anglo-saxon, but it points to matters which, in the strife-torn society of modern Italy, must inevitably be at the forefront of political consciousness. The honest and unsentimental search for fundamentals will, we hope, attract many subscribers to *Elementi*, in a country where, until recently, no intellectual has opened a publication which lacks a red cover.

26,000 lire for 6 issues, obtainable from via Ca' Granada 29, Milan.

The Language of the Prayer Book¹

J. Enoch Powell

Text of address to The National Conference of The Prayer Book Society
held at Trinity Hall, Cambridge on 10th September 1983

It was the sound of church bells and the language of the Book of Common Prayer, heard almost 36 years ago now across the Aleian plain of atheism, which recalled me home, gently yet imperiously, to the Church. I have needed therefore no prompting or persuasion to take my place in defending against its powerful and determined opponents the liturgy of the Church of England as by law established in 1558 and 1662. And as a ranker in the army of the Book of Common Prayer, I am singularly fortunate and happy to be called to address you this morning.

I want to share with my fellows here in the same cause an anxiety which repeatedly assails me. It is the anxiety that we are given to understating our cause, or, to be more precise, founding it upon grounds less exalted and less substantial than those which are capable of sustaining it. In decisive engagements it is the main forces that must be committed. This it often seems to me we are reluctant or afraid to do. Why, can perhaps be explained, and is, in due course, worth examining; but explanation is not justification. It is easy to extol the Book of Common Prayer linguistically and literarily. Its superiority in beauty of language and power of diction over the alternatives in the field against it is all too effortlessly demonstrated. The consequence is that we often seem to rest content with that demonstration, as if the argument were thereby ended – at least, for all with ears to hear and emotions to be stirred. We drift thus into the easy option of conservatism: here is a thing of beauty, we say, a fair inheritance, so let us preserve it. The argument is all right so far as it goes; but it goes scarcely any distance.

The efficacy of the Book of Common Prayer consists in its being archaic and in its being prescriptive. Such is the thesis I put forward; and I assert further that on no lesser grounds ought the cause of the Book of Common Prayer to be rested.

When the liturgy in English replaced the Latin liturgy, it replaced a language that not only was no longer spoken but had not been a live tongue even in its native land for over a thousand years. It was, in most senses of the word, a dead language, but a dead language which was hieratic, the language of prescribed ritual and customary worship. It was not for the most part particularly good or beautiful Latin – Cicero would have found it excruciating – but it had been used immemorably and the Western Church had known no other. Those words in that language, and no other words in any other language, were efficacious.

To replace them with English words, even with the august, rhetorical and inspired English of the Prayer

Book, was a violently revolutionary event. It was revolutionary in what it destroyed; it was revolutionary in its professed object. How severe that revolution was, we Anglicans can form some mild notion today when we contemplate the devastation which the Roman Church has been busy inflicting upon itself in recent years. The assumption which underlay, and underlies, the revolution is that words used in worship can be, and ought to be, 'understood of the people'. But ought they? And can they? Not unlike music, worship and ritual say things and do things which cannot be stated in plain language and which are destroyed or trivialised or caricatured in the attempt so to state them. It is of the essence of worship and rite that their language has overtones which defy analysis or paraphrase.

I must resort here to a term which cannot be fended off. The language of worship and rite is in itself *sacramental*; that is to say, it is more than, and different from, its natural sense. The converse is also true – that sacramental acts depend upon sacramental language: supercharged action and the supercharged words which accompany it are mutually dependent, inseparable aspects of one and the same event.

The humiliating and baffling fact about supercharged language is that we cannot voluntarily and intentionally construct it: it is, like so many of the other capabilities which make human life sustainable, 'begotten, not made'. There is only one process known whereby it arises, and that process is – call it archaism, call it obsolescence if you please – that it has continued to be used until it has become detached from its original meaning, context and associations, that it has lived over from one world to another. That occurs easily and obviously when an actual language, which has been otherwise disused, survives in religious use, as Latin did in the Western Church until the vandals put an end to it. But the process can also occur, though less violently and visibly, when an earlier form of a still spoken language is preserved in a religious context; and this process is exemplified by the Book of Common Prayer. By one of those happy combinations of circumstance in English history which half persuade us that our nation is specially favoured by Providence, the Book of Common Prayer was preserved intact through more than four centuries while the passage of time subtly imparted to it the supercharge of archaism and familiarity which it could not possess at the outset but which make it a uniquely English vehicle of religious and ritual expression. Cranmer did not put the supercharge there – he could not – it grew there out of its own accord, which

makes its existence the more difficult and embarrassing to acknowledge.

One reason why this happy outcome was possible was the fact that the Book of Common Prayer, being a statutory document embodying a compromise, was peculiarly entrenched. I do not want however to come yet to the subject of authority. Another contributory cause was the intense conservatism of the Church of England in that long stretch of time – 250 years – between the Restoration of the monarchy and the religious ferments of the early nineteenth century. By the time the depths were stirred by the Evangelicals and the Tractarians, the Book of Common Prayer had already completed its transmutation into a hieratic tongue, as sacramental in its own way as the Latin of the Tridentine rite.

I am going to offer a small specific example of the sacramental nature of liturgical language: it will serve as a transition to the next, and the most difficult, suggestion which I have to offer. Nobody, surely, can be unaware that something is made to happen by the opening words of the *Sanctus*: 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts'. In modern English 'Lord God of hosts' is effectively inexplicable. The origin of the words can indeed be elucidated, not without some difficulty, from Biblical Hebrew; but that elucidation does not contain the secret. Significantly, the Roman Missal embalmed the Hebrew word itself, *dominus deus Sabaoth*; but the Book of Common Prayer has achieved the same result of power and mystery by a literal translation of the Hebrew feminine plural which is no more to be 'understood of the people' than the original would be. The Alternative Service Book, rite A, offers us, as usual, a piece of bathos: 'God of power and might'!

The reason why I selected that particular, rather minuscule case is that it illustrates a surprising and even alarming characteristic which is apparently normal if not essential to religious and ritual language – unintelligibility. Greatly presuming, I venture to designate this as 'the nonsense factor'. It was in the course of textcritical studies of the synoptic Gospels that I found myself forced to admit that frequently error creates truth and absurdity creates beauty. It is almost a matter of rule that when a Gospel phrase or thought has passed into the lips and hearts of men and been recognised by them as conveying by the splendour of its imagery an otherwise inaccessible truth, it turns out to be the product of deep-seated corruption which has altered whatever was the original sense into undeniable nonsense. I am not talking here about archaic expressions open to misunderstanding, such as the 'evil communications' which 'corrupt good manners' or 'spiritual wickedness in high places'. I am talking about real nonsense, such as the famous 'lilies of the field which toil not neither do they spin', or 'entering in at the strait gate' when self-evidently entry (as opposed to exit) by the 'wide gate' will get you to exactly the same place, or 'the faith no larger than a mustard seed' which 'moves mountains', or 'if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out', or 'moth and rust doth corrupt'.

In all such places it would be possible, with varying degrees of assurance, to substitute a text and a translation

which eliminated the illogicality and often cast a new and penetrating light upon the passages which were thus brought into closer relevance. The result would also be total devastation – a spirit would escape from the bottle and evaporate. It is not so much that the verbal magic is invulnerable to difficulties of sense, construction and logic. The suspicion is hard to resist that those difficulties actually play a creative and perhaps indispensable role. An irrational element is part and parcel of the supercharge of religious and ritual language.

Like those treading the foothills of a high mountain range, we are here in the presence of huge, daunting and ill-defined possibilities, such as the question to what extent the truth, the power and the success of the Gospel itself were dependent upon the contradictions and unintelligibilities which successive stages of its verbal and credal evolution deposited. On all that, however, I hasten to turn my back, in order to descend to the relative safety of the plain, observing only that much, though not the whole, of the case for the Book of Common Prayer applies equally to the Authorised or 'King James' Bible. The known and acknowledged defects of its underlying original and of the translation are not corrigible; but the penalty which attaches to the attempt to remove them is the loss of the precious essence itself.

It is possible to champion the Authorised Version and those earlier versions embalmed in the lectionary of the Book of Common Prayer without being ignorant or obscurantist – and without being fundamentalist either. The fundamentalists, nevertheless, are right in their instinct that 'one step, and all the marsh' beyond the arbitrary safety of 1611. Those who have seen most deeply into what lies behind and beneath the *textus receptus* and the Authorised Version are most aware how endlessly insecure is the advance of the scholar and the historian into the unknown.

Reference to the Authorised Version has brought me, by something more than a pun, to another indispensable attribute of religious and ritual language – authority. When words are to do something, to bring something into existence which was not there before, they must be the *right* words, their secret lies in the rightness: out of all the possible selections and combinations, one only is efficacious. Not for nothing do we pray, in the B.C.P. of course, that bishops and curates may 'rightly and duly administer thy holy sacraments' – 'rightly and duly', *rite et debite*, the condition of success in all collective religious action.

Until the synodical revolution of the Worship and Doctrine Measure 1974, the language of the Book of Common Prayer was distinguished by being uniquely authoritative, established and fixed by the Crown in Parliament, the supreme source of authority in this realm. This authoritative fixity of the wording not only, as I have mentioned already, 'held the ring' as it were during the long period of supercharging while what was new became traditional and what was once contemporary became archaic. It also liberated meaning; for if words and formulae are fixed, change must express itself in interpretation. The Tractarians were doubly right when

they acclaimed the Book of Common Prayer as the proof of the catholicism of the Anglican Church: right because the words and formulae, being themselves impregnable, were susceptible of an interpretation which bridged the gulf of the Reformation; and right because the essential mark of catholicism, uniformity imposed by universal authority, was placed upon it by the untrammelled *imperium* of the English nation state. Without the authoritative fixity of its liturgy, the unique comprehensiveness and broadmindedness of the Church of England would not have been possible. For where formulation can be altered, differences of interpretation cannot be tolerated: that is the logic which the long fissiparous history of the dissenting sects has demonstrated ad nauseam. The freedom of the Anglican to say 'I conform because it is commanded' is not unworthy to stand beside the freedom of Tertullian to say 'it is certain because it is impossible'.

The cause of the Book of Common Prayer is not a literary or an aesthetic cause: it is a religious cause. It lies athwart the religious dilemma of our society, a society not emancipated from the necessities, including the religious

necessities, of all human societies, but a society where the intellectual and emotional scaffolding of religious observance has been dismantled, not least by the very caste which is specialised in society for sustaining, commending and interpreting it. The deliberate attack upon the Book of Common Prayer which the last decade has witnessed is a conscious and integral part of that dismantling process – inevitably so, because the Anglican Church and its liturgical heritage survive, almost alone since the ravaging of the Roman Church, as living evidence of essential elements in religious experience and expression. I suspect that we who maintain the Book of Common Prayer are fighting in a wider warfare than we can know.

Note

1. The editor is grateful to the Prayer Book Society for permission to print this article. Readers interested in the Society, or wishing to support its attempt to retain the language of the Book of Common Prayer should write to The Society at 40 Great Smith Street, London SW1.

The 'Right' Approach to Education

David Morgan

In the view of many people, both inside and outside the Conservative Party, education is a peripheral issue, something to be brushed aside or gradually demoted in importance. Despite Disraeli's famous remark – 'It is upon the education of the people of this country that its future depends' – the Party over many years has shown a tentative and lacklustre approach to the problem. There have been important achievements, particularly Balfour's much-underrated Act of 1902, and of course R. A. Butler's 1944 legislation. However, the latter has sadly never really been fulfilled – an indication that real change and lasting achievement in the system is not within Parliament's competence.

Equally sadly, and perhaps strangely, given their centralised, mechanistic view of so many aspects of political action, it is the Left ('hard' and 'soft') who have grasped this nettle. They have appreciated that change can only be truly brought about from within; and as a result they have held the initiative for 30 years or more. The fact that they have not won the argument (when their view is so fraudulent and genuinely evil) gives us cause for hope, and, to its credit, Mrs Thatcher's first term produced some sensible, perceptive changes. But much remains to be done to ensure that their subversive hold is broken and defeated in detail. The need now is for the Party, in the true national interest, to adopt a positive and comprehensive approach. After all, we do not want for intellectual muscle.

Before outlining 'what more needs to be done', a broader point needs to be made. In the final analysis, the Conservative Party and tradition of thought are far better suited to deal with the problems of education than any party of a socialist persuasion. As conservative thinkers have often emphasised, we have always had a strong belief in the autonomy of institutions, i.e., all those institutions that serve to stabilise and give coherence to a given society. Paradoxically, it should be within our reach to apply this to the State Sector (which, after all, serves 94% of the young). Autonomy means, first, independence of schools from political direction and control, and, secondly, the treating of education, at most levels, as an end in itself, which serves the individual because of what it is, and not because of what it produces. It is categorically not 'a means to a more equal society' or any other such left-liberal nonsense. Again, paradoxically then, our approach must never become overtly or unnecessarily interventionist, except of course when reversing the damage done by the Left.

First, the idea of choice must be made concrete reality. Despite the 1980 Act, parents still do not have enough say in how and where their children are to spend the most important years of their lives – from 11–18. The move towards and protection of genuinely diversified provision in terms of type of school is an important ingredient, and will be discussed later. We are told that Sir Keith Joseph has found a voucher scheme 'intellectually attractive'.

And undoubtedly injecting the 'social market' into the system would benefit some, perhaps even the majority. However, the result could equally be administrative chaos, with children suffering from the contraction and even closure of many schools. The scheme should perhaps be given a trial run in selected areas, but there are better, more foolproof ways of enhancing choice and standards. Parental choice can be underpinned by coming down firmly on subversive or incompetent teachers; by making H.M.I. reports available to all interested parties; and by ensuring that all internal and external examination results are published. The teaching profession, rather like its counterpart in the N.H.S., is far too restrictive, secretive and suspicious of the rights of parents. At least this is the impression received from such as Mr Jarvis of the N.U.T., although it is of course open to question whether we should take this union seriously, given its ludicrous and damaging behaviour at its last annual conference.

After much agonising, the Party has, I think, recognised that Comprehensives, despite their many faults, and despite having been foisted upon the nation with indecent haste by governments of both main parties, are here to stay. Given this fact, it seems that we must not snipe at them with fond hopes of bringing back selection, but seek to improve them from within, above all reasserting the competitive, academic ethic and atmosphere, *always* putting quality and excellence before the nebulous and subversive doctrine of 'equality'. Of particular importance is the retention of formal 'O' and 'A' Level examinations. A 'common system' at 16+ seems to me (and many others) a nonsense: its introduction (which may be possible by 1987) would jeopardise the incentives of the better pupils, who would then cease to stretch themselves as they should. There is also a real danger that if 'O' Levels are abolished 'A' Levels will shortly follow. Even a Conservative may, through inertia and lack of foresight, yield to such changes, which of course would put the whole Higher Education system in jeopardy.

It is in the new 16-19 'Tertiary Colleges' that the threat to examinations is most obvious. So far the Government has taken a far too benign view of these institutions. As Professor Cox in his many writings has emphasised, the all-too-obvious attempts by politically motivated 'teachers' to turn them, gradually if necessary, into egalitarian, 'broad-based', or, worse, 'community-orientated' establishments must be resisted. The most obvious way of doing this is by defending the traditional Sixth Form, where 'scholarship', 'competition' and 'real intellectual stimulus' are seen to denote ends in themselves, and not decried as dirty words in the demonology of the progressive barbarians.

Higher Education must also be protected from such pressure. The idea of the 'Comprehensive University' is unthinkable – standards of entry, from Oxbridge downwards, must if anything be improved. I feel lucky, and indeed privileged, to have reached this stage of education. A place at University, Polytechnic, or College is *not* an automatic right, but a privilege that must be

earned, by rigorous testing and proven worth. At this end of the scale, the educational process must, surely, be unashamedly elitist. We must, indeed, work to bring words like 'elite', 'excellence', 'merit' and 'hierarchy' back into common usage. It is regrettable that only the many excellent independent schools continue to transmit this necessary language. The Left believes that education is a tool for producing an egalitarian society (where the only equality would be of ignorance – as bad as Taine's 'Democracy of the Dead'). Hence it has made great strides in the non-academic sphere of the curriculum; the recent spread of so-called 'peace studies' is the least of its achievements. Far more subversive has been the rise and spread of 'sex education'. At least the title used by the left-liberal teachers who promote this obscenity is honest. For it is a deliberate attempt to subvert morality, to assert the supremacy and goodness of sexual activity in itself, devoid of its ethical, moral or spiritual context. The unfortunate teenagers nourished on 'sex education' are drawn into a valueless, irresponsible world, a world of ultimate loneliness and misery. Action, and if necessary direct intervention, is vital here. Schools must return to genuine, responsible religious and moral education, where traditional values and the sense of obligation, whether to family, community or nation, are inculcated.

To return to the theme of choice and diversity: the 1944 Act was designed by Lord Butler, here as in all else a true and good Conservative, to ensure the best possible education or training for each individual pupil, of whatever level or type of ability. The relentless egalitarianism of the left-liberal mind seeks above all to level down and force together – its aim is a mass of roughly equal ability, and roughly equal attainment. One does not need to be an Eysenckian to see that we are all different in talent and intelligence. Hence it is essential that diversity of provision be available to cater for different needs. This is why the scheme for technically-based courses, in conjunction with the M.S.C., is such a far-sighted step. Mr Kinnock squeals about 'Educational Apartheid'. But it is humbug to pretend that the less academically-able at present benefit from the conventional curriculum and examinations. It is always better, of course, to acknowledge the world as it is – there is far better chance of getting results.

In conclusion then, the keynotes for a positive policy, a logical and sensible approach building on the good work done since 1979, should be diversity, autonomy and quality. But what about finance? I do not believe that it is a serious issue. For all the talk of cuts, the Government (helped by falling rolls) is now spending more per head on education than ever before. Moreover, the pursuit of excellence categorically does *not* depend on money spent. Both Sir Keith Joseph and Mrs Thatcher have made this point more than once, and I am confident that the public is aware of its truth.

Let the Left indulge in their cerebral fantasies. We have the task of living up to Disraeli's dictum, with Party and Nation, as in other respects, in successful concert.

The Politics of the Self

David J. Levy

In recent years the Conservative Party has acquired the reputation of being the party of individualism. At the heart of individualism is a complex of beliefs centred on the superstition that the essence of the self is something of unique value that exists apart from and opposed to the sphere of political institutions. Consequently, it is argued, the highest duty of the Conservative statesman is to prevent the trespass of politics upon the sanctum of the self; and this is why Conservatives should oppose so strongly the expansionist efforts of socialist states, whether foreign or home-grown. Conservatives have adopted the liberal rhetoric once associated with Herbert Spencer. They pose fundamental issues of politics in terms of 'Man against the State' regardless of the fact that such a rhetoric sits uneasily alongside the continuing Tory emphasis upon law and order, patriotism and the supra-individual demands of a shared morality.

My purpose in this essay is to restate the outlines of a more truly Conservative politics of the self – one which, while owing nothing to the tradition of liberal individualism, allows us to defend the value of human individuality against the encroachments of statist ideology. My argument is that, far from being something that does and must exist apart from the demands of political institutions, the responsible self is, like the constitutional state to which it is sometimes opposed, the product of political and spiritual traditions peculiar to the Western world. The self is inherently political. It is the creation as well as the creator of an institutionalised community of essentially political animals who have, through a shared history, evolved constitutional forms especially suited to meet the requirements of human nature. Seen in this way, the highest imperative of Conservative statesmanship is not the promotion of individuality as such but the guardianship of institutions and the fostering of traditions which provide the cultural soil in which selfhood can flourish.

Because, today, issues are so often experienced as well as posed in terms of the opposition between private aspirations and public, state sanctioned, restrictions, the idea that what we call the self is inherently political is treated with incredulity and suspicion. In the modern world it is the common experience of life and not any mere perversity of perspective which encourages the idea that politics is a matter of man against the state. Yet, though this is the way matters most obviously appear, it is highly misleading. It encourages the myth that man is most truly himself when least in communion with his fellows – the drop-out as model of authenticity – while producing a general mood of disenchantment with the

honourable and necessary business of politics. How, it insinuates, can we trust a person whose life is devoted to tasks which, by definition, frustrate the inmost being of man?

Where politics is identified with action of or upon the state and the self is conceived as the enduring fugitive from external interference suspicion is quite understandable. In such a view the idea that there is a politics of the self which is other than the defence of the self against political manipulation is bound to smack of statist and even totalitarian ideologies. The English, in particular, have a healthy distrust of those who seek to form character and opinion in accord with the requirements of particular ideologies, however well intended; and, in general, they treat with contempt the well worn claim of the disaffected radical that, since people are always so formed, the choice is not whether or not education should be ideological but which ideology should inform it. Rightly they suspect that this argument blurs a distinction between education and indoctrination which is crucial to the preservation of a free society. The formation of the self is not to be reduced to the moulding of attitudes in conformity with what the men of the moment judge to be desirable.

In part, this suspicion is a feature of the liberal inheritance, omnipresent in the West but especially pervasive in the English-speaking world which first gave it institutional form and which has always proved its firmest defender. Since English conservatism traditionally conceives itself to be the political expression of the nation's self-understanding – not a doctrine, still less an ideology, but a commitment to serve the country by conserving valued ways of life – it is not surprising that it should have absorbed the indigenous, liberal conception of an apolitical self.

At least in this, English conservatism is as modern a thing as any post-Enlightenment liberal could wish. For the apolitical self, on whose defence it places so high a value, is a distinct element, the central character indeed, in a distinctively modern fiction which is called liberalism. Liberalism, in the sense I am using the term, is a moral fiction which presents itself as a theory of politics. It is a fiction because the characters who appear in its tale and carry the plot to a successful conclusion do not nor ever could exist. It is a moral fiction because it presents us with an image of man's nature and condition which, while untrue as a reflection of the way things are, draws our attention to that sense of moral autonomy respect for which is the mark of any remotely acceptable political outlook in an age disfigured by totalitarianism. Men are not originally and radically autonomous in the sense

liberalism suggests – that is the fiction – but they may aspire to the cultivation of themselves in a space free from pressure to conform to the demands of others, even when these masquerade as the imperatives of history.

Therefore the presence of this fictional figure, the apolitical self, as an ultimate value in the conservative view of things is to be cherished not only because he is, like Robin Hood, an authentically English legend but because, unlike Robin, his imagined doings exemplify a way of conducting one's life which a conservative may properly seek to emulate. However to make proper use of such a fiction requires that we recognise it for what it is. If liberalism is taken at face value, as political theory rather than moral fiction, the consequence will be irreverence toward the political conditions which alone make some simulacrum of apolitical selfhood possible. For the apolitical self of the liberal fable is a fictionalised, abstract version of a type of human being who exists concretely only within the orbit of the historical culture of the West, and who can thrive only where certain political conditions have become institutionalised to the point of habit. The self we prize in making our own the fiction of apolitical selfhood is not a prime substance out of whose deliberations the good life flows, but a being informed by cultural traditions deriving from Greece and Israel and borne through history by the Western nations. He is not the source of sound politics but one of its highest products.

The content of conservatism is not everywhere the same but at least in England the conservative's relationship to liberalism is not one of integral rejection. Insofar as the self-aware, self-interested individual is the hero of the liberal legend the English conservative will usually criticise him not for what he is but for the gay abandon with which he divests himself of all the props which make his existence possible. Writing in the 1930s, when the political initiative seemed to have passed to regimes dedicated to the elimination of moral autonomy and the reabsorption of selfhood in an *ersatz* mass community – called state in Italy, race in Germany, class in Soviet Russia – T. S. Eliot called attention to the peculiarly autodestructive nature of a creed which does not respect the conditions that allow it to maintain its institutional expression in the Western constitutional state. 'That Liberalism,' he wrote, 'may be a tendency toward something very different from itself, is a possibility in its nature. For it is something which tends to release energy rather than accumulate it, to relax, rather than to fortify. It is a movement not so much defined by its end, as by its starting point; away from rather than towards, something definite. Our point of departure is more real to us than our destination; and the destination is likely to present a very different picture when arrived at, from the vaguer image formed in imagination. By destroying traditional social habits of people, by dissolving their natural collective consciousness into individual constituents, by licensing the opinions of the most foolish, by substituting instruction for education, by encouraging cleverness rather than wisdom, the upstart rather than the qualified, by fostering a notion of *getting on* to which the alternative is a hopeless apathy, Liberalism can prepare the way for that which is

its own negation: the artificial, mechanised or brutalised control which is a desperate remedy for its chaos.'

This polemic against liberalism has a part to play in a conservative politics of the self, not because liberalism has nothing valuable to say about selfhood, but because by conceiving the self as a source and not an end of political order – an autodetermined building block and not a final form toward whose achievement action should tend – the liberal prepares the destruction of that which he, like the conservative, claims to value. And he does so precisely because in the moral fiction of liberalism the existence of the self is taken for granted. It is the premise of the tale and not the hard won goal of struggle maintained in difficult conditions. In contrast to the liberal, the conservative knows that one is a self only by becoming so, that selfhood is not to be found in the first moments of life – either of the individual or the species – but only the potential for its attainment. For the potential to be made actual the conditions must be right and these conditions are intrinsically political. For a human being to survive to adulthood, let alone acquire a degree of self-understanding which amounts to maturity, he must *ab initio* be accepted as a participant, passive at first, in the ordered life of the social group. He must have an identity, which is to say an accepted place in the social scheme of things. In its turn, the group, which is the cradle and school of his selfhood, will only endure if it achieves and maintains an institutional form, or framework of habitual action, appropriate to the natural and historical conditions in which it finds itself.

The liberal typically believes that when one has chipped away the encrustation of cultural formation, an authentic, elementary self remains to breathe the purer air of an autonomy natural to man as such. The conservative knows that this is not an atmosphere but a vacuum in which no self can survive and from whose prospect men will flee into whatever refuge is offered, even if it be the confinement of a cage filled with the tainted air of ideology. Thus, taken to its logical conclusion, liberalism is, literally, self-destructive.

But matters cannot rest here. As I understand it, the politics of the self involves more than the recognition of the dependence of the self on an appropriate social environment and the admission that the notion of selfhood which, typically, we prize is a human image peculiar to the traditions of Western civilization. The human self is more essentially political than any cultural ecology and history can show, and this essence can only be grasped by posing directly the fundamental question: 'What is my self?'

I put the question in terms of 'my self' rather than 'the self' because, though we are concerned with selfhood as such and not with autobiography or the peculiarities of an individual's psychology, it is apparent that any knowledge I have of what it is to be a self comes, not from the observation of others, but precisely from my self consciousness. I know myself to be a conscious centre of experience, not isolated and alone in a cosmic void, but a responsible agent irremediably implicated in the processes of the world. My self is an 'I' and so, it seems, the awkward sounding 'What is my self?' can be converted into 'What

or even 'Who am I?' These are not, strictly speaking, identical questions. 'What is my self?' asks about what one might call the form of selfhood; while 'Who am I?' is a question about its particular content. Nevertheless, the near convertibility between the two is instructive, for the essence of selfhood is, in every case, the self one becomes through participation in being. And this in turn is always an event that takes place at a certain moment in time and space. It was not necessary that I should have been born. Matters might have fallen out differently. In that sense my self is an accident of being. But, having been born, to certain parents, at a particular locality, under specific historical conditions, I am essentially, necessarily, what these accidents have made me.

So the essence of selfhood is not something apart from the contents of the self. What I am is inseparable from who I am; and the 'who?' encompasses my identity as a member of the human species, the biological fact of my parentage and ethnic descent, the sense of cultural affiliation which I absorb without effort through the acquisition of a native language, my affections and beliefs, my name and my nation. There is no belief more psychologically brutalizing and politically disruptive than the common modern fancy – enshrined at the core of so much radical ideology – that all these ways of belonging, by which I identify myself as particular, unique yet part of something greater, are so many indices of alienation. It is not alienating to belong to a historically constituted community, a nation or a church, but to become separated from it; and this separation is the only true meaning we can allow to what Marx called man's alienation from his species being. For the form of being proper to the human species is to belong, and feel oneself to belong, to an actually existing community that values itself for what it is. No ideology, however grand its presumptions, can compensate for the loss of the quiet pride which is the birthright of the man who feels the past within him, not, as Marx would have it, as a nightmare weighing upon the present, but as an inspiration and the inner form of the self. In the midst of the terror which Hitler let loose upon the Jews of continental Europe, those who had remained attached to their national, religious traditions, endured to the end better than their secularised fellows from whom every social support had been systematically torn away. In no way does this diminish the evil of the crime done to believer and unbeliever alike. The sense of belonging to something that had a meaning which transcended a present composed of impotence and murder could touch neither the conscience of the killer nor the sympathy of the powerless witness. For these, the objective facts of the situation were enough, calling forth murder and sorrow respectively. But for the psyche of the victim, the self who was fated to suffer and die, the community of a people, a culture and a faith provided something which only the extinction of the body could touch.

The form and content of the human self are essentially intermingled; and, though experience is continually introducing new content, what is involved is a growth or modification of the self and not an utter change of identity. Saul of Tarsus remains a conditioning presence in the apostle Paul, and the pleasure loving youth and devout Manichaeán both survive to make their vivid contribution of self-knowledge to the *Confessions* of St. Augustine. The self is a creature of time and space, and these are not abstract categories of philosophy but concrete circumstances of life. Human time is a biography, an education, perhaps a marriage and a career: space is a locality, a birthplace, a parish and a nation. It is, I think, almost inconceivable that one could value oneself while despising these potent factors of selfhood. The Rousseau's and Sartre's of this world – haters of circumstance who admire only the imagined selves of an ideologically projected future – are not only the preachers of rebellion but the unhappiest of souls. Their political efforts are directed not to the realistic goal of improving the circumstantial conditions of life but to their abolition. Joseph de Maistre remarks somewhere that while he has met Frenchmen, Englishmen and Germans, he has never encountered Man, the abstract hero of the 18th century Enlightenment. This does not mean, as some have argued, that de Maistre denies the unity of human nature, which elsewhere he describes as being 'cognitive, social and religious', but that he like every conservative recognises that the essence of its expression is membership in a particular, culturally distinct community.

There is a way of putting this which, while profoundly unfashionable even among conservatives, needs to be restated plainly. It is that there is no knowledge more important to any man than that he should know his place. To know my place is not only an awareness of social rank – though this will always play its part in life whatever egalitarians may pretend. My place is not simply a position in the prevailing hierarchy. It is a bounded space, however objectively insignificant, arising in and contributing to the history of my native group. This in its turn emerged in the wider history of a human species, itself an enduring moment in the unceasing process of the cosmos. I know my self and my place together, for to know who I am is to come to understand the bounds of the space I am called upon to fill with my activities and dreams. I know myself truly only when I recognise my finitude as a creature and my dependence as a subject. I – my self – am formed at the point of intersection between the objective processes of natural and cultural history which precede and accompany my life and a personal experience which determines my consciousness of self by disclosing the world and my place within it in the unique process of my existence. Only so do I learn the truth of my being as a creature of culture, whose specific nature is to create and sustain a political community which, by providing order within and defence without, allows the self to flourish.

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The West and Soviet Oppression

Nikolai Tolstoy

A paper given to the inaugural conference of the
Academic Council for Peace and Freedom on 14th September, 1983

The aims of the Academic Council for Peace and Freedom are, I take it, to enlighten public opinion (informed public opinion in particular) as to the dangers inherent in dealing with a potential enemy from a position of military weakness. That potential enemy is, of course, no abstract threat but a massively-armed and historically aggressive Soviet Union. There is a good argument to be made out in addition for retaining a nuclear deterrent against the more general menace of proliferating national nuclear arsenals. One could, for example, readily envisage a situation in which this was the only means of deterring that most alarming of prospects, a madman with a bomb. Poor, crazy Colonel Gaddafi springs to mind, and the proliferation of mad dictators seems unhappily as likely a contingency in the contemporary world as that of nuclear weapons.

But these are potential threats, at present of limited scope. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, is the declared enemy of Western civilization and is possessed of a gigantic 'overkill' capacity to destroy it. The nature of the Soviet threat is therefore the crucial factor for understanding, and it is this that needs placing clearly and continually before the public eye.

It appears extraordinary that, among those bodies (principally CND) that advocate appeasement of the Soviet Union, there is a marked absence of anyone with any remotely scholarly knowledge of Soviet history. CND's leading academic light is, I am told, a man with a profound knowledge of the game laws in eighteenth-century England. But this is surely not enough, and it must be our task to make the facts more generally known.

The Soviet record of aggrandisement over neighbouring states (and, once they are absorbed, over her neighbours' neighbours) is, or should be, a matter of common knowledge. Nevertheless a brief recapitulation may serve to remind us, that what has until now been a continual progression has reached a point where inevitably it is we ourselves who must appear high on the shopping list.

On 7th May 1920 the Soviet Union recognised the independence of Georgia. The Red Army invaded and conquered the country ten months later.

In the same year (1920) the Soviet Union formally recognised the independence of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and signed Peace Treaties with all three countries. In 1929 Non-Aggression Pacts were added to these agreements, Pacts which in 1934 were renewed until

the end of 1945. The outcome of all these solemn treaties and pacts was the invasion and absorption of all three countries in the summer of 1940.

In October 1920 the Soviets signed a Peace Treaty with their other small neighbour, Finland. In 1932 this was confirmed by a Non-Aggression Pact, ratified in 1934. Invasions followed five years later, resulting in the annexation of over a tenth of Finnish territory.

Finally, in this round-up of post-Versailles agreements, the Soviets signed a Peace Treaty with Poland at Riga in March 1921. This was followed by the customary course of events; the Non-Aggression Pact of 1932, prolonged in 1934 to the end of 1945 and the invasions in alliance with Nazi Germany on 17th September, 1939.

By 1940, at Hitler's invitation, the USSR had conquered most of the countries which had seceded from the Russian Empire at the time of the Revolution. The next stage was expansion beyond the old frontiers, a stage which began in the same year (1940), with the annexation of the Roumanian province of Bukovina. The defeat of her former ally Germany in 1944-45 offered opportunity for a full-scale eruption into the heart of Europe, with the conquest of the rest of Poland and Roumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Eastern Germany. At the same time the Red Army attacked Japan at the moment of her collapse, enabling the Soviet Union to seize half of Sakhalin Island and the Kurile chain of islands. Three years later came the absorption of Czechoslovakia, and more recently, of course, the invasion in Afghanistan.

A common characteristic of all these invasions and annexations is that not only were they committed in flagrant breach of international law and specific treaties, but in every case save one took place without a formal declaration of war. (The exception was Japan, when a declaration formed part of the policy concerted with the Anglo-Americans.) This piece of evidence suggests that the Soviets not only regard attack without warning as sound military strategy, but that in addition treaties of peace, non-aggression and the like form active preparatory moves as part of the same strategy.

On 11th October 1939 Stalin entertained a Lithuanian diplomatic delegation at a banquet in the Kremlin, during which he provided elaborate assurances of his country's benevolent intentions towards Lithuania. It was the very same day, however, that he arranged the drawing up of the notorious 'Order No. 01223 regarding the Procedure for Carrying out the Deportation of Anti-Soviet Elements

from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.' It was this Order which authorized a reign of terror in the three Baltic States which resulted in the death or disappearance of tens of thousands of people.

This is a factor of Soviet thinking which is widely overlooked in the West. It is that typical trait of barbarian societies, which Soviet thinking displays in so many of its facets: cruelty, cunning, the exultation of conflict, and the disruption of ordered civil life being its most marked characteristics. War and expansion are in addition conveniently justified by Marxist ideology, as interpreted by Lenin and his successors. As Lenin himself explained in 1920, 'If the proletariat wages war, having conquered the bourgeoisie of its own country, if it wages war in the interests of strengthening and expanding socialism, then war becomes legitimate and holy'. Which I take to mean that *any* war waged by the Soviet Union is *ipso facto* 'holy'.

War with neutral Finland in 1939, for example, was justified in the following terms by an eminent Soviet legal authority (F.I. Kozhevnikov): 'The USSR has a right to defend itself by shifting the boundaries of that state which constitutes an immediate menace to it. In order to secure the frontiers of the USSR, the territorial problem can be solved by means of a just war, which is the self-defence of the Socialist state.' In the year that followed this pronouncement the 'territorial problem' was solved by the absorption of some 23,000,000 people within the frontiers of the Soviet Union.

Professor E. P. Thompson and other Marxists are wont to defend this action by references to a 'glacis' theory, whereby the Soviet Union was entitled to create a protective 'glacis' against foreign invasion. I have always found it hard to understand how proponents of such a view find it consistent to deny Hitler's claims to a similar 'glacis'. But perhaps his 'glacis' approached rather too near home.

One might feel that the only way to check further Soviet expansion would be by a continuing show of resolute military capacity to protect the frontiers of unoccupied Europe. The CND argument is the precise reverse. Only by 'setting an example', they urge, by effective disarmament, by making ourselves so militarily impotent as to constitute no perceptible threat to the Soviet Union, can we hope to persuade that power to follow suit. The Soviet Union, they claim, feels itself encircled by hostile states and is, with or without reason, deeply suspicious of their intentions. Much the same argument was proffered by advocates of appeasement of Nazi Germany in the Thirties, but as history is in general not the forte of the Monsignor and his aides, the facts have to be spelt out in terms even they may find difficult to quibble with.

CND proposals carry interesting echoes of a practice widespread among animals, and also among primitive peoples. As every dog owner knows, the weaker of two fighting dogs will suddenly adopt a cringing pose of 'surrender', lying on his back and even offering his exposed throat in a gesture of propitiation. Nature has so ordered things that the gesture is almost invariably effective. More elaborate rituals are recorded in early human societies. Among the Celts, for example, it was the

custom in such a contingency for naked women to appear before a hostile army, engaging in formal propitiatory gestures.

But, if history reveals anything, it is that policies based on such notions are little likely to prove effective towards the Soviet Union. The USSR has never lost an opportunity of conquering a weaker neighbour, *but only when the risk of doing so appeared absolutely minimal*. Finland and the Baltic States were only attacked after Hitler had provided Stalin with firm assurances that Germany would stand guard in the West against possible British and French intervention. Despite his eagerness to absorb Eastern Poland, Stalin waited three weeks for the Polish Army to be destroyed by the Germans before he dared move. The fact is that the Soviets have never voluntarily attacked a power greater than Finland. (Japan was already defeated when the Soviets entered the war in the East.)

Popular philosophy claims that a bully is invariably a coward. Though far from being the rule, this aphorism certainly applies to the Soviet Union. Soviet insecurity positively welcomes a powerful, vigorous adversary or neighbour. During the sixty-six years of its existence, the Soviet Union has known one brief period when relations with the outside world seemed secure and settled. This was the twenty-one months between 29 September 1939 and 22nd June 1941, when the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and National Socialist Germany stood shoulder to shoulder as firm allies.

As we now know, Soviet overtures to Hitler had begun the same year he took office as Chancellor. With the Blood Purge of June 1934 Stalin became fully confirmed in his views that here at last was someone who meant business, and with whom one could do business. In Soviet eyes, the great virtue of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was that it effectively sealed the USSR off from the outside world, enabling the NKVD to digest Eastern Europe in peace and maintain a vigilant eye on the native population.

Perhaps the strongest testimony to Soviet respect for Hitler lies in the contrasting relations with her Anglo-American allies after the *volte face* brought about by the German invasion. Everyone knows how the Soviet Union in 1939-41 enabled Germany to break the Allied blockade; how she provided Germany with a naval base on Soviet territory; how she employed the French Communist Party to spread defeatism in France; and how she supplied Germany with vital oil, grain and cupronickel. What is often forgotten, though surely of much greater significance, is the benevolence which Soviet internal policy displayed towards her overbearing neighbour. The Germans were permitted to open consulates in provincial towns; anti-Nazi propaganda was ruthlessly prohibited throughout Soviet territory (even in the camps of GULAG); fugitive German Jews and Marxists were packed off home; and Gestapo officials travelled freely on Soviet territory in the course of their duties.

Nothing remotely comparable characterized Stalin's subsequent dealings with his Anglo-American allies. The extraordinary gush of goodwill initiated by Beaverbrook and Harriman, which by May 1945 had become an

irrational fervour, aroused only the grimmest contempt and sourest suspicion among the Soviet ruling class.

If we ask why this should be so, and whether Soviet attitudes in the 1930s and 1940s are any guide to their conduct in the 1980s, I am convinced that the answer lies in the conspiratorial origins of the Soviet state. The overnight collapse of the Imperial Government in February 1917 came as a blinding surprise to Lenin in Switzerland and Trotsky in the United States. To their less intelligent followers it seemed something of a miracle, and when after four years of civil war they found themselves rulers of all Russia they could scarcely believe their luck.

On one point, however, they cherished no illusions. It was not love of their blue eyes that had earned them the obedience of their 180 million subjects. Despite exceptional circumstances largely favourable to their propaganda and influence, the Bolsheviks obtained only a quarter of the votes cast for elections to the Constituent Assembly in 1918. Lenin promptly dissolved the Assembly, and thenceforward only a deliberately fraudulent façade of democracy was maintained.

Force, as Lenin knew, was the only means by which an unpopular government could maintain itself in office. There was also the factor of what was regarded as the generally ungovernable character of the Russian people. Or, as Vyshinsky put it to the Polish Ambassador in 1941: '..... the Russians are a gloomy people, sluggish, lazy, dull, dirty, without initiative, hostile to any form of cultural progress. . . Nothing can be got out of this people by ordinary means. It can be raised to a higher level only by such a form of government as Stalin applies. Only by force and compulsion! And that's why I'm such a fervent admirer of Stalin and defend his system.'

The means and extent to which that force was applied is but too well known: the seizure of power in the Civil War; the creation and extension of the OGPU; the establishment of a system of penal labour camps which at its peak included twenty or thirty million souls; the forced famine and fantastic purges of the Thirties; the war against the civilian population before and during the German invasions – a war that took tens of millions of lives and on occasion took precedence over the national war against Germany. Perhaps the most striking evidence of this continuing conviction of the unremitting hostility of the people against its rulers is provided by the treatment of the two and a quarter million refugees returned by the Allies under the Yalta Agreement. It was simply assumed that anyone who had glimpsed the outside world – even if only in Auschwitz – *must* be an enemy of the regime, and execution or quarantine in a forced labour camp was the only remedy.

No one has analysed the anomalous position of the Soviet Government better than Milovan Djilas, who visited Stalin's court in 1944 and 1945, at a time when Soviet armies were riding on the crest of victory's wave, and when the Soviet Union enjoyed its brief moment of international respectability.

'As far as the cabal around Stalin was concerned, their desperate search for wine and song (women were strictly not part of the fare) was an expression of the

conspiratorial nature of Soviet leadership. Every time I was invited to Stalin's table and became involved in this unseemly game of sycophantic toasting, marathon drinking and politicking, with the dwarf-like, pock-marked despot sitting in judgement over the lives of his subjects in his enormous empire, I could not suppress a feeling that these men had no confidence at all in the legitimacy of their rule and needed reassurance from wherever it could be obtained: drink, 99% election results, vast armed forces, international treaties recognising their legitimacy . . . even adulation from fraternal foreign visitors like myself . . . What my visit to Stalin taught me was that these men regarded themselves as appointed to rule over and against the will of the people. They acted like a group of conspirators scheming to suppress, squash, circumvent, or hoodwink the inhabitants of some conquered land, not their own. Power for Stalin was a plot, with himself as chief plotter as well as the one cast to be plotted against. It was an expression of the civil war which Communists have always waged, and *will* always wage, against society.'

Inevitably the Soviet Government must fear the effects of any prolonged or severe crisis. War, the great catalyst of history, is the crisis feared most deeply. For on whose side will the Russian people fight? Nothing could appear more battered into submission than the USSR on the eve of the German invasion in 1941. But would the Russians fight for the regime? Neither Hitler nor Stalin could tell. In the event thousands of troops went over to the Germans, singly or in entire detachments. By the end of the War a million Russians were serving in the *Wehrmacht*; Hitler could have had another two million had he chosen. Stalin, a cynical realist if ever there was one, nurtured no delusions. The Russians, he confessed to Averell Harriman in September 1941, 'were fighting as always for their homeland, not for us'.

The Soviet regime has momentarily achieved what Marx declared impossible; it has frozen history. The mainsprings of Soviet policy remain much as in Stalin's time. All resources of the Soviet state are directed towards a single end, the survival of that state. Marxist ideology, now a hollow shadow of a creed, remains as the only *raison d'être* of dictatorship. It compels the USSR to be at odds with the rest of the world, a compulsion sustained also by the need for a continuing state of crisis and tension essential to justify the myriad restrictions placed upon her subject population.

Such a state is not merely contemptuous of weakness. Weakness makes it apprehensive and suspicious. Its leaders know little of the Russia in which they live as protected prisoners, and almost nothing of the responses of foreigners. To them weakness suggests duplicity, at once a temptation and a menace. They fear strength and vigour too, but they respect them and understand them.

It is a regrettable fact that many intellectuals have for two generations found an oddly seductive allure in that ramshackle tyranny beyond the Pripet swamps. Brutality and violence possess an insidious appeal for these natures. Such people would do well to consider the words of the

Soviet Minister of State Security Abakumov, delivered to an audience of SMERSH officers in 1945. 'We Chekists are not to be frightened by problems and sacrifices. It is our good fortune . . . that the British and Americans in their attitudes towards us, have still not emerged from the post-war state of calf-love. They dream of lasting peace and building a democratic world for all men. They don't seem to realise that we are the ones who are going to build a new world, and that we shall do it without their liberal-democratic recipes. All their slobber plays right into our hands, and we shall thank them for this, in the next world, with coals of fire. We shall drive them into such dead ends as they've never dreamed of. We shall disrupt them and corrupt them from within. We shall lull them to sleep, sap their will to fight. The whole "free western" world will burst apart like a fat squashed toad. To achieve it will require great efforts on our part, great sacrifices, and total renunciation of all that is trivial and personal. Our aim justifies all this. Our aim is a grand one, the destruction of the old, vile world.'

There is no easy way of countering this malevolent threat. The nuclear arsenal has provided the USSR with a shaky external security. Neither they nor we will risk a mutually destructive war. But no human institution is immortal, least of all one so contrary to nature as Soviet Communism. Its end must one day come in some unforeseeable way; perhaps in a decade, perhaps in a century.

Civilized society in earlier times has survived the threat

of tyrannical empires. In 1554 the Chevalier de Busbecq returned from an Imperial Embassy in the court of Suleiman the Magnificent. It was a time when the Turkish threat to Christian Europe seemed greater even than that of the Soviet Union today. Centuries were to pass before the Turkish Empire crumbled, but Busbecq's words appear as applicable today as they were in the days of Charles V: 'Everything is established and preserved by that which raised it at first. As Kingdoms and Empires have been obtained by Military Valour and well-appointed Armies, by the same way they must be preserved. Take away Arms, remove Soldiers, neglect Discipline, and a Kingdom will either fall of itself or be a prey to the Conqueror. The Diadem and Sceptre doth not preserve the Majesty of a Kingdom, as the Sword; in vain you wear the one upon your head or carry the other in your hand, unless your sword be girt by your side . . . I have admonished and adjured Christians to shake off that drowsy fit under which they lie . . . The danger is as great as ever it was; let us then bestir ourselves . . . to repel force with force, to run to our Arms; not fortuitous, tumultuous, and foreign ones, but our own country ones . . . Cheerfully buckle to those ways to our defence which God has mercifully supplied us with.

To our Arms, to our Arms, with valor and courage, our only hope under God. This becomes the Christian name, and the greatness of the danger we are in; and this may prevent our impending ruin.'

The Diary of Lord John Manners

The following extracts lead on directly from those given in our last issue, and concern the period of Lord Derby's illness and retirement, and Disraeli's first tenure of office as Prime Minister.

1868

Jan 22nd. Our first Cabinet this year yesterday was far from satisfactory. In Ld. Derby's absence – from gout, Disraeli opened by saying he feared it would be impossible to avoid educational legislation this year, and that consequently he had been in communication with D. of Marlborough, who had prepared a bill which he would now explain. (The Bill had only been circulated that morning.) Duke then spoke. He had consulted Primate about Conscience clause, and they had agreed upon a modified clause which in Bishop of Lincoln's words would secure liberty of teaching and freedom of conscience: this clause to be applied to annual grants as well as to building grants; secular schools to be admitted, and where, in opinion of Privy Council, education inadequate there County rates to be charged with school, the County to recover one half from district, one half from Consolidated Fund. No one having read the Bill not much was said. Hardy, Northcote & I objected to extension of conscience clause, Stanley & Malmesbury doubted about rating.

Disraeli wished to know probable expence. No result arrived at.

Jan 28th. A few days ago I called on Disraeli and told him I felt so uncomfortable about Education that I had written to Lord Derby expressing my opinion that a Reform of the Department & creation of a Ministry of Education ought to precede legislation. D assured me that he had already expressed same view to Ld. D and urged me to bring it before Cabinet or other colleagues. I said Hardy was quite of our opinion. D said personal feeling of D. of Marlborough alone stood in the way. Yesterday morning received summons to meet some of our colleagues in Downing Street at 4 o'clock. Found Disraeli, Pakington, Hardy & Northcote. Walpole had been asked, but was not in town. Hardy, Northcote & I agreed in the main that extension of Conscience clause to annual grants, & Rating system could not be supported, & that Minister of Education, Educational Census & extension of present system should be basis of Bill: to my delight Pakington

assented – saying that if he were asked which he would have Minister without a Bill, or Bill without a Minister he should say the former. Disraeli concurred, but hinted that D. of Marlborough might resign if deprived of the Department.

Jan 29th. Yesterday at the Cabinet Disraeli opened the matter in very guarded terms and called on Hardy to give his views – especially on whether measure should be complete & permanent, or tentative & temporary. Each member of the Cabinet spoke in turn with the following result, as well as I remember.

For Minister of Education, improvement & codification of Minutes in Act, & Educational Census. Hardy, A. Corry, Walpole, Pakington, myself, Northcote, Duke of Buckingham, Stanley. For larger measure and rating. Duke of Richmond & Mayo. Against Minister of Education, Malmesbury. D. of Marlborough & Disraeli reserved themselves & Lord Chancellor had no opinion to express.

D. of Buckingham was authorized to open negotiations with Hudson's Bay Company for cession of their rights with view of handing over the Country (rather larger than Europe) to Canada.

Feb 1st. Disraeli opened by saying Lord Derby earnestly wished us to reconsider Education question, and strive to come to agreement on a measure: he then called on Duke of Marlborough to state his matured opinion after having heard his colleagues. Duke made a modest and sensible speech, admitting that on the two points of Rating and Conscience Clause for annual grants his mind was not made up, and that he was quite willing to waive them in deference to his colleagues: but on the Minister of Education he remained firm, throwing out moreover a hint that more weight might be given to Education Department by rearranging rest of Council Office. He said that Archbishop told him a certain number of Bishops had agreed to meet an equal number of Bruce's friends, & endeavour to arrive at common conclusion, & that Henley was strong in favour of Archdeacon Denison's plan. Stanley, Pakington, Hardy, Northcote, Corry & myself still urged Minister of Education. D. of Richmond & Malmesbury against. D. of Buckingham absent. Disraeli endeavoured to extract points on which we were all agreed; they were too few and slight for a bill: at last Northcote suggested that we should see what could be made out of D. of Marlborough's suggestion as to remodelling his office, & Duke of M., Northcote & Hardy were appointed Sub Committee ad hoc.

Feb 4th. Disraeli opened with one of the most artful yet sensible speeches I ever heard: for the most part giving Lord Derby's views, the whole burden being that as no question of principle is at stake in the Education question, but merely one of departmental organization secession is impossible. Lord D's own view is that a new Secretary of State should be appointed – the D. of M to be the man. The Committee's recommendation was that the Committee should be abolished, the L^d. President be the

Education Minister, with a Vice President for all Council work proper, and a Secretary to the special Education Department. Lightly but clearly pointing out the objections to this proposal, D pressed on to consider the important matters on which the Cabinet was substantially agreed and ended by proposing that as no decision we could come to in L^d. D's absence on the Department question could be final, and as all were agreed some great change was necessary & that Duke of M under any circumstances was to be Education Minister, and take charge of the Bill we should proceed to discuss its 2 first parts. This was received with approbation by all except Duke who hummed and hawed, evidently perplexed by the compliments paid, and his obstinate determination to keep Education in the Privy Council. At last on distinct understanding that he was not bound to assent to what might ultimately be proposed he consented to go on with Bill, and then it was determined to refer the Bill to a sub Committee, Duke of M. Duke of Buckingham, Walpole & myself.

Tuesday Febr. 25th. After nearly two hours at the Privy Council Office this morning on Education Bill I was finishing my luncheon at my Office when Montagu Corry was announced; it was to tell me from Disraeli that L^d. Derby had resigned, and that on his advice, the Queen had asked for D, who wished to know personally or by letter from each of his colleagues whether they would assist him. I at once said he need not trouble himself about me, and that I would either call upon him, or not as might be most agreeable and convenient to him. Accordingly later in the afternoon I called at Grosvenor Gate, and was shown up to his little upstairs study. With more emotion than I had ever seen him manifest before he fairly embraced me, and after receiving my congratulations, gave me a short account of what had happened. On the Saturday Lord D informed him of his resignation, but said he was too exhausted to add more. General Gray came up from Osborne with orders not to leave London except with him as Prime Minister, and in case of any colleague proving recalcitrant to urge the Queen's strong personal wish that her new Minister should be supported. Her expressions to him were most gracious, that even if Lord Derby had not recommended him, she had determined from what she had noticed of his character & conduct to offer him the highest post. The only painful letter he had had to write was to the Chancellor, whom he could not include – not from ill will to him, but because while even at the formation of our Government Lord Derby had told him his possession of the Gt. Seal could only be temporary – now with Lord Derby disabled it became absolutely necessary to import fresh debating power into the Government in the House of Lords and that Cairns had accepted the office. He was proceeding when Walpole was announced to be waiting downstairs, and knowing that some difficulty might be experienced in that quarter I departed.

Febr. 28th. Yesterday I wrote the letter on opposite page to Lady Derby.

Feb. 27 1868

My Dear Lady Derby

You will not, I hope, think me intrusive if I venture to express to you the feeling predominant in my heart at this moment. Ever since I left Cambridge now 30 years ago, Lord Derby has been my exemplar and model of what an English statesman ought to be: and the more frequently I have been brought into personal contact with him, the more, the more gladly have I acknowledged his personal & political sovereignty; while to me individually kindness and confidence were exhibited in a manner for which I shall never cease to be grateful.

Both then on public and on private grounds his retirement is to me a source of unfeigned regret; but the cause of it forces one to acknowledge its absolute necessity, & heartfelt are my prayers, dear Lady Derby, that its result may be a restoration of his health and strength for many years to come.

Rather than trouble him with a letter at this moment I would ask you to be so kind when & as you think fit to convey to him my expression of loyalty & gratitude.

Believe me to be

Your's most truly

JM

Lady Derby's answer.

March 1

My dear Lord John,

I regretted not having time on Friday to write and tell you the very great pleasure your kindest of letters had given to my dear Husband. He was deeply touched by your sincere expressions of feeling towards him, and I need not say that I am most grateful also for the sincere affection you have for him. Indeed his dreadful illness and his retirement have brought him so many proofs of strong personal attachment as well as high opinion that he has been much touched by all this kindness — but I do not think any letter pleased him more than yours. He is now going all right, and I hope and fervently pray that he will continue steadily to improve, though we cannot venture to expect a rapid recovery.

I hope dear Lady John has been going on satisfactorily. Will you give her my love, and tell her that I look forward to seeing you both when my dear Husband is able to move to town. Ever believe me, my dear Lord John,

Yours most truly

El Derby

March 2nd 1868. The first Cabinet of the Disraeli administration. All present. The Prime Minister began by thanking us all for the confidence we had shown him in his

difficulty, and said no man in the room felt so keenly Lord Derby's loss. Then called on Mayo to give his views on the 4 main Irish questions. 1st. as to what affected her material prosperity; railways etc. 2nd. Education. 3rd. Land. 4th. Irish Church. Mayo opened by saying Railway Commission had not yet reported, and then went into land question, proposing to enlarge scope of Bill beyond what was agreed to at last Cabinet by including compensation to tenants for improvements sanctioned by Board of Works, and not, after notice, vetoed by landlord. Commission still to issue on general subject: agreed to. On Irish Church Cairns exposed the different proposals before the Public — Mayo, Pakington & Disraeli in favour of some policy on the subject to be declared in debate on Maguire's motion. Mayo really proposed although nobody appeared to notice it, that some £200,000 a year should be appropriated from Irish Church to Glebes etc. for R.C.s. Hardy said he assumed no one in the room contemplated touching the mass of Irish Church — a course which might break up the Sacraments. I counselled saying nothing which might give life to false hopes on one side, and unnecessary fears on the other, and that as we had apparently no policy to announce we had better avoid subject altogether. Disraeli summed up that our policy ought to be creation not destruction in Ireland, and that maintaining the Irish Church we might still do something for R.C. priests, and Presbyterian Ministers. On University Education Mayo proposed Charter of mixed lay and clerical element for R.C. University, which was generally approved, Northcote wishing for one University for all Ireland. I asked if he proposed endowment. Mayo said yes, upon which Disraeli suggested it should be only payment of necessary University expences as in London University. We sate 2 hours and 3 quarters.

March 4th. Disraeli opened with statement of D. of Marlborough's acceptance of change in Department of Education on condition of the Bill being complete. This was after some discussion agreed to, & Duke authorised to introduce it without delay into House of Lords. Cairns then submitted his plan for repeal of Ecclesiastical Titles' Act; as, having directed attention of Cabinet to objections to Macevoy's Bill I expressed satisfaction with Cairns' proposal. Pakington thought it less dangerous to assent to & afterwards modify Macevoy's bill than to propose measure of our own; but Cabinet took other view, and it was agreed that Cairns should introduce his Bill forthwith. D. of Buckingham submitted result of negotiations between himself and Hudson's Bay Company for surrender of their rights to Canada re. Imperial Government, and draft despatch to Lord M. (?): agreed to. On Hardy's advice it was determined not to support Abel Smith's Sunday Liquor Bill.

March 21st. Some interesting talk on the approaching crisis & on R.C. Charter, on which latter Mayo read out letter from 2 deputies of the R.C. Parley, combatting nearly every point, but ending with requesting an interview: settled that Mayo with Malmesbury for witness should see them on Tuesday. Disraeli said Gladstone's

opposition had created astonishment as he was under promise to them. D. of Marlborough authorised to say on Tuesday that Irish education would be entrusted to new Secretary of State & divided portion of British Museum. A sharpish discussion between D. of Buckingham and Hunt as to writing out £150,000 of debt due from New Zealand to Mother country. Stanley backed up the Duke, and it was so arranged. A whip ordered against Coleridge's University Bill on Wednesday.

March 23rd. Cabinet at 12 to consider Gladstone's resolutions, & our consequent course. Disraeli opened by reading sketch of amendment which had occurred to him as basis for discussion, and asked each in turn our opinion as to direct negative previous question, or amendment: unanimous in favour of last alternative. Cairns suggested important alteration in turn of amendment, reserving all expression of opinion for new Parliament, whereas Disraeli's started with acknowledging no capacity for great change. Cairn generally supported – but Pakington preferred D's. D. then suggested that Stanley should be asked to move amendment, to which S. assented; and we agreed to meet again on Friday to settle exact words. The impudent magnitude of Gladstone's move has apparently stifled our minor intestine differences on this thorny subject.

Friday 28th. Met at 12 to finally decide on terms of Stanley's amendment. At my suggestion 'United Church' was taken from the Act of Union and 'Temporalities' substituted for 'position and revenues': with those exceptions Cairn's form was adopted.

April 4th. Disraeli gave an account of his interview with the Queen. She commenced the conversation by saying she had made up her mind not to accept his resignation if he tendered it, and charged him to communicate to the Cabinet her earnest desire that he would remain firm, & not desert her. She appeared to be well informed as to the motives actuating the various sections of the Opposition, and assured him of her zealous support. He said it was the duty of the Government to consult her comfort, and convenience & the public service, and that he would communicate her gracious pleasure to his colleagues. She added that she was ready to dissolve this Parliament if necessary. An anxious conversation followed, opened by Stanley who said he saw no reason for resignation, and had reason to believe that many of the Opposition had no intention of pressing things to a conclusion. Malmesbury considered the position from 3 points of view: 1st. duty to the Queen: 2nd. to the Church, 3rd. to the Party, and agreed with Stanley. Hunt thought real danger lay not in Gladstone's resolution but in Scotch & Irish Reform Bills; to this I replied that if defeated on them we might legitimately dissolve. D. of Marlborough & Northcote rather leant to resignation if again defeated. I threw out for consideration action on the part of the Lords after precedent of 1839 on subject of Education.

Wednesday 23rd. Disraeli detailed interview with Queen last Thursday. She asked for his view of the situation. He recapitulated the main features: that Ld. Derby had accepted office in known minority of 76 in Parliament not called by him. That nevertheless until last vote policy or administration of Government had not been impugned. Finance, Foreign policy, Home, Irish policy, Abyssinian Expedition all successful. A mere vote therefore that House of Commons would consider Irish Church in Committee did not call for extraordinary notice. For the future if Gladstone carried, as he probably would, his 1st resolution the case would be very different, and he did not think in the face of such a vote we could continue to act as Ministers without an appeal to the country. Queen expressed her complete assent, and said she regarded his Supremacy as at issue, and that she looked to us not to desert her until we had appealed to her people. He then asked Cairns to state his views. Cairns said on all grounds of duty to Queen, Party, Institutions threatened, he was clear we should remain firm. Northcote doubted whether Church would not be benefitted by our resigning but adhered in the main. Hunt thought that if beaten on Scotch reform Bill we might throw over it & Irish, and dissolve with old Constituencies there, & new in England. I said that regarding question from Northcote's point of view I was strongly in favour of fighting it out to the bitter end. D. of Marlborough was against holding on till new Constituencies could be appealed to, & was in favour of resigning, or dissolving at once. Disraeli summed up and said question was how could appeal to new Constituencies be hastened? Agreed that Scotch & Irish Bill should be eased to mere Franchise bills, that registration should be hastened by appointing more Barristers, and that after Division D. should move adjournment for purpose of deciding and announcing course of Government. D. of Marlborough to go on with Education Bill. Church Rate bill to be referred to Select Committee.

Friday 24th. Duke of Buckingham today offered me the Governor Generalship of Canada – saying that it had been previously offered to Cranborne, and that were he, the Duke, not Lord Lieutenant of his County he should take it himself. I thanked him, & said the offer was so completely unexpected on my part that I must take a little time to consider. What shall I do?

April 28th. Yesterday I asked Disraeli his opinion and advice. Nothing could be more frank, or kind. He said the Government would hold till after the Election; but that it was very doubtful whether we should have a majority in the new Parliament: in that case he should retire & live probably in seclusion, in that he should miss me: Mayo and I were the two of his colleagues for whom he wished to provide: and he advised me to accept, though he should miss my advice in Cabinet. He spoke flatteringly of my Parliamentary career, and showed a depth of feeling hardly to be expected.

April 30th. After nearly a week's anxious consideration I have declined the glittering post.

Thinkers of the Left: Antonio Gramsci

Roger Scruton

‘Gramsci was an extraordinary philosopher, perhaps a genius, probably the most original communist thinker of the twentieth century in Western Europe’ (E. J. Hobsbawm). ‘If we except the great protagonists of the Soviet revolution, there is no personality in the history of the workers’ movement whose person and work have aroused greater interest than Gramsci’s’. (N. Bobbio). ‘Who has *really* attempted to follow up the explorations of Marx and Engels? I can think only of Gramsci.’ (Louis Althusser.) Such praise, from eminent members of the left-wing establishment, is but a small part of the tribute that has been offered in recent years to Antonio Gramsci. Those who remember the events of 1968 and their aftermath will recognise that the current valuation of Gramsci as a left-wing thinker – which has led to the founding in Rome of a Gramsci Institute, to the publication of virtually all the posthumous works, to the inclusion of Gramsci into a thousand university courses, as political theorist, as revolutionary, as cultural critic and as philosopher – is not the result of a few scholarly articles only, but of a vast movement of sympathy, a kind of hunger for moral and intellectual guidance, which singled out Gramsci as its object, and which has clung to him ardently ever since. Gramsci is the creation of the sixties, the symbol of a generation avid for leadership, but trusting only in those who were safely dead – preferably dead, like Gramsci, in the never-ending struggle against the ‘fascist’ enemy.

The idea of the revolutionary hero is by no means new. Indeed, it is one of the most interesting paradoxes of Marxism, that it has combined a theory of history which denies the efficacy of leadership, with a revolutionary practice which has depended entirely on leadership for its success, and which has been able to consolidate its hold on power only by establishing habits of worship towards the revolutionary hero. This paradox – the problem of ‘so-called great men’, as Engels described them – is one to which Gramsci, in his theoretical writings, directly addressed himself. But he could never have known that a whole generation of students would one day be taught to see him in the same light and with the same uncritical submissiveness as they were taught to see Mao and Trotsky: as leader, teacher and hero of the ‘revolutionary masses’. Gramsci’s canonisation is in fact of the greatest importance for those who would understand the evolution of left-wing thinking. Every critical theoretical development requires an atmosphere of ‘struggle’, such as existed in 1968, which provides the necessary feelings of solidarity. But it also requires a figurehead, who is hero or martyr in the cause of revolution. In order to qualify as

such a figurehead it is not sufficient to be a resolute leader. It is necessary also to establish one’s credentials as an intellectual; to claim some contribution to ‘socialist thought’, that will both explain and justify one’s critical role in socialist practice. The figureheads of modern left-wing movements have therefore been consistently presented as intellectuals: the extraordinary myth concerning the ‘brain of Lenin’ is but one example of a permanent hagiographic process, whereby second-rate thinkers (such as Lenin himself) are presented as paragons of insight and wisdom, whose words are oracles, and whose deeds are also revelations.

More impressive, perhaps, than the example of Lenin, is that of Mao, whose titanic strength and military genius could never have qualified him for the position of figurehead, had it not also been possible to believe in his ‘theoretical correctness’, and in the intellectual prowess which was expressed in it. Hence a whole generation of students was encouraged to study works of philosophy and political theory which, judged from a point of view outside the hagiographic zeal of Mao’s admirers, appear risibly naive, and fraught with the crudest misunderstandings. There are further examples – Ho Chi Minh, Che Guevara, and Stalin – but none more minatory to those of us who were students in the sixties than Gramsci. Gramsci did for the sixties what Lenin and Stalin had done for the thirties and forties: he convinced his following that revolutionary practice and theoretical correctness are identical concerns; that learning provides wisdom; and that wisdom is revolutionary. In short, he showed that those on the left are intellectuals, and that left-wing intellectuals have the right to rule.

That gnostic illusion – well diagnosed by Eric Voegelin – lies at the root of the emotional appeal of leftism in Italy. For not only is a ‘clerisy’ deeply rooted in the Italian national culture; there is also a sense both that leadership is necessary, and that it can obtain its credentials from no other source than education. With a frankness that would be surprising in a more orthodox Marxist, Gramsci devotes a considerable amount of his work to the study of the role of the intellectuals, directly admitting, not only that they are the true agents of revolution, but also that they owe their legitimacy to the ‘correctness’ of their views.¹ He thus supports one of the indispensable premises of modern leftism: the premise that, by virtue of my superior knowledge and insight, I, the critical intellectual, have the right to rule over you, the merely prejudiced man. In such a thought lies the main inspiration of Marxist hagiography, which – while it devotes some attention to concealing the crimes and ennobling the

motives of its chosen figureheads – is as much concerned to establish their intellectual credentials as to glorify their deeds.

Gramsci's sudden canonisation depends upon certain features of his thought which rendered him more than ordinarily useful to the sentimental revolutionaries of the sixties. First he was dead, and therefore, as I have indicated, unable either to deceive through his weakness or crush with his strength. The revolutionaries of the sixties certainly retained their unshaken faith in Mao, and, by extraordinary contortions, were able to see the 'cultural revolution' as something other than a war against the intellect. But they dimly perceived that intellectual leaders are not to be trusted to respect an intellectual following. Stalin had been unmasked, and a certain suspicion was beginning to fall on Lenin. True, there was always Trotsky, but Gramsci possessed an advantage that Trotsky could not claim: he was not only dead, but dead in the struggle against fascism. And it is a testimony to the extraordinary success of communist propaganda, that it has been able to persuade the average Western intellectual that fascism and communism are exclusive, and exhaustive, opposites, and that there is a single scale of political ideology, stretching from 'far left' to 'far right'. Thus, while indeed communism is on the far left, it is simply one further stage along a road which all intellectuals must go, to the extent that they are opposed to the true evil of our times, the 'far right' view of the fascist enemy.

It is perhaps easier for an Englishman than it is for an Italian to see through that pernicious nonsense, and to perceive what it is designed to conceal: the deep structural similarity between fascism and communism, both as theory and as practice, and their common antagonism to the forms of constitutional government that are the aim and the fulfilment of European states. Even if we accept the – highly fortuitous – identification of National Socialism and Italian Fascism, to speak of either as the true political opposite of communism is to betray a dangerous naivety. Communism, like fascism, involves the attempt to create a mass popular movement, and a state bound together under the rule of a single party, in which there will be total cohesion about a common goal. It involves the elimination of opposition, by whatever means, and the replacement of ordered dispute between parties by clandestine 'discussion' within the single ruling élite. It involves taking control – in the 'name of the people' – of the means of communication and education, and the instilling of a principle of command throughout the economy. Both movements regard law as defeasible and constitutional constraints as irrelevant – for both are essentially 'revolutionary', governed from above by an 'iron discipline'. In short, both are forms of military government, involving the constant and total mobilisation of the entire populace, which can no longer do even the most peaceful-seeming things – eating, walking, praying, or meeting – except in the spirit of war. The most important difference, historically, is that, whereas fascist governments have frequently come to power by democratic election, communist governments have always had to rely upon a *coup d'état*.

The reply comes that communism is perhaps like that in practice, but only because the practice has betrayed the theory. Of course, the same could be said of fascism; but it has been an important leftist strategy – and the major component of Soviet post-war propaganda – to contrast a purely theoretical communism with 'actually existing' fascism, so as to reinforce the view that communism and fascism are opposites. Thus a promise of heaven is contrasted with the reality of hell. There is a dual purpose in this. Not only does it help to rally to the cause of revolution all those who had been involved in the 'struggle against fascism'. It also reinforces an independent intellectual habit, without which much communist propaganda would be totally ineffective – the habit of thinking in dichotomies, of representing everything as an 'either/or', of inducing the thought, by whatever means, that those who are not with us are against us.² This habit can be seen everywhere in Gramsci's early writings³, and is incapsulated in the slogan with which he first led the Italian Communist Party into battle against Mussolini – the slogan that 'between fascism and communism there is no middle road', with which sentiment Mussolini, being an intellectual of similar make-up, was disposed to agree.

There is another reason for Gramsci's canonisation, however. Gramsci provided the theory which promised, both to solve the problem of 'so-called great men', and also to establish the intellectual's right to political ascendancy. In *The Modern Prince*, and other writings from his prison years⁴, he ceased merely to reiterate the worn slogans of Leninism, and devoted himself to what is, in truth, the critical task for the Marxist politician – the task of reconciling the Marxist theory of history and society, with a philosophy of action. In other words he sought to effect the transition from interpretation to change.

Gramsci referred to his theory as the 'philosophy of praxis', and assumed it to be an offshoot of Marxism. The theory arose in opposition to the 'vulgar materialism' of Bukharin, and to the popular and influential version of Marx's theory of history which Bukharin typified.⁵ If 'base' determines 'superstructure', – in other words, if the works of the spirit are the offshoots of economic transformations which they do not control – what place is there for political (and especially revolutionary) action? And if the base moves ineluctably in obedience to the growth of productive forces, how can a social system survive the point at which it enters into conflict with this growth? How, for example, can the capitalist order survive the point at which it begins to 'fetter' the productive forces? These well-known problems prompted Gramsci's theory of 'hegemony'.⁶ A social order can survive through crisis, he argued, because of the complex nature of class domination. Under capitalism the bourgeois class holds power, not merely because it controls the means of production, but also because it establishes a 'hegemony' throughout civil society and the state, reserving to itself the offices of government, and the key positions of influence in all the institutions of civil society. Religion, education, communication, indeed every activity that lies embedded within the existing social order, falls under a regimen of bourgeois control. The results of this

hegemony are twofold. First, it enables a class to exercise (whether or not consciously) a concerted political will, and thereby to control the effects of an economic crisis, and ensure the survival of the social order from which it derives its power. Secondly, it places in the hands of a ruling class the instruments of education and indoctrination, whereby it can persuade other classes to accept its rule as natural and legitimate. Thus the priesthood, by inculcating habits of obeisance towards authority, and by cloaking all existing institutions in a mantle of divine ordination, induces the mass of people to accept the political order which governs them. By virtue of this dual influence, a ruling class can exert itself to overcome the pressures which rise from the economic base. Changes in the superstructure are therefore not determined only by changes in the base: the causality is indeed reciprocal. To put it another way, the Marxian theory of history, which explains all historical development in economic terms, is false. Historical development is as much the outcome of political will (as our 'bourgeois' historians have always insisted) as the outcome of 'material' transformations.

Of course, Gramsci does not put it in quite that way – he speaks of a 'dialectical' relation between superstructure and base⁷, thus using Marxian jargon in order to mask his deep agreement with the fundamental proposition of conservatism, the proposition that history is on no-one's side. Nevertheless, Gramsci's rebuttal of Marxian determinism is equally fundamental to his own 'philosophy of praxis'. It enabled him to do, what classical Marxism cannot do, which is to rehabilitate the political sphere. Politics is no longer a response to economic forces welling from below, but an active principle of change, which can stand against those forces and curtail or control them. Communist politics will involve the systematic replacement of the ruling hegemony. Thus the superstructure will be steadily transformed, to the point where the new social order, the emergence of which was permanently blocked by the old hegemony, is at last able to come forth under its own impulse. This process is called 'passive revolution', and can be accomplished only by the conjunction of two forces: that exerted from above by the communist intellectuals, who steadily displace the hegemony of the bourgeoisie, and that exerted from below by the 'masses', who bear within themselves the new social order that has grown from their labour. The transformation occurs only when these forces act in harmony, as an 'historical bloc': and the role of the party is to produce that harmony, by uniting the intellectuals to the masses in a single disciplined force. The party is the 'Modern Prince', the single agent of true political change, which can transform society only because it absorbs into its collective action all the smaller actions of the intelligentsia, and combines with the sheer force of the proletarian masses, giving strength to the one and guidance to the other. Hence the party must be integrated into civil society – it must gradually impose its influence throughout society, and indeed replace every organisation that holds any position within the hegemony of political influence.

Gramsci thought that this kind of systematic in-

filtration would precipitate the abolition of the state. The communist intellectuals and the masses are, he believed, bound together by an instinctive sympathy; this would remove the need for coercive government, and found in its place an ideal government by consensus.⁸ Like so many intellectuals of the left, Gramsci does not analyse this ideal government (this 'administration of things', as Marx described it). He therefore loses all power to persuade his opponent, who is sceptical precisely of the *aims* of communism, and has no doubt about the means. To the realist who asks how, in this society of the future, conflicts are to be accommodated or resolved, Gramsci has no reply. For the communist shares with the fascist an overriding contempt for opposition: the purpose of politics is not to live with opposition, but to liquidate it. The question of opposition is, however, the single most important issue of modern politics. Conflicts between individuals lead, by free association, to conflicts between groups, to rivalries and factions, which will inevitably express themselves in competition for power. How is that competition to be accommodated? In particular, how is the Communist Party to respond to opposition to its rule? We know the Leninist prediction: that there will be no opposition. And we know too the Stalinist method whereby that prediction has been verified.

The question is absolutely crucial to a 'Marxist humanist', who seeks, like Gramsci, for a politics that is adapted to the human reality. Gramsci assumes that the masses will be united behind the intellectuals. At the same time he is aware of the many millions (who for some reason are not to be included in the 'masses') who had provided fascism with the kind of mass support that communism has never achieved. And it is indeed the very historical *reality* of fascism which shows the incoherence of the communist dream – the dream of a society without conflict and opposition, not because the first is resolved and the second accommodated, but because the 'conditions' of neither obtain. The conditions of conflict are assumed to be social, and changeable, dependent upon the 'antagonistic production relations' to which the Marxists trace everything objectionable. But if the conditions of conflict lie, as they evidently do lie, in human nature, then to hope for their removal, is to entertain an inhuman hope, and to be moved towards inhuman action.

The appeal of Gramsci's political theory is evident. It provides the complete justification to the left-wing intellectual in his bid for power. Revolution, according to Gramsci, is not an ineluctable force that sweeps us away, but an *action*, undertaken by heroic individuals. Moreover, the intellectual does not need to immerse himself in the proletariat in order to work for revolution. On the contrary, he may calmly proceed to whatever comfortable office invites him, and work for the downfall of the 'bourgeois' hegemony, while enjoying its fruits. Such a philosophy is extremely useful to the intellectual – whose views and patience would be severely challenged outside the university – and it is the natural philosophy of student revolution. Add to it the charmed dichotomy of communism and fascism – the dichotomy illustrated by

Gramsci's own heroic life – and the picture is complete. An enemy is identified, a 'struggle' defined, and a theory provided which shows that, to fight with the heroes, one need only stay at one's post.

But all this – pleasing though it may be to the man in search of 'painless praxis' – raises considerable doubt as to Gramsci's Marxist credentials. For is Gramsci not simply recommending a new class society, with the party as collective 'philosopher king', and with the intellectuals enjoying the privileges that were once enjoyed by their 'bourgeois' opponents? Here and there in the *Prison Notebooks* Gramsci wrestles with this question, arguing first that the intellectuals are not a class, and secondly that the intellectuals, by virtue of their educative role, will be able to persuade the masses to accept their dominion, which will therefore be entirely without a coercive basis.⁹ Neither argument is plausible, and the tortuous reasoning which supports them barely conceals Gramsci's awareness that this is so. For the theory of hegemony implies the rejection of the economic definition of class put forward by Marx – or at least, it implies the recognition that collective agents exist which have the power accorded by Marxism to classes, and yet which are formed precisely by the unity of purpose which characterises (in Gramsci's view) the intellectual élite. Moreover, the ability of a ruling class to persuade the masses (through its priestly arm) to accept its rule is precisely the feature of a 'class society' which Gramsci had wished to display and analyse. Why is the new priesthood any different, in its structural features, from the old? In particular, why is it better for the masses to be dominated by an intellectual élite, than by a hegemony of honest bourgeois? The theory of the 'party as prince' makes fully clear that the communist future will involve an immense disposition of political power on the part of those appointed to 'administer' things. To argue that the power is not exerted *over* the masses, merely because the masses are to accept and cooperate with it, is to be the victim of that very bourgeois ideology which scientific Marxism aims to overthrow.

To be fair, such issues are not discussed by Gramsci in the *Notebooks* with the assiduity and coherence that would permit him to resolve them. The best that could be said is that he so immerses them in literary obscurity as to permit the faithful to assume whatever answer they may currently require. But it is interesting to look back to the original of Gramsci's theory of the party. Gramsci's early writings show that he had grasped two important truths: first that there are intellectuals who are active anti-communists; and secondly that there are many non-intellectuals who are prepared to be led by them, in thwarting the aims of the Communist Party. He invented a class to which these recalcitrant people could be assigned, and, because they must be rigorously excluded from the irreproachable 'masses', they had to be members of the 'bourgeoisie'. Hence was born the absurd theory of the 'bourgeois' nature of fascism – or rather, since it was too palpably the case that the lowest orders of society were more disposed to follow Gramsci's rival intellectual Mussolini than to follow Gramsci – the 'petty bourgeois' nature of the fascist menace:

What is Italian fascism? It is the insurrection of the lowest stratum of the Italian bourgeoisie, the stratum of the layabouts, of the ignorant, of the adventurers to whom the war gave the illusion of being good for something and of necessarily counting for something, who have been carried forward by the state of political and moral decadence. . . .¹⁰

Gramsci thus initiated a standard communist evasion: a vast popular movement that is anti-communist is never a movement of the 'masses', whereas a *coup-d'état* by communist intellectuals is always supported by the 'masses', whatever the strength and nature of the opposition. Movements like fascism are movements of the 'petit bourgeoisie' – and how often do we find this nonsense in the pages of our own more scrupulous historians, when they write of Hitler's rise to power? James Joll writes that Gramsci believed the fascist regime had no class base (and hence was not genuinely 'revolutionary').¹¹ On the contrary, Gramsci believed that, precisely because it had come to power, fascism must have such a base. He invented a name for this alien class, which, despite the fact that it embraced a majority of Italians, was to be regarded as quite distinct from the 'masses', a mere opposition 'fraction' that, in the outcome of the final 'struggle', would be duly liquidated. And he studied the structure of the party that had led it to power, guided by an intellectual. He learned the lesson of the fascists, the lesson of 'corporatism' – which is the true original for his theory of 'hegemony'. Society, he realised, is composed of a thousand small institutions, a thousand associations, a thousand patterns of communication and response. To reach into every one of these, and to impose upon them – while safeguarding the hegemonic power which they contain – the iron discipline of party leadership: this is the secret of politics. This is what had led the fascists to power, and what had formed, for the first time since the birth of the modern Italian state, that unity about a common purpose, which gave form and coherence to the mass of followers and also power and principle to the Vanguard party which governed them.

In short, the theory of the *Prison Notebooks* is the true theory of fascism: of the power which had pre-empted Gramsci's ambition, by realising it in other hands. When, in an early article¹², Gramsci described the proletariat as making up an ideal unity, a '*fascio*', he anticipated in his hopes precisely the form of social order which was later to be achieved by his rival. The philosophy of praxis – so like the philosophical 'dynamism' of Mussolini, and, like that philosophy, influenced through and through by Georges Sorel – retains its charm for the intellectual, precisely because it promises him both power over the masses, and a mystic unity with them. But that is the promise of fascism, and, if the left needs constantly to identify the fascist as the single enemy, we need look no further for the explanation. For what better way to conceal one's intentions, than to describe them as the intentions of one's mortal enemy?

Notes

1. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. & tr. by Q. Hoare and G. Nowell-Smith, London 1971, p. 425 ff.
2. This habit of thought is brilliantly diagnosed by Petr Fidelius in this issue – see ‘In Search of Central Europe’. See also Petr Fidelius, *Jazyk a Moc*, Munich 1983.
3. See especially the addresses to the Lyons Congress, in *Selections from Political Writings, 1921–26*, tr. & ed., Q. Hoare, London 1978, pp. 313–378.
4. In *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, and also in *The Modern Prince and Other Writings*, edited by the Gramsci Institute in Rome, and published, tr. L. Marks, New York 1957.
5. N. I. Bukharin, *Historical Materialism, a System of Sociology*, Moscow 1921.
6. This theory derives from the Prison writings, and is given in *The Modern Prince*, and elsewhere. It is very clear from Gramsci’s language that he had always in mind the famous preface to a Critique of Political Economy, in which Marx delivered in aphoristic form the complete outline of his theory of history.
7. See also the discussion in Joseph V. Femia, *Gramsci’s Political thought*, Oxford 1981, ch. 3.
8. See, for example, the letter to Tania, May 2 1932: *Letters from Prison*, ed. & tr. Lynne Lawner, pp. 234–5.
9. See, for example, the crucial passage ‘The Formation of Intellectuals’, in *The Modern Prince and other writings*, cit., pp. 118–125.
10. *L’Ordine Nuovo*, 11th March 1921.
11. James Joll, *Gramsci*, Fontana Modern Masters, London 1977, p. 58.
12. Quoted in Joll, *cit.* p. 33.

Berkeley on Civil Disobedience

J. P. Day

Now that civil disobedience is once again a burning issue, it is timely to consider the view that George Berkeley took of it. His treatment is likely to appeal to readers of *The Salisbury Review* for two reasons. First, because he is the Church of England’s intellectually most eminent ecclesiastic. Secondly, because he was a Tory of a rare and interesting kind. He states his position in his principal work in ethical and political philosophy, namely, his discourse entitled *Passive Obedience*.

Its origin is as follows. In 1712, Berkeley delivered three discourses in the chapel of Trinity College, Dublin, of which he was a Fellow, to junior members of the college. His intention seems to have been simply to give them guidance in an urgent practical problem. But the sermons caused Berkeley to be suspected of being a Jacobite. To refute this charge, Berkeley published them as a single discourse in the same year. Berkeley was loyal to the Hanoverians, but he was not sympathetic to the Whigs, who began their long ascendancy under that House. The theory of Divine Right and Passive Obedience (otherwise called Non-Resistance) was in fact the theory of the Tories. The Whigs’ renowned political philosopher, John Locke, who had been intimately involved in the Revolution Settlement, had criticised it in his *First Treatise of Civil Government*. It was a serious matter to be suspected of Jacobite sympathies, as was shown by the Jacobite Rebellions of 1708, 1715 and 1745. During the last, Berkeley, who was then Bishop of Cloyne near Cork, raised and equipped a troop of horse to counter the threat of a French invasion of southern Ireland in support of the Pretender.

Passive Obedience is essentially a critical work which is directed against Locke’s theory of conditional loyalty; a theory which Berkeley regarded as not only false but ‘pernicious’. Superficially, then, his position is paradoxical. On the one hand, he supported the

Revolution Settlement and the Hanoverians, and opposed the Stuarts. On the other hand, he opposed Locke and the Whigs, and professed the Tory theory of Passive Obedience. In reality, however, his position is quite clear. He was a ‘Hanover Tory’. His quarrel with the Whigs was not over their conclusion, the Revolution Settlement, but over their reasons for it, *viz.*, Locke’s theory of social contract and conditional allegiance, which he expounds in his *Second Treatise of Civil Government*. (Berkeley criticises Hobbes’ and Locke’s theories of social contract in Secs 22–24 of *Passive Obedience*.)

The text of Berkeley’s discourse is, ‘Whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God’ (*Romans*, xiii, 2). His thesis, then, is the unconditional non-resistance precept, ‘Do not resist the supreme power!’. It will be convenient to call the supreme power ‘the sovereign’. This precept is negative, *ie* a prohibition. It is also unconditional (*ie*, it allows no exceptions), and a moral rule (as opposed to a legal or a prudential rule). Berkeley also speaks of moral precepts as ‘laws of Nature’. This is a sort of prescriptive law of Nature as contrasted with the descriptive laws of Nature discovered by scientists, and the authority who issues them is God, so that these laws of Nature are also ‘ordinances of God’. (See Berkeley’s text, above.)

‘Passive obedience’ means simply ‘unconditional non-resistance’. But Berkeley’s thesis is not that subjects have an unconditional moral obligation to obey *any* command, especially a law, of their sovereign. He distinguishes negative moral precepts from positive ones, and maintains that there is an unconditional obligation to obey the former, but not the latter. Consequently, a subject has a moral right, indeed an obligation, to disobey any command of his sovereign which conflicts with a negative moral precept. But if a subject does so disobey his sovereign’s commands, then he has an unconditional

obligation to 'a patient submission to whatever penalties the supreme power has annexed to the neglect or transgression of them'. Suppose, for instance, that some sovereign commands all his non-Jewish subjects to kill all his Jewish subjects. Then the non-Jewish subjects have an obligation to disobey his command, because it conflicts with the negative moral precept 'Do not kill!'. Suppose however, that the sovereign also commands any non-Jewish subject who disobeys that command to go to prison for ten years. Then all his non-Jewish subjects have an unconditional moral obligation to obey this second command.

Berkeley advances three arguments for his unconditional non-resistance precept, the first of which is from the unconditional inviolability of negative moral precepts. (See above.) It goes simply as follows. There is an unconditional obligation to obey all negative moral precepts. The unconditional non-resistance precept is a negative moral precept. Therefore, there is an unconditional moral obligation to obey the unconditional non-resistance precept.

The second argument is utilitarian, and runs thus. God intends the happiness of all persons past, present and future, *ie* 'the public good'. Therefore, all persons ought to take the necessary means to the public good. These means are obedience to a set of moral precepts, one of which is the unconditional non-resistance precept. Therefore, all persons ought to obey the unconditional non-resistance precept.

The third argument is the following dilemma. There has to be some moral precept respecting civil disobedience. This precept must be either Berkeley's unconditional non-resistance precept, or Locke's conditional non-resistance precept, which says, 'Do not disobey your sovereign, except in emergencies when the public good requires disobedience!'. But Locke's precept cannot be accepted, because it is too difficult for a subject to judge whether an act of civil disobedience will conduce to the public good. Therefore, Berkeley's precept must be accepted.

The distinction between positive and negative moral rules on which Berkeley relies so heavily did not originate with him. It derives from the facts that some of the Ten Commandments are negative (*eg*, 'Do not kill!'), whereas others are positive (*eg*, 'Honour your father and your mother!'); and that the former are more important and more binding than the latter. However, in his first argument, Berkeley overlooks the simple fact that any negative moral precept is equivalent to some positive moral precept. Thus, 'Never disobey your sovereign's commands!' is equivalent to 'Always obey your sovereign's commands!'. But Berkeley himself points out, truly, that there is no unconditional obligation to obey positive moral precepts. Therefore, on his own showing, there is no unconditional obligation to obey negative moral precepts.

To understand Berkeley's second argument it is necessary to distinguish between act-utilitarianism and rule-utilitarianism. Utilitarianism is the theory that the test of the rightness of actions is their consequences, *eg*, their tendency to promote the public good. Act-utilitarianism is the theory that the test of the rightness of

an action is, *eg*, its tendency to promote the public good. But rule-utilitarianism is the theory that the test of the rightness of an action is its falling under some rule, obedience to which tends *eg* to promote the public good; for instance 'Never disobey your sovereign's commands!'. Locke is an act-utilitarian, but Berkeley is the first rule-utilitarian, and his theory is remarkably similar to that propounded much later by J S Mill in his *Utilitarianism*. In particular, both authors object against act-utilitarianism the difficulty and slowness of estimating the consequences of an action. The difficulty of predicting the effect on the public good of an act of civil disobedience, especially in its extreme form of rebellion, is just one, though a very striking illustration of this general truth.

As for Berkeley's third argument, it is possible to slip between the horns of his dilemma. For civil disobedience can be justified not only by reference to the public good but also by reference to natural rights. Locke offers this justification as well as a utilitarian one: '... where the body of the people or any single man are deprived of their right, ... they have a liberty (*ie* a moral right) to appeal to heaven (*ie* to resist their sovereign) ...' This is the justification of civil disobedience which is most commonly advanced today, for instance by John Rawls in his *Theory of Justice*.

What, then, are the differences between Berkeley and Locke, and which of them has the better of their dispute? Respecting the moral obligation to obey a law providing punishment for civil disobedience, there is no difference between them. For Locke writes '... What if the magistrate should enjoin anything by his authority that appears unlawful (*ie* wrong) to the conscience of a private person? I answer, ... that such a private person is to abstain from the action that he judges unlawful (wrong), and he is to undergo the punishment which it is not unlawful (not wrong) for him to bear'. The reason is, of course, that although a citizen may be justified in disobeying a bad law, he is not thereby justified in further weakening law and order by a *second* act of disobedience, namely to the law which provides a certain punishment for disobeying the bad law. To judge by their actions, such eminent civil disobedients as Thoreau, Russell, Gandhi and King have agreed with Locke and Berkeley on this important point.

Nor does Berkeley disagree with Locke about the moral justifiability of disobeying such a law as that commanding non-Jewish subjects to kill Jewish subjects. (See above.) Where they differ is over the reasons that they give. For Locke, the disobedience is justified because the law violates the Jewish subjects' right to life. But for Berkeley, the disobedience is justified because the law conflicts with the negative moral precept, 'Do not kill!', the obligation to obey which is unconditional. (See above.) Here Locke is on firmer ground than Berkeley. For whereas there are no unconditionally obligatory moral rules, there are indeed general moral rights to life, liberty, *etc*.

Finally, what of disobedience to a law forbidding rebellion against the sovereign? The act-utilitarian Locke holds that each citizen must use his own judgment to decide whether the public good requires this drastic

action. But the rule-utilitarian Berkeley maintains that the citizen ought simply to obey the secondary principle, 'Do not resist your sovereign!'. Their different stances reflect their different practical concerns, Locke's being to vindicate the Glorious Revolution, but Berkeley's being to avert a Jacobite rebellion. Here again, Locke is right, since the citizen must take this hard and fateful decision himself. He cannot evade it by automatically following a

rule. Yet one must sympathise with Berkeley's desire to relieve him of this responsibility by offering him such a rule. For, as he prophetically wrote, '... in the way of rebellion we are sure to increase the public calamities, for a time at least, though we are not sure of lessening them for the future'. If Charles Edward Stuart had heeded those wise words he would have spared Scotland the Battle of Culloden and its grim aftermath.

The Race Relations Industry

Antony Flew

The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), as it likes to tell us in its advertisements, 'was set up by the Race Relations Act 1976, with the duties of working towards the elimination of discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between different racial groups generally.' These are indeed admirable objectives, which no person of goodwill could fail to share. Certainly racism is an outrage; if but only if, that is, the word 'racism' is, as it should be, construed as meaning the advantaging or disadvantaging of individuals for no other or better reason than that they happen to be members of this racial group rather than that.

So, when we learn from the Commission's *1982 Annual Report* that in that year they won only 30 out of the 200 cases which they brought or supported before Industrial Tribunals (p. 11), we may – although even one case of unjust or otherwise wrongful treatment is always one too many – be tempted to conclude that the general situation is pretty good; and a deal better than might have been feared. Certainly this notable failure of the vast majority of CRE-backed cases to stand up in court ought to have persuaded the Commission to look again, and this time critically, at reports of research which they have been sponsoring.

'Racial discrimination in employment remains widespread', they say. Maybe it does. But is it really as widespread as the CRE would have us believe? 'In 1982', they continue, 'the Commission carried out . . . spot checks on 300 London based firms who were recruiting employees and found that 50 per cent discriminated against black applicants at the point of recruitment – a figure which confirmed the results of earlier and more substantial research programmes' (p. 6).

A critic must ask: 'Were these CRE researchers – like, it seems, almost all those in what Tom Lehrer would have us call Edbiz¹ – content just to point to inequalities of outcome; either grossly confusing these with inequalities of opportunity; or blandly taking it for granted that unequal outcomes cannot but be in fact the product of unequal opportunities?' There is some evidence internal to that *1982 Autumn Report* that the Commission is itself client to confusions and false assumptions of this sort. For instance: in the text they say that 'ethnic minorities have

taken more than their fair share' of youth unemployment; supporting this with the statement that 'In June 1982, the Commission published a survey of inner city youth unemployment . . . which indicated that 59 per cent of young people of West Indian origin were unemployed, as compared with 41 per cent of their white peers' (p. 9).

It is clear that the CRE believes, or at any rate would like us to believe, that this 'potentially explosive' disparity is due to white racism, to discrimination against non-whites as such; and, therefore, that it falls within the CRE's statutory terms of reference. Yet in the very same page they present in diagram form fuller and slightly different figures. These show: that their wholesale claim about 'ethnic minorities' is simply false; that their suggested explanation of this 59%/41% disparity, in terms of white discrimination against all non-whites, must be mistaken; and, hence, that the cherished corollary conclusion, that to destroy it is their own peculiar and appointed business, falls to the ground. For the diagram reveals other disparities in inner-city juvenile unemployment. Its figures are: (not 41 but) 42% for Whites; 59% for Afro-Caribbeans; and 40% – a little less, that is, than for Whites – for Asians.

Elsewhere there are some small signs that the Commission is half aware of a more plausible explanation for the actual disparity between, on the one hand, the Afro-Caribbeans and, on the other, the Whites and the Asians. Nevertheless it nowhere permits itself to entertain any thought that there may be among the former any deficiencies either of character or of education not to be attributed to (white) racism, or which could and should be best and most properly corrected by the efforts of the people themselves rather than of official busybodies. The glimpses occur in Appendix 6, in accounts of two 'Research Grants' to members of Departments of Education. One refers to 'careers for West Indian boys', and 'The research fundings [sic] will form part of the Commission's campaign against underachievement.' The other is 'to examine differences between black and white pupils in relation to 'high' and 'low' educational achievement' (pp. 32–3). I must, by the way, insist upon interjecting that those disclaiming sneers against the distinction between high and low educational achievement

are, of course, contributed either by the Commission or their hired 'educationist'; not by me or by any other sincere teacher.

Since the CRE did in 1982 find thirty clear and winnable cases of racial discrimination in employment, it might be premature to call for its immediate and total dissolution; even though these 30 hits do stack up against 170 misses. But the evidence already produced has shown the quangurus of this quango to be as zealous as others of their species to make for themselves more and ever-continuing employment. Why else should they be so resolute to discover racial discrimination where no racial discrimination exists? So perhaps it is for the present sufficient to urge a drastic budget cut, and a reminder that the terms of reference of the CRE are: 'To promote *equality of opportunity* . . . between people of different racial groups' (p. 4: emphasis added); not *equality of outcome*.

The sums involved are, of course, compared with what needs to be cut if public expenditure is not to reach and to surpass 50% of national income, peanuts. Yet they would be more than sufficient to cover – say – a restoration and extension of BBC Overseas Services. We can know because the CRE records its 1982–3 expenditures (pp. 4 and 27). They total £8,306,586. Of this more than eight millions, more than two and a half went on 'Salaries and Wages, National Insurance, Pensions and Graduated contributions'; more than two on 'Grant-Aid for Employment of Community Relations Officers and Assistants'; and more than thirteen hundred thousand on 'Commission and Secretariat (Overhead Expenses)'. Where have all those fierce Treasury axemen been, where those cruel Thatcherite cuts of which we hear so much?

These are matters of financial substance. But there are questions of principle to be raised about many items in Appendix 4 'Project Aid Grants approved by the Commission' and in Appendix 5 'Self Help Fund' (pp. 28 and 32). Why, in the name of racial equality, is the taxpayer making contributions to a 'Festival of Black Independent Film Makers', to 'Black Bookfair 1981', to a conference of the Society of Black Lawyers, and to 'Mother Tongue Classes' in the Bradford Gujarati School, and elsewhere? Would the CRE make corresponding contributions to a Festival of White Independent Film Makers, to a White Bookfair, or to a conference of a Society of White Lawyers? Or would it not rather, and rightly, seek to bring a case under the Race Relations Act against the organisers of any such racially exclusive operation?

Again, what business has the CRE to be supporting the teaching and learning of any language other than, perhaps, English? (English is relevant since the object of the exercise surely is, or ought to be, as fast as we can, so to assimilate our immigrants that they become English or Scots or Welsh who just happen to have skins of a minority colour? Those who want to remain – say – Bangladeshi ought to be planning later, if not sooner, to be returning to Bangladesh.)³

If the Commission supports the teaching and learning of Gujarati for no other or better reason than that it is an Asian language, then this becomes an exercise in precisely

what the CRE was established to combat; namely, racially grounded privilege. But if, as the similar grant to the Turkish Education Group might suggest, such CRE benefactions are available to any immigrants sharing a mother tongue other than English — Polish or Lithuanian Czech or any other refugees from the Socialist Bloc, say — then these payments become *ultra vires* rather than, to coin a phrase, *contra vires*.

Such 'Projected Aid' and 'Self Help' grants, however, total little more than a quarter of what is spent on 'Grant Aid for Employment of Community Relations Officers and Assistants.' And it is these people, rather than those at the centre, who do most of the direct and positive harm. Soft hints from the centre become hard and explicit at the level of what the Marxists are now calling 'the local state'. Take for example Berkshire, an authority which recently appointed a Marxist to direct its race relations activities. In the name of the Advisory Committee for Multicultural Education he circulated a discussion document to all teachers, *Education for Equality*.

The CRE's own employment of the term 'black' is loose and confusing. Sometimes they refer only to blacks, sometimes to all non-whites, and sometimes their intentions are obscure or indeterminate. But official Berkshire proposes explicitly to redefine the word to include 'both Afro-Caribbean and Asian people' (p. 3: emphasis original), while simultaneously extending 'Afro-Caribbean' to cover all and only those previously rated black. These manoeuvres might appear merely perverse, or a concession to the vulgar, or both. But we have already seen that they have a very definite purpose, well understood by its proposers. The point is to conceal relevant differences between different non-white groups, while suggesting both that all equally are victims of (exclusively white) racism, and that there is nothing which they themselves can do to better their conditions; apart, that is, of course, from supporting the right left-wing political campaigns. In the slightly more tactful words of *Education for Equality*, "The term "black" emphasizes the common experience which both Afro-Caribbean and Asian people have of being victims of racism, and their common determination to oppose racism' (p. 3).

It is impossible to emphasize too strongly the importance of not thinking of all immigrants, or even of all non-white immigrants, as one homogeneous mass. For there is a deal of evidence to show that, especially in the second generation, Asians are reaching higher levels of achievement than blacks; and hence evidence to suggest that white racism cannot be a major factor in accounting for black failures. To the comparison between white, black and Asian rates of juvenile unemployment it must for the moment suffice to add mention of a finding by the National Child Development Study of the National Children's Bureau. Similarly, all immigrant populations — West Indian, Asian and Irish too — live on average in conditions which are by prevailing standards overcrowded in the first generation; but, while with *both* the West Indians and the Irish, this above-normal overcrowding persists into the second generation; with the Asians the disparity has, in the second generation,

disappeared completely.⁴ If only our researchers – in this encouraged and supported by formidable vested interests in race relations – were not so obsessed with race and racism, we might have evidence also of significant differences in performance between those coming from different parts of the Caribbean. It was, after all, non-racial differences between inhabitants of the different islands which caused the breakup of the West Indies Federation.

The 1982 *Annual Report* displays insufficient awareness of the fundamental distinction between inequality of opportunity and inequality of outcome as well as a besetting disinclination to recognise, both that poor achievement by non-whites may have little or nothing to do with white racism, and that there may be entirely unpolitical steps which those concerned could and should take in order to better themselves. *Education for Equality* begins by quoting, and pretending to endorse, the stated aim of the 1976 Race Relations Act: 'to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups' (p. 1). It then proceeds so to redefine 'racism' that that fundamental distinction is collapsed, while what the Commission itself is merely most disinclined to admit is now outright denied; by definition!

Under the italicized heading '*The central and pervasive influence of racism*' the crucial clauses run: 'There are certain routine practices, customs and procedures in our society whose consequence is that black people have poorer jobs, health, housing and life-chances than do the white majority . . . Racism is a shorthand term for this combination of discriminatory practices; unequal relations and structures of power, and negative beliefs and attitudes' (p. 9). This whole 'perspective emphasizing primarily Equality', which in the ensuing teachers' discussion its presumed author had the grace to describe as 'a Marxist analysis', is in the end, with a swingeing effrontery, said to be 'promoted by supporters of all the main political parties.' All, therefore, are required to accept both this 'Marxist analysis' and policies derived therefrom – for no other or better reason than that 'All the main parties . . . support the 1976 Race Relations Act' (p. 11).

This outrageous redefinition of 'racism' has apparently now been promoted from the Advisory Committee for Multicultural Education to acceptance by the full Education Committee of the Royal County of Berkshire. For its every feature seems to find a place in one or other of the three *Education for Racial Equality* policy papers since issued in the name of the Director of Education. Yet given that redefinition of 'racism', or indeed anything like it, and given too that, whatever the word is to be used to mean, racism has to be eschewed and abominated, then we are going to be asked to condemn and abandon any and every institution or practice the actual effects of which are that the racial distribution in any social group is substantially different from that in the population as a whole. If there are n% of blacks and m% of browns in the population as a whole, then there have to be n% of blacks and m% of browns in every profession, class, team, area,

or what have you: anything, but anything, which stands in the way of this proposed ideal is to be denounced and execrated as (always white) racism.

For example, the selection practices of all our universities must, on any such definition, be condemned by their present effects as being yet one more form of what Radicals call 'institutionalised racism'. This must be so; for no other or better reason than that our universities strive, in their old-fashioned and often ineffective ways, to appoint the best qualified among the candidates offering themselves for appointment or admission; and have never – so far – tried to operate a quota system which would ensure, regardless of the merits and qualifications of the candidates, that blacks and whites and browns and yellows were included everywhere in rough proportion to their numbers in our total population.

Again, if we are to concede the Berkshire definition, or anything similar, then we should have to see and be repelled by the racism of US professional basketball and of UK string quartets. Since both these different spheres are highly competitive, recruiters have to appoint the strongest candidates. One consequence is that in professional basketball blacks are grossly overrepresented; while Jews, if anything, are even more overrepresented in the string quartets. So far, in Berkshire at least, all those concerned have repudiated racist policies of 'positive discrimination' and racial quotas. Yet, by endorsing a redefinition of 'racism' in terms of equality of outcome, they have unwittingly committed themselves to denouncing as racist everything which does not in fact achieve the intended effects of such intentionally racist policies.

Further implications of any redefinition on these lines ought to have made an Education Committee one of the last rather than the first to concede. They above all others should have noticed the ruinous implications: not only for the maintenance of any racially unbiased standards of achievement in anything; but also for the untrammelled pursuit of factual truth. The sinister thing here is to introduce references to actual or alleged matters of fact – to 'negative beliefs' as Berkshire tactfully puts it. For this is to demand, irrespective of any evidence which might be turned up to the contrary, that everyone must believe certain approved propositions about average or universal differences or similarities as between different races and racial groups. To concede such a demand to the often Marxist militants of race relations is to open the door to purges: not only of libraries; but also of people. It is not ten years since many a campus in the USA was ringing with calls to 'Sack' and even to 'Kill Jensen' – Jensen being a psychologist who dared to publish evidence suggesting that there may be genetically determined average differences between different races and racial groups in respect of other than their racial defining characteristics.⁵

Finally, the resolve of any would-be axeman should be strengthened by the knowledge that the third Berkshire policy paper makes just a few interim proposals for hiring extra race relations staff: 'Resources to begin . . . are in principle available in the 1983/4 budget'; and 'assistance from central government . . . should amount to 75% of the salary costs . . .' (pp. 1 and 5).

These modest proposals are, for a total of 23 posts: 18 scale 2 teachers actually to teach (at least part of the time); 3 people on Scale 3 as team-leaders and deputy team-leaders; and another 3 at 'Group 4 headship equivalent level' to advise and supervise. The cream of what we can

scarcely refuse to label the black joke is that all the actual teaching proposed is to be of or in languages or dialects which are supposed to be the mother tongues of the pupils, rather than the language of the country of which they are supposedly aspiring to become equal citizens.

Notes

1. For examples of these confusions and false assumptions in major and respected studies in France, Britain and the United States see my *The Politics of Procrustes* (London: Temple Smith, 1981), II 4, pp. 45–58.
2. See Sir Philip Holland *The Governance of Quangos* (London: Adam Smith Institute, 1981).
3. See the revealing analysis given by R. J. Honeyford, 'Multi-ethnic Intolerance', *Salisbury Review*, no. 4. Summer 1983.
4. See K. Fogelman (Ed.) *Growing up in Great Britain* (London: Macmillan, 1983).
5. Compare 'The Jensen Uproar', in my *Sociology, Equality and Education* (London: Macmillan, 1976).

The Political Levy and The Labour Party

A. J. M. Sykes

The question of the political levy and the financial dependence of the Labour Party on the trade unions has been a matter of controversy ever since the political levy was made legal in 1913. Nevertheless, it is arguable that the system of financing through the political levy worked reasonably well in the past, when responsible trade union officials did not abuse the political power it gave them. But since the early 1960's, with officials who are prepared to manipulate the system for political ends, it has become corrupt and potentially dangerous.

In order to set up a political fund a union must first ballot its members. A simple majority of those voting is sufficient. This tends to be a permanent commitment, as ballots to review the situation are rarely if ever called for – unless the members vote against the levy and then review ballots are common. Thus the ballots committing most unions were held decades ago and with a very different electorate. At present 63 unions have political funds, more than half the unions affiliated to the T.U.C., and this includes all the large manual unions. Once a political fund has been set up the income may be spent in several ways. One is by affiliating to a political party – in practice this is the Labour Party. This is done by affiliating a proportion of the membership and paying a fee – now 50 pence per annum – for each person affiliated. The union in return receives votes at the Labour Party Conference in proportion to its numbers. The numbers affiliated are not necessarily the same as those paying the levy. Usually they are less but they may be greater, depending on the union's political aims at the time. The situation was summed up by Mr Frank Chapple, General Secretary of the E.E.T.P.U., at the Labour Party's special rules revision conference in 1981: 'The trade union block votes exercised here are not the votes of real people. They represent the amount of money a trade union is prepared to put up to buy votes. Some trade unions buy more votes than they have members paying the political levy. Some could seem to buy more votes than they even have members.'

Many unions, particularly the larger ones, have a panel of candidates whom they sponsor for Parliament. Persons accepted for the panel are normally paid an annual retainer and a grant towards expenses. In addition the union may make annual grants towards the funds of the Constituency Labour Party which adopts the candidate. In some cases the Constituency Party may be financially dependent on such grants. More important however are the grants the unions make towards the election expenses of sponsored candidates. These are allowed up to a limit of 80 per cent of the expenses incurred. In the 1979 election the unions sponsored 165 candidates out of the 622 Labour candidates who stood. However, this does not tell the full story; 133 of the 165 were successful, an 80.6 per cent success rate, as against a 43 per cent success rate for Labour generally. This figure has remained reasonably constant; in 1950 it was almost exactly the same (80 per cent and 43 per cent). The reason is that the trade unions sponsor candidates only in safe constituencies and many of these constituencies have become virtually union property in which a particular union claims the right to choose the candidate. This is a constant bone of contention between some large unions and other party members.

The unions also sponsor M.P.'s. These are expected to represent the union's interests and in return receive financial assistance, as also may their constituency parties, from the sponsoring union. In the last parliament 133 Labour M.P.'s, 49.6% of the total, were sponsored by trade unions. The amount of control some unions, in particular the National Union of Mineworkers, try to exercise over their sponsored M.P.'s has aroused strong criticism in recent years. In 1975 a Commons Select Committee censured Mr Arthur Scargill for allegedly trying to dictate policy to M.P.'s sponsored by his union. In 1977 the presence of four sponsored M.P.'s, including three ministers, on their union's picket line at Grunwick aroused much adverse comment.

The position established under the Act of 1913 is that a

member of a trade union was automatically levied for the political fund unless he filled in a form stating his wish to 'contract out' and deposited it with the union. Many who were not supporters of the Labour Party have long held that this is unfair and that it has led to many, from ignorance or inertia, paying into the political fund when they did not wish to do so. This opinion has been confirmed by the two changes that have taken place in the Act since 1913. In 1927 the Trade Disputes and Trade Unions Act changed the system so that members were automatically *out* of the political fund unless they filled in a form stating that they wished to 'contract in'. The effect was an immediate drop in the numbers paying the political levy. In 1927, before the Act became operative, 3,238,939 party members were affiliated through their trade unions. In the following year the number fell by one-third to 2,025,139. In 1946 the 1927 Act was repealed and the position reverted to the situation that members automatically paid the levy unless they contracted out. In 1945, 48 per cent (2,917,000 members) of the membership of registered trade unions with political funds were paying the levy. In 1947, after the change, this had risen to 75.6 per cent (5,613,000 members) and by 1948 to 91.5 per cent.

The reasons are, as already stated, twofold: ignorance—the fact that the political levy is compounded in with the rest of his union dues, which means that unless a man reads his union's rule-book very carefully he will not know that he is contributing; the amount — on average 65 pence a year, which is easily overlooked. A study of Post Office workers carried out in 1975 found that 95 per cent of the sample paid the political levy but only 51 per cent knew they did so, and only 21 per cent approved of affiliation to the Labour Party. The second reason is inertia. The unions do not make it easy to contract out. And many prefer to pay rather than go through the difficult and sometimes unpleasant process of contracting out.

Let us now consider the influence exercised by the trade unions at the Annual Conferences of the Labour Party. There are three main aspects of this: first, the voting power exercised by the unions on behalf of their members paying the political levy; secondly, the way it is cast by block vote; thirdly the lack of any proper means of consulting the membership in whose name it is cast.

At the 1982 conference the total votes to be cast were 6,950,000 of which 6,282,000 were held by the trade unions. This ratio had held for many years. In fact the five largest unions together have an absolute majority at the conference.

In 1894 the block vote system became the established custom and practice although not the formal rule at the Trade Union Congress. This has led to scandalous results. In 1980 the change of one vote in the A.U.E.W.'s delegation led to 928,000 votes being changed from supporting right-wing to supporting left-wing candidates. While at the Conference of 1982 the discovery that Mr Sydney Weighell of the N.U.R. had used his union's block vote contrary to his mandate led to his resignation.

The use of the block vote is a gift to the extreme left,

who make every attempt to secure decisions which follow their own views. Communists are often conspicuous at the Labour Party Conference. They cannot attend the actual Conference as delegates but they often attend the meetings of their Unions' delegates at which it is decided how the union will vote. For example, Mr Mick McGahey, the Communist leader of the Scottish miners, regularly goes to the Labour Party Conferences and attends the meetings of the N.U.M. delegates. There is also the factor of a built-in left-wing prejudice at union conferences. Harrison, in his definitive study of the trade unions and the Labour Party, wrote of them: 'Whether a union's conference is 'right' or 'left' the attitude to dissenters is broadly similar: left-wing dissent is respectable, right-wing opposition is not. Throughout the movement 'talking left' is listened to tolerantly'.¹

Decisions then are made through the normal machinery of the unions, which means in most cases its annual delegate conference. But in some unions such a conference is held only once every two or three years. Most union conferences are held at Easter, six months before the Party conference, so that discussion at branch level may be nine months before the Conference — a long time in politics. Another problem is that there is little time available at union conferences for the discussion of political matters. This means that the union delegates to the Party Conference are left with considerable scope. Some unions leave these completely free and even when they are mandated as the historian of the Labour Party Conference, Minkin, has said 'The typical situation was that the union's conference mandated the delegation but it was the delegation's responsibility to interpret the mandate and the delegation's responsibility to decide policy on issues when there was no union mandate.'² It is often claimed that delegates are responsive to public opinion in the union. But the only expression of opinion comes not from the 'silent majority' but from the highly organised minority of the left.

'Accountability', writes Harrison, 'is the least satisfactory aspect of the unions participation in Conference. Many unions never tell their members of the decisions made in their name. Most of the bigger unions print delegation reports in their Executive Minutes, but almost no one reads them. Many active members have never seen a copy'.³ This is certainly true. Most unions are very bad at communicating information to their members and in addition there is often a great deal of deliberate secrecy maintained. Unions are often reluctant to divulge information on Conference voting to their members and sometimes simply refuse to do so.

The constitution of the Labour Party provides that the N.E.C., 'shall be subject to the control and direction of the Party Conference by the Administrative Authority of the Party.' It has 29 members, 12 are elected directly by the trade unions and, as seven of the others are elected by the Conference as a whole, they control these appointments too. In the past this was unimportant as there was consensus between the leaders of the Parliamentary Party and those of the largest unions. The politicians kept out of trade union affairs and the unions supported

Education and Race – an Alternative View

Ray Honeyford

The issues and problems of our multi-racial inner cities are frequently thrown into sharp relief for me. As the headteacher of a school in the middle of a predominantly Asian area, I am often witness to scenes which have the raw feel of reality – and the recipient of vehement criticism, whenever I question some of the current educational orthodoxies connected with race. It is very difficult to write honestly and openly of my experiences, and the reflections they evoke, since the race relations lobby is extremely powerful in the state education service. The propaganda generated by multi-racial zealots is now augmented by a growing bureaucracy of race in local authorities. And this makes freedom of speech difficult to maintain. By exploiting the enormous tolerance traditional in this country, the race lobby has so managed to induce and maintain feelings of guilt in the well-disposed majority, that decent people are not only afraid of voicing certain thoughts, they are uncertain even of their right to think those thoughts. They are intimidated not only by their fear of giving offence by voicing their own reasonable concerns about the inner cities, but by the necessity of conducting the debate in a language which is dishonest.

The term 'racism', for instance, functions not as a word with which to create insight, but as a slogan designed to suppress constructive thought. It conflates prejudice and discrimination, and thereby denies a crucial conceptual distinction. It is the icon word of those committed to the race game. And they apply it with the same sort of mindless zeal as the inquisitors voiced 'heretic', or Senator McCarthy spat out 'Commie'. The word 'black' has been perverted. Every non-white is now, officially, 'black', be he Indian, Pakistani or Vietnamese. This gross and offensive dichotomy has an obvious purpose: the creation of an atmosphere of anti-white solidarity. To suppress and distort the enormous variations within races which I everyday observe by using language in this way is an outrage to all decent people – whatever their skin colour.

And there are other distortions: race-riots are described by the politically motivated as 'uprisings', and by a Lord of Appeal as a 'superb and healthy catalyst for the British people' – and the police blamed for the behaviour of violent thugs; rather like the patient blaming the doctor because he has a cold in the head. 'Cultural enrichment' is the approved term for the West Indian's right to create an ear-splitting cacophony for most of the night to the detriment of his neighbour's sanity, or for the Notting Hill Festival whose success or failure is judged by the level of street crime which accompanies it. At the schools' level

the term refers to such things as the Muslim parent's insistence on banning his daughter from drama, dance and sport i.e. imposing a purdah mentality in schools committed to the principle of sexual equality; and the determined efforts of misguided radical teachers to place such as the following alongside the works of Shakespeare and Wordsworth:

' "Wi mek a lickle date
fi nineteen seventy eight
An wi fite and wi fite
An defeat di state.

(From 'Inglan is a Bitch', Linton Kwesi Johnson)

No one, of course, is allowed to describe first generation black or coloured immigrants as 'immigrants' though no other collective noun exists. In the courts it has been revealed that we now have laws on the statute book which insist that Sikhism is a race, which, as three distinguished lords of appeal were able to demonstrate, directly contradicts the best available dictionary definitions. We have, therefore, officially perverted words to such a degree that it would be perfectly reasonable in law to describe a member of the Church of England or the Labour Party as a member of an ethnic group – a manifest absurdity. (It is worth noting that in his judgement of this case, Lord Justice Kerr commented of the Commission for Racial Equality, 'The commission seemed to have created discord where there had been none before,' a view, I suspect, which is shared by the vast majority of the public with regard to most of the C.R.E.'s activities.)

We in the schools are also enjoined to believe that creole, pidgin and other non-standard variants have the same power, subtlety and capacity for expressing five shades of meaning, and for tolerating uncertainty, ambiguity and irony as standard English. A generation of cultural relativists in the field of linguistics has managed to impose on the schools the mindless slogan 'All languages are equally good' – a myth recently and convincingly demolished by Professor John Honey in 'The Language Trap' a monograph published by the National Council for Educational Standards. Those of us working in Asian areas are encouraged, officially, to 'celebrate linguistic diversity', i.e. applaud the rapidly mounting linguistic confusion in those growing number of inner-city schools in which British-born Asian children begin their mastery of English by being taught in Urdu.

In 'Politics and the English Language' George Orwell said, 'Political language . . . is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an

parliamentary leaders. Since 1968 this has changed, with powerful left-wing union leaders trying to pack the N.E.C. with left-wingers in order to seize control of the party and its leadership. In 1981 the Party's constitution was changed and the Leader and Deputy Leader who were formerly elected by the Parliamentary Labour Party are now elected by an electoral college which includes the trade unions. The battle between left and right continues but the fact that there is a battle at all testifies to the power of a small number of trade union leaders.

As already indicated the Labour Party is totally dependent upon the trade unions for its finances. In the past 90 per cent of the Party's annual revenue has come from the unions. As a result of efforts to reduce this proportion it has been reduced since 1978 but in 1981 it was still 78 per cent. Virtually all its election funds have come from the unions and are negotiated before each election in the knowledge that they can be withheld or stinted if unions do not like the election policy. The leaders of the large unions have often reminded Party Conferences that, as Arthur Deakin put it: 'he who pays the piper calls the tune.' Mr Terry Duffy, President of the A.U.E.W., was reported in June 1980 as saying to the Party 'Either abandon your silly policies or our response to the next request for funds could be in the negative.' Also in 1980 the unions replied to a Party appeal for funds by a demand that they should supervise the way they are spent. Again this did not matter so much in the past but today when union officials are prepared to use their financial power it greatly weakens the independence of the Parliamentary Labour Party.

It is claimed that the influence of the trade union leaders is no greater, and is certainly more democratic, than that of the small group of industrialists and businessmen who finance the Conservative Party. However, there are certain very significant differences. The voting and financial power is concentrated, and concentrated permanently, in the hands of a very few unions. There is no similar group of half-a-dozen large companies exercising a similar permanent influence on the Conservative Party. Lobbies may come and go but such a permanent concentration of power is inconceivable.

A second difference is that industries may well exercise pressure in favour of their own particular interests – as the trade unions also do. But these interests are narrow and are balanced by the pressures from opposed interest groups. The political influence of the trade unions is not exercised in the direct interests of their members – for whom they may legitimately claim to speak – but is a complete political programme of which parts may well be opposed to the views and interests of their members. For example, Stephen Milligan, a Labour correspondent for the Economist, has pointed out that 'In 1974–5 for example, the T.U.C. advised government on the following issues: industrial law, employment law, wages policy, prices policy, food subsidies, taxation ... energy, education, social services, ... social science research, abortion ... the arts, nuclear weapons, civil aviation,

forestry, terrorism, the E.E.C., Chile, Ulster, Ethiopia and Vietnam – to name but a sample.'⁴ All that need be said is that the union leaders do not have the 'know how' to advise on such a range of matters, nor do they have the means of ascertaining their members' views on them. To claim that they represent the united view of twelve million trade unionists on such matters is utter nonsense.

Another consequence of the political involvement of the unions is that many of their leaders subordinate the occupational interests of their members to their own political interests and ambitions. This over-emphasis on politics to the neglect of their members' direct occupational interests weakens the trade union leadership. Members do not openly revolt but they drop out, or ignore the leadership and follow unofficial leaders. This is what caused the collapse of the so-called 'social contract' between union leaders and the Labour Government of the 1970s. The leaders committed their members to wage restraint without their consent and found they could not enforce it. Every time this happens it discredits the leadership and increases the power of shop-floor militants.

The close connection with the unions weakens the Labour Party itself. At the Party Conference union voting power is so dominant that both left and right depend on it for victory, and forget that their imaginary millions of votes cannot win parliamentary elections.

It is clear that the present system is undemocratic. But as Mr Attlee once said, the only people who object to it are the losers; in his day the left, in recent years the right. As the only people who can change it are the winners, it remains. What possible remedies are there? Ideally political parties should not have to depend on fund-raising but should instead be financed by the state. Failing this the only practical solution at the moment is the suggestion in the Green Paper for a change from 'contracting-out' of the political fund to a requirement to 'contract-in'.

On the existing evidence this would lose the Labour Party at least half of its revenues and would lead inevitably to accusations that it was a political move to cripple the Party. But it need not have this effect at all. If the unions were openly collecting from committed Labour supporters, instead of semi-secretly from those who are not, the subscriptions could easily be raised from their present derisory level to compensate. This, in turn, would force some much needed reform of the political activities of the trade unions. If they had to ask members openly for a substantial political contribution they would need to offer them a far greater degree of participation, and be more sensitive to their interests, than they have ever been in the past.

Any such changes will be fiercely resisted by many trade union leaders, since the present system is admirably suited to the unrestricted pursuit of their political interests and ambitions. But in the long term reform is inevitable. And it is in the interests of the Labour Party, the trade unions and, more important still, of the country as a whole that it should come soon.

Notes

1. M. Harrison, *Trade Unions and the Labour Party since 1945*.
2. Lewis Minkin, *The Labour Party Conference*, 1978.

3. M. Harrison, *Trade Unions and the Labour Party since 1945*.
4. Stephen Milligan, *The New Barons*, 1976.

impression of solidity to pure wind.' Race – speak is the language of a politics committed to that sort of deceit. There is little hope of our coming to terms with the monumental significance for our future of New Commonwealth and Pakistani immigration until we invent a language by means of which doubts, fears and aspirations can be expressed openly and honestly.

What, in the meantime, can one do? In the absence of the coinage of honest discourse, one can perhaps make a start by reporting and commenting on one's everyday experiences. I recall, for instance, the meeting called to explain to Asian parents the importance of regular school attendance for their offspring's future. A very high proportion of Asian immigrants have a habit of sending their children to the Indian sub-continent during term time with obvious, deleterious educational consequences. Not only is the practice inadvisable, it is almost certainly illegal, though no local education authority has had the courage to bring a test case, and the Department of Education and Science turns a blind eye. After much badgering from the schools, the local authority had agreed to try to impose on brown parents the same obligations it demanded from white and black parents with regard to school attendance.

Against all normal expectations the meeting was packed. There had obviously been a local 'three line whip' from the Pakistani leadership. It quickly became evident that what had been proposed as an act of reconciliation, based on the school's concern for the child, was to descend into a noisy and unseemly demonstration of sectarian bitterness. The hysterical political temperament of the Indian sub-continent became evident – an extraordinary sight in an English School Hall. There was much shouting and fist waving. The local authority was accused of 'racism'; the chairman, insulted. One anglicised Asian stood near the door and, at regular intervals, shouted 'bullshit' at the chair. The disorder was orchestrated. Questions were always preceded by a nod from a Muslim leader. A half-educated and volatile Sikh usurped the privileges of the chair by deciding who was to speak. The confusion was made worse by the delays occasioned by the need for interpreting – many of the audience had no English, though there have been freely-available English classes in the area for at least a decade. I raised my hand to speak several times but was ignored. The atmosphere was highly charged and threatening. I left before the end, bitterly disappointed. Needless to say, the absenteeism of Asian pupils abroad continues. The authorities have simply given up. And I am left with the ethically indefensible task of complying with a school attendance policy which is determined not, as the law requires, on the basis of individual parental responsibility but by the parent's country of origin – a blatant and officially sanctioned policy of racial discrimination.

My disappointment was compounded by a sense of irony. These people, who now so vehemently accused the authorities of denying them a right which, in reality was a privilege no other parents enjoyed, and no other group of immigrants had contemplated claiming – these same people enjoyed rights, privileges and aspirations unheard

of in their country of origin. Pakistan is a country which cannot cope with democracy; under martial law since 1977, it is ruled by a military tyrant who, in the opinion of at least half his countrymen, had his predecessor judicially murdered. A country, moreover, which, despite disproportionate western aid because of its important strategic position, remains for most of its people obstinately backward. Corruption at every level combines with unspeakable treatment not only of criminals, but of those who dare to question Islamic orthodoxy as interpreted by a despot. Even as I write, wounded dissidents are chained to hospital beds awaiting their fate. Pakistan, too, is the heroin capital of the world. (A fact which is now reflected in the drug problems of English cities with Asian populations.) It is not surprising that such a country loses more of its citizens voluntarily to other countries than any state on earth.

How could the denizens of such a country so wildly and implacably resent the simple British requirement on all parents to send children to school regularly? It was this reflection which caused me, perhaps for the first time, to understand why so many fundamentally decent people harbour feelings of resentment. I realised, too, how little the cant term 'racism' explains. In truth, I was affronted by what I had seen in my own school hall.

Again, I recall the reaction to an article I published recently in 'The Times Educational Supplement'. I simply attempted to question the conceptual soundness of the ideas which comprise the term 'multi-racial education.' My main argument was that the fashionable way of explaining comparative black-pupil failure in British schools as a function of teacher prejudice and an alien curriculum was almost certainly bogus. There is not a scrap of evidence to support such a belief. The roots of black educational failure are, in reality, located in West Indian family structure and values, and the work of misguided radical teachers whose motives are basically political.

Within days *The Caribbean Times* carried a long letter from a group of black activists known as 'The Harringay Black Pressure Group on Education'. This letter confirmed my belief, that much of the pressure for a multi-racial curriculum comes from the vehement, radical left of black organisations. Its tone is strident, its contents poorly argued, its style sub-standard; but the main thrust of its argument accords well with official policy edicts now being imposed on the schools by several local education authorities – a process which is certain to be accelerated when the impending Swann Committee report is published. The basic intention of the authors of the letter is to intimidate. It is also defamatory, and highly likely to damage me professionally. But redress would be difficult, since no one has had the courage to sign the letter. How do you sue a collective?

Amongst other things I am accused of the sins of being white and middle class. Inevitably I am a 'blatant racist'. I should be immediately sacked and a public investigation carried out into how I run my school. I am even accused of trying to deprive negroes of their welfare benefits. The totalitarian nature of the writers' mentalities may be

judged from the following quotation: 'All teachers, especially those like Mr Honeyford, should be compelled to attend massive (sic) in-service training courses to bring them up to date with modern education theory and practice, and to purge them of their racist outlook and ideology. Teachers who refuse to adapt their teaching and go on in-service training courses should be redeployed or retired off (sic) early. School books with a racist content . . . should be scrapped. Racist teachers should be dismissed.' Of such libellous and mindless bombast is the rhetoric of multi-racialism composed.

Of course it might be objected that such a mentality is not representative. That the Harringay Black teachers are simply the disreputable, unacceptable face of the race industry, of which the Commission for Racial Equality is the acceptable front. But such extremism is becoming the norm. I was recently told by an educational mandarin that, unless I attended a 'racism awareness workshop' arranged by the local authority, I would be deprived of the right to be involved in the appointment of staff to my school. Consider, too, the following extract from 'Black Britain' by Chris Mullard: 'Already we have started to rebel, to kick out against our jailers . . . As more black Britons leave school disgruntled, as more black immigrants discard their yoke of humility, the ultimate confrontation will become clearer . . . Blacks will fight with pressure, leaflets, campaigns, demonstrations, fists and scorching resentment which, when peaceful means fail, will explode into street fighting, urban guerrilla warfare, looting, burning and rioting'.

Now the writer of that is not some insignificant devotee of Marcuse spitting out his hatred of the white establishment. He is, in fact, a lecturer in education in the University of London. As such he is accorded expert status. He is influential in the training of teachers, and his views are respected by local education authorities.

More recently I published a simple report on my contact with Asian parents in a typical school week. The piece contained many positive references to Asian values. But I was immediately and intemperately attacked by a dedicated multi-racialist who publicly accused me of being prejudiced, of fabricating the evidence, and of using phrases which 'must give cause for concern'; and my 'strategy' (whatever that means) was condemned as being 'ignorant and counter-productive'. It is typical of the response to honest discussion of those teachers who have eagerly embraced the career-enhancing possibilities of the new multi-racial orthodoxy in schools. Such people never proceed through rational argument, but rather by the tactic of impugning others' goodwill.

At no point in all this sound and fury does the plight of those white children who constitute the 'Ethnic minority' in a growing number of inner-city schools merit even a mention. Yet their educational 'disadvantage' is now confirmed. It is no more than common sense that if a school contains a disproportionate number of children for whom

English is a second language (true of all Asian children, even those born here), or children from homes where educational ambition and the values to support it are conspicuously absent (i.e. the vast majority of West Indian homes – a disproportionate number of which are fatherless) then academic standards are bound to suffer. This intuition is supported by the findings of the Department of Education and Science Assessment of Performance Unit on primary school English; and there is suggestive evidence in the National Council for Educational Standards' report 'Standards in English Schools'.

The absence of concern for the rights of this group of parents is due to three factors: they are overwhelmingly lower working class with little ability to articulate their social and educational anxieties; they have, so far, failed to produce a pressure group generating appropriate propaganda; and – unlike non-white children – they have no government quango to plead their cause.

These experiences I here report are the tip of an iceberg. Yet they seem to me important since they point up the real educational consequences of the general acceptance of the notion that multi-racial inner cities are not only inevitable but, in some sense, desirable. Specifically, they raise for policy makers and public opinion the question of how the following unique factors now operating in our inner cities can be reconciled to produce that integrated, harmonious society we all effect to cherish.

A growing number of Asians whose aim is to preserve as intact as possible the values and attitudes of the Indian sub-continent within a framework of British social and political privilege, i.e. to produce Asian ghettos.

An influential group of black intellectuals of aggressive disposition, who know little of the British traditions of understatement, civilised discourse and respect for reason.

A small but growing group of dispossessed, indigenous parents whose schools are – as a direct result of the multi-racial dimension – failing their children.

The presence in the state education service of a growing number of teachers and advisers who, quite correctly, perceive the professional advantage of supporting the notion of the multi-racial curriculum urged by the authorities, and of making colour and race significant, high-profile issues in the classroom.

The successful creation by the race relations lobby of a dubious, officially-approved argot which functions to maintain a whole set of questionable beliefs and attitudes about education and race – attitudes which have much more to do with professional opportunism than the educational progress of ethnic minority children.

I suspect that these elements, far from helping to produce harmony, are, in reality, operating to produce a sense of fragmentation and discord. And I am no longer convinced that the British genius for compromise, for muddling through, and for good-natured tolerance will be sufficient to resolve the inevitable tensions.

In Search of Central Europe

The following text comes to us from Czechoslovakia. Its author writes under the pseudonym of Petr Fidelius, and we publish here the first of two extracts from his important analysis of Totalitarian language, some of which has already appeared in *The Times*.

Totalitarian Language

When we seek to arrive at the very heart of the phenomenon of totalitarian thought, what comes to mind is an idea of *capitulation in the face of the ambivalence of the world*. There is nothing to which man finds it so hard to reconcile himself as the fact that, born to unity, he has to live amid division and disparity; with his whole being he yearns for unification and integrity, but his lot is incompleteness and diffusion. This feature of his sojourn on earth is already written into his very biological and psychological make-up: the 'whole man' is actually tangibly (and at the same time symbolically) *cleft* by the fact of his sexuality; humankind occurs in two utterly incomplete, non-self-sufficient forms – as man and woman. But this 'curse' impinges on our existence at all other levels as well, appearing in our minds again and again in the symptomatic form of a binary opposition: man – nature, body – spirit, knowledge – belief, knowing – doing, love – right, individual – society, etc. (and it is characteristic that we experience these relations more as conflicts than complements). So in countless permutations our culture keeps posing the same question, sustaining itself by the very fact of repeatedly endeavouring to resolve the insoluble. Therein lies its greatness, but also its misfortune; yet we cannot very well abandon this path, our very speech (which is not of our choosing) being so adapted; it all lies in the concepts themselves on which we are dependent whether we will or no. Man senses that his spirit will know no peace unless he finds the unique sense of everything. And yet wherever he turns he encounters ambiguity and ambivalence. Man yearns for certainty. For the certainty of truth. Absolute and unique truth, truth with a capital T, the truth which would encompass all the variation and multidimensionality of man and the entire world; truth which would embrace the past, the present and the future. This is what our reason and our heart seeks: the truth must be *ultimately one*. The misfortune is that this uniform, all-embracing truth is unattainable for us. We are buried beneath the rabble of fragmentary half-truths, precarious and provisional truths, with an inevitable admixture of errors, or lies; we may trim them and refine them, correct or reject them ad infinitum; but the *overall* continuity escapes us. We are ignorant of the formula which would bring order into this chaos once and for all. And yet we would dearly like to

separate the truth from falsehood, the wheat from the chaff, for good . . .

It is certainly not easy to accept this fate; that calls for courage, of which we often do not have enough. It is easy to give in to disappointment. Many a man may be driven to helpless rage by the bitter fact that he is not pure spirit, but is the captive of his body and time. It even appears that revolt against this circumstance is the real essence of all the modern 'demons' which beset the world of today. However, we shall concentrate on one aspect only of this existential situation: the fact that it is out of this, from the depths of an *authentic* longing for unity, that springs that temptation to capitulate which we believe is the key to an understanding of totalitarian thinking. The temptation to put an end to the endless anguish and 'drag heaven down to earth': secure certainty for oneself without delay, bring in 'unity' *here and now*, even if the price is violence. The temptation towards the '*premature* synthesis of truth', as Paul Ricoeur puts it. An understandable gesture, so human (oh, so human), yet so fatal in its consequences.

So it is in this violent unification of the truth that we should see the well-spring of totalitarian thinking. The 'totality' concerned is precisely that false, premature unity, the fruit of the impatience and 'demonic frenzy' of the human spirit. Let us take a closer look at just what that means. Without doubt it is spiritual capitulation. Capitulation in the face of the plurality and ambivalence of the world. At the same time it is inevitably a *violent* 'solution': it cannot get by without violence to our thinking vis-à-vis reality. The established 'totality' is, to be sure, a mere substitute for and caricature of that finite unity for which man longs, and it cannot be otherwise; it is merely partiality rendered absolute, and a major slice of our incorrigibly diversified world must of course fall victim to this absolutization. 'United' history cannot help needing its 'scrap-heap' whither to dispose of all the undesirable, disturbing, unsubmitive elements. 'Logically organised being' needs as its counterpart some kind of non-being to which can be consigned everything that runs counter to the 'new order'. A world of 'uniform' truth necessarily becomes the one and only true 'reality'; hence it will also become necessary to set up a realm of 'illusions' to which can be removed everything which for one reason or another will not fit into our 'real' world. The

totalisation of good makes necessary the totalisation of evil, i.e. the no less violent unification of everything which is at variance, for all manner of reasons, with our 'unified' good. What then has actually taken place in our mind? Instead of one, albeit ambiguous, world, we now have two worlds, but both quite unambiguous. In place of the non-uniform whole made up of relative truths we now have two uniform blocks, between which prevails the relationship of mutual exclusion: absolute truth standing against absolute falsehood. An irreconcilable opposition of two worlds has taken the place of variety within a single world. Conflict, which previously urged us to seek a synthesis, becomes, once we have made our 'synthesis', merciless internecine strife: the 'new' order can only be sustained at the cost of the destruction of the 'old'. As soon as our thinking sets off along this path we are ready to accept a totalitarian ideology.

If we do fall in with this way of thinking we become completely defenceless against the onslaught of the false dichotomies by which the imaginary world of totalitarian propaganda is inhabited. All we can do is look on, powerless, as reality is torn in shreds by all manner of 'either-ors'.

'The bourgeois or the socialist ideology. There is no middle path . . .'

(Lenin, Collected Works, Czech edition, vol. 3, p. 396)

'Science is either progressive, or it is not science, but pseudo-science and scholastic armchair baloney; scientific creativity is only scientific to the degree to which it is progressive: scientists who refused to follow the crab-like progress of the evolution of bourgeois culture down to pulpiteering enlightenment and 'directed' Fascist pseudo-science (à la Rassenkunde), were obliged to seek the salvation of scientific progress in the only progressive class of today, the revolutionary proletariat.'

(Karel Teige: Intellectuals and Revolution, 1933)

'Do we wish to perish with Western capitalism or live in the socialism of the New Europe? We have no other way; there is no third way.'

(Emanuel Moravec, radio address, 5.10.1940)

'The only thing being decided today is whether Europe is to be national socialist or bolshevik. There is no third solution.'

(Emanuel Moravec, radio address, 6.11.1942)

'Only the Leninist path is the true path of revolution and socialist construction. There is no other alternative except the alternative of counter-revolution.'

(*Rudé Právo*. 18.2.1977)

And so it goes on: either 'reality' or 'illusion'; either 'order' or 'anarchy'; either 'elemental' or 'regular' change; either 'the nation' or 'the Jews' . . . There is no absurdity at which this demonic frenzy would stop. And since it is primarily a frenzy of the spirit, it is very easy for intellectuals above all to let themselves be carried away by it. We have seen it in Karel Teige: science is either 'progressive' and 'revolutionary', or it is not science, but 'Fascist pseudo-science'. The logic of this way of thinking

requires that the 'united' truth be opposed by, again, nothing but 'united' falsehood; the soldier in the firing line cannot afford the luxury of drawing distinctions among the enemy ranks. This is how those remarkable pieces of terminological patchwork come about. Take national socialism, for instance: in its eyes, what kind of substantive difference could there have been between Western democracy and bolshevism? Nazi propaganda was of course obliged to take the current political and military situation into account for tactical reasons, but in the final analysis both represented one and the same evil to it, on principle; it goes without saying that it welcomed the divisions among the Allies, but at the ideological level it held firmly to their 'unity'. The unifying factor of this incredible synthesis was of course the 'Jews': and so in the newspapers of the Protectorate we might encounter not only 'the Jewish plutocracy' and 'Jewish bolshevism', but also 'Jewish plutocratic bolsheviks'.

Communist propaganda is conducted in the same way. Just as 'plutocracy' and 'bolshevism' merged in the Nazi lens, so too do 'bourgeois democracy' and 'Fascism' merge, more or less, in the viewfinder of communist ideology. Let us recall the generally known fact that for a long time the social democrats were consistently labelled 'social fascists' in communist terminology. This was not intended as a term of abuse, but as a 'designation of reality', as we are assured by Klement Gottwald, who spent a major part of his memorable parliamentary address of December 1929 in offering a 'theoretical' justification for the concept. . . We have no grounds for not believing him; equally the appellation 'plutocratic bolsheviks' was doubtless not intended to be abusive, but merely as a 'designation of reality'. Up to 1935 the Third International made no official distinction at all between 'democracy' and 'Fascism'. But this was not a transitory episode, a momentary aberration, buried for ever in the precipice of history: even for today's 'true socialist' propaganda 'Fascism' remains as the common denominator for all the elements which 'disturb the unity' of our 'socialist family'. True, this surfaces only rarely, in situations of particular tension, such as recently in the period after the publication of Charter 77. That was a time when we could verify that even the present official propaganda is capable, without so much as blushing, of describing as a 'Fascist' anyone who does not share their own viewpoint; the most varied political forces, from the conservative right to social democracy may figure under the heading 'Fascism'. In truth, there is no cause for surprise at this. This is no 'return to the 'fifties', as some precipitate voices were heard to assert (in which case we ought really to be thinking in terms of a 'return' to the 'twenties'). In moments like this what we really have is just the *explicit* expression of the tendency that is proper to all totalitarian thinking: the tendency to 'unite' evil. We should not let ourselves be misled by the fact that this tendency remains mostly latent in contemporary official propaganda. Although the resultant 'synthesis' is these days not (for tactical reasons) broadcast *urbi et orbi* with such regularity as in certain past periods, its 'theoretical' basis continues unchanged: it still implies that the

Western democracies are only a *veiled* form of the 'dictatorship of the bourgeoisie', while Fascism is none other than its *overt* form. The conclusion which follows from these premises is never more than a step away even though it may not be made operative at the precise moment. Indeed it would not be a sign of statesmanship if the current official propaganda were to describe, say, Chancellor Kreisky as a Fascist'; but the possibility is always there and it would be the height of folly to believe that *Rudé Právo* will ever surrender its 'right' to employ 'designations of reality'. Of course, the official propaganda appreciates that this kind of 'theoretical' justification of a given 'synthesis' is too abstract for the requirements of 'working among people on a mass scale'; it knows that people think more in images than syllogisms. A theoretical formula works far less effectively on their imagination than a symbol – the more mysterious, the more compelling. This was the intuition which also governed Nazi propaganda, which doubtless considered 'international Jewry' a more valid argument than complex expositions of a racist theory. Thus in an entirely analogous manner the communist propaganda scene contains a power, a mysterious power to boot, which fulfils the same unifying function as the 'Jew' did for the Nazis; this is of course the notorious CIA, the ultima ratio of the most improbable conspiracies against our 'progressive' system.

At the same time the same old refrain continues to be heard: 'there is no third way'. Totalitarian propaganda never takes more pains than over its effort to persuade you that there are only ever two possibilities

between which to choose. The ease with which the human mind lets itself be terrorised by this unremitting 'either-or' is quite staggering; on the spiritual plane this tactic has much the same effect as a revolver-bearing outstretched arm has on the physical plane: the individual feels as if he is in a trap from which there is no escape. Faced with this ultimatum-like gesture even intelligent and educated people may lose their rational capacity and for a moment at least begin to waver in uncertainty. The experience of history speaks all too clearly in this respect. Why has the intelligentsia evinced by and large such a low resistance to totalitarian ideologies of this or that type? Only an incorrigible pessimist could seek to explain this disturbing fact merely in terms of cowardice or advantage-seeking; even the honest, and personally courageous individual will get caught in the vice of that bewitching 'either-or' if . . . if he is prone to what we have been calling 'totalitarian thinking'. Anyone who yields to the allure of this way of thinking will scarcely be able to resist the spiritual terrorism of totalitarian propaganda, no matter how absurd the dichotomies it might place before him. However, there are various ways in which the individual might fail, not merely by eventual acceptance (even for lack of any alternative) of the *content* of the propaganda along with the lens. If this were the only eventuality taken into account, we should be all too easily convicted of blindness, if not worse. The individual may fail if, while rejecting the content, he keeps the lens. This accounts for the fact that many a sworn opponent of a totalitarian 'establishment' may (perhaps unconsciously) share its 'spiritual' perspective.

A Day at the White Lion Free School

Roy Kerridge

One of my favourite spots in Islington is Chapel Market, where you can find me wandering up and down reading the slogans on the walls, such as 'Gonzo, the Kid from Outer Space' and 'Horse Face Harry the Kid from Chapel Place'. Among the crowds around the stalls, young people of all colours mix amicably, the noisiest and nicest being the jolly girls from Starcross Comprehensive down the road.

Sometimes I muse on my earlier wanderings in Islington, when I lived there as a boy and continually played truant from the grammar school. Strangely enough, a school for truants has been opened just round the corner from the market, in White Lion Street, near a West Indian church well known for its raucous gospel music and hysterical casting out of demons.

I first noticed the White Lion Free School in the mid-seventies, when an excellent papier maché white lioness smiled sleepily over the door, later removed as a fire hazard at the orders of the Borough Surveyor. Sometimes I would catch a glimpse of rough boys smoking in the windows.

'It's a school for thieves and vagabonds', the sage Islingtonians of the market told me, shaking their heads.

Finally I could stand the suspense no longer, boldly walked inside, and asked permission to 'sit in' on lessons for a day. Lessons were over, but a tall rebellious-looking young man named Nigel Wright seemed to think my request was reasonable, especially as it might attract money to the school, which was not part of the State system, and collected grants from various sources. When I said that I wrote for right wing papers, he revealed that the local Conservatives on the council had promised a large donation if they were returned to power. I also found that the school was not specifically for Comprehensive truants, but opened its doors to children of all ages who sought Freedom in education.

Later that night I returned for the school trip to the theatre, but only two boys turned up, both teenagers, one of whom was dressed as a punk.

'It's always the same when it's Culture', Nigel told me resignedly, as we climbed into the school mini-bus.

Soon we arrived at the Activist Youth Theatre, near

Sloane Square, a bleak whitewashed place where you sit on rows of steps and watch the actors perform on a kind of glorified dance floor. Every seat was taken, mostly by fresh faced brightly dressed uproarious young people, accompanied by teachers and youth leaders, all agog to see the play, 'Holding Fire'.

When the youthful actors took the stage, I was surprised to see that they were dressed exactly like the audience, smoked and swore in the same style, and portrayed unemployed youth on the dole. Unfortunately I had to leave before the end, but I later found that the story concerned two young men who joined the Army, and went to Ireland where one of them was shot. A Tory councillor called for the play to be taken off after the first night, apparently objecting to a rape scene. Typically for a play with an anti-British message, the military stage props were supplied by a real Army regiment.

I felt a little nervous of Nigel Wright, as teachers of maths and science seem formidable to me, and he was no exception. A disciplinarian's jaw jutted from beneath that mop of curly hair, and in a school where all were supposedly equal, he was the spiritual headmaster. He reminded me of the leader of an old time beat group, hardened by years on the road but with flashes of anarchic humour. Later I read a book he had written, *Progress in Education*, which praised Comprehensive Schools and denied that anyone played truant from fear of bullying.

At nine o'clock in the morning, I ran to school – late as usual! It didn't matter, as no one was there except the teachers. Later, some mothers with small children trickled in, for the school ran a play-group for three to five year olds. To look at, the Free School resembled a rather ramshackle Victorian dolls' house, of the tall, thin vertical type, with white columns in front of the door. The main hall downstairs was gloomy, with benches and tables, but when a solemn girl of thirteen who never took her coat off showed me round, I was surprised how snug the place was. There were plenty of books, lots of toys and pictures on the walls, and small classrooms with three or four pupils in each, with a loft for art, and woodwork upstairs. All the teachers were young and idealistic, not to say featherbrained, and included several recently-come-over Americans and a German.

'I left my proper school, Abbey Wood, because of the bullying', the girl in the coat told me.

I saw no bullying at the White Lion, partly because the playground, where most school violence takes place, was scarcely used. Pupils simply melted into the throngs of Chapel Market when they went outside.

An older woman presided over the playground, a charming place with a castle, a thick carpet for rolling or jumping on, and most popular of all, a climbing bar, which, when used, set a giant papier maché model of an albatross into motion. Such models were a school speciality.

So far, the school seemed a decided improvement on a council-run truant's centre I knew of, where the small boys lived in fear of the big ones. True the books left scattered ostentatiously about included such titles as *Police and Blacks* and *Fightback for Women's Rights*, but no child ever opened these.

The few older pupils there, boys and girls of fourteen to sixteen, lay slumped in chairs in apathetic resentment, smoking and shouting 'F-off!' when anyone spoke to them. In this they resembled their brothers and sisters in State schools, with the difference that younger pupils had to sit in the same room with them. My own pet theory on education is that young children want to please grown-ups, and often work earnestly, but when the age of fourteen is reached, a natural 'eleven plus' takes place, and the non-academic simply down tools and lie around sneering. This, I believe is the age when Nature intends them to start work, perhaps to return to the academic life in their twenties or later, by means of night classes. Apprenticeships and boy soldiers could no doubt be reintroduced.

Staying on at school makes the sneering pupils so ugly-minded and resentful that they often become too uncouth ever to be accepted for employment, and so never get into the habit of working at all. While I was there, some burst in and out, shouting about signing on, for they were school-children on the dole.

'I agree they should lower the school leaving age', an American teacher told me. 'These boys and girls register here so they can't get charged for truancy, yet they don't do any work. We can't interest them in anything.'

To my surprise, the young hippie-like German teacher thought that the school went in for too much discipline – 'the German free schools are much less rigid'. There's a change-over for you!

Nevertheless, the limp foul-mouthed people seemed to like the school in its aspect of Youth Club, for hardly a day went by without an excursion somewhere, these outings taking up most of the school's money. Horse riding and dry-run ski-ing in a leisure centre in Uxbridge were quite normal outings, and holidays to Cornwall, Yorkshire and France for children and parents had recently taken place. Some people have all the luck! Treats like these kept boys old enough to be school-leavers hanging around the Free School.

I saw few signs of history or geography, and there was no scripture. After watching girls typing and learning to use 'phone books, I sat down in the comfortable easy chair of a room where a forceful young crop-haired teacher called Mary was teaching English and Social Studies. Older girls who didn't like work occupied themselves drawing neat patterns with coloured pencils, and most of the boys had disappeared, to re-emerge at dinner time.

A 'No Smoking' sign was ignored by the over-fourteens, and their monotonous bad language, especially when talking to Mary, whom they addressed by her first name, was clearly upsetting for the two younger girls in the room who were being worked to the utmost of their capabilities.

An older girl slouched into the room and ordered Mary out of her chair with a contemptuous jerk of her head.

Mary, looking most intense, was preoccupied with a flustered, well-meaning girl of fifteen who was trying half heartedly to get a C.S.E. in Social Studies. Meanwhile, the two younger girls were left to their own devices, working very hard at answering questions on poems. One of the girls was my friend from Abbey Wood in the coat,

the other was Mo, aged eleven and very serious.

'Read the book on Battered Wives', Mary told the fifteen year old, and then she did her best to interest a lounging smoking boy and girl, who stared at her contemptuously, in doing some work. But it was no use, and she gave them up as a bad job, as teachers in the most over-disciplined schools also have to do. The White Lion's lack of order must have been based on pleasing such pupils, as the younger ones seemed to expect a teacher to be a teacher, and were a good influence on their idealist rulers. All the same, the overall standard seemed lower than in State schools, which in turn have lower standards than they had fifteen years ago.

The two young girls enjoyed reading *Possum's Practical Cats* by T. S. Eliot, but got rather bogged down in *The Charge of the Light Brigade*. They had to answer questions on Tennyson by going downstairs and struggling back with enormous copies of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

'If you won't tell us, we'll have to find out for ourselves', Mo said mournfully.

'Good!' Mary answered, for this was a progressive idea that she evidently believed in, as well as one that made her work easier. Somehow the good pupils *had* to do the work, but the bad ones were excused. I helped Mo, whose face puckered up, close to tears, at a question by Mary that read 'What was the Charge of the Light Brigade? Look up General Custer'.

Did Mary believe the Brigade to have been charging Red Indians? I took the charitable view and assumed her to want an answer comparing military blunders.

Groaning, the fifteen year old girl was trying to tackle the problems of heredity and environment in Social Studies, a subject introduced long after I had thankfully left school. However, I was familiar with its text books, such as the infamous 'Connexions' and 'Topliner' series, a ragbag of Leftist propaganda, cartoons and sensational newspaper cuttings.

'Don't read that easy book, read this hard one', Mary said, so I grabbed the easy book for myself.

It was called *It's a Matter of People* by Jane L. Thompson, and according to Mary it was meant for second or third year pupils in State schools. Among the many sub-Beanoesque cartoons was a recurring strip about a stupid working class couple called Bert and Ethel, and their bright son who loved the modern teaching methods at his school.

The intention seemed to be to make children laugh at traditional ideas, and to side with teachers against parents. In the more serious parts of the book, capitalism was repeatedly denounced as the world's worst evil, and our Imperial heyday was briefly described as 'stealing from other countries'.

Irritated beyond measure by the pupils who took the Free School at its face value, Mary threw a book down and slightly hurt the smoking boy's hand.

'Oh, I'm *so* sorry!' she snapped sarcastically.

'Fun-nee!' he jeered, looking at her with hatred.

'Meeting time!' someone shouted from outside, and everyone pelted out. Downstairs, staff and pupils gathered democratically to air their differences and decide

the policy of the school. The pink faced girl who had been doing Social Studies seemed to be the chairman, and bawled questions and points of order above the general hubbub. One of the teenage boys wanted a bike ride to Brighton, and he said it was easy to pedal a hundred miles a day. When Nigel demurred at this, the boy rushed out of the room swearing.

Then the girl chairman, evidently voicing a popular complaint, accused a pleasant-faced teacher, Anthea, of not letting the pupils sit at the front of the mini-bus on outings.

'I'm nervous of driving with people sitting round me', the teacher said in a soft voice.

'But we like sitting in the front!' the girl exclaimed, amid the chorus of support.

'I'm sorry, but it can't be helped,' muttered Anthea.

'Shut up! Shuttup! Shut *up!*' the girl yelled above the ensuing hubbub. 'Since she's bound to have the last word, I'll have to shut up about it. What's the use, after all?'

A teacher brought up the matter of school expenses. Last year they had received £50,700 and spent £50,900. Most of this had gone on school treats and holidays. This year they now had £40,000 and more to come. The washing up rota was discussed at length, this being a task for pupils.

Nigel Wright then took the floor and began to tell the children off in a voice like thunder, in the time honoured manner of a headmaster after Assembly. Why had they smashed a door? Who poured washing up liquid over the floor? How could they destroy a visitor's umbrella? They were cowards! A wolfish looking tow-haired boy, with a killer's eyes, more or less admitted to the umbrella-crime by furiously denying the charge of cowardice.

'I've been to two Free Schools before this one', he mentioned during his defence. Hearing this, no jury would convict.

After a good humoured complaint about the mice in the food cupboard, the meeting ended and lunch was served.

This proved to be egg, chips and a beefburger, with 'afters' to follow. I was joined at table by a bright blond little nine year old boy called Ross, who couldn't spell his surname and wouldn't touch his food. Nobody tried to make him eat, another characteristic of a State school.

'I've always been to this school, 'cos they cane you in the real schools', he said, although this is not true of primary schools. The tiny playgroup children, who had attended the meeting, also stayed for a free lunch.

'Coming ten pin bowling?' Ross's elder brother called and my new friend left me. I thought they were playing truant, but noticing an elated holiday atmosphere among the teachers, I found that lessons ended every day at twelve, and the afternoons were given over to treats.

A cheerful American teacher with a boyish hairdo took the tiny children to a grim adventure playground in a park, and other teachers took their pupils bowling. Lessons were over, all two and a half hours of them. I said goodbye to the children, who were a likeable lot, except for the older ones.

That evening I returned for the teachers' meeting, which was a far quieter affair. One of the staff, a hairy man

who used to be a supply teacher for the district's primary schools and ended every sentence with 'right?' voiced a general regret in that he was 'unable to get through to the over-fourteens'.

Then followed a long discussion on money-matters, and another on admitting a girl who was over fourteen, which was against their rules and very sensible too. They had to have a balance of age and sex, and there was a waiting list of eleven. Two girls from Starcross were to come in for two hours twice a week as part of their training in Social Studies.

Nigel importantly drew out a list of Aims, a School Constitution, and everyone studied these. It was only a rough draft, he assured me. The White Lion Free School, I read, was committed to the collective interest and putting the group before the individual. Its members (no difference was made between pupils and teachers) must accept collective decisions, and be against racism, sexism and violence. They must be non-violent, non-aggressive and non-competitive, and treat everyone as an equal, while expressing themselves clearly and confidently and facing up to problems and overcoming them. Like many constitutions it was nice to look at, especially on a peaceful evening when the last of the big boys had gone home, expressing himself clearly and confidently as he went. After a moment or two, some of the Inherent Contradictions of socialism began to sink in, and a chorus of protests arose.

'All this "collective interest" stuff sounds fascist to me', said the sweet young American art teacher. 'What happens to the individual?'

'We must stay collective in principle', Nigel replied stubbornly, lower jaw jutting out.

'We can be collective, and yet against conformity – I mean, traditional conformity', the supply teacher hazarded.

Nigel agreed, adding that he felt that some of the Aims,

such as the one about facing up to problems, sounded 'too Christian'.

'I object to the bit about "non aggressive",' someone said. 'How can you be non-aggressive when you're fighting for your rights, against fascists or in a revolution or something?'

'That's true', everyone agreed, so they amended it to being 'against aggression but admitting the need to be aggressive'.

At that point I made an excuse and left, just as everyone began talking about money again. It would be best, I think, if the various authorities cancelled all the grants to the Free School, so that it could be reduced to a playgroup for infants, the function it performs the best. As a school it is far too conservative, embodying methods taken up in State schools in the late 'sixties, and abandoned in the early 'seventies, such as the 'finding out for yourself' technique that causes so much anguish. I think the younger children would be happier in the primary schools they have never attended, away from insolent louts. As for the louts themselves, if they could get permission to play truant all the time, and even get jobs, some of their loutishness might vanish. What are we grown-ups but licensed truants anyway? At forty two I can hardly believe my good fortune in not having to go to school!

Note

The White Lion School has now been closed for redecoration, and opens next summer. It is still being run in exile, however, from premises nearby. Nigel Wright has left, and a spokeswoman told me, with some satisfaction, that 'nearly all our funding now comes from the ILEA.' In short, it has become a state school, or almost, which is of course appropriate, now that the state schools are moving closer to the White Lion model.

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T. S. Eliot as a Conservative Thinker

Michael Ivens

In times of great political change, said Disraeli, political parties find it convenient to re-baptise themselves. After the failure of Tory Butskellism, Mrs Thatcher has bravely immersed Britain and the Conservative Party in a bracing, baptismal pool. The dip will, she believes, wash away the sins and sludge of statism, monetary debauchery, socialism, unionocracy and pseudo-Keynesian economics.

The philosophy that has inspired this has been a Whig-liberal Toryism. The book for Mrs Thatcher and Sir Keith Joseph has been Hayek's great *Constitution of Liberty*. (Mrs Thatcher has acknowledged this as an influence along with William Simon's *A Time for Truth* and John Jewkes' *New Ordeal by Planning*.) But Hayek, and other currently influential figures such as Friedman, von Mises and Popper, are a long way from being conservative thinkers. Or at least, if they are conservative, it is not in the sense of the British Conservative tradition.

It was necessary for the Conservative Party and Britain that the relationship of the market economy and freedom should be re-stated, and that the dust be brushed from the statue of Adam Smith. It was necessary to end the post-war political dance, in which five steps towards socialism was followed by a half step back. It was also necessary for Conservatives to state the brutal fact: that socialism – even democratic socialism – inevitably leads to a loss of liberties. Winston Churchill's enthusiasm for Hayek's prescient *The Road to Serfdom* (first published in 1944) was correct but, as far as the mood of immediate, post-war Britain was concerned, premature. Indeed, it helped him to lose the election. It also scared Conservatives away from comparing the economics of fascism and national socialism with that of the Labour Party. The failure to do that – and to display the deep affinity between national socialism and the 'international socialism' of Lenin and Stalin – has been responsible for much of the tolerance that the post-war Labour Party has enjoyed.

And so the current philosophy has been pragmatically helpful; it works and it has truth. But it also has missing ingredients, which are noticed not only by committed conservatives but also by many others who are made anxious by the decline of our culture, by its rootlessness, by its lack of understanding of the past, and by such vast but elusive changes as the pressures on the family and the cheapening of all verbal culture. Concern at these things is indeed an essential part of the modern consciousness, which is suspicious of the reassuring rationalism of previous generations, and appalled at the inhuman assault on natural values, evinced, for example, in our extraordinary abortion laws, in the proliferation of

pornography, and in the easy tolerance towards violent men.

We need then a double re-baptising. We must acquire the Tory-Thatcherite identity justifiably in favour at present and at the same time renew our ties with the original conservatism, whose values are essential not only to the Party, but also to the nation, whose life and interests the Party seeks to represent.

Mrs Thatcher has grown in stature and popularity with the public. Her increased confidence, her moral outrage, and the experience of the Falklands war, have caused her to dig down to the old conservative roots. During her new term of office, she may even achieve the longed-for synthesis of liberal individualism and conservatism. It is, however, a tragedy that the one public figure who could have intellectually integrated the two streams of thought – Enoch Powell – has become almost entirely identified with the issue of 'national sovereignty', expressed in the conflicts over immigration and the EEC. For Powell, had he achieved the breadth which his yearning for authority requires, might have forged in one blow, the unity of purpose which Mrs Thatcher has been slowly creating out of fragments.

Fortunately, however, one does not have to look to politicians for the intimation of political purpose. Our political outlook stems always from sources which lie deeper than the surface stream of political activity. Poetry, which touches those sources, will always be more valuable to our political education than the rhetoric of those in power. One compensation for living in a period of literary anonymity is that a great poet, T. S. Eliot, towers above his pygmy successors. And he is the poet to whom modern conservatives should bow. For Eliot is able to give voice to the missing vision, without which the Whiggish liberalism of the market is little better than licensed selfishness and anarchy.

In 1955 the Conservative Political Centre published a short essay by T. S. Eliot, 'The Literature of Politics'. It is worth re-printing. In it, Eliot pays homage to Lord Hugh Cecil's *Conservatism*, and then produces his four 'classic' writers of Conservatism: Bolingbroke, Burke, Coleridge and Disraeli. As Sir Keith Feiling pointed out in his *Sketches in Nineteenth Century Biography*, Bolingbroke and Disraeli fall into the Tory category, and Coleridge is the ideologist of Toryism, where Toryism is understood as a forward-looking doctrine, prepared to detach the future from the past. Burke, however, is the representative thinker of a deeper conservatism, of a resolute emphasis on continuity in change. Despite this preponderance of Tory radicals in his pantheon, however, T. S. Eliot's

writings (apart from some amateur and eccentric excursions into economics) show him to be a conservative in the mould of Burke, and one who provides a rich sustenance for our generation of value-starved rationalists. He described himself 'as classicist in literature, royalist in politics, and anglo-catholic in religion' (in the preface to *For Lancelot Andrewes*). This unusual explicitness about his position he later explained as being provoked by the challenges of Irving Babbitt to 'come into the open' about his baptism. Although he later said that he would have put it differently, it remains a good statement of Eliot's position.

His classicism arises from his passionate sense of continuity – with a history, a culture, and a community – and his horror of the modern waste land:

What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow
Out of this stony rubbish?

The Waste Land remains the ultimate assault on the disintegration of modern culture, morality and religion. The images of decay, of aridity, of loss, run through his greatest poem: 'a heap of broken images', 'the dead tree gives no shelter', 'I think we are in rats' alley', 'rock and no water and the sandy road', 'These fragments I have shored against my ruins'.

The mechanical seduction that parodies Goldsmith and which so shocked W. B. Yeats, still shocks:

When lovely lady stoops to folly

And paces about her room again alone. . . .

The sinister images of maternal lamentation and hooded hordes swarming over endless plains point prophetically to the catastrophes of our times, and express Eliot's sense that the material comforts and safety of the modern city are suspended over an abyss of moral anarchy, into which, at any moment, they might fall. And yet the glimpses of the noble past that are shored against the ruins bring optimism: the Ionian white and gold of St Magnus Martyr, the past glories of the first Elizabeth, St Augustine's 'Confessions', Buddha's Sermon and the Upanishads. They led – by an eclectic but logical route – to Eliot's baptism.

Eliot was concerned, in all his writings, with the continuity of literature, as a symbol of the continuity of the social world. He wished to assert 'the preservation of developed speech, and of civilisation against barbarism', and argued that 'a new unity can only grow on the old roots: the Christian faith, and the classical languages which Europeans inherit in common. These roots are, I think, inextricably entwined.' Yet this was no reactionary concern. In the words of G. H. Bantock (*T. S. Eliot and Education*) 'what Eliot shows is that the mind which is imbued with the present significance of the past is the one best prepared to cope with exigencies of change'. This was shown also by Churchill, de Gaulle and Adenauer. But what is shown in poetry is shown always with more clarity than can attach to the actions of politicians.

Eliot did not hedge his view, in *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*, that 'our own period is one of decline; that the standards of culture are lower than they were fifty years ago; and that the evidences of this decline are visible in every department of human activity', adding that

'Cultural disintegration may ensue upon cultural specialisation'. It is true that Eliot never made fully clear what he meant by 'culture'. He never addressed himself to the question which has since engaged such attention – the question whether scientific knowledge is properly to be considered as a culture. He did, however, see culture as organic and not as the sum total of its details; and he associated this idea of an organic culture with a theory of elites. 'An elite', he argued, 'must be attached to some class', and elites must not be isolated from each other. Elites without class (such as those created under modern totalitarian government) are the enemies of all small associations, and therefore the enemies of culture. Small associations such as the family are the essential transmitters of culture. Moreover, an awareness of family includes 'a piety towards the dead, however obscure, and a solicitude for the unborn, however remote'. Hence this concern for the upholding of a culture is also the deepest concern for social and political continuity.

Eliot saw that we are a split society – and that this poses challenges to a democracy. In *After Strange Gods*, he voiced personally this sense of split: 'We experience such profound differences with some of our contemporaries, that the nearest parallel is the difference between the mentality of one epoch and another'. The main political problem of our time is the problem of this split, which threatens the institutions through which a culture may be preserved and renewed.

Eliot's deep sense of national history produced his two other loyalties: to monarchy and to the Church of England. They were intertwined. Monarchy, in his view, could not exist without a backcloth of religion. But tensions between Church and State were inevitable.

The Church of England, he argued, was the creation not of Henry VIII but of the reign of Elizabeth. 'The *via media* which is the spirit of Anglicanism was the spirit of Elizabeth in all things . . . In its persistence in finding a mean between Papacy and Presbytery the English Church under Elizabeth became something representative of the finest spirit of England of the time'. (*For Lancelot Andrewes*.) And so Eliot, although acknowledging that the English Church has no literary figure comparable to Dante, no devotional figure comparable to St Francis, no intellectual figure comparable to St Thomas Aquinas, nevertheless has a tenderness for and devotion to Hooker, Jeremy Taylor, George Herbert and, above all, Lancelot Andrewes, 'the first great preacher of the English Catholic Church'.

It is typical of Eliot that he has reservations about including that great convert and poet, John Donne, in his Anglican pantheon. 'He is dangerous only for those who find his sermons an indulgence of their sensibility, or for those who are 'fascinated by personality' in the romantic sense of the word'. This summing up is typical of Eliot's suspicion of romanticism, his wariness of the odd individual who flourishes by himself: like William Blake or Spinoza, for example. He is not wholly at ease, therefore, with the many-sidedness of Goethe.

Eliot's poetry, including the dramas, gives the substance of what conservatism should conserve – not the

outer form of institutions, but their inner spirit, and the underlying sense of unity between the individual and his 'tribe'. His essays state with great clarity and restraint the verities beneath the flux of time, by anchoring ourselves to which, we are saved from dissolution. He writes lucidly for the intelligent man who seeks a rock of belief, and it is not for nothing that he admires Pascal. Naturally, however, despite the tact with which Eliot approaches the questions of politics, his writings are, from the point of view of the man who seeks real advice and guidance, not without flaws. As a politician he is limited and sketchy; at one time he took off his cap to Charles Maurras, who was more a reactionary ideologue than a conservative in the English sense. Eliot's economics were naive, and in the nineteen thirties he was influenced by Tawney, by Social Credit and by the woolly flock of Christian economists.

But, in his weaknesses, as in his strengths, Eliot was a child of his time. Like Ezra Pound he identified capitalism with usury – although he was prepared to allow his brother-in-law to invest for him. Like Pound and Edith and Osbert Sitwell, one or two of his early poems had flashes of shallow and fashionable anti-semitism. (And, like the Sitwells, he soon got rid of it.) Like most people, he did not grasp at first the significance of German national socialism. In *The Idea of a Christian Society*, he wrote: 'The red herring of German national religion. I cannot hold such a low opinion of German intelligence as to accept any stories of the revival of pre-Christian cults'. (His attitude in the war was, however, staunch and correct.) He was (for some) somewhat excessively grave and hierarchical. Despite his liking for the old music hall and the flashes of Cockney songs in *The Waste Land*, he did not have that trust in the sanity of the common man that G. K. Chesterton displays.

But how great are the merits! He may be naive about

economics and grossly prejudiced about businessmen, but only in the course of raising deep and serious questions. These questions cannot be answered by a blithe response that capitalism is morally neutral. 'The most that can be said', wrote Maurice Cowling dismissively, 'is that Eliot posed problems.' He did a lot more than that – and his questions reflected his conclusions. He saw, for example, that, 'what is miserable is a system that makes the dual wage necessary.' He was a pertinent critic of totalitarianism, and at the same time showed the impossibility of an attitude of laissez-faire, in the moral climate of the modern city.

Although Eliot's knowledge of European literature was profound, his awareness of continental and American political thought was not conspicuous. But his knowledge of the roots of English culture and religion was deep, stemming from a personal pilgrimage of the soul. Like Jung, Eliot knew that modern man is frustrated by a repressed desire for religion – and that the frustrated religious sense may, if unfulfilled, turn man himself into a false god, and so threaten all our fragile achievements. Thus, at a time when Auden was turning to Marxism and Spender was writing *Beyond Liberalism*, Eliot rejected the historical determinism that wanted to be on the winning side. He had the courage to produce unpopular opinions, and the genius to make critics appreciate his poetry, despite the unfashionable views expressed in it.

Russell Kirk in his study *Eliot and His Age*, quoted Eliot on the philosopher F. H. Bradley: 'We fight for lost causes because we know that our defeat and dismay may be the preface to our successors' victory, though that victory itself will be temporary: we fight rather to keep something alive than in the expectation that anything will triumph.'

These words are a fitting epitaph for Eliot himself.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Clive Ashworth teaches sociology at the University of Leicester.

Haven Bradford Gow is a freelance political writer living in America.

Ian Crowther is a director of Lonsdales Advertising Agency.

Michael Cullis is a former British diplomat and academic, who is now Director in this country of the European Cultural Foundation, of Amsterdam.

J. P. Day is Reader in Philosophy at Keele University.

Antony Flew is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Toronto, and author of many books, including *The Politics of Procrustes*.

Ray Honeyford is headmaster of a multi-ethnic school.

Michael Ivans is director of Aims of Industry. His latest volume of poems, *No Woman is an Island*, was recently published by Villiers Publications.

Daniel Johnson works for the Centre for Policy Studies, and is researching modern German history.

Roy Kerridge is a freelance writer. His latest book, *Real Wicked, Guy* was published this autumn by Blackwells.

David J. Levy teaches sociology at Middlesex Polytechnic, and has just completed a book on the subject of Political Order.

David Morgan is reading history at the University College of North Wales, Bangor.

The Right Hon. J. Enoch Powell MBE MP is the Official Ulster Unionist MP for South Down.

C. H. Sisson's latest volume, *Anglican Essays*, was reviewed in our last issue.

Lord Sudeley is a Vice President of the Prayer Book Society.

Andrew Sykes is Professor of Sociology at the University of Strathelyde.

Count Tolstoy is the author of several books, including *Victims of Yalta*.

EDITORIAL

Revelations concerning the disposal of radioactive waste from the Windscale Nuclear Power Station have coincided with an indictment issued to the directors of Three Mile Island in New Jersey, accusing them of falsifying safety reports. The two cases raise what promises to be one of the most important long-term political issues of our time: how should we protect the environment upon which we depend for our survival? In particular, should we protect it by centralised planning and control, on the socialist model, or merely by law? The issue is too important to permit a dogmatic answer. We should be prepared to consider all possibilities – including those which fit neatly into none of the prevailing political ideologies. However, we must begin somewhere, and there is profit in comparing actual and competing political systems.

Unfortunately it is almost impossible to do this with any rigour, not because the facts are too complicated – although they are very complicated – but because they are not available. The principal modern example of a centrally planned economy – that of the Soviet Union – is one for which vital statistics cannot be provided. While it is known to the World Health Organisation that life expectancy has been steadily falling in the Soviet Union over the past fifteen years (and steadily rising, for example, in the United States), the causes of this decline are hard to assess, since mortality figures are no longer published by the Soviet Office of Information. Similar strategies of concealment operate in the client states of Eastern Europe. Thus visitors to the forests of Bohemia know that the devastation caused there by acid rain is in all probability far more serious than that to be seen in West Germany, but no statistics are available that would enable us to compare the two disasters. Sometimes a report may appear, in a Communist Party newspaper, drawing attention to this or that occurrence, and accompanying its description with threats and warnings. Thus a recent article in *Izvestia* drew attention to the death by chemical pollution of nearly half a million tonnes of edible fish in the Dnieper – enough to provide supper for every Soviet citizen. But what inspires such reports, what system of enquiry is revealed in them, and what remedies they herald, are facts about which we remain in ignorance.

Of course, the Soviet Union is not a model of the kind of ‘socialist planning’ that our own legislators would propose. When the Western socialist argues that problems of the environment can be effectively dealt with only by a central system of investment and control, he does not imply that the system should also silence public opinion and debate, or lead to the kind of widespread policing of civil society that sustains the monolith of Communist government. On the contrary, he would

argue, a centralised economy can generate its benefits only when subject to the correcting pressure of public opinion, and to the over-arching rule of law which places in the hands of the citizen the instrument whereby his guardians might be guarded. The true comparison, therefore, is not between the Soviet Union and the United States, but between the ‘capitalist’ and ‘socialist’ economies of Western Europe, which exist side by side under regimes equally subject to law, constitutional procedure, and democratic election. We should compare, say, Britain and France, or Norway and Sweden.

Such comparisons are again hard to make. But in so far as they can be made they seem to show that neither system is superior to the other. ‘Socialist’ and ‘capitalist’ governments in Western Europe confront the same environmental problems, adopt the same solutions, and experience the same degree of success. Spectacular failures there certainly are, but for the most part they can be attributed to individual villains, or to local habits of indifference and corruption (as at Seveso). The prevailing economic order seems to make little difference.

If that is so, however, we must doubt the socialist’s case. If the economic distinction between ‘social ownership’ and ‘private property’ makes no appreciable difference to environmental control, then social ownership cannot be the solution to the environmental problem. Such protection as there is stems from public opinion and the rule of law, by the operation of which those affected by pollution can impede the actions of those who create it. And, it is tempting to add, how much more likely are they to succeed in removing pollution, when those who create it are not the functionaries of a centralised state, protected by anonymity, subterfuge, and the auxiliary powers of office, but mere private individuals, with no more power over the state and its institutions than the citizen who calls them to task?

But the law moves slowly, and may arrive too late. The historic judgement of *Rylands v Fletcher* (1865), which shows the refined and purposeful manner in which the common law of England adapts itself to new contingencies, shows also the need for a new kind of foresight. The learned judges held that ‘the person who for his own purposes brings on his lands and collects and keeps there anything likely to do mischief if it escapes, must keep it in at his peril, and, if he does not do so, is *prima facie* answerable for all the damage which is the natural consequence of its escape’. By the time that was decided, the damage in question had been done. It was damage that could be compensated for: but who could possibly compensate the victims of an explosion on Three Mile Island, and how could the evil be remedied? The law has indeed proved most effective in controlling such dangers: but it can no longer prove effective, if it is allowed to act

merely in retrospect, when the damage is done. It is necessary to anticipate dangers, and in particular to listen to those experts who warn of them. Individuals cannot respond effectively to the warnings of experts; only governments have the power and the opportunity to initiate the requisite measures. And to the extent that this power must transcend that of the merely legal constraints upon a market economy, to that extent will the government be forced to contemplate interventionist measures.

But why should a Conservative government not initiate such measures? Conservation should not be an exclusively left-wing issue, and the environment should not be neglected by a Party devoted to conserving all that sustains us. A Conservative Party which banned cars from cities, or which created a new factory inspectorate to locate pollution in advance, would do much to win the hearts of the lumpenintelligentsia. And, in doing so, it would win the principal fomenters of public opinion.

Letters

The First Weasel

Sir: Except in the case of easily-track-downable scientific neologisms, it is always dangerous to attribute 'coinage' to any user of a word or phrase, however early or eminent, and I fear that Theodore Roosevelt in the case of 'weasel word' is no exception.

Stewart Chaplin wrote in the *Century Magazine* (June 1900 p. 305) that 'weasel words are words that suck all the life out of the words next to them, just as a weasel sucks an egg and leaves the shell'. There is no doubt that Theodore Roosevelt *popularised* the phrase, but he did not *coin* it. Neither, perhaps, did Chaplin; but so far as I am aware, no-one has found an earlier example, at least in print.

G. Chowdhary-Best
27 Walpole Street,
London SW3 4QS

Post-Election Blues

Sir: Harold James' analysis of the West German elections in your Spring issue contains a number of highly questionable observations and comparisons.

- (1) The stability of the Adenauer era was *not* a product of the SPD's acceptance of his 'regime'. The pillars of Adenauer's policy – alignment with the West, European integration in preference to German reunification, rejection of economic controls and planning – were anathema to the SPD opposition until 1959. Conversely it would be a mistake to exaggerate the degree of polarisation between the parties in 1983.
- (2) Bonn is not Weimar. Comparisons with the collapse of the Weimar Republic are misleading. The economic situation in 1983 bears little resemblance to the early 1930s, as any visitor to the Federal Republic knows. Politically, support for extremist parties is low whilst attachment to the state and democratic ideals is high both in the population as a whole and amongst those elites whose antipathy to democracy was a major factor in the decline of Weimar.
- (3) The views of the environmentalist Greens may be 'unsophisticated' and their extra-parliamentary activities often suspect. Comparison with National Socialism, however, is invidious and the use of the word 'fascism' should in any case be used with greater sparingness than is currently fashionable.

- (4) The Greens presented a danger to the governmental stability only inasmuch as they could have supplanted the FDP as the third party and coalition partner for the two main parties. Had this occurred, the uncompromising character of the Greens and the immobility built into the constitutional provisions for dissolving parliament, could conceivably have presented difficulties. This situation is unlikely to occur in the near future.
- (5) The SPD is now going through a period of flux. To achieve a government majority without the assistance of the FDP, it must decide whether to go for the Green vote in the future or to move into the middle ground in an attempt to win back support from the traditional working and middle classes. This accounts for the equivocation of the party's leader described in Otto von Habsburg's article. The outcome will depend on the economic circumstances and the persistence of support for environmentalist issues. There seems, however, little danger of the 'really popular fascism of the left' which Mr James so vividly conjures up.
Ian Turner
UMIST, Manchester M60 1QD

Doubts about Dostoevsky

Sir: Angela Ellis-Jones overstates the similarity between Dostoevsky and the British conservative tradition (*The Salisbury Review*, Autumn 1983).

Dostoevsky was a great enthusiast for that highly eccentric thinker N. F. Fedorov. 'I will say that I agree completely with these thoughts', wrote Dostoevsky of Fedorov's ideas.

And Fedorov's ideas included vehement opposition to capitalism as well as socialism; a world utopia under the rule of the Czar which would lead to the resurrection of the dead; immortality as a result of 'positive chastity' and much else besides.

Fedorov influenced *The Brothers Karamazov*. He was preoccupied with 'the fraternity of the sons for the resurrection of the dead fathers'. Dostoevsky's theme in *The Brothers Karamazov* was 'the fraternity of the sons for the murder of the father'.

Michael Ivens
Aims of Industry,
40 Doughty Street,
London WC1N 2LF

BOOK REVIEWS

THE METAPHYSICS OF MODERNITY

Ian Crowther

A Critique of Freedom and Equality, John Charvet. Cambridge, £19.50. **Two Worlds of Liberalism**, Eldon J. Eisenach. Chicago, £19.50. **Of Liberty**, edited by A. Phillips Griffiths. Cambridge, £9.50.

Of books on liberalism there is, it seems, no end. To what extent this bears witness to the creed's continuing vitality, or to the dominant position it has long held in our intellectual life, it is hard to say. But whether one approaches the liberal church as believer or apostate, one cannot but be struck by the devotion its beliefs still inspire. Clearly we are in the presence of a religion which is still invested with considerable moral authority.

John Charvet, like the founding father of liberalism, John Locke, though with quite different aims in view, apparently feels that there is much 'intellectual rubble' to clear away before even the foundations of a new world view can be laid. He begins by criticising the modern view that an individual's moral worth can be measured by the degree to which he chooses, and acts upon, his own self-chosen ends. This strenuous view of the moral life stigmatises as inauthentic the person whose moral outlook is inherited or unreflective, since such a person has allegedly renounced self-determination in favour of determination by others: family, society, God. Not that I think there is much danger of the individual in a modern secular society patterning his life upon traditional models of behaviour. The doctrine of heroic freedom, once held up as an ideal for the few and poeticised in Shelley's natural man (sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed; Equal, unclassed, tribeless and nationless; Exempt from awe, worship, degree), is tailor-made for today's morally dispossessed masses. Man 'come of age' is obliged, by the emancipated condition in which he finds himself, to invent his own values, or at least to choose them from the infinitely variegated range which the twentieth century has on offer.

Charvet does not dispute the empirical capacity of men to behave as free moral agents. He simply contests the proposition that this capacity should ipso facto bestow moral brownie points. A succession of tortuous attempts have been made to ground morality in the fact of individual self-determination, and Charvet disposes of them one by one, starting with Hobbes. From the latter's *Leviathan* we learn that men discover the 'natural laws' of morality by reasoning prudentially about the conditions necessary to their mutual self-preservation in a competitive environment. The conclusion emerges that men must respect an equal liberty in others to that which they claim for themselves. But this is to suggest that reciprocal obligations are always in accordance, and never in con-

flict, with prudential considerations of self-interest. This is implausible, as Charvet points out, not because it isn't in the individual's interest to enter into obligations, but because as an egoist it isn't necessarily in his interest to keep them.

One possible reaction to the incoherence of Hobbes's account of morality is the notion of sympathy as an explanation of how self-love is transmuted into the love of others. For Hume we associate another's pain or pleasure with our own, 'and in so far as we act for their welfare, we can be said to be loving ourselves in them. In this way the unity of self and others that morality requires is created'. But this theory, far from resting on self-love, presupposes that we are morally related to our fellow beings, since otherwise there is no earthly reason why, as naturally self-interested beings, we should go to another's aid. Egoists do not become altruists through the simple awareness of another's suffering.

With Rousseau we arrive at a recognition of the need to transform 'the personality, from one governed by self-interested reason to one governed by moral reason'. This transformation, in Rousseau's account, is presumed to take place, not as men enter civil society, but as they leave it. On Rousseau's hypothesis, socialised man is an aggressive predator, made such by the ties of dependence which turn his innocent self-love into a base desire either for domination or emulation. Rousseau's wish to detach the citizen as far as possible from partial associations and to locate him in the purely political realm is of a piece with his conviction that the moral conscience must be made to prevail over our natural inclinations.

Kant developed this idea into his picture of man as a dual being, phenomenal and noumenal. As noumenal ego man rises above the phenomenal world of causal determination, and determines his own destiny. At this point, Charvet tells us, the modern attempt to derive morality from self-interest is given up in favour of a view which subordinates the one to the other. Actually, I think it would be more accurate to say that from this point the way is open for Western man to lead a double life: in effect inhabiting two quite distinct worlds, the one governed by considerations of personal gain and utility, the other by intimations of personal moral worth and dignity.

Hegel and Marx, as Charvet reminds us, were each driven by a desire to heal this rift in modern man between the particular and the universal, and to recreate for the individual a world which would make ethical sense to him. But unfortunately each of them was also captivated by the modern idea of 'a self-determining will that as such is completely unrestricted by anything outside itself'. Since palpably such an entity does not exist in present reality, Hegel and Marx sought to give it reality elsewhere, in a collectivised state or society. In the process, however, they instrumentalised real, particular individuality by making it the vehicle of the unreal individuality which it was the explicit aim of their systems to produce.

Charvet's own solution to the problem 'of reconciling

the particular and the moral self' is to reject 'the *absolute* value of the individual' and affirm instead 'his *value in relation* to other individuals.' Charvet is troubled by the fact that, because individualist theory regards as absolute the right of each individual to realise his authentic self determined ends, it offers no moral (as opposed to prudential) justification for limiting and balancing rights in a community. An ethical community, Charvet asserts, must embody some substantive 'conception of an ordered life.' I agree; but I am unclear as to why such a conception is more likely to arise or gain acceptance as a result of viewing individuals, not as self determiners, but, in Charvet's terms, as 'co-determiners' of each other's lives.

As long as morality is thought to issue solely from individual wills, whether considered as acting singly or in association, it is bound to assume an arbitrary and conventional character. In these circumstances, it is more likely to multiply, than minimise, disagreements among men. I cannot see, then, how one can go much beyond a liberal regime of negative freedom and welfare, except by invoking either traditional sentiments (such as patriotism) or a pre-liberal conception of man which points towards a perfected human life. Charvet is not unappreciative of the first: he even implies that his theory should be read, in the manner of Oakeshott, as an 'abridgment' of our present social relations, including their traditional practices. However, since he takes 'for granted the superiority of the modern conception' (which, curiously, he thinks rules our arbitrary moral attitudes), his theory does not adequately account for the persistence of customs and institutions to which we unselfconsciously assent from the depths of a nature capable of acknowledging all kinds of goods as given; these goods possess a reality prior to the willing of them into existence by our subjective selves.

Charvet may hanker after a more substantive idea of the common good than political society presently allows, but his theory precludes its realisation quite as much as the individualist doctrine it opposes. That doctrine's rationalist appearance conceals, moreover, its metaphysical antecedents, which go far towards explaining the hold it still has over us. The peculiarly modern notion that to act independently of external influences is one of the cardinal virtues, perhaps the cardinal virtue, is reminiscent of the attitude we associate with those primitive Christians who, to preserve the purity of their faith, kept themselves strictly apart from the pagan idols and practices of Roman civilisation. The Protestant reformer of the sixteenth century, convinced that the fears of these early Christians had been entirely justified by subsequent events, sought once more to seal off the faith from worldly contacts: this time in the catacomb of the individual conscience. Herein lie the seeds of philosophic subjectivism: the principle that every man is his own pope, and that truth and value is located in the individual subject, whereas everything external is experienced as inauthentic. Herein also lie the seeds of secular liberalism with its insistence that men's public relationships should be based on impersonal bonds of self interest and mutual calculation. But this contraction of human purposes to a bare utilitarian minimum, although secular in effect, was religious in origin. Everything in nature was depraved, everything in man concupiscence and pride: hence the coincidence between Calvinism and skeptical naturalism. The two collaborated in destroying the old moral and juridical order of Christendom and put in its place the *Two*

Worlds of Liberalism explored by Eldon J. Eisenach in his book of that title.

Eisenach takes us back to the beginnings of this rupture in European man, in order, he says, to show us a side of liberal culture which is rarely now on view, and yet which illuminates much that is most characteristic of modernity. Protestantism preached that faith, not works, secures salvation. In the countries it conquered religion became a purely personal, and even at times a selfish affair between God and the individual. Priests, rituals, institutional churches, religious feasts and charities were all so many idols which served only to corrupt the purity of a person's inward faith by giving it worldly expression. Therefore, men must be unbound from all such institutional connections and returned to a state of nature wherein private interest is the primary motivating power. Men may be redeemed by inward faith and God's saving grace, but their natural reason (which Luther called 'the devil's own whore') cannot tell them of their religious obligations or penetrate to first truths: it can only help them construct rules appropriate to their naturally depraved condition.

Hobbes took seriously the puritan belief of his time that, in Eisenach's words, 'the best one can do is to shape and adhere to legal and moral standards appropriate to this world under a system of public power and of private motivations that reflect man as he is. To attempt more is to tempt one's faith. One's political duties are to destroy institutional tributes to vainglory (they prevent the workings of faith), not to construct new ones'. The Christian was to prepare himself for the second coming and, in the meantime, not to sully the purity of his faith by muddying it with material concerns.

In the literature of Cromwell's Commonwealth and in Hobbes's *Leviathan*, we find defined the framework within which English liberalism was to develop. The soulless character of contemporary society owes much to the distinctions insisted upon by the founders of liberalism between religious and natural interests, church and state, faith and knowledge. Man's ultimate goals are not to be pursued in the workaday world, in which realm it is better (for the sake of peace and civility, said Locke, echoing Hobbes) 'that all men pursue proximate goals, chained to the necessities of their bodies, interests and goods'. For Locke, as for Hobbes, observes Eisenach, 'care of the soul . . . is entirely an unshared personal concern'. Locke will tolerate the church providing it 'is a thing absolutely separate and distinct from the commonwealth . . .'

Once having established as 'Gospel' the desirability of 'privatising' the church, Locke is free in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* to invoke the state of nature, or the pleasure-pain mechanism which is operative there, as the proper medium of moral instruction. Priests, paternal power, customs, religious sanctions, and the like, are thus effectively relieved of their roles in the body politic. Their places are taken by 'Nature's God (which) works in reasonable ways to insure the eventual victory of true morality'. In the views of Hobbes and Locke the destruction of the prevailing institutions by a regime of self-interest and calculation is not in order to elevate the latter 'but to make possible receptivity to true righteousness'. This belief that authoritative and higher ends are best preserved in the purity of the private conscience is overshadowed for a time by the French and Scottish materialists of the Enlightenment.

However, with John Stuart Mill we are again con-

fronted with the two worlds of liberalism. In *On Liberty* Mill laments that now, 'not one Christian in a thousand guides or tests his individual conduct by reference to . . . the maxims and precepts contained in the New Testament'. In this passage Mill has no thought of resuscitating religious impulses which he considers to be 'well nigh spent'. Rather he wants to reassert 'our mental freedom'. Granted that most men are tethered to the timeless dictates of desire after desire until death, a saving remnant of high-minded reformers may still transcend the routinisation of life and rise above the happiness of mere sensation.

Mill's image of such an elect striving heroically to uphold the free, spiritual nature of man in the teeth of material and psychological necessity has since gained both converts and plausibility from the developments in this century of behaviourist science and social engineering. Indeed, it may be the best we can hope for in the present phase of our civilisation; certainly Eisenach seems to think so: more than once he suggests that, to redeem our society from its calculating hedonism, we should inaugurate a liberalism cognisant of the spiritual as well as the rational side of its tradition. Yet even supposing that more of us were to heed Hobbes's millennialism or Locke's Reasonable Christianity or Mill's elevated Religion of Humanity, would modern society be significantly different from the character it assumes now? Isn't it in fact the case that we moderns are heirs to both the worlds which Eisenach describes? If the more familiar and, as it were, 'lived in' world of liberalism is the outer one given up to utilitarian pursuits, that is only because its other, inner world was never created for anything but our 'free' moments.

Viewed in a wider historical perspective, from a pre-liberal past, modernity presents a deeply unsatisfactory picture of man's relationship with reality. Whether the individual is encouraged, with Hobbes and the Protestant tradition, to purify his Christian belief of all natural attachments or, with Mill and his contemporary epigones, to distance his personal morality from worldly concerns, the result in each case is the same: hypermoralism on the one hand and hyperactivism on the other. When man is robbed of what Eliot would have called an 'objective correlative' for his spiritual energies, he is liable to turn in upon himself and to develop a political ethics which is merely ideal, and which is fuelled by a pharasaic contempt for the world as it is. This is one consequence of transforming man's relationship, either to God or to his 'higher self', into something purely vertical and individualist. The other is the abandonment, for the sake of peace and a high standard of living, of the horizontal task of sanctifying the political order.

Hypermoralist and hyperactivist are alike in their common refusal of reality. Both exhibit a neo-Gnostic contempt for what Santayana called 'the constitution of the world', which is to be drawn up anew by the forces either of technology or ideology. The world, now a thoroughly disenchanting and devalued place, is to be conquered, not conserved. Except perhaps in memory, we have lost the earlier pre-modern image of the world as a place possessed of value in its own terms. There still persists, though, a conservative tradition of thought which has always invested the real with more than utilitarian significance. Such vestiges as remain of the West's sacral civilisation the conservative has jealously

guarded: monarchies, sacred ceremonies and symbols of authority, established churches and liturgies, holy days and charitable foundations. Conservatism, even where it has severed its religious connections, retains a piety towards the 'givens' of life; in particular towards all those rooted common feelings which mirror in the social world something of the natural rhythms of the cosmos, and something also of the inherited empirical experience of man. Moreover, the conservative does not wish to see all such feelings relegated to the subjective realm, and thereby relativised. On the contrary, he insists that it is in the nature of man to give public expression and permanent embodiment to his deepest beliefs and instincts.

Individual and society, mind and nature, will and desire do not exist as mutually exclusive categories in the conservative mind. The conservative does not see man as stretched out on a rack, forever torn between the polar opposites of perfect freedom and natural bondage. Neither religion nor art nor manners nor morals need to separate themselves from the community in order to find their true essences. These disembodied essences of liberal idealism, like spectres at the feast of reality, spoil our appetite for the richness and diversity of existing things, forcing us to feed privately on what we are forbidden to relish publicly.

The conservative does not deny the individual's right to live his own truth, but society also has its lived truths which must be protected, even though they cannot adequately be understood as the outcome of contractual undertakings. Individual freedom is not the master value in political and social life which liberals take it to be. Rather, it is the mature fruit of a carefully cultivated plant whose roots lie deep in the soil of tradition. This is a point made variously by the 'conservative' contributors to *Of Liberty*.

Roger Scruton, like Charvet, but from a somewhat different perspective, exposes the absurdity of seeking always to justify social constraints by reference to the liberal conception of freedom, which conception presupposes an idea of autonomy. Such social constraints as exist, notably, for example, custom and its prescribed forms of conduct, must be understood independently of any true idea of autonomy, since they are preconditions for the latter's appearance. They enable us to define, develop and enact our individual selves in ways which would be impossible if we were left, so to speak, to our own desires. Unless we think of freedom simply as the capacity at any time to respond to our strongest desire (in which case we may actually be thinking of a state of unfreedom), we must see that the value of freedom consists in our being able to satisfy those 'primary' desires which fulfill our being, 'and which are definitive of what we are, rather than of what happens to us'. Scruton sharply distinguishes this view from the Kantian idea (which incidentally is the Protestant idea transposed into the order of speculative knowledge) that 'the will can be wholly separated from desire and assigned to a different subject from the subject of desire'.

Kenneth Minogue makes a similar conservative point when he calls freedom a 'social skill'. He further argues that the English are richly endowed with this skill thanks to their willingness to 'play the game'. This willingness depends, of course, upon a shared social ethic and upon each person's perception that his fellow citizens can be

trusted to live by the ethic. How far future generations of English men and women will continue to internalise an ethic of the kind Minogue admires, is a matter for doubt. Minogue himself argues that a condition of freedom cannot easily be sustained without 'in the first place a recognition that we have inherited something valuable'. Nor will freedom survive unless people are 'prepared to make sacrifice for it'. Unfortunately these conditions of freedom are inconsistent with normal liberal definitions of it. Once define freedom as something transcending all communal bonds and you set up an automatic opposition between the individual and the society in whose bosom he has been nurtured. Once define society as a band of self-seekers and you remove the motives to make any sacrifices for it. Liberal civilisation may not be the best guarantor of our freedoms, precisely because the freedoms it values are ideal, not real, located in another (or a future) world and not this one. It is for conservatives to demonstrate, not only that self-limitation is essential to freedom, but that such self-limitation is the result of the moral education which our civilisation provides, and for which we should show as much solicitude as for the always precarious freedoms which it makes possible.

GOVERNING IDEAS

C. H. Sisson

The British Political Tradition, W. H. Greenleaf.
Volume 1, *The Rise of Collectivism* £22.00
Volume 2, *The Ideological Heritage* £26.00 (Methuen, N.P.)

It is difficult to be as grateful as one should be for these two great volumes which constitute – there are soon to be three and, finally, four – the first half of a study which the author diffidently calls 'little more than an extended essay' on the British Political Tradition. What can be meant by this description? The period covered is the last hundred and fifty years. That at any rate sets limits in time which give some definition to the notion, though it must be said that it is a funny 'tradition' which goes back no further than the first half of the nineteenth century. The more difficult part of the definition is in the scope given to the subject within the chosen period, and this can hardly be judged until the work is completed. The first volume (*The Rise of Collectivism*) aims at providing 'a certain historical perspective in the context of which the development of our modern politics may be seen.' The second (*The Ideological Heritage*) 'is an attempt to show how the basic tension between libertarianism and collectivism is reflected in arguments of state; how our three main political doctrines have both stimulated and reacted to the growth of government intervention and the proliferation of public agency; and how they have dealt with the problems of individual liberty involved.' The third volume will apparently review the development of 'governmental and allied machinery,' while the fourth will consider 'the overseas dimension of our affairs, foreign and imperial policy and administration, and ideas about them.'

The subject as a whole is a huge one and Professor Greenleaf is disarming about the difficulties he has

encountered. What 'some years ago' seemed – it is hard to see why – a 'limited task' has grown beyond expectation 'as the array of potential evidence increased' before his eyes 'to astonishing and quite unmanageable proportions.' He says ruefully that he might have gone to the Social Science Research Council for a 'massive grant' and 'employed a couple of research assistants to do all the spade-work.' He didn't, because he 'never fancied that way of working, regarding it . . . as rather a cheat,' as with a subject of this kind it surely would have been. For what he is attempting is not a mere factual survey (in the ordinary sense of that delusive expression) but something more ambitious. The work as a whole will 'suggest a particular point of view about the study of politics' – something which, as he says, requires an author to 'brood over the details' himself 'and not at second-hand.' These reflections on methodology leave one with a great regard for Professor Greenleaf's integrity. One might say that a certain melancholy charm emanates from a work which is so clearly the product of immense labours undertaken with a sense of their inevitable inadequacy.

The subject is, like so many others, of its nature limitless. For what, ultimately, is political tradition except everything that has happened to us and is remembered or can be recovered from the past? Time-limits are certainly artificial, for what we started with a hundred and fifty years ago was nothing but the product of earlier experience and reflections. Moreover, the notion of an 'Ideological Heritage' which is confined to *political* ideas – however widely one interprets that phrase – is certainly only a part, if an important one, of what goes on in the minds of those who have to be governed or, as we now say more politely but perhaps not more exactly, have to govern themselves. Any ideas which lurk at the back of people's minds, however apparently unrelated to politics, can and do affect their relations with the powers that be and the pressures that may be exerted against them. Professor Greenleaf himself certainly understands this, for he devotes a chapter in his first volume to 'Science and Scientism,' a prominent component, no doubt, in the contemporary political mind, but why stop there? Because, I suppose, one must stop somewhere.

The range of Professor Greenleaf's studies and meditations is impressive; even the poets get a mention, and his mastery of what is more usually regarded as the literature of his subject is nowhere in doubt. He keeps his bearings in all this by orienting himself on the two opposing tendencies 'which may be conceptualised as "libertarianism" and "collectivism", which are indeed the chief political toys of the period. The first volume, *The Rise of Collectivism*, opens with a characterisation of modern British politics in those terms, and the bulk of it is given over to a study of 'The Great Change' which has tipped the balance progressively in the latter direction. There are chapters on war and the role of government; economic and social aspects; political matters such as the extension of the franchise and legislative and administrative changes; science; philanthropy. The second volume – almost two hundred and fifty pages longer, as if the machine were really getting into gear – takes us, under the title of 'The Ambivalence of Liberalism', through Cobden, Spencer, J. S. Mill, the 'Yellow Book' – which is *Britain's Industrial Future* (1928) and not the nineties publication – with glances at a host of other sources; through a discussion of paternalism and libertarianism in

Tory conceptions to a final part on 'The Duality of Socialism' from the Webbs and Tawney to later 'continuing ambivalence.' Professor Greenleaf's original orientation has indeed determined what he has seen, but it is an orientation from which much that is of practical importance *can* be seen. Moreover, because he sees – rightly – the same forces at play in all parties, his work is eirenic and should serve to diminish the more strident claims of all of them.

The question remains, to whom are such volumes likely to be most useful? The strident on any side are unlikely to bother their heads with them and, to be truthful, more reflective persons who have been paying attention for long to what actually goes on in the world will find little that is novel to them. The book is one which would hardly have been conceived had not the study of government been, as Professor Greenleaf says, 'introduced in one form or another in most if not all of our universities.' Whether this latter fact proves the existence of the subject, in any exclusive form, is another matter. Professor Greenleaf himself is too widely read not to have entertained doubts about this. Perhaps politics are to be understood, if at all, only in the practice of them. However that may be, there exists a body of students who are engaged in the study and there must, one imagines, be many undergraduates who enter upon it with inadequate if not crack-brained notions of what it could be about. For such readers Professor Greenleaf's volumes could not fail to be valuable, not least because they are designed to show 'the limits within which the possibilities of [modern British] politics freely range' and they do in fact demonstrate that the parties are not as different as they make out. If the raw undergraduate is thereby discouraged, no harm done, for that is the beginning of wisdom.

THE NEW MACHIAVELLI: CARL SCHMITT AT 95

Daniel Johnson

Carl Schmitt: Theorist for the Reich Joseph Bendersky (Princeton U.P., £23.70)

So long as intellectuals frequent courts, they shall require the virtues of the courtier, and profess all others at their peril. The spectacle of the unfortunate or more often incautious philosopher, beset by enemies, retreating into a retirement filled with rancour, remorse or serenity, is common; though never sufficient to deter the ambitious, it rarely fails to elicit sympathy and respect, as Aubrey felt for the aged Hobbes; and the precious store of sceptical wisdom has usually profited by such minds more than any others. Balthasar Gracian (1653): 'Even knowledge must follow the fashion, and where it is unfashionable consists precisely in feigning ignorance . . . The clever man adapts himself in adorning the mind as well as the body to the present, even should the past seem better to him . . . Let the clever man live as he can, if not as he should like, and value what fate conceded him more highly than what he was denied.'

Carl Schmitt embroiled himself in the politics of the

Third Reich for four years; thereafter he advised those who asked him about National Socialist jurisprudence to consult his 'distinguished colleague, Professor Höhn' – actually one of his chief persecutors. By then it was not too late to salvage a precarious existence, thanks to Goering's patronage; but the old courtly wiles could not anticipate that peculiarly modern odium associated with the obsolete apologist for legalised depravity. Even those who believed their litany – or at least their leader – and were responsible for its implementation, like Speer, have been more readily forgiven than Schmitt for his jurist's prudence. During his long retreat in his Rhenish birthplace, Schmitt has doubtless derived much comfort from contemplating those, like Machiavelli, whose fate and consolation he proudly claims to share; but will there ever again be an intellectual of such ability and ambition who will trust these models to guide him through the reckoning with totalitarianism?

Joseph Bendersky's new book supersedes all previous treatments of Schmitt's life up to 1947, and contains some shrewd analysis of his inexhaustible works. Though isolated entries from his voluminous diary, which Schmitt has allowed visitors to 'San Casciano' (as he calls his retreat) to see and publish, suggest that when he dies we shall acquire a source of great value, it is unlikely to alter significantly the facts established by Bendersky's archival research, which included many of Schmitt's letters. I remember once reading an essay on Pope Alexander III to my tutor at Magdalen; remarking on how elusive my subject's personality had proved, I was met by the retort: 'He didn't have a personality, he was a lawyer!' While Bendersky shows how much more than a lawyer Schmitt has always been, the fictional juristic person became so necessary an alternative form of life to the sensitive, passionate, pessimistic soul which sometimes reveals itself in the earlier works, that even this conscientious portrait is only two-dimensional.

Bendersky follows a remark of Schmitt's in suggesting that only chance led him to the law; and of course it is true that he has not only written on every aspect of constitutional and international legal theory, but has employed great philosophical, theological and literary erudition to develop several political theories which are still fertile, besides one that was stillborn. Nevertheless, the jurist's method is not an accident but the essence of Schmitt's thought, particularly when combined – as it was at first for Schmitt, and always remained for Max Weber – with neo-Kantianism: 'Jurisprudence is the mathematics of the humanities,' wrote Hermann Cohen. There is nothing literal in Schmitt's execution of this programme: he never fell victim to his own geometrical concision, but preserved in the most exquisite formalism an *esprit de finesse*, a passion for distinctions which is scholastic only in serving an architectonic purpose.

Hugo Ball who, though a Dadaist and first hagiographer of Hermann Hesse, was an acute critic of the Lutheran and idealist German tradition, wrote of Schmitt in 1924: 'He wishes not only to know the idea of law, but where possible to represent it, to be it himself. That is a Catholic, eschatological thought.' Though Bendersky lacks space to discuss adequately the numerous sources of Schmitt's ideas – notably Weber, who died soon after encountering Schmitt in revolutionary Munich – he rightly devotes much attention to political Catholicism. But he firmly rejects the belief, cherished by socialists,

liberals and Nazis alike, that Schmitt used his influence in the last years of the Weimar Republic as constitutional advisor to and legal advocate of the presidential regime to promote the Catholic authoritarianism of Papen. Nor, argues Bendersky, should Schmitt be reckoned among the motley circles of 'conservative revolutionaries', national bolsheviks and political romantics. In short, the fact that Schmitt became a 'March violet' (as older Nazis called those who joined the party only after it had seized power) is seen to be irrelevant to the historical reconstruction of Schmitt's activities before the Republic, against his advice, liquidated itself.

Bendersky's vindication contradicts the majority of scholars hitherto (the most thorough of whom is Heinrich Muth, in 'Carl Schmitt in der deutschen Innenpolitik des Sommers 1932', *Historische Zeitschrift*, Beiheft 1, 1971). Whether one is convinced by it depends to a great extent on one's interpretation of the entire dissolution of the Republic, and particularly of the private aims of those with whom Schmitt identified himself. These were the Catholic chancellor Brüning, who would have liked a restoration of a titular monarch, but took no steps in that direction so long as it was clear that any head of state would, like Hindenburg, be forced to take over from the paralysed *Reichstag* the task of solving an unprecedented economic crisis; and Schleicher, who was no monarchist, but seemed so devious that by the time Hitler replaced him as chancellor he was credited with every conceivable scheme and motive, from a military putsch to a corporatist state with union support. To those who consider that, after the presidential regime gave exceptional powers the status of normal laws in practice, and the Nazis began to fill the vacuum in September 1930, the Republic was already defunct, it makes little sense to treat Schmitt as the sincere publicist of the 'guardian of the constitution', Hindenburg. But he never spoke for the guardian's guardians, such as Papen and Oskar, son of Hindenburg, who wished to change the constitution to suit its enemies. Even if one attributes to Schmitt's writings the tendency to reduce political debate to a pragmatic or cynical level, Bendersky shows that they were neither intended nor perceived as subversive or reactionary. In the last few months of the Republic, when accusations of 'situation-jurisprudence' were hurled at Schmitt from the liberal side, and, in his subsequent Hobbesian self-interpretation, his support for Hindenburg and the constitution was due simply to the protection they offered, it would still not have been prudent to throw in his lot with Papen (who had no popular backing), still less with Hitler (who had nothing else, and whose party was declining and in danger of splitting from November 1932 on). There is no hard evidence that Schmitt admired or had dealings with these two; he sympathised with the Schleicher government's realism – but like Schleicher himself failed to see that, short of actually using the army, there was no substitute for an election machine – and left Berlin to take up a chair in Cologne soon after Hitler took office.

Karl Löwith, in a remarkable attempt to prove the incompatibility, despite formal similarities, of Weber's political decisionism with that of Schmitt, fell back on the argument that the latter's decision to join the Nazis identified him with the targets of Weber's *Politics as a Vocation*: those who preferred to act according to conscience or conviction, rather than the ethic of responsi-

bility. Apart from the fact that Schmitt's crime (which his interrogator at Nuremberg, Robert Kempner, rightly found non-indictable) concerned the scholar's integrity – for which the loss of his library was sufficient penalty – no man ever acted less from conviction than did Schmitt in 1933. He could and did hurl Weber's charge of irresponsibility at those intellectuals whose consciences opposed them to the new regime.

But Schmitt's Nazi episode differed profoundly from those of friends like Ernst Jünger, the soldier-novelist and later opponent of Nazism, or Martin Heidegger, who wrote to Schmitt in order to convert him, and whose Freiburg Rectoral Address of 1933 is so tortuous that it tells us little, except that the author believed that something ineffable had happened to academic freedom. Such people were, like nearly all those who later formed the conservative resistance, political romantics: deceived by the dynamism and rhetoric of the Nazis, they were sooner or later sharply disillusioned – often by the executioner. Schmitt, however, had never used this rhetoric, and his first great book, *Politische Romantik* (1919), had inaugurated a powerful reaction against the revival of political romanticism, a reaction which tended to find its expression, both on the Left and Right, in an apotheosis of technology, as with Spengler. With modest expectations from the new Reich – a strong state and inviolable privacy – Schmitt chose to believe Hitler's disclaiming of responsibility for the murder of Schleicher and other conservatives in June 1934, and sacrificed his most private possession by speaking in the *Lingua Tertii Imperii*. Unlike the romantics, who suffered from many illusions about National Socialism, Schmitt fell victim to one only: that he could prove his disingenuous loyalty useful by theorizing.

What remains of Schmitt's doctrine? (For once the word is appropriate, since he defends the secular usages of theological notions.) The famous devices that have always been debated, such as decisionism, the condition of the exceptional, and the reduction of politics to friend and foe, will continue to matter. Nobody has yet tried to explain how Schmitt gains his effects: a literary analysis at least as sophisticated as that of the early Jünger by Bohrer, *The Aesthetics of Terror*, would be needed. It is no criticism of Bendersky's sober work that this is absent. Still more desirable would be a study comparing Schmitt's critique of liberalism with his analysis of political romanticism, from the Latin, Catholic point of view suggestively but not exhaustively discussed by Bendersky. Schmitt was oracular in his hostility to discursiveness. He pits himself against the romantic occasionalism which resolves everything into 'eternal conversation'; and elsewhere isolates 'public discussion' as the parliamentary ideal, whose replacement by party machinery has generated a crisis. Dolf Sternberger is right to call Schmitt's conception of the political a 'lunar landscape'; but we can no more bury what Ball called his 'cutting, inquisitorial intelligence' than we can the potentially nightmarish weapons of which he was more aware than most political philosophers. In 1931 Christopher Dawson – who broke with Schmitt in 1933 – wrote an introduction to *Römische Katholizismus und politische Form*, translated as *The Necessity of Politics*, in which he drew attention to the precarious character of 19th century humanitarianism, its easy degeneration into the hypocrisy and 'subjectivism' which was at present ignoring the liquidation of the kulaks:

'From the subjectivist point of view the Catholic claim to social authority and its tendency to legal formalism appear as monstrous perversions of the religious ideal. But to a Catholic and a jurist like Professor Schmitt the public and representative character of Catholicism is a proof of its truth and its universality. For religion is not to be identified with a particular element in life. It is the ordering of life as a whole . . .'

ILLUSIONS PERDUES

Michael Cullis

A History of the Modern World: from 1917 to the 1980s Paul Johnson (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £16.50).

The Squandered Peace: The World, 1945–1975 John Vaizey (Hodder & Stoughton, £8.95)

The Price of Victory Michael Charlton (British Broadcasting Corporation, £10.70)

Tradition and Reality Robert Jackson (European Democratic Group, £1)

Paul Johnson's ambitious survey starts at the end of the first world war, Lord Vaizey's at the end of the second. Both are concerned to prescribe as well as to narrate: to ask what went wrong, and how to retrieve these mistakes. There is also a similarity of outlook between them, as apostates from the political Left, who write (sometimes indeed over-write) with the ardour of converts. For both, too, the arch-illusion of our times has been the same: the supposed blessings of state power. And both see the remedy in decentralisation, liberal pluralism and the social market economy.

Of the two books, Johnson's is markedly the better, for readability, coherence and a flair for the authentic which only occasionally deserts him (there was no 'hysteria' in Britain in 1939, for example). If he is selective for the purposes of his arguments, it is on the basis of absorbing a prodigious amount of material. Not the least refreshing feature of the book is its non-determinist, personalised approach. Rarely indeed can the banal monsters of our times have been more devastatingly exposed; while the chapter 'Caliban's Kingdoms' ought to cure almost anybody of third-world-itis. A penchant for overturning accepted opinion can yield some provocative judgments, such as that the presidencies of Harding and Coolidge were wise and beneficent, and Eisenhower's the best of the post-war lot; that the recovery of France began with Vichy; or that Korea and Cuba were really American defeats. Partisan sympathy can sometimes mislead him, as when he glosses over the damage done to nuclear non-proliferation by Israel's bombing of an Iraqi reactor that had been 'cleared' by inspectors of the international control agency to which both countries belong. The starting-point of his study as a whole is the trend towards relativism in philosophy, science and the arts which he sees as typifying the age, and as the root cause of its upheavals. By contrast, and somewhat incongruously, his final chapter detects hope for mankind in the findings of micro- and socio-biology, 'as a primary dynamic of the last years of the century'. But all this is really incidental to

a historical narrative that can be enjoyed, and profited from, on its merits.

If Vaizey's book suffers by comparison, and not just from the accident of covering only half of the same ground, it is by no means without quality, containing useful material and some trenchant aperçus. But it is marred by a certain carelessness in the writing and construction, by an odd combination of exaggerated statements with conventional wisdom (or even unwisdom), and by argumentation that tends sometimes to contradict itself, for instance when he opines that Britain should have cut its ex-imperial losses regardless of the consequences, but then grants that this could not have been done in terms of either conscience or practicality. More substantial shortcomings are indicated by such things as his pronouncement that 'each day' makes nuclear war more 'certain', his belief that the Foreign Office in 1945 was 'more anti-American than anti-Russian', or his sweeping and simplistic 'I blame America' for not leading the rest of the world along the paths of righteousness.

While the scope of both writers is global, it was after all in Europe that the peculiar optimism to which war-time destruction seems to give rise was most highly entertained – and most deeply disappointed. It may therefore be reasonable to focus from the viewpoint of Europe, and of Britain not least, on the most specific illusions that underlay the failure, from which so much of our malaise derives, to prevent World War II, and to create a more acceptable peace after it; illusions, that is, about the nature and aims of the two great totalitarian powers of our continent. Who were to blame for such illusions? Above all, surely, the rulers and sophisticates of the Western democracies. For although there was massive popular support for 'appeasement' of both Hitler and Stalin, governments themselves are paid to lead, not just to follow – and intellectuals to think straight; *trahison des clercs* being indeed as much responsible as myopia of politicians for the self-deception of the 30s and 40s by those who should have known better. In passing, a significant difference may at the same time be noted here. Pre-war illusions in this country about Hitler's policy are by now well documented: but they seldom extended to his actually being liked. On the other hand a revealing book has yet to be written on the sympathetic depiction of Stalin by our opinion-formers from 1941 onwards, and how effectively it did his work for him.

Still graver, of course, in the Soviet context is the responsibility attaching to Roosevelt and his entourage, who receive indeed little mercy in the pages of either book. When much of the criticism subsequently directed at America has been unjustified and even perverse, it is nevertheless salutary to have on record here the illusions, as regards not only the Soviet Union but China, 'colonialism' and a lot else, of a statesman so powerful yet so ignorant and with such a conceit of himself in the international field. 'Consummate politician' and 'charismatic figure' Roosevelt doubtless was; and in all the circumstances it may be natural enough that, despite his own ambiguous feelings for this country, his statue should dominate a central London square. At least we can be confident that none is likely to grace an Eastern European capital.

But what, it may be asked, *could* with greater prescience have been saved from the wreck there? The reply surely is that a firm, concerted, clear-headed Anglo-American

policy would have preserved Czechoslovakia anyhow, and probably Hungary as well. Indeed, if the Western allies had made it forcefully plain from the outset what sort of Europe they intended to see established, and that Russian security must be sought (and would in the long run be better served) by having friendly rather than subservient neighbours, it is possible that the situation might have been ameliorated even for Poland. As things were, however, the decisions taken at Yalta could hardly have been different, at any rate where Poland was concerned. In fact, like Munich previously, Yalta represented an almost inevitable culmination of the weak policies that had led up to it. At the same time, Yalta itself has been made (as in these two books) to bear more weight than it ever actually carried. For it was occupation by the Red Army, not pieces of paper, that sealed the fate of the countries of Eastern Europe. Yet a more determined Western strategy could have drawn the line further East.

When one turns to post-war Europe, it is perhaps surprising that neither of our authors gives more attention to the move towards unification of its Western half: both, it would seem, have still some way to go along the Damascus road in that direction! A major aspect of the subject is however the theme of Michael Charlton's book, comprising his series of radio interviews, which attracted a good deal of interest at the time, on 'how Britain lost the leadership of Europe'. The book is, in a way, even better, because fuller, than the actual broadcasts; and it represents a well-composed, well-researched exercise in oral history, the value of which no professional historian should be tempted to under-rate. It covers the period from Churchill's 'morning thoughts' of 1943 on the problems of organising post-war Europe, down to the initial Gaullist *Non* 20 years later: an apt stopping-point, for to go beyond it would be, as Charlton says, to embark on a different story, of how the door into Europe which Britain had declined, 'when finally opened, revealed for many, not a bed of roses, but a bed of nails'.

His main thesis is by now familiar enough: a national failure of vision, and of adjustment to the country's radically changed situation. To illustrate it, some 50 protagonists – British, American, French, German, Belgian and Dutch – are brought together, with a skilful linking commentary, to provide fresh insight into the motives, inhibitions, misapprehensions and sheer inertia that characterised our European policy-making in a crucial period. From a number of fascinating interviews, certain stand out, not least those where men of great influence at the time, like Lords Sherfield (Roger Makins) and Butler, are under pressure to defend their negative, condescending stance towards British engagement in the European venture. The latter indeed is actually led to admit that 'we made a great mistake' – albeit still with some of the equivocation that may help to explain why he never became Prime Minister.

The early chapters define the limits to continental involvement that marked the attitudes of the two leading British statesmen who had in fact done most to save Europe. Yet Churchill's ideas in the 1940s, whatever their inadequacies, might, as Charlton implies, have been developed constructively by others, instead of having cold water poured on to them. (Nor was his famous 'three circles' doctrine so out-of-place when originally enunciated.) In the case of Bevin, who held the fort in Europe almost single-handed until America could be

brought in to underwrite its economy and its defence, there are good grounds for contending that no major harm was done by our refusal of the Schuman Plan offer in 1950. The fatal error lay rather in the way British governments proceeded to treat the issue as *chose jugée*, failing to appreciate the reality of the urge for further economic integration on the part of the Six by the mid-fifties. For despite the brave words of the Conservatives in opposition, there was no change of direction when they returned to power, with foreign policy now fully under the control of Eden, a latter-day 'Empire' man, and as a diplomat more skilled at solving others' problems than his own (witness the Indo-China and German rearmament crises of 1954). The same course continued under Macmillan, for all his superior European credentials, until when the shift eventually came it was too late. To this part of the saga the personal accounts by Philip de Zulueta and Couve de Murville add some illuminating details about the role played by nuclear weapons in the meetings at Champs and Rambouillet. Edward Heath by contrast is tight-lipped here – though forthright in his verdict on de Gaulle generally.

The last words – closing lines of the drama – are spoken appropriately by the father of European integration, Jean Monnet, in his 90th year: 'I never understood why the British did not join in this, which was so much in their interests. I came to the conclusion that it must have been the *price of victory*: the illusion that you could keep what you had without change . . .'

After 1500 pages of historical exegesis, it may seem disproportionate to give comparable space to a short pamphlet by Robert Jackson (MP and MEP). But the putative challenge to traditional British conservatism posed by European unification is topical enough, especially with new European elections imminent. Dedicated to Enoch Powell, 'who asked the right questions, even if he gave the wrong answers', the paper carries a brief foreword by Lord Hailsham, accepting the equation of conservatism with nationhood, but agreeing that the latter 'can only be preserved if it takes into account the facts of contemporary life'. Jackson's own approach is less defensive than this. Distinguishing British conservatism from other more ideological creeds, including Christian Democracy which he says has tended to look askance at nationality, he likewise distinguishes the nation from the nation-state, which in his view Powell 'comes close to worshipping, in the German manner': and he is able to invoke that staunch Tory Dr Johnson against him on sovereignty. What Jackson regards as really mattering, British *identity*, he sees as being in no way threatened, 'because Europe does not involve the supersession of the identities of the peoples that make it up. It is rather a question of the formation and fostering of a new dimension . . . in the way demonstrated by the formation of the United Kingdom itself': a measured statement of the case, which he might even have taken further had space permitted – and perhaps in the process also have discredited the myth of the immutability of national character.

Stressing that 'realism' – another key element of conservatism – is 'more potent than idealism in coming to terms with Europe', Jackson tackles the future political shape of the Community in a notably down-to-earth spirit, while allowing that the Continentals have in practice done so too; and concluding that 'the influences

that have moulded conservatism in Britain are not so very different from those that have formed the parties of the moderate Right on the Continent (so that) the conservative tradition can be an important voice in the emerging European system'.

Here also he might possibly have expanded the argument – *and* raised his sights a bit. At the moment the omens for progress may not be good. Yet the degree of political union that is demanded by the need for the people of Western Europe to make effective common cause is hardly going to be attained by gradualism alone. Sooner or later that goal must call for a positive act of will, a Great Leap Forward, if it too is not to prove another illusion.

WHAT IS IT TO BE HUMAN?

Clive Ashworth

The Identity of Man Grahame Clark (Methuen) 1983. £12.50

Professor Clark, who is now Emeritus Disney Professor of Archaeology at Cambridge, is one of Britain's most distinguished archaeologists. In his forty-five year association with the Department of Archaeology at Cambridge he has produced at least twenty books on various specialist aspects of the subject, particularly the pre-history of Northern Europe, on which he is undoubtedly one of the world's leading authorities. In this his most recent book, written during the early years of his retirement, he has turned his attention to some of the most general and contentious issues of our age, indeed of any age, and in so doing has utilised his vast knowledge of archaeology and ethnography in the production of a philosophical treatise which is unambiguously in the best traditions of High Tory scholarship.

Professor Clark begins his treatise with the question:

'What does it mean to be a man? Or, to frame it in more contemporary terms, what does it mean to be a man, rather than any other form of primate?'

His answer is complex, well thought out, clear, and, in terms of its implications, profound. He points out that on this question there are, broadly, two possible positions. On the one hand there are those who argue that in the same way as animal morphology and behaviour can be understood in terms of the interplay between variation/mutation and natural selection, so too can human morphology and behaviour be so understood. After all, such neo-Darwinians argue, man evolved from the animals, *is* an animal, and can therefore be understood utilising the same models and concepts as we use to understand animals. On the other hand, there are those who, although they may pay lip service to the Darwinian revolution, have never really accepted it, and cling to the Cartesian view that man is potentially, if not actually, a 'free spirit' in charge of his own destiny, and to all intents and purposes able to ignore his animal ancestry. This, if you like, is the debate between the extreme 'naturalists' and the extreme 'culturalists'. Professor Clarke, wisely,

tries to steer a middle course between these two positions, arguing that although animals are:

'... subject to substantially homogeneous and static behavioural patterns with individuals imprisoned in the present and effectively caged by their instincts. ...'

man has a 'dual' nature, in the sense that although:

'Even the most summary overview of human evolution should be enough to underscore a *broad synchronism* between his biological and cultural aspects'.

nevertheless:

'... through the process of humanisation documented in the course of prehistory his animal nature can be tamed, or at least directed into different channels by a process of *nurture* and when necessary by constraint'.

In other words, on top of his animal nature, which can never be ignored and which is ever-present, man has developed 'a sense of identity' and 'self-awareness' which not only leads him to concern himself with transcendental matters, in particular aesthetics and religion ('The capacity to imagine Gods is man's crowning accomplishment. . .'), but which at the same time gives his life a freedom to choose (within the parameters of natural necessity) denied to 'caged' animals. The evidence for, and implications of, this distinction are that to some extent 'cultural evolution' and 'biological evolution' proceed independently of one another, and that human societies are characterised by an *accelerating* rate of progressive social change, and a capacity to *diversify* in a manner without parallel in nature. The evidence he marshals to substantiate his mediatory propositions, taken from prehistory and ethnography, in the case of man, and ethology, in the case of animals, is painstakingly and convincingly presented, and at no point relies simply on abstract generalities. For example, comparing Celtic and Anglo-Saxon societies at similar levels of social development, he says:

'The objects from La Tene treasures and the Sutton Hoo burial focus on personal finery, warlike equipment and appurtenances of feasting. The forms chosen for display and still more the styles in which they were shaped and decorated on the other hand exhibit to an enhanced degree the cultural diversity which existed between the Celtic and Teutonic worlds'.

Arguing against those 19th century romantic archaeologists who saw the archaeological record as a record of the 'zeitgeists' of Platonically enduring nations, or races, *and* against those archaeologists who see an abstract social evolution akin to the biological evolution of genera and species, Professor Clark makes, perhaps, the most significant of all of his points, namely that human development has been characterised by a continuous tendency to 'diversify', in a manner which neo-Darwinians could not possibly explain, and that same diversification, and the diffusion and inter-societal interaction it produces, is *itself* the motor force of human progress:

'By and large communities with the most elementary economies survived longest in territories most remote

from, and ecologically unattractive to, peoples with more powerful ones'.

and:

'Without differences there can hardly be interaction, and without interaction (of differences) death'.

After mediating between neo-Darwinian and Culturalist explanations of the Animal/Man dichotomy, and Romantic and Neo-Classical explanations of the course of human history, Professor Clark concludes his thesis by a hard-hitting and extremely clear polemic against modern industrial societies, which although belonging to the much maligned category of 'civilisation' which he makes so much use of, have nevertheless taken a distinctive turn for the worse. His diagnosis claims that modern society, based as it is on the application of natural science techniques to the study of man (social engineering), has produced a world-wide civilisation of 'homogenisation and dehumanisation', by which he means that natural science, mis-applied to humanity, has reduced the intra-societal diversities (hierarchies) and inter-societal diversities (nations), upon which the *further progress* of humanity as a whole depends. His prognosis, meanwhile, is:

'... not to shield so much as to build up the resistance and vitality of native cultures'.

(He is particularly scathing about multi-national organisations such as the U.N., the E.E.C. and multi-national corporations.) Thus his conservative critique of modern society, whilst recognising in particular the contributions of '... high cultures in hierarchical societies', is actually in the name of 'progress', and *not* in the name of a romantic sentimental attachment to the past, more or less for its own sake. In the meantime, he defines 'progress', not in the conventional technological and other senses so beloved of 'progressives', but in terms of the Hegelian notion that:

'... overall progress can certainly be inferred, and it lies in the enlargement and deepening of conscious awareness'.

His attempts to revive the insights of 'diffusionism' in the face of the neo-evolutionary 'backlash' which is currently taking place in archaeology, as represented by the Colin Renrew school, is to be welcomed, for it means that, unlike the latter, he never falls for the naive optimism which sees progress as more or less immanent within all societies, conceived of as functionally adapting closed-systems, nor does he fall for the cultural relativism which many versions of diffusionism bring in their wake.

In the end, however, his profound insights regarding the role of diversity and inter-societal contacts, as being the main engines of progress and enlightenment, are all that can really be rescued from his otherwise totalising and inter-related system. For example, in his neo-Cartesian attempt to maintain the Animal/Man distinction, he seems to be largely unaware of various developments in the natural and social sciences, which, on the one hand, would argue that there is nothing in the human realm ... consciousness, identity, 'idealism', acculturation, diversity, language, communication and even self-awareness ... which is not at least *anticipated* in

the animate, and even inanimate, realms, and there is nothing in that same human realm which prevents us from seeing its 'culture' as far more the expression of 'natural structures' than Professor Clark would be willing to admit. For example, it is all very well to say that men make their own history through the constructive possibilities which their language endows them with, but this is to ignore the claims of those ethologists who argue that the rudiments of *human* language are also found in animals, particularly the higher primates, and that human language itself, despite its diversity at the level of speech/parole is in fact based on determinative brain-embedded structures at the level of language/langue. Interestingly, Clark makes little use of a quote by Henry Moore which he includes for quite different reasons: Clark notes that Henry Moore detected:

'... a common world language of form ... the same shapes and form relationships'.

In other words, perhaps much of Clark's 'diversity' is more of an illusion than a reality. Far from there being *even the moderate dichotomies* between nature and culture which Professor Clark points to, it could well be the case that the two are unified in a profound sense which would be disturbing to his otherwise well argued case.

Now this point has implications for the conservatism of his concluding chapter. The greatest threats to modern civilisation have come, not from those who have sought to apply the findings of natural science to the study of man, but from two quite distinct sources. First of all there has been Soviet Marxism, which has made a *religious dogma* out of a now dated natural science (Newtonian mechanics/Darwinian natural selection and Marxist materialism), and, even more threatening, German National Socialism (and its contemporary humanistic/romantic equivalents on the modern far left), both of whom have so *separated* the natural from the human as to have lost all humility in the face of natural necessity, and who, from such a starting point, are given licence to indulge their own ego-mania to the point that only a diabolical mixture of absolute anarchy and absolute tyranny can result from their actions. The disease of the modern age is *not* a lack of religion, for no age has been more religious than ours, but an artificial *split* between the scientific and the religious consciousness. Although Professor Clark would, rightly, distance himself from such bad company, nevertheless his own acceptance of an essentially mechanistic view of nature and a 'voluntaristic' view of society, does lend some credence to *their* assumptions.

Which brings us to what is perhaps the most serious critique of High Toryism of the Clark variety, namely that although traditions may well be necessary, they cannot be *justified* except on grounds which render them compatible with what Science has to say about reality. Although this *can* be done, as I suggested in my article on 'Nationalism and Sociology' (*Salisbury Review* No. 2), unless it is done, conservative values ... nationalism/diversity/hierarchy/religion/personal freedom etc ... remain as unjustifiable and subjective as do the equally utopian dreams of the left. Professor Clark has certainly made his contribution, but there is still a long way to go if the 'conservative project' is to achieve its ends, namely the production of a case which, whilst it recognises the verities and practices of the ancients, nonetheless continuously grounds those same verities and practices in certain *inescapable* features of the contemporary world, the most important of which is *science*.

FOR GOD AND THE OLD RITE

Merlin Sudeley

Prayers for the New Babel, Ian Robinson (The Brynmill Press £6.60)

When the position of the Prayer Book continues to deteriorate, fresh criticisms of the new services are very important, and this book makes a valuable contribution. Ian Robinson rightly regards Dix and his great book *The Shape of the Liturgy* as the cardinal influence on our present liturgical revolution. Preferring the Roman Mass, Dix discredited the Prayer Book by trying to make out that on the matter of the Eucharist Cranmer was a Zwinglian. Robinson provides a very necessary rebuttal of this view. Dix evolved his own archaeological theory about the primitive character of the Eucharist, some features of which have been seriously disputed; the new Eucharistic rites have a structure which is in keeping with Dix's theory; and the principal theme of Robinson's book is to show how that new structure is inferior to the structure evolved by the genius of Cranmer. Robinson insists that an academic or archaeological theory is not a proper basis on which to rewrite a liturgy. Cranmer revised the liturgy in response to a felt spiritual need and within an extant tradition.

However, Robinson misses a further objection to the archaeological revival attempted by the Church of England, namely that it is a sham revival. The revisers of the liturgy have merely selected those features of the early worship of the church which are not offensive to modern liberal opinion, and left out the rest. We see nothing today of such practices of the early church as the separation of the sexes, the requirement that women should not wear any make-up, and, above all, the severe penitential discipline.

The further important strand in Robinson's book is his theological criticism of the new services.

At first criticism of the new services centred on their inferior language, which is a more important issue than it looks. Poetic language is very necessary to a liturgy for the subliminal effect it has on our minds, and so that we can be transported in our act of worship; and any changes of language are apt to introduce subtle shifts of theological meaning. But now, despite the inherent difficulties of making theology into an area of public debate, more attention has been paid to the theology of the new services. It cannot be said that the new services are heretical, but they do show a tendency in that direction, and Robinson has picked on good instances where this has occurred. He says that in the new marriage service the procreation of children is no longer regarded as the primary object of marriage. He tells us that in the Creed we say 'We' instead of 'I' believe, which can only introduce into our faith an element of social communitarianism. He adds that original sin is omitted from the new service of baptism. This last theological shift has serious political implications. If we had not inherited sin, the society we live in would be entirely capable of improvement: according to the ideals of the French Enlightenment through the agency of politicians and social engineers, and according to the Marxist formula through a political revolution.

In regard to what might be done to restore the Prayer

Book, Robinson complains that the Church of England is incapable of governing itself democratically. Democracy is used here as a clean word, which it does not have to be. During most of the period since the fall of the Roman Empire it has not been the principal form of government; and often it must be dangerous to introduce democracy into the conduct of religion. Democracy could not survive if we did not adhere to strong inherited traditions from our pre-democratic past, and religion is perhaps the most important of these. Nevertheless, given that the new services are at the behest of the clergy rather than the laity, the Prayer Book would fare better if the laity were more directly represented in the Synod. At the moment the parish sends a representative to the Deanery Synod; it is only the Deanery Synod which sends a representative to the General Synod; and this gearing means members of the laity often do not know who their representatives in the Synod are.

Robinson's other restorationist suggestions are less incisive. He pleads that Mrs Thatcher should find a Cranmer to restore the Church of England to sanity. It is unlikely that Mrs Thatcher would take any positive action. Though strong, Mrs Thatcher is cautious, and now she is in the position to dominate so much else she may feel it would be regarded as the last straw if she started bossing the Church about as well.

Nevertheless, even without any help from the Government, Parliament is not impotent. In April 1981 the passage of the Prayer Book (Ballot of Laity) Bill through the House of Commons under the Ten Minute Rule, and through the House of Lords on its Second Reading, showed the feeling in Parliament over the Prayer Book, even though without the cooperation of the Government no legislation could be enacted. In consequence of this Bill, the Bishops passed a series of resolutions to improve the status of the Prayer book, but these have been poorly implemented. The key to the revival of the Prayer Book is its restoration to a proper place in the theological colleges where ordinands receive their training. If a Select Committee on the Prayer Book were set up in the House of Lords, it could expose the present weak position of the Prayer Book in the theological colleges. Such a Select Committee would also do a great deal to prevent the inadequate use of the Prayer Book at parish level. There is nothing that Church House would dread more than all the publicity a Select Committee would attract on how the new services have been railroaded on a reluctant laity at parish level.

SAFE HARBOUR

Haven Bradford Gow

The Foundations of Conservative Thought: An Anglo-American Tradition in Perspective by William Harbour. University of Notre Dame Press (Notre Dame, Ind. 46556), 1982. 220 pp.

According to scholar William Harbour, the following beliefs are considered by conservatives to be important:

1. God is the divine ground of existence. God, not man, is the measure of all things.

2. Man's moral nature is tragically flawed; his greatest sin is pride. Moreover, man's reason is seriously limited when it comes to dealing with the greatest human problems.

3. There is some kind of moral order to the universe; man must be viewed in spiritual and not simply material terms.

4. Since man is imperfect and blemished by the pernicious effects of original sin, government is limited in what it can accomplish; human beings shall never become gods; nor can they ever hope to achieve paradise on earth purely through human endeavour.

5. Reforms based on a realistic view of human nature rather than revolution must be employed to improve society.

6. Man is a religious animal and religion is an indispensable requirement for a good society.

7. Essential to social stability are healthy customs and traditions which provide human beings with direction and meaning.

8. Only the most qualified persons, part of a national aristocracy based on wisdom, talent and virtue, should lead society.

9. Localism, small-scale social relationships, limited government and decentralisation of political institutions are indispensable to social and political stability.

As Mr Harbour makes clear, modern political conservatism emerged in the 19th century in reaction to the crushing political and social upheavals associated with the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution; but the groundwork for modern conservatism already had been established during the late 1700s by the eminent British statesman and political philosopher, Edmund Burke.

Burke believed that attempts to create heaven on earth through radical and overwhelming social and political transformations are in opposition to the divine order of Providence. The existing order should be changed cautiously and with prudence; radical and hazardous social and political revolutions cause much more harm than good. For him, the French Revolution was an example of a pernicious social and political revolution. The appalling results of the French Revolution were the penalties inflicted upon a society which had violated Divine statute.

According to Burke, civilised society requires orders and classes. Class distinctions are natural distinctions and cannot and should not be eradicated; the only true equality is metaphysical equality; a nation without a 'natural aristocracy' – that is, an aristocracy not of men of wealth and privilege but rather an aristocracy of men of talent, wisdom and virtue – soon will be destroyed.

Burke also recognised the importance of man's personal relationship with God; he believed that the earthly miseries which human beings encounter are tests and trials sent to us by Providence to mold and shape our characters for the better. The Christian view of sin and human nature is the true one; sin, he argued, is a consequence of our depravity and not the result of erring institutions. Sin is an alarming and demonstrable fact, and only deep religious faith, not legislation or revolution, can be a consolation for our ills.

The British statesman and political philosopher recognised the necessity of religion for the good in society. If the people of a nation lose their religious faith, then that country will disintegrate morally, socially and politically.

For true religion rises above earthly law; indeed, it is the source of all law. The highest happiness, Burke believed, is moral and spiritual happiness. Wise men would attack vices and not names or institutions. Without religion, men would become spiritually blind, and would seek to place the blame for our ills on institutions rather than on themselves.

The views expressed by Burke, Harbour argues, furnish a philosophical foundation for what many contemporary conservative thinkers maintain. The true conservative, observes the eminent social philosopher and critic Russell Kirk, is governed by far more than human rationality can comprehend; he sees this world as a place of trial and testing. The true conservative recognises that the idea of human perfectibility is just a strong delusion; he appeals to an authority far greater than human reason; he trusts in the wisdom of his ancestors and in enduring values.

Conservative thinkers of today are much concerned about the problem of the heart, that is, the problem of moral bankruptcy. The conservative, aware of past history, is worried about what moral bankruptcy can do to his country; he has read about the civilisations of Babylon, Rome and Egypt, and how these civilisations rose to such august heights only to disintegrate as a result of moral degeneration.

Consequently, like their mentor Edmund Burke, modern conservatives are concerned about the problem of religion. The conservative, according to Harbour, affirms religion to be the moral foundation for civil society; however, as the late conservative social philosopher Will Herberg trenchantly observed, 'unless he is something more than a conservative, [the conservative] will be tempted to turn religion into an exalted public utility serving social and cultural ends.'

Generally speaking, conservative thinkers maintain that without religious faith and belief in the enduring values of religion, a society cannot survive as a moral entity; religious faith humanises man and keeps him from committing mayhem against his neighbour. The conservative reasons this way: It is no doubt true that man, even with religion in the world, has made a mess of the world; but, how much worse would the world be if we did not have the restraining influence and guiding force of religion?

The Jacobins of our day, say the conservatives, are trying to do away with religion's enduring values. The end result: Man will go down the road of moral chaos with nothing to help him distinguish between right and wrong, virtue and vice, noble and base except his own petty rationality and the social, intellectual, moral and religious fads and foibles of his neighbours. But such modern conservatives as Will Herberg and Russell Kirk do not view religion as *nothing but a sustaining force* in society; they do not believe religion should be reduced simply to a vehicle to buttress injustices in the social, economic and political status quo; they continue to insist that the Judaic-Christian religion is the religion of Moses, Jesus and St. Paul, and not merely a 'liberation theology' which would lead human beings to lust after the strong delusion that paradise can be recreated here on earth purely through human endeavour.

'Just what is conservatism?' asked Abraham Lincoln. 'Is it not just the preference for the old and tried against the preference for the new and untried?' Abraham Lincoln, who knew history and loved his God, was right.

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