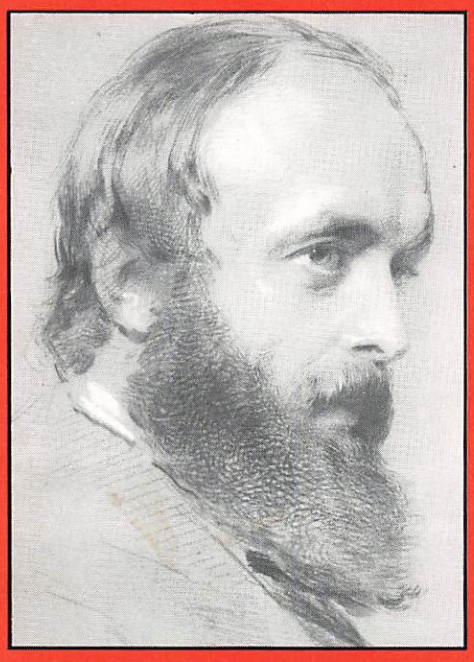
DECEMBER 1990
Volume 9 Number 2 £4.00

The Salisbury Review

The quarterly magazine of conservative thought



The Third Marquess of Salisbury
1830 - 1903

The Claridge Press

The Salisbury Review

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Is communism really dead? Certainly, the *belief* in communism is dead - at least among those who have experienced the communist reality. But the system generates a peculiar institutionalised mendacity, which serves to make belief irrelevant. Once installed, communism captures truth, and confines it to the dungeon. Thenceforth the world is regimented by official lies. The system learns to reproduce itself, even though nobody believes in it; indeed, *because* nobody believes in it. For communism has the capacity to generate out of unbelief the peculiar negative energy needed to sustain its criminal purpose.

All over Eastern Europe, the system seems to be crumbling. But, if George Ross is right, it retains its hold in Romania, where by a deft manoeuvre the communists have managed to profit from their very lack of popularity. The one-party dictatorship continues, with all its instruments of persecution in place. The Romanian 'revolution' - conducted in laboratory conditions by the KGB - showed a way forward for communists everywhere. True, it got out of hand in Czechoslovakia; but this will not prevent it from being tried in Russia. We will then again witness what we have witnessed in Romania; the overthrow of communists by communists, who retain the entire system except its name.

The success of communism in Romania should not, however, discourage the hope that it is in retreat elsewhere. While the Communist Party may hang on to what it has gained in the world, it is unlikely that its gains can now be added to. Communist rule may not depend on belief; but the original seizure of power depends on the beliefs of others: in particular on the beliefs of those who have sufficient power to betray their country and their friends. The magic of treason gripped the whole of Europe after the war, and ensured that half of the continent would be enslaved. And the crucial instrument was the network of communist sympathisers in the British civil and foreign service, who were able to shape the policy of the Western allies, and hand over much of what the communists asked for.

Perhaps in no case were British leftists more influential than in the takeover of Yugoslavia, described by Michael Lees in the book reviewed here by Stanisa Vlahovic. And as Yugoslavia crumbles into bickering fragments, we can witness the fateful legacy of communism: the destruction of political culture and the instruments of compromise.

Yugoslavia illustrates, too, another lesson of modern history: the willingness of socialists to be taken in. Throughout the post-war period, when the embarrassing behaviour of the Soviet Union necessitated that attention be turned elsewhere, Yugoslavia was proposed as the model for socialist government. Endless praise for 'market socialism' and the 'Yugoslav experiment' filled the *New Statesman* and *New Left Review*; and our socialists were happy to credit Tito for his 'neutral' and 'peace-loving' diplomacy, which seemed to offer a 'third way' between the 'superpower blocs'. Now that the whole thing has been exposed for the fraud that it was, we hear from the apologists of socialism what we are accustomed to hear: a resounding silence.

Not the least interesting example of self-deception on the left has been the attempt to capture George Orwell for the Cause. A few years ago Orwell's official biographer, Bernard Crick, described *1984* as a prophecy of Thatcher's Britain: of all the ways of negating Orwell's great achievement, in seeing to the moral heart of communism, this is surely the most dishonest. As David Heald makes clear, however, Orwell's antipathy to leftist ways of thinking goes further than his prophetic denunciation of the communists. The most astonishing thing is that Orwell should have continued to think of himself as a socialist.

Part of the reason for this is that for decades it was hardly possible for an intellectual to describe himself in other terms. Right-wing ideas had to be either disguised, or else muttered in private, between crusty dissenters over a glass of port. Following brave initiatives, in which our own contributors have often been prominent, right-wing intellectuals are now 'coming out'. One sign of this is the quantity of new conservative books, many of which are well-argued and scholarly, and some of which are even readable. This has caused our review section to swell - to the limits, but we hope not beyond the limits - of our readership's tolerance. In an extended article our literary editor does his best to bring our readers up to date with the latest intellectual advances. Perhaps, as John Carroll suggests, the moral heart of our society is not entirely healthy; but there are signs that its political head is becoming clearer and cooler.

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Subscription details
Published quarterly in September, December, March and June, volume commencing with September issue.
Annual subscription rates: £15, $35 surface mail; £18, Europe; $45 airmail; single issues £4.00, $7.00, ISSN: 0265-4881.

Printed in the UK by Biddles Ltd. Typesetting by Blue Express

Conservative Journals: *O DIABO*

O Diabo (the Devil) began life as a campaigning journal, dedicated to the overthrow of Portugal's dictator, Dr Salazar. It was founded by Vera Lagoa, who still publishes and edits it, having acquired ownership in 1976. Although Mrs Lagoa was hostile to Salazar (who had sacked her father from the army), she became far more hostile to communism; and when communists gained power in her country, following the army coup of the seventies, she veered to the right, taking *O Diabo* with her. It is now perhaps the most outspoken and trenchantly argued voice of Portuguese conservatism, published weekly in Lisbon and Oporto, and directing its firepower against the vast corruption of the socialist machine. Each week there appears a column from one of our own subscribers, the courageous and articulate Patricia Lança, whose analysis of events in Southern Africa (events which the Portuguese, for obvious reasons, see far more clearly than we do) will strike a chord in all our readers.

O Diabo has put itself behind Unita in the conflict in Angola, and loudly expressed what most Portuguese believe - namely, that their fellow-Portuguese in Africa were victims of an atrocious trick, played on them by the communists. Alas, however, the communists are still strong in Portugal, dominating much of local government, and instilling a habit of corruption and illegality into the bureaucratic process. By speaking out against the abuses, and presenting a serious defence of the rule of law, *O Diabo* frequently encounters trouble. It has many times been sued by the robber barons in high office, yet continues to be relentless in its investigation of political scandals. With a circulation of 60,000 it is one of the most influential of Portuguese weeklies: the political elites may read it in secret, but read it they do, if only to benefit from its detailed and imaginative coverage of international affairs.

In social and economic matters *O Diabo* is staunchly Thatcherite. It is also remarkable for its repudiation of post-colonial guilt, and its belief that few better things ever happened to the Africans, than to be colonised by the Portuguese. This reasonable patriotism goes further. If *O Diabo* is to be believed, Australia too was discovered by the Portuguese, and is really a Portuguese colony. Perhaps this is the way to solve the problem of the Australian trade unions.

O Diabo is available weekly from R. Alexandre Herculano 7 - 5, 1100 Lisbon.

Divisive Language

Caroline Moore

In a recent pamphlet, the Liturgical Commission, chaired by the Bishop of Winchester, put forward proposals for the introduction of 'inclusive language' into the liturgy. This will involve weeding out, as far as possible, certain common English usages on the grounds that these are now perceived as 'offensive'. Confusingly, the usage under attack are precisely those that used to be called 'inclusive': the use of male terms to include both sexes, according to the old grammatical rule 'the male embraces the female.' In particular there is the generic use of the male third person pronoun 'he', employed to mean 'he or she' (as in 'if anyone serves me, he must follow me'); and the use of 'man', 'men' and 'mankind' to mean 'a human being', or 'the human race' (as when we pray for 'all men according to their needs', or say that Christ came down from heaven 'for us men and for our salvation', dying 'for the sins of all men'). Along with these usages of 'man' and 'mankind', moreover, a number of other apparently masculine terms will have to be excised - such as references to Christians as 'sons' of God and 'brothers' in Christ, and the whole nexus of Christian imagery that is associated with these definitions.

The Liturgical Commission adds, however, several important qualifications. It does not recommend any change to Scriptural usage in applying male pronouns and adjectives to God. Moreover, according to the pamphlet, 'the total elimination of apparently male terms used to include women is neither practicable nor desirable' (para. 83). Exceptions are allowed where the Biblical formulations prove impossible to recast in non-sexist language (though in these circumstances they often recommend using an alternative scripture), or where the text is too well known to alter, as in 'Man does not live on bread alone.' These qualifications, although necessary, do make the proposed reform seem patchy and inconsistent. Why on the same page of the ASB should 'Whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake, he will save it' be perceived as less offensive than 'If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there shall my servant be also'? Yet in Table 5 the Commissioners recommend that the first should be kept and the second changed.

If the proposals of the Liturgical Commission seem both tentative and sweeping, they are, oddly, even more half-hearted and more radical than they at first appear. Rather strangely, given the ostensible thrust of the pamphlet, the writers several times assert that non-sexist language simply does not work. It does not make women more visible. They quote the remark of a feminist critic that 'there are plenty of reasons to suppose that this kind of language does not really bring women into people's mental landscape at all' (para. 34); and they themselves go on to assert that 'always using language that is equally applicable to either sex' can actually 'obscure rather than increase visibility of women' (para 88).

The preface, too, suggests that the Commissioners themselves do not actually feel that these new patches on an old garment are at all satisfactory. '*Ad hoc* adaptations of existing texts', they suggest, will never be enough. Far more controversial recasting is, in fact, necessary.

This combination of the half-hearted and the radical makes the proposals of the Liturgical Commission peculiarly difficult to describe or discuss. It is difficult to pin down quite what is envisaged as the scope or even the aims of the alterations.

The Liturgical Commission admits that 'there is not yet agreement, even in feminist circles, about what constitutes non-sexist language or about which linguistic strategies *will* best help the visibility of women' (para. 2). This, in fact, is a considerable understatement. There is profound disagreement about whether non-sexist language can even exist. There are strong signs that the belief of the Liturgical Commissioners in non-sexist language is, as the writers themselves are half-aware, already dated. Deborah Cameron, whose writings have been drawn upon extensively by the Liturgical Commission, certainly believes that the day of non-sexist handbooks is over: 'Recently....a new kind of concern with language has become more common among feminists, and the new theorists warn that non-sexist language is an illusion.'[1]

In many of the new schools of feminism, in fact, only the demand for non-sexist writing survives, as a liberating strategy. This demand is not made in the genuine hope of a solution (since 'we believe that non-sexist language is little better than ordinary sexist language'), only to produce further questions. Its aims, that is, are disruptive, divisive, designed only to 'draw attention to the present masculinist bias of conventional usage'.[2]

Deborah Cameron might well be pleased with the debate in the Synod, therefore, but never, by definition, with any of its recommendations. Their ideological bad faith, the 'illusion' of their neutrality, would always have to be further exposed.

The Synod may perhaps be resigned to a perpetual up-dating of the language of the Liturgy, as it becomes outmoded and fails to please - but the notion of making changes that cannot please, and that are always, in effect, outmoded before they are brought in, ought to give them pause.

Past changes or changes to come?

Feminist indignation about the 'sexist bias' in common English usages was fuelled by a belief in linguistic determinism - the belief that the patterns

'encoded' into our language influence or even control our thoughts. Sexist language makes us sexists. The difficulty with such a belief is that it makes change impossible. Language forms our thoughts, and thoughts language, in a vicious circle, a 'language-trap' from which there is no escape.

This makes it difficult to find agreement on the basis for reform. Programmes for reform tend to fall into two schools, mutually contradictory - and both severely criticised by other feminists for over-optimistic naiveté.

The first believes that if you alter language, you will alter attitudes, and alter society. The problem with this is that the meanings of words depend on attitudes and society, for they depend on context and the way in which they are used. In a 'sexist' society, therefore, even 'non-sexist' words like 'human' are actually used as if they refer to men.

The second school of thought is even more generally discredited. It holds that attitudes have already changed, so that sexist grammar is now perceived as 'offensive'. The battle is already over, and it is merely a matter of tidying up the battlefield. But practically all feminists now believe that this optimism was premature, and that our society is still riddled with patriarchal attitudes and assumptions.

Some of these difficulties are recognised (at least implicitly) by the Liturgical Commission. It is this, perhaps, that creates a revealing waver of uncertainty as to what, exactly, it is trying to do. Is it, in fact, proposing changes merely to catch up with a now generally accepted shift in usage, in which case the only real difficulties are, the pamphlet claims, those of 'inertia' (para. 14)? Or do the Commissioners merely believe that there is a 'likelihood' of such a shift (para. 41), so that 'it is probable that some permanent shift of use will occur' (para. 40)? Are they only trying to be 'sensitive to changes in language' (para. 83), or are they urging a 'movement for change' (para. 41)?

The Commission is itself hovering between theories, between seeing language as 'symptomatic', and seeing it as 'causal' (para. 35). And this is more than mere inconsistency, for neither gives an adequate account of the operations of language. Two half-truths are more likely to create a quarter-truth than a whole truth.

Who would be pleased by the changes?

This brief description of a few of the disagreements in feminist circles is not, of course, intended to 'prove' that feminism is therefore misguided: indeed, diversity and disagreement may and ought to be a sign of healthy debate. It is, however, intended to suggest that the Liturgical Commission might find it difficult to give a clear answer to the question, 'Who are you going to please?' Even leaving aside the ever-increasing numbers who think that non-sexist language is an illusion, and make the demand for non-sexist language merely as a 'strategy', it is still difficult to know at whom these proposals are aimed.

No very clear evidence has been adduced to show that ordinary women in practice find the generic use of 'man' offensive. And evidence of a widespread Christian desire for change is of necessity nebulous and hard to come by - as much a matter for guesswork as talking about 'the black economy', or 'the number of unreported crimes'. For women who are already regular communicants have in effect declared that they do not feel excluded: they, like their sisters throughout the ages, have been able to feel themselves part of the Mystical Body of Christ. Whatever their feelings about 'sexist' language in different contexts, it has not, for them, provided an insuperable barrier to communion - perhaps because the church has performed its proper function of spiritual guidance, and provided the context in which to understand such language. It is hard to maintain that women feel themselves to be effectively excluded from a church in which, statistically, they are in the majority.

But what of all the women who have never answered the summons to 'taste and see that the Lord is good'? Is there, in fact, a large number of women who are simply put off the message by the packaging? The Liturgical Commission, always and rightly aware of the need to spread the Word, feels that there might be at any rate 'some people' who feel themselves to be excluded:

> The church must address some people's conviction that the feminine is suppressed in our liturgical language and that women are rendered invisible by the use of apparently male language to include women (para. 24).

The difficulty with this, however, is that in practice almost no feminists believe that language was appropriated by men to suppress awareness of females without also believing that the primary act of 'appropriation' was the naming of God as male. This is an intrinsic part of the 'man made language' theory: the 'politics of naming' involves the suppression of the very idea of a female Goddess. It

> establishes one of the primary categories of our world as a male category. It immediately casts females into a negative position which can be further exploited. [3]

According to such feminist theologians as Elaine Pagels and Mary Daly, female names for God were actively suppressed, gradually and deliberately weeded out by male committees, in order to reinforce the male view of the world, for 'since 'God' is male, the male is God'[4]. From this feminist point of view, the masculinity of God is a vital piece of 'encoding'. Yet the Liturgical Commission repeatedly assures us that it is not contemplating any change of traditional and scriptural usage in applying pronouns and adjectives to God (preface and para. 8). At the same time, however, it rather ominously repeats the view of the Standing Liturgical Commission of the Episcopal Church of the United States of America that the term 'Lord' is 'increasingly felt to be excluding because in English it is gender-specific' (para.45), and the view that it

is desirable to 'restore' female metaphors to 'balance' our perceptions of God (para. 46). This looks either like 'ill-thought out inconsistency' (para.14), or disingenuousness. If the Commission is not intending to alter scriptural usage, the changes will win no favour with those who believe in the male suppression of female meanings, for whom 'exclusive' he/man language is only part of the male-dominated culture that gives us an 'exclusive' male God:

> Just as with the symbol he/man, there are many who would try and point out that the symbol God also encompasses women, but we think male when we use he/man and we think male when we use God. As Elaine Pagels has indicated, the actual language which is used 'daily in worship and prayer gives the distinct impression that God is thought of in exclusively masculine terms.' This belies the assurance that women are to consider themselves encompassed in the image of God. [5]

But if the Commission does envisage altering, even in the distant future, the forms in which God chose to reveal himself to the world (for it would be 'inconsistent' not to), then they should say so. How far are they planning to go? Hints of 'major revisions' of the Psalter and 'more radical recasting' of the marriage service are not reassuring (paras. 90 and 75).

'Men' and 'Sons': there is no alternative

There are considerable practical difficulties involved in attempting to carry out the proposals of the Liturgical Commission - difficulties which cannot be solved even by the resolute 'sensitivity' of the Commissioners.

The first major objection is mainly theological, and is stated, quite simply, by the Liturgical Commission: 'English has no other word (than man) that personifies the human race as an individual,' (para. 6). This usage is more than just 'important'; it might be regarded as vital. Christianity is above all a personal religion. Altering this profoundly Christian stress on the individual relation between God and man might well seem to be a 'variation of substantial importance', falling under Canon B5. And it is an illusion to believe that there is a non-sexist word that would serve the same function as 'man'.

Often, it can be used to stress the difference between us and God, as in 'The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid, what can man do to me?'. The proposed alteration in Table 5, 'What can anyone do to me?' blurs this important stress. It is also lost in the sentence from the Marriage Service, where 'That which God hath joined together, let no man divide', has to be altered to 'let no one divide'. Here, however, the weakness of the alternative alerts one to the important double function of 'man'. It is individual as well as generic: it is a direct warning to each of us, as individuals, not to tamper with something altogether beyond us, as a human race. The loss of this individual warning is inevitable: it is impossible for anyone to think of him or her self as 'no one': the 'one' which would make it individual is altogether swallowed up by the negative stress of 'no-one'.

This double function of the word man is even more vital when stressing the positive aspects of our relationship with God. Christ came to save 'all men' - all of us, but all of us as individuals, not as 'people' en masse, or 'people everywhere', or 'the world' (as is suggested in Tables 7 and 8).

Similarly it is our relationship with Christ that is threatened by the attempt to suppress descriptions of Christians as 'sons' and 'brothers'. For this is the way in which we are asked to perceive our Christian status, as joint heirs with Christ - who is, in what may seem an insuperably 'sexist' formulation, the Son of God and Son of man. Referring to 'sons and daughters' actually excludes women from this identification with the Sonship of Christ; similarly, 'children' will only have the right resonances in the unlikely event that we could ever become accustomed to speaking of Our Lord as 'Child of God' or 'Human Child'.

Positive Discrimination?

The Liturgical Commission, however, is only putting half of its trust in non-sexist language; the other half of its collective mind, as I have suggested, believes that 'using language that is equally applicable to either sex' can 'obscure rather than increase the visibility of women' (para. 88). What, then, is the answer? According to the Liturgical Commission, it lies not in equality, but in positive discrimination: the introduction of 'material that concentrates on the feminine'. But what, in practice, would be the effect of these alternatives?

Turning to the Supplementary Texts in Chapter 5, we find specifically female formulations, such as 'Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace'. These, of course, exclude men. The priest would be specifically addressing only part of his congregation. Whatever the rights and wrongs of the dispute over whether grammar can be sexist, or whether non-sexist language is an illusion, this exclusion is in practice undeniably far more rigorous than the 'exclusion' of females by generically male formulations. Of course, it is perfectly possible to argue that this would provide a salutary shock to male egos. Divisiveness has its uses as a feminist strategy. But it should be recognised as such: we should not give divisive language the bland label 'inclusive', and thereby suggest that it is directly ministering to wholeness of communion.

New patches on old garments: internal divisions in the liturgy

Even if non-gender specific terminology did work to sooth inflamed susceptibilities, it is an illusion to believe that this would solve anything. It would create more problems than it solves: for it is difficult to see how the new patches could fail to make the unreconstructed patches more problematic.

In a sea of genderless pronouns, the symbolic masculinity of God and the historical masculinity of Christ would stand out as reefs of intractable maleness, to the wrecking of the supposedly frail female psyche. The male terminology that is left (and, the Commission insists, 'the total elimination of apparently male terms used to include women is neither practicable nor desirable',para.83) would inevitably be perceived as more offensive, deprived of the context which might enable understanding. It would, in fact, become divisive.

One can see difficulties, for example, in the retention of 'and was made man' in the Nicene Creed. The Commission, indeed, obviously felt a need to alter this, but was 'advised, however, that for the present any substitution would probably be regarded as beyond the scope for minor variations allowed by Canon B5' (para. 76). Yet careful excision of all other references to Christ being made man necessarily makes this sole remanent more startling, for those who find it difficult to accept the notion that Christ was, in fact, a (male) man. Our supreme confession of faith is then likely to become a stumbling block.

Dividing the Bible from the Liturgy

Surely, too, we should be wary of any proposals that threaten to drive a wedge between the liturgy and the Bible. It cannot be claimed that the apparent offensiveness creeps in from any inaccuracy in the translation; on the contrary, the Liturgical Commission's comment on the use of 'sons' 'brothers' and 'fathers' might also be applied to the use of 'man' and 'mankind': [6]

> The difficulty in these cases does not arise from any alleged peculiarity of the English language. All three terms are used in this way in Greek and Hebrew, and the liturgical use reflects scriptural use (para. 59).

The argument put forward to get round this is one of cultural relativism, which, it is claimed, 'might reconcile some people to the legitimacy of biblical usage in the original context and yet argue for the necessity of change if the terms are not to be misheard in modern society' (para. 60).

But surely this means that, at worst, the Bible is to be relegated to a cultural museum-piece; even at best, 'biblical usage' is inevitably more liable to be misunderstood, misheard, if we are no longer accustomed to hearing it in church. For familiarity is vital: familiarity enables the ordinary members of a congregation to absorb and understand the 'original context', to transcend the letter of the merely cultural.

Imagine the shock, for a reader reared upon the carefully sanitised pabulum of the proposed new liturgy, of stumbling across the strong meat of the unreconstructed Word. Inevitably, the effect would be one of recoil, of culture-shock. For even the most 'sensitive' modern translations cannot get round the inescapably masculine grammar of many key texts - for which there can be no non-sexist translation. The new liturgy would simply dodge them: 'Impossible to recast; use alternatives'. But are they therefore to be excised from the Bible? Or are they to be allowed to remain - and to become a scandal for future 'sensitive' generations?

Consider, too, the reactions of a female reader accustomed to a liturgical 'balance' of male and female images. She would, surely, be shocked and alienated to discover just how carefully those female images have, in fact, been gleaned from a work thoroughly lacking in 'balance'; and, moreover, how often they have been wrested from their context to give, in effect, a false impression. (She will discover, for example, that the 'daughters of Jerusalem' and the 'daughters of Judah' in the suggested Supplementary Texts, are not, in fact, women at all, but cities: Zech. 9.9. and Ps. 48.11). The well-meaning falsification may actually be doing her a disservice, making it more difficult for her to read the message of God for herself.

Of course, the falsification is not meant as a 'lie': the reformers of the liturgy are only being 'positive', trying to bring out what they see as the spirit of truth from the letter of culture. Yet, as Christians, we should surely be wary of any measures that threaten to make this activity even more surely the province of the learned, who alone can crack an increasingly alien cultural code - when it should be the kingdom of the simple and pure of heart (or even ordinary members of a congregation!)

Congregations divided by a common language

'No scripture is of any private interpretation', according to the second epistle of Peter; according to the Liturgical Commission, however, 'user, hearer, and different sub-cultures will have their own perceptions of its meaning' (para. 38). Faced with 'disconcerting challenges from the scriptures themselves', inevitably members of the Church of England will find that their perceptions of social context and theological priorities will differ (preface).

The Bible has indeed always had a disconcerting habit of meaning all things to all men; and the liturgy, too, is inevitably open to multiple perceptions, multiple readings. Of course, common understanding cannot be guaranteed by the sharing of mere words: it is a matter of the spirit, not the letter.

Yet the solution to this perennial problem is surely not what the Liturgical Commission suggests - a further dissolution of church unity, allowing in still greater liturgical variety. The ASB texts are to be adapted 'where this is felt to be appropriate', in the recognition that 'much depends on people's perceptions of how language is understood; and local circumstances vary considerably' (preface). But a patched-up liturgy, brought in piecemeal, with the possibility of infinite minute variations from parish to parish, can only actively encourage the growth of an infinite variety of subcultures. If 'fixed forms of prayer' as the Commission itself asserts, actually have 'the power...to shape people's sense of identity and aspiration' (para. 33), when

used in common, they have some power to create a community with shared values. Too many variations, dissolving too many fixities, actually help to create a welter of cultural relativity.

At worst they will help to foster a feminist ghettomentality, until the liturgical similarities that remain only serve to highlight the dissimilarities of approach between different parishes - as England and America are said to be divided by a common language. Even at best, it will doubtless tend to make visitors in churches that are not their own feel a little confused, or even excluded, by differences in practice.

Of course, in urging the dangers inherent in subscribing to the myth of non-sexist language, I will seem myself to have fallen into inconsistencies. I seem at once to be saying that words don't matter (for they do not condition our minds in the way that many feminists believe), and that they matter very much indeed, for it is important to keep the 'fixed forms' that help to create our identity as Christians.

This, however, is only a re-writing of an age-old problem. Christianity in general, and Protestantism in particular, has always been logocentric, centred on the literal words of the Bible, and Christ, the metaphorical Word of God. Christians have always found themselves saying that words matter immensely - since words are God's chosen vehicles, the way in which he chose to reveal himself to us- yet also that they do not really matter at all, since form is less important than content: 'the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.'

It is surely important to realise, however, that this problem is not just created by the shifting of culturally-given perceptions. It is not created solely by the ever-increasing gap between our culture and that of the 'original context' of the Bible. Words have always been intrinsically both 'inclusive' and 'exclusive', both gloriously adequate and terribly inadequate - with the potential for being either the means of genuine revelation, or a language-trap. And this was true even for those hearing the message of Jesus in its 'original context'. Some of the most chilling passages in the Bible describe how many of his original audience heard, but did not understand. They were caught in the language-trap; and their failure is shown to be part of their cultural conditioning:

> For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness. (I Cor. I, 23)

Jesus' reaction, however, was not to recast his message into a culturally acceptable form, to make it apparently easier of access, more 'inclusive'. What he demanded, instead, was something far more radically challenging: the ability to move beyond the merely cultural altogether. And this, paradoxically, often involved the superficial appearance of 'exclusivity.' Christ often seems, deliberately, to make his message hard. His favourite method of instruction is to speak in parables, 'dark sayings', which demand interpretation - and which, we are informed, remained dark to many of his listeners.

> This parable spake Jesus unto them, but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them. (John 10, 6)

What Christ's parables and his quotations force us to do, by their violently dark and riddling method, is to follow him in an act of profoundly creative re-interpretation. It is an act where old and new fuse, in the mind of an interpreter, at the moment when old words are seen in a dazzling new light. The old commentators of the Bible understood the importance of this 'kind' forcing, when, following Augustine, they looked for, and found, a real point to the insistently metaphorical language of the Bible.[7] Milton summed up their arguments when he wrote that 'the most of evangelick precepts are given us in proverbiall forms, to drive us from the letter, though we love ever to be sticking there'.[8]

If this idea is extended to the letter of cultural forms, then the discrepancy between our present day modes of thoughts and those of the 'original context' will similarly become a force for good, rather than a deficiency. What appears to be a difficulty will actually make it less likely that we will become self-trapped by a deadly literal-mindedness.

For the point of these Biblical forms is surely that they simultaneously stretch and humble the mind, making one aware of the greatness and the littleness of man. They enhance our awareness of how easy it is to be trapped in merely human terms; but simultaneously enhance awareness of the miraculously creative and God-given nature of the power that enables us to transcend and transform those terms, with an act of understanding that alters what it sees.

If that sounds dangerously close to a belief in private revelation, it can perhaps be re-phrased more soberly. Every act of understanding is, one could say, rather peculiarly dependent on the exercise of the theological virtues: faith, hope, and, above all, charity.

'We could not understand language', as the critic William Empson remarked, 'unless we were always floating in a general willingness to understand it'[9]. In such general willingness, there is compounded a mixture of hope that there is a message there, and faith that we may be enabled to understand it; but it is charity that provides and uses the code-book, in an act of sympathetic imagination.

It is this power that should enable us all to re-read even the old formula of 'the male embraces the female' and see it in a Christian light, as the embrace of charity.

NOTES

1. Deborah Cameron, *Feminism and Linguistic Theory*, London, 1985, p. 4.
2. Ibid., p. 171.
3. Dale Spender, *Man Made Language*, London, 1980, pp. 166-7.

4. Mary Daly, 'The Qualitative Leap beyond Patriarchal Religion', *Quest,* 1 (1974), p.21. See also Elaine Pagels, 'What became of God the mother?: conflicting images of God in early Christianity', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society,* 2 (1976), pp.293-303. Edmund Leach rather remarkably suggests that Moses' sister Miriam is a suppressed female goddess, 'Why did Moses have a sister?', *Structuralist Interpretations of Biblical Myth,* Cambridge, 1983, pp. 33-66.
5. Spender, p.166.
6. No feminist would accept the argument that the Biblical use of *anthropos* is grammatically unbiassed. There is, indeed, a distinction made between *aner,* 'a male or husband', and *anthropos,* 'a man or human being', which is not caught by the English 'man'. Yet in the Bible, though *anthropos,* like 'man', can be used to include women, it is, like 'man', not applied to women alone; and it is consistently used, even when applied to human beings in general, in a context which shows that it is heard as male (e.g. Matt. 19, 5-12 about the relations between a 'human being' and his wife), while there are countless instances where it is used of male individuals.
7. Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana,* III, 5, 'It is a wretched slavery which takes the figurative expressions of scripture in a literal sense.'
8. Milton, *Tetrachordon: Complete Prose Works of John Milton,* ed. Don M. Wolfe, Yale, 1953-82, Vol II, p 637.
9. William Empson, *Milton's God,* London, 1965, p.28.

State Schools and the Gender Myth

Ray Honeyford

Is there a bias against girls in the state schools? A combination of radical feminism and determinist dogma has convinced many people that there is. There is growing evidence from the publications of the Department of Education and Science (DES), policy documents issued by local education authorities, and courses offered by teacher-training establishments, that the Women's Liberation view of the education of girls has been swallowed more or less whole by the state education establishment. Though there is no mention of 'gender issues' either in the Education Reform Act of 1988, or in the guide for parents on the National Curriculum, the DES 'red book' on the National Curriculum 'From Policy to Practice' makes specific reference to the need in teaching the new curriculum for 'coverage across the curriculum of gender...issues.' And the Equal Opportunity Commission spends significant sums of public money in seeking to convince everyone that this is a valid and essential enterprise.

Now the key assumption here is that girls suffer systematic disadvantage in relation to boys in school. Girls are the object of a malign conspiracy which causes the system and those who operate it to perceive the sexes selectively, and to value boys more than girls. The girl as victim, rather than as equal partner in the classroom, is an image being assiduously cultivated in the state education service. That the current differentiation of the sexes is entirely the result of social and historical conditioning is taken as a self-evident truth all must accept. Dissenters and doubters are dismissed as fools or reactionaries.

But what is being presented as holy writ is, in reality, the subject of perennial debate. No doubt sexual differences *can* be understood as a function of male hegemony, which has moulded women over the centuries. Equally, they can be interpreted as the expression of biologically embodied differences, constant in essence, though varying in form over time and in cultural location. Both factors, no doubt, have played a part in determining specific outcomes. The issue is essentially unresolved. My objection is not to the debate, but to the assumption that feminists have settled the matter. In fact, as applied to schools, the feminist position owes very little to rational argument or to demonstrated proof. Its success is due neither to scholarship nor to science, but rather to the campaigning antics of a handful of highly untypical, radical females of the 1960s who created effective pressure groups and generated appropriate propaganda. The educational establishment has been won over, as have a very large number of politicians who believe that to question feminist dogma is to risk losing women's votes. The absence of any sort of scientific consensus on the vexed questions of human sexuality and gender was brought out just before the last election in an agonised letter to the *Guardian* by David Holbrook. Holbrook, a Cambridge academic and traditional Labour supporter, has spent twenty years in researching, and in reading and writing about human sexual differences. After all his labours he is honest enough to admit, '...we know very little.' And after reading the Labour Party's equal opportunities pack for school governors he dismissed the thing as being, 'sickeningly stupid,' and a commitment to 'bloody nonsense.' Such robust honesty is refreshing, but it has done little to halt the march of feminist orthodoxy in the educational establishment.

If the theoretical issue is subject to debate, what about how far empirical evidence supports the femi-

nist position about girls in school? If the girls are being given fewer opportunities than boys, then it is reasonable to suppose that this will mean the girls enjoy a comparatively restricted educational diet, and that boys will outperform girls in public examinations.

This was the assumption behind an 'equal opportunity policy document' issued by the Metropolitan Borough Council of which I am a member. Under pressure from civil servants from the Department of Trade and Industry, who hand out grants for vocational training in schools, and with the eager support of the equal opportunity bureaucrats appointed by the Labour Council, a group of just twelve sympathetic teachers under the direction of an adviser produced a document which embodied all the predictable feminist arguments. Schools, it implied, did not simply seek to meet the needs of boys and girls. They ascribed fixed, highly questionable roles; and through a variety of social processes prefigured the male-dominated outcomes. To offset this male conditioning, schools were urged to abolish time-honoured social rituals in the classroom. Names in the register should not be grouped according to sex; the marked tendency boys and girls have to line up outside classrooms in separate groups should be discouraged; seating arrangements should be manipulated so that girls and boys violate their natural inclinations and sit together without regard to their sexual identity. Heavy monitor jobs, traditionally the preserve of boys since they tend to be physically bigger, and out of courtesy - should be shared with the girls. Story and text books should be scanned for the presence of undesirable sex roles and aspirations. The teacher, that is, should become a crude social engineer in the service of feminist dogma. The success of this policy would, presumably, not only create a new vision of womanhood, but overcome the alleged inequality of opportunity suffered by girls. Girls would learn to overcome their inferior position in schools, and achieve as much as boys.

However, when I asked the education officer for factual evidence that girls occupy this position, I was told that the Local Education Authority did not monitor educational performance with regard to sex. No one, in fact, had the slightest idea about subject choice, or about comparative examination results. The 'equal opportunity policy' for our schools had no data base whatsoever. When I requested that the evidence should be gathered, I discovered that, in the previous year, girls, far from being denied opportunities, studied a wider range of subjects than the boys. Moreover, the girls did significantly better than boys in their GCSE examinations, and obtained more A grades at A level. Of the seven youngsters who got Oxbridge places, three were girls.

As far as attainment is concerned, then, the equal opportunity policy was based on a falsehood. True, more boys than girls did maths and physics, but more girls than boys did biology. Moreover, girls dramatically outperformed the boys in English Literature and modern languages - the latter having particularly important vocational value, in view of 1992.

This was not an isolated example. An enquiry into the examination results obtained by pupils in the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA), the biggest of its kind in Europe, discovered the following:

> These differences between boys and girls are much greater than those found nationally and they are paradoxical given the recent expensive ILEA campaign to try to prevent underachievement by girls. All the evidence indicates that boys in ILEA are underachieving much more than girls.[1]

Moreover, the latest national data echo these findings. 18.2 per cent of girls got one or more A levels, compared with 17.9 per cent of boys; 11.4 per cent of girls and 9 per cent of boys got five or more O levels; 29.5 per cent of girls and 24.3 per cent of boys got between one and four O levels. And fewer girls than boys got no passes - 41.2 per cent as opposed to 47.1 per cent.[2] In short, there is a discernible tendency for girls to do better than boys. How can this be reconciled with the allegation that girls are being denied opportunities in our schools?

Even when one goes beyond attainment - which can be empirically verified - and enters the much more subjective realm of attitudes, values and levels of personal maturity, it is difficult to see how girls are losing out. Although these things cannot be effectively measured on some sort of scale, there is a consensus amongst teachers that girls are more successful in controlling aggression, in displaying mature attitudes to self and others at an earlier age, and in respecting legal restraints on behaviour - juvenile delinquency is an almost exclusively male preserve. The greater maturity of girls is also displayed in their greater tendency to remain in formal education after the age of sixteen.[3] Moreover, the feminist allegation that girls are being developed in terms of male domination suffers from an obvious flaw - most of the influences on boys and girls in school are female, since most teachers are women; at the crucial primary stage the proportion of women teachers is: Nursery - 99 per cent; Infants - 98 per cent; First School - 88 per cent; First and Middle - 76 per cent; Junior/Infants - 75 per cent; Junior - 66 per cent; Middle - 65 per cent.

It seems less than likely that this massively disproportionate female influence will produce girls who lack belief in themselves, and in their ability to compete intellectually and emotionally with boys unless, of course, we make the arrogant assumption - often made by feminists - that women teachers lack insight and dutifully go on reproducing male conditioning in their female charges.

The truth is that, despite much sound and fury from the vested interests involved, the feminist position in education is remarkably precarious. Out of all the torrent of research, and the mountain of papers and books produced over the past twenty years, only two indubitable facts have been estab-

lished. First, boys are more aggressive than girls in their classroom behaviour, and teachers give boys more attention in order the more effectively to control them. Secondly, boys, on the whole, do more maths and science than girls, and these differences are caused by girls conforming to male expectations. The first finding will surprise only those who not only expect girls to be equal with, but the same as, boys in their behaviour - an expectation which contradicts both common sense and pretty well the whole of history. That the second finding should depress anyone can only be accounted for by the assumption that science is intrinsically superior to the arts - a value judgement most people would question. Would a physicist or chemist want to question his daughter's right to study Jane Austen, rather than quadratic equations?

The state education service, it seems, continues to demonstrate a fatal tendency to be distracted from its real purposes in pursuit of fashionable and highly questionable myths. It is the story of state education over the past quarter of a century or more. The advent of educational reform had caused many of us to hope the state schools would now be free to get on with the real business of educating the children, whatever their sex, creed or colour. But the signs are not propitious. The relentless march of the dogmatist, the social engineer and the bureaucratic interest group continues.

Notes

1. John Marks, et al., *Examination Performance in ILEA*, NCES Research Report No.3, 1986.
2. June Statham, et al., *The Education Fact File*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1989.
3. *Statistical Bulletin: Summary of National Trends*, Department of Education and Science, May 1989.

Is Nothing Sacred?

Ian Crowther

Now that the greater part of Eastern Europe is consigning communism to the dustbin of history, and the Soviet Union is following suit, albeit more furtively, we may be witnessing not 'The End of History', as the State Department's Francis Fukuyama prophesied in his now famous essay[1] of last year, but its resumption, and in a manner which (*pace* Fukuyama) promises to deflate the universalistic pretensions as much of liberal as of Marxist modernity. Of course, one can quite see why liberal internationalists today imagine the world is going their way. During the cold war period, though some liberals anticipated a 'convergence' between capitalist and communist systems, it wasn't easy to envisage an era of world peace while two competing internationalisms, bourgeois and proletarian, each sought to eclipse the other in power and influence. However, with the end of the cold war, it appears that the world is no longer obliged to make a choice, or its superpowers to impose one. Only a few geriatrics in China and Albania now seem disposed to settle for full-blooded socialism. So isn't it highly plausible to postulate a future largely devoid of ideological conflict, in which nation shall speak unto nation in a perpetual state of peace and plenty? That liberal universalism is an idea whose time has finally come was the thesis of Fukuyama's essay; a thesis to which contemporary events would appear to have lent their support. After all, if communism as an effective force is removed from the world scene, what is left but a benign, easy-going consumerism, legitimised and made possible by the now triumphant institutions of liberal democracy and the market economy? Surely, at the end of the twentieth century, there is nothing important left for human beings to argue about. We are all enlightened moderns now.

No doubt the world as one vast shopping mall is infinitely to be preferred to the world as one vast Gulag, but the dominant human type it suggests (as Fukuyama himself despairingly acknowledged) is more reminiscent of Nietzsche's 'last man', whose 'small contentment' is like that of a 'domestic animal', than traditional, Western man whose striving, moralising character was moulded by Jerusalem and Athens. But does communism's demise really portend, as Fukuyama would have it, 'the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalisation of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government? Only someone leading an especially sheltered life - dare one say, a liberal intellectual, or perhaps, a globe-trotting businessman - could seriously believe that from the spread of free markets and democratic regimes will come a new form of humanity, unencumbered by national, cultural or ethnic differences. Even in Western Europe, one is struck by the fact that outside a common disposition to trade freely - which is itself questionable: witness the strenuous efforts of French farmers to exclude British meat - there are profound national differences which resist dissolution either by common markets or by bureaucratic directives. Indeed, as the drive towards a single European market and uniform legislation has quickened, so too have the impulses of different nationalities to protect their own distinctive customs and laws. A sense of nationhood - manifest in the deeply rooted taboos and prejudices that dis-

tinguish one country's ancestral culture from another - is not something that can be relegated to the realm of folk dancing and kept alive only as a tourist attraction, as though its relevance to the real business of life - including, incidentally, the real business of politics were nil. It would be truer to say that a nation's political and economic life are coloured for the most part by the customs and cultural archetypes which generations of its citizens have internalised. Free markets may all share the same formal characteristics, but otherwise they differ markedly from country to country, being affected by traditions which in many instances predate capitalism or have nothing essentially to do with economic considerations. In all the chatter about a single European market, let alone about a single European state, the shaping influence of history upon different people's political and economic lives is conveniently forgotten, or wished away. It is only possible to believe in 'the end of history' if you downgrade or dismiss its importance.

France draws on a centralising and paternalistic tradition alternatively to moderate and stimulate the workings of her market economy. This makes her appear more ready than Britain to adopt rationalising measures of the kind we associate, for example, with the French high-speed railway network and the long, broad boulevards of Baron Hausmann's Paris. However, there are other reforms which we in Britain would regard as rational, but which to the French are anathema. The Napoleonic inheritance laws - an earlier measure of Gallic rationalism - have effectively prevented to this day the merger of many small, 'uneconomic' French farms into those large agro-industrial complexes which have so disfigured the life and landscape of England.

Moreover, many of France's most valuable and distinctive characteristics - strong family ties, continuities in property ownership, provincial pride, the quality of food - are all linked to the continuing existence and significance of her peasant population.

Another striking instance of the way in which unique, national laws and institutions impinge on the operations of markets - and effectively militate against their internationalisation - is the continued vitality of Germany's *Handwerkkammer*, the chamber of craftsmen which antedates Bismarck and Hitler, and which today is still adding new crafts as old ones disappear. Ninety per cent of West Germany's school-leavers are apprenticed to a *Meister* in one of the four hundred and fifty trades which the government recognises. The Guild's basically medieval philosophy, of providing both consumer protection and industrial regulation, obviates the need for the state to concern itself overmuch with business. The *Handwerkkammer* played an indispensable part in West Germany's economic miracle of the 1950s. All the signs are that it will have just as important a role in the new, united Germany of the 1990s.

As for the countries of Eastern Europe and the newly awakened nationalities within the Soviet Union, the hunger there for free institutions and economies cannot disguise an equal yearning to reassert traditional identities and forms of life, religious and cultural, which had long been proscribed as obstacles to the creation of the new socialist man. The peoples of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union are not emerging from decades of totalitarian rule simply in order to become the contented, secularised beneficiaries of a Western-style, liberal democracy. The religious and national consciousness of Poles, Hungarians, Lithuanians, Ukrainians, and innumerable others, which have together played so significant a part in the resistance to Soviet domination and Marxist ideology, are likely to lead these peoples in directions which are inexplicable in terms of our prevailing Western model of society.

What, for example, are we to make of the claim of many devout Christians in Russia and Eastern Europe that the momentous events unfolding in their countries are the consequence of our Lady of Fatima's revelations in 1917, and of Pope John Paul II's consecration of Russia in 1984?[2] With whatever degree of scepticism we are inclined to treat such a claim, the fact remains that Eastern Europe's insurgents, inspired by prayer and sacred symbols, marched under the banners of patron saints, usually of Our Lady.

When we look beyond Europe's shores at countries like Japan which have adopted liberal democracy and a consumer society, we nevertheless find that their conduct of political and economic life remains deeply permeated by axioms of traditional culture. Japan has reproduced Western achievements, as have those East Asian countries encouraged by her example - South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore - without exhibiting the individualism which we in the West think of as inseparable from an advanced economy. The truth is, that nowhere in the world do people conform (except in some cases, superficially) to the internationalist stereotypes visited upon them either by liberals or Marxists. Bourgeois solidarity across national frontiers is no less of an illusion than proletarian solidarity. But whereas the latter is now seen as having no possible correspondence with the real world, the former still apparently has power to charm the policy-making élites of the Western world, distorting their perception of reality to the point where Fukuyama's fanciful vision of global homogenisation can be taken seriously.

If the real world does not lend much support to liberalism's universalist aspirations, from what source then do they derive their plausibility? The answer, of course, lies in that idea from which universalistic liberalism naturally arises, namely, individualistic liberalism, whose minimalist picture of man appears to render obsolete or optional all those larger associations of kin, region, religion and nation - which have traditionally distinguished one group of people from another. Since all such associations are unchosen - being foisted on the individual without his consent - their legitimacy is called

into question by the contractarian theory of society. If all societies are understood as random collections of individuals, and these individuals are essentially buyers and sellers in markets, and abstract bearers of a few fundamental rights, then, obviously, there can be little dividing one society from another, or one set of human beings from another. The key role that Marx assigned to proletarians in his unfolding historical drama, that of 'universal class', has always been more credibly filled by the bourgeoisie, or at least the bourgeoisie as portrayed by liberal, social contract theorists from Hobbes and Locke to Rawls and Nozick. All forms of life other than the liberal bourgeois are then seen as simply more primitive stages in a historical process which will necessarily culminate in a universal civilisation.

In the course of a powerfully argued work which takes on a whole host of *Liberalisms*, [3] disposing of one version after another, John Gray uncovers the weakness at the core of all social contract theories, namely the circular reasoning on which, perforce, they rely. By devaluing at the outset the particular forms of historical life which make us what we are, and postulating instead abstract subjects or artificial persons, the contractarian 'assures a liberal upshot' to his theorising. Consider the device of the 'veil of ignorance' used by Rawls. Intended to ensure impartiality and neutrality among competing ideals, it effectively screens its subjects from the inheritances and attachments which everywhere are constitutive of real persona. It thus assumes what it sets out to prove, that human beings can readily possess themselves of a universal viewpoint. The viewpoint in any case turns out to be 'universal' only in name. In so far as it pictures human beings as interest-maximising or gender-neutral or rights-bearing, it at once betrays (in Gray's words) 'its dependency on a particular cultural tradition - that which has secured a precarious hegemony over the miscellany of cultural traditions that Western societies harbour. It is in the truth that liberalism's universal standpoint gains content only by its secreting a particular local perspective that liberalism's central and fatal incoherence is found.'

The refutation offered thus far of liberal internationalism, and of the individualism it presupposes, has been made essentially on the grounds of its unreality: all experience is against it. However, this commonsensical critique is unlikely to carry much weight with someone who is guided, not by experience at all, but rather by an ideology whose appeal lies precisely in its claim to break with all previous experience. The universalist ideal may repeatedly founder on the rocks of reality and yet survive intact in the minds of its adherents; that is, so long as it survives as an ideal. Hence, instead of arguing that the internationalist ideal, however desirable, is not realisable, the conservative might more fruitfully argue the exact reverse, that however realisable, it is not desirable.

The only morality one could envisage as being consistent with a thoroughgoing internationalism would be one which was neutral and disengaged. It would have to be all things to all men, readily adaptable and capable of accomodating under its benevolent, outstretched arms all manner of disparate creeds and cultures; but unlike them it would not itself think anything especially worth affirming or denying, except, of course, the supreme value of 'freedom'. Each must be free to pursue whatever preferences please him, provided only that in exercising his own freedom he does not impede another's. That this morality has for some time been operative in advanced Western societies, it would be difficult to deny. The rational egoists of liberal theory are now among us, and cannot, therefore, be dismissed out of hand as figments of the ideological imagination. There are growing numbers of Westerners who pride themselves on their freedom from 'prejudice' and the plasticity of their moral natures, enabling them to live easily in a pluralist or multicultural society. As Gray describes them, they 'may conceive themselves (with whatever degree of self-deception) as sovereign individuals who migrate across traditions and cultures and are defined by none of them.' Although we may doubt how far the secular individualist can serve as a model for all societies, or even as a model for our own, we cannot doubt his existence. We can, however, doubt whether his detached moral posture, his coolness (if not hostility) towards all settled systems of belief, is at all conducive to the kind of society most of us would want to inhabit. Is it not rather the case that for people who belong to no tradition, and rejoice in the fact, no set of beliefs can carry any weight, or exert any authority? For such people, every morality appears as self-serving, or as the expression of a particular cultural preference. Indeed, it is a mark of the truly free or enlightened individual that he holds himself aloof from every morality. And he can hardly do otherwise, since moral rules really only make sense within a shared tradition and social world.

Robert Nisbet has seen what havoc moral neutrals are making of American life, and in his latest book, *The Present Age*, [4] he records his impressions of a social fabric in the process of unravelling itself. It is not the mere existence of pathological individualists which alarms Nisbet, but their proliferation in every important area of life. After all, society has always had its share of morally non-committed individuals. Nisbet quotes Dr Johnson's remark to Boswell about a man in London he knew who 'hung loose upon society'. But in present day American society 'there are a great many loose individuals: loose from marriage and the family, from the school, the church, the nation, job and moral responsibility. What sociologists are prone to call social disintegration is really nothing more than the spectacle of a rising number of individuals playing fast and loose with other individuals in relationships of trust and responsibility.'

Nisbet is particularly scathing about those individuals unloosed by modern, finance capitalism. The typical capitalist once worked mainly not for himself but for his family - his family, in time,

meaning his children and their children. From this came his discipline, devotion and willingness to sacrifice and invest for the future. The same motivational dynamic is still at work in the Western Pacific Rim nations today. But the disciplines upon the self which go with tangible property, and with the combination of ownership and management, are sharply reduced by the ubiquity of absentee ownership, and by the opportunities it affords to make easy money ('quick killings') through the frenzied buying and selling of shares. 'In such circumstances', observes Nisbet, 'the loose individual flourishes. For in an epoch of high liquidity, incessant turnover of shares, and fast-moving takeovers, mobility on the part of the operator is imperative. Those who are mired in tradition, in ancient concepts of trust, honour, and loyalty to house will be losers.' A market economy in which money has become an end in itself will, unsurprisingly, give rise to a profusion of sharp, unethical and often downright criminal practices. It will also tend to consume its own seedcorn rather than plant new and productive industries, rewarding those who have an eye, not for the future, but for the quick return. The historical trend within advanced capitalism towards what, half a century ago, the Harvard economist Joseph Schumpeter[5] called an 'evaporation' of property, today both reflects and contributes to a moral climate which sanctions loose relationships to everything - not just to equities and the companies they represent, but to spouses, to children and kinsmen, to friends and partners, to jobs, churches, schools and communities. There is an unhealthy symbiosis between modern capitalism and modern culture which is to the detriment of both. Now that we need no longer fear that in criticising our modern, liberal societies, we are giving aid and comfort to communism, we can perhaps concentrate more on the motes in our own eyes; otherwise the triumph of capitalist democracy may turn out to be short-lived.

We might begin by recognising that not everything in life is a matter of our subjective choice, or good simply because we have chosen it. All that Edmund Burke meant by 'the unbought grace of life', we know more simply as the sacred, to which primeval category belong all those goods - trust, honour, loyalty, fidelity - that cannot be bought, or quantified; and that by their very nature, and ours, are endowed with an authority which, disown it as we may, we cannot dislodge. There are unchosen goods, in other words, which are not debatable or negotiable. And their goodness, far from depending on our consent, demands our willing assent. To admit the claims of the sacred in our day - as do a number of the authors cited in this essay - may seem to some as anti-democratic. But it would be more accurate to describe such conservatives and traditionalists as opposed to any form of democratic absolutism; opposed, that is, as Thomas Molnar puts it in his most recent book,[6] to 'the extension of contractual order into areas which were once the realm of the sacred and natural order.' Conservatives do indeed believe that a state's legitimacy rests on something other and older than its citizens' consent. The 'ill-regarded thought', as Stephen R.L. Clark describes it, 'is this. The state and its officers hold their authority from above: not from the consent of the governed, which may be wholly unreal, but as embodiments of a sacred order that needs the visible unity of the state....not merely....to lead its subjects in the one right way by issuing such commands as they grow into real virtue by obeying: perhaps it (also) gives them a veritable image of psychological unity - where there is no such central command the people may exist like Plato's democrats, swerving from one life pattern to another as the fancy takes them....Either there is a moral or religious demand that transcends our own individual wills or there is not. If there is not, and individual consent alone is the root of any authority another may exercise over us, then no existing state government has any such authority.'[7]

The reason conservatives take such a view of the state is that they take such a view of the individual, as being bound by obligations not always of his own making. It follows that every man-made institution, including the institution of government, is similarly bound. These inherited obligations, embedded in laws, customs and institutions, amount to an implicit social contract between the state and its citizens which, properly considered, is no less binding than the explicit social contract entered into at any one time between an electorate and its representatives. The limits of legitimate government are defined - as those of a trustee are defined - not solely by the wishes of living individuals, but by the whole way of life in which these individuals discover their meaning and identity. The danger of an unlimited or absolute democracy (to guard against which is the chief business of a 'mixed' constitution such as ours) is this: it is tempted to sacrifice the past and the future to the present, by permitting the temporary holders of power, and those who put them there, to indulge their pet projects, or their prodigality, at the expense of a society whose character, though it cannot be formed by one generation, can all too easily be ruined by it. It is to Hegel that conservatives remain indebted for one of the most powerful arguments against the liberal theory of the state as founded purely on consent or choice. Roger Scruton, in one of the essays ('In Defence of the Nation') collected in his new book, [8] summarises Hegel's view thus: 'Man owes his identity as a rational chooser to a process of development that implicates him inescapably in obligations which he did not choose. These obligations of piety are both pre-contractual and pre-political....The legitimacy of the state depends in part upon its ability to recuperate and articulate these non-political obligations, which form the original of its own non-contractual order. The person who, on releasing himself into the freely contracting world of 'civil society', dishonours the pieties that nurtured him is not more, but less rational than the one who respects them. The blithe momentary Benthamite cuts away

the ground from the rational choices that he pretends to be making, by depriving himself of every value other than his own pleasure a commodity whose worth vanishes in the possession of it.'

Nisbet's 'loose individual', in so far as he fits Scruton's description of the 'blithe momentary Benthamite', is the person who fondly believes - and is disposed to act on the belief - that he should be bound by nothing greater than his own fleeting choices. In this sense, he is the utilitarian hedonist who stands consciously apart from the world, weighing up its possibilities, as though always in an instrumental relation to his society and its inherited mores. Not simply the state, but every transpersonal form of association, be it familial, friendly or civil, is robbed of its intrinsic worth by the view that it is valuable only to the extent that it contributes to individual pleasure or well-being. The society which F.R. Leavis called technologico-Benthamite - and which more commonly today goes by the name of the consumer society - has a tendency (one might even say, with pardonable exaggeration, a totalitarian tendency) to annex every form of social life to its supreme end of individual felicity. Like a colony of traders, it exalts the making and maximising of wealth, and seeks to subordinate an increasing number of its laws and institutions to the purposes of an 'enterprise culture'. Such a society is one version of Michael Oakeshott's 'enterprise association',[9] though of course it is without the despotic means of a theocratic or socialistic 'enterprise' to stamp out altogether the independent forms of civil association.

Many individualists would disavow any responsibility for the materialist dystopia just described. They would equally dispute the 'reactionary' suggestion that there cannot be such a thing as an ethical individualism; and one, furthermore, which is fully consonant with a good society. If in modern times the sovereign individual has come to be seen as the only sure foundation of moral and social order, and free choice as a kind of substitute sacred, the reason must be sought in the idealistic tradition associated with Kant rather than the materialistic associated with Bentham. Kant it was who taught that virtue consists precisely in following one's own self-chosen course. The genuinely autonomous will is the good will: the only source of those universalisable maxims which I can apply equally to myself and others. Indeed, Kant denied the title of 'moral' to anything which could be understood as originating elsewhere than in the free will. To act courageously through fear of dishonour or desire of honour; to extend charity or patronage to another because 'my station and its duties' demand it; to go to the rescue of a drowning child on impulse and without prior deliberation; no such act could be construed as moral by Kant, because each is an expression of the empirical or social self: each is heteronomous not autonomous. However, as John Casey demonstrates, in a book which succeeds admirably in retrieving an older ethical tradition (that which derives from Aristotle and Aquinas), an ethic of the virtues is bound to be, in some sense, heteronomous. It cannot help but assume the emotions and appetites. It assumes man's physical and social nature. It assumes 'a person must *at least* be someone who can make and acknowledge claims, and can be the object of and can reciprocate love, respect, hatred, and contempt. Some emotions and certainly anger - express one's sense of oneself as a person amongst persons, and help to illuminate what it is to regard oneself and others as beings to whom reasons for action can be offered. So emotion, far from derogating from the idea of rational agency, reinforces it. At the same time, this sketch of some emotions presupposes man's life as a social being. We could not understand anger without knowing about what counts as respectful and contemptuous behaviour, what people value, what grounds people have for self-esteem, what is regarded as admirable and disgraceful.'

Once we remove pharisaically the virtues from any real contact with the world, refusing either to clothe them in flesh, or to express them through our social selves, we deprive our moral lives at once of any content and of any motives; and in the process we risk damaging or denying every generous and healthy instinct. Also, by insisting that all that is merely empirical in man is irrelevant to morality, we play the game of utilitarianism, as pacifists play the game of conquerors, in effect handing over our sentient and social selves to the very materialists whom we affect to despise. It is thus that the idealist's hypermoralism is the unwitting ally of the materialist's amoralism. The unfortunate, if unintended, consequence of Kantian idealism has been to cast a halo of respectability over an individualism whose true character consists more in 'doing what one feels' than in 'doing what one ought'. And just as Kant's idea of the 'autonomous' self has been corrupted, so equally has his idea of the 'heteronomous' self. The latter is now taken to mean any form of confined existence - such as a mother obliged to look after her children at home, or a priest forbidden by his Church from preaching heresy which impedes the fulfilment of our momentary desires and projects. We moderns have in any case been encouraged by our teachers to deconstruct the Kantian self, making it difficult any longer to believe in the rational ego as the solid base on which to erect a Great Society. As Thomas Molnar caustically observes, 'we....are told by psychologists, ideologues, and hermeneuts (also called 'masters of suspicion' by Nietzsche and his followers) that our conscious self is put together from a mosaic of contradictory impulses, sordid interests, secret desires, bundles of suppressed violence, and other tumultuous drives. Why should we then trust our 'ethical consciousness' which, even in the best of cases, is only one fragment of our ego ? Kant at the end of the eighteenth century saw reason as an absolute sovereign, free of an intruding external world, master of science and destiny. Yet his message about a proud reason with sure judgements ill fits our newly discovered insignificance....'

Ethical individualism, for want of any external standards on which either to pattern itself or to shore up our fragmentary personalities, has thus proved far more vulnerable than those first champions of the inner light and of man's divine-like autonomy could perhaps ever have foreseen, living as they did in a world still heavily imbued with Christian and traditional moral standards. But if the sovereign individual, whether acting on will or desire, is not the source of all goodness and value - if, in other words, liberal democracy alone is not enough to guarantee a good society - what on earth is? What remains as a solid foundation for moral and social order? The cosmology of modern science, since it postulates an external, phenomenal world which is shaped ultimately by scientific rather than moral laws, can afford us no answer. After all, it is the mechanistic view of the physical universe which has led materialists since Hobbes to reduce man's thoughts and actions to 'nothing but' matter in motion, so that to this day we are led to seek the truth of man's nature, not on the surface where his intentions and noble aspirations lie, but in the murky depths beneath; in human nature, as in all of nature, appearances are deceptive, we firmly believe. The mechanistic view which has taught materialists to place man wholly inside the physical universe of modern science has equally taught idealists to place him wholly outside it, so that since Kant we have been led to locate the sacred in each individual's rational self-consciousness, and nowhere else. Finally, the modern cosmology is mimicked by the modern society, a point noted by Molnar: 'Above is a desacralised, empty heaven, a universe in which objects collide or pass each other according to inexorable mechanical laws. Below rule the equally inexorable laws of earthly arrangements; here too people, interests, and ambitions collide and respond, according to psychological, sociological and economic laws.' Anyone who imagines that this model has lost its hold over contemporary political scientists should look at the latest attempt by Robert Dahl, [11] Sterling Professor Emeritus at Yale, to furnish a rationale for modern representative government. For Dahl, liberal democracy is inescapably pluralist, and democratic politics a marketplace in which competing individuals and groups struggle to advance their interests through a process of barter and compromise. There is no place in Dahl's vision, as indeed there is no place in modern cosmology, for moral purpose. Conceptions of the common good and of virtuous leadership he dismisses as a 'lost tradition' and 'irrelevant' to developed Western societies.

Our modern, desacralised world-view stands in complete contrast to the traditional and sacred one which, whether arising from man's experience of the cyclic, repetitive patterns in nature, or from his sense of a transcendent order behind and beyond nature, alike provided a model on which natural and human law were based. Premodern man, even when he did not see nature as itself divine, at least saw it as divinely ordained. His customs and rituals and sacred texts were all ways of reinforcing the natural or cosmic order, and of assuring its orderly continuance through prayer and propitiatory acts. Cosmos would only become chaos again through men's disobedience and their failure to act (in Heidegger's phrase) as the 'shepherds of being.' Traditional man, in other words, co-operated in the work of maintaining the cosmic whole in being; he was truly a steward of creation. Our modern refusal to bend the knee before an order not of our own making may perhaps be seen with hindsight as a prolonged act of hubris, whose nemesis we have now begun to glimpse in the shape of an ecological and social catastrophe. Ironically, it is our contemporary experience of mounting disorder that is returning us to a recognition that absolute value is not to be conceived solipsistically, and sought in ourselves alone, but instead is to be understood as the outcome of a fruitful dialectic between my being and the being of the whole created universe. But of course this goes against the grain of the scientific understanding which consists precisely in viewing the world as it would be without us. We have fixed the world with our detached, 'objective gaze' the better, we thought, to 'disenchant' it and so make it available for our use and exploitation. But supposing that nature thus viewed objectively is a gross distortion or contraction of reality; that not only human nature, but all nature, is suffused with meaning and purpose; and that when we leave the laboratory microscope behind us, and use our own eyes, the qualities which we see - colour, form, worth, goodness, beauty and nobility - all those qualities which modern science abstracted out of existence as subjective or 'secondary' are actually the real things; then appearances would not be deceptive after all. Then reality, instead of being understood in terms of its 'lowest' elements (admittedly a useful fiction from the point of view of a practical science), would be understood in terms of its 'highest'.

A fundamental distinction between modern Western civilisation as it has developed over the last three hundred years and all other civilisations known to man is their contrasting attitudes towards hierarchy. Traditional societies see reality as constructed from the highest down; in Aristotle, for example, the natural model for man is the highest to which his nature can aspire. Granted that our 'potential' as human beings may not always be realised, nevertheless the model is the fully developed, not the underdeveloped, human being. As a purposeful cosmos is replaced by a purposeless one, human purposes shrink to what is then considered realistic or 'primary', namely, comfortable self-preservation. We have even reached the stage today, as Stephen Clark notes, where some Westerners happily 'admit to serving only the seed, the 'selfish gene'....Ancient humanists saw value in humanity because they saw value in the world of which we are a part, and which we can come to know....philosophical paganism....is the celebration of the human world within which we grow to

virtue....The little gods of household and sect take shape within a deeply imagined universe. That imagined (which is not to say imaginary) world is the one that the Creator produces out of chaos, out of the merely unmeaning material universe whose ghastly shape we glimpse behind or within the cosmos....the lightning that is attributed to Zeus is the lightning endowed with human meaning, not that limit of imagination, the large electric spark that would exist even in a humanly unmeaning world - or that is thus made available for unlimited human use.'

It hardly seems to have occurred to people yet that if an attitude of piety or reverence is appropriate towards nature, because nature is not simply the meaningless collocation of atoms we previously took it to be, then *a fortiori* the same attitude is appropriate towards our own human nature, which is neither to be spurned by the rational self nor treated as a mere passive receptor of sensations. The 'practical wisdom' whose character John Casey illuminates - Aristotle's *phronesis* which is the 'unity in man of reason and desire' - depends on our seeing human nature as given to us for a rich set of purposes - and not just for the purposes concerned with survival. These higher purposes - Casey's *Pagan Virtues* - involve not only a certain disposition of mind or spirit but also a sense of ourselves as essentially social beings. Courage, honour, temperance, justice and indeed every virtue which transcends the desire for self-preservation requires the social self for its enactment. So, for example, 'the idea of the noble' which Casey tries to capture 'includes something like the following: it is an idea of being-in-the-world, of one's self being fulfilled in a social role or function, and of an identification of oneself with the public world which is revealed in action.'

The noble consciousness is an idea which moderns find peculiarly difficult to take seriously, since the conception of the self they cherish seems to preclude the very idea of the noble, let alone its reality. As Casey explains: 'The characteristic modern view of the self (given philosophical expression by Descartes) is of a centre of thoughts and sensations. One is not essentially a man or a woman, a Frenchman or Englishman, a Christian or a Muslim, but something - a person - which is essential and which transcends these accidents. Many people in other societies - the ancient Greeks, for instance - included in the idea of a man's self much that we would exclude. They included not only his social role, but even his fate....one way in which people have expressed their identity with a social world is in looking for honour from their city - as Aristotle says that brave citizen soldiers do. People can find that their real self is the self which finds pride in, looks for honour from, something that transcends the individual - a group, city, or state. It is not that no modern people can feel in this way soldiers probably still do, and so do people engaged in resistance movements against foreign occupiers. But it is not at all characteristic of that important ideology of our time - liberal individualism.'

Conservatives whose intellectual energies these past few decades have been largely spent defending the West against the armed ideology of communism may now perhaps be forgiven for thinking they can retire to cultivate their gardens, turning as it were their pens into ploughshares. But the more percipient of them have long been aware of another threat to civilised Western values, that posed by 'the Liberal who claims to have a completely open mind on the way of life which ultimately emerges from a riot of fevered self-fulfilment'.[12] Indeed, long before conservatives felt called upon to exorcise the spectre of Marxism, they were more often occupied in combating the belief of 'Enlightened' minds that civilisation can be sustained without a commitment to anything more substantive than individual freedom. Or to put it rather less provocatively, they were concerned to demonstrate that freedom itself would be devalued by the belief that it alone is valuable. Today, there are signs - to which many recent works testify, including some of those noted here - that conservatives are reverting to their former role as critics of our desacralised culture. If so, it may not be the 'end of history' we are seeing, but the resumption of a debate about the very nature - in many respects, the flawed nature - of liberal modernity.

Notes

1. *National Interest*, Summer 1989.
2. See *To Russia - with Love*, Robert J Fox, Augustine Publishing Company, Chulmleigh, Devon EX18 7HL.
3. *Liberalisms*, Essays in Political Philosophy, John Gray, Routledge, 1989, £35
4. *The Present Age*, Progress and Anarchy in modern America, Robert Nisbet, Harper & Row, 1988, £11.95.
5. *Capitalism, socialism and democracy*, Joseph A. Schumpeter, George Allen & Unwin, 1976.
6. *Twin Powers*, Politics and the Sacred, Thomas Molnar, Eerdmans/The Paternoster Press, 1988. £7.75.
7. *Civil Peace and Sacred Order*, Limits and Renewals 1, Stephen R.L. Clark, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1989, £22.50.
8. *The Philosopher on Dover Beach*, Roger Scruton, Carcanet, 1990, £18.95.
9. *On Human Conduct*, Michael Oakeshott, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1975.
10. *Pagan Virtues*, An Essay in Ethics, John Casey, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1990, £27.50.
11. *Democracy and its Critics*, Robert A. Dahl, Yale University Press, 1989, £19.95.
12. *The Conservative Community*, the roots of Thatcherism - and its future, Robin Harris, Centre for Policy Studies, 1989, £4.95.

With the Death of God is Everything Permitted?

John Carroll

Durkheim made the distinction between 'sacred' and 'profane' fundamental to human thought.[1] Weber ended his major work with his bleak image of modern society, the iron cage within which 'specialists without spirit' and 'sensualists without heart' were trapped in a disenchanted and therefore absurd world. Both rejected the optimism in social progress and individual happiness that had been generated by the industrial revolution; a doubt which appeared first in conservative form, in the work of Edmund Burke, Jane Austen, and Joseph de Maistre.[2] It was to become more strident decades later in the work of Nietzsche and Dostoevsky.

Nietzsche's famous 'Death of God' parable asserted that with loss of faith in a transcendental power men would also lose their bearings in the world; in particular there would be no fixed point by which to determine what was good and what evil.[3] Relativism in morality means no morality. The same theme was to preoccupy Dostoevsky. His telling formulation was that without God everything will be permitted.[4] Everything permitted means no checks, a world in which the most brutal acts are condoned. In such a world there is no means for distinguishing a murder from a kiss. Although Kierkegaard wrote before Nietzsche and Dostoevsky, his work was discovered later. His main theme is that life is governed by an ascending hierarchy of levels: the aesthetical, which is the domain of egoism and pleasure, the ethical, and the religious. Kierkegaard attacks modernity for allegedly moving in reverse. Having lost the religious it is losing the ethical, and largely finds itself reduced to the passionless and frivolous pursuit of comfort.

In other words the three most profound nineteenth-century critics of modern Western society all held that the decline of religion will automatically bring about a decline of morality. Secularisation means moral nihilism. Two of modern sociology's three founding fathers, by the end of their work, had come to the same conclusion. A lot is at stake here. At the interpretative level, how one reads Western development since the industrial revolution depends on the answer one gives to the religion-morality question. At the evaluative level the same is true. More explicitly, the entire humanist tradition, with its roots in the Renaissance and its main branch through the Enlightenment, stands or falls on this issue. Humanism, founded on the axiom that man is the measure of all things, assumes that morality is possible without religion. It assumes that a humane civilised life may be conducted in a metaphysical environment in which the individual man is the highest end, the goal of existence. Indeed its main branch points to religion as superstition, a barrier to the achievement of human happiness and virtue. In modernity all of rationalism's branches, liberal, socialist and others alike, follow this line. Marx himself belongs here: although morality was not of direct interest to him, his optimism about Western economic development depends on post-capitalist abundance creating a free, equal and humane society - not an anarchic, nihilistic one. Thus, within social theory we find a central divide on the religion-morality question, between Durkheim and Weber on the one hand, and Marx on the other.

With some notable exceptions like Kafka, Heidegger, Hannah Arendt and Philip Rieff, Western theory since 1920 has neglected this theme.[5] This is nowhere more obvious than within the sociological tradition itself. While Durkheim and Weber have exerted a commanding influence over the discipline, the fundamental question at the root of their work has been repressed. Indeed this repression has been so complete that I need here, before embarking on my own investigation, to pause in order to show that the religion-morality question *is* the fundamental one in their work.

Durkheim's abiding interest was the decadent consequences in Western society of the decline of community. His rightly most influential concept, "anomie', describes a state of social breakdown due to a weakening of the force that ties people to each other, their collective conscience or group mind. In modernity the enfeeblement of the collective conscience has developed hand in hand with rampant individualism. Durkheim's anti-humanist reading is that individualism is a pathology. More specifically, individuals who are not integrated into community, who are not regulated by its superior law, fall victim to an egoistic sense of life being absurd and futile and an anomic sense of their own natures being chaotic and unruly. The key question then follows; what is the essence of the collective conscience? Durkheim's answer is the sacred. Furthermore, what gives form and practical force to the sacred is religion. There were moments in Durkheim's work when he toyed with the possibility of typically modern forms of association, such as occupational groups, developing their own sacred collective ethos.[6] However, such moments were fleeting, and Durkheim reverted to his assumption that religion is the necessary prerequisite for any community's collective conscience. In the *The Division of Labour*

in Society he had argued that the collective conscience in traditional societies is based on religion, and it is intense and absolute. In modern societies, without religion, it is weak. It was in the next major theoretical work, *Suicide*, that Durkheim turned the notion of the weakening collective conscience into the central problem of modernity. Soon after completing this work he said himself, 'I achieved a clear view of the essential role played by religion in social life.'[7] He went on to devote his last book, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, to searching for religion's staple ingredient: what is common to all religions, across culture. His discovery is 'sacred force', a universal force experienced by all humans in all societies. It is the fuel of religion. Therefore it is the fuel of the collective conscience. The implication is that to demolish its cultural representation, the particular religion of a society, is to cut the collective conscience off from its source of energy.

Weber, in his major work, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, defends capitalism against Marx's claim that it was founded on and driven by naked self-interest, by greed and exploitation. Weber's counter was that the lust for riches is as old as written history. The secret of capitalism's success was in fact the opposite of this lust: that it placed ethical checks on the hitherto unscrupulous methods of the merchant and the entrepreneur. The typical capitalist is honest and rational. Weber's lament in the last chapter of *The Protestant Ethic*, repeated elsewhere, is that with the decline of Protestantism in the nineteenth century the religious goal which directed the work ethic - salvation - had been removed. The modern businessman was left working for the sake of his business - in itself an absurdity. Moreover, the techniques of rationality, which had progressively made business less risky and more efficient, had taken over, and become ends in themselves. The symbol of this was the modern bureaucracy, which was in danger of turning into an iron cage, an agent for 'mechanised petrifaction'. In Weber's decisive equation, rationalisation means the disenchantment of the world, the creation of a profane world with neither spirit not sensuality. This is in effect a 'death of God' theory. The futility and banality of modern life, in Weber's account, follows from the loss of the tie to the religious goal of salvation. That happened with the decline of Western religion's last vital representative, Protestantism. Finally, the imagery which Weber projects to evoke this banality is full of nostalgia for lost religion, from the notion of disenchantment to the quotation from Isaiah with which he closes the great troubled lecture given late in his life, 'Science as a Vocation'.

Evidence Supporting the Religion-Morality Thesis

It is well over a hundred years since the thesis that the decline of religion means the decline of morality took full flight. How true has it turned out to be?

a) *The Family.* The main changes in the Western family in the twentieth century are suggestive of a weakening of the bonds that hold it together. An explosion in divorce rates in the 1960s became possible because traditional moral barriers, backed by the Christian churches, had been lowered. Marriage was less an obligation for life and more a renegotiable contract for mutual pleasure. Associated prohibitions on sexual relations outside marriage and on abortion virtually disappeared. Within the family there have been other signs of a deterioration of the collective conscience. The lower sense of obligation to look after grandparents is one. The steady loss of parental control over teenage children is another. The willingness to put young children in creches, even from the first year of life, is a third.

A certain caution, however, is required before drawing final conclusions about the modern family. While the creching out of infants and the abandoning of teenagers to the influence of their peers are signs of a dire fracturing of parental obligation, in many ways parents remain devoted to their children, and succeed in bringing them up to be orderly and mature members of society. Moreover, a lot of the hypocrisy that patched together numerous middle-class marriages in the past has gone.

b) *Pornography.* A fair idea of the moral condition of a human community can be gauged from its standards of public decency. What is permissible in public? The trend in the modern West has been towards allowing everything in the town square, as evidenced at the extreme in a city such as New York. Since the Lady Chatterley censorship case in the 1950s, checks over pornography in literature, film, and now video, have rapidly disappeared. In the name of liberalism, pornography has become both more widely available and more evil in content. One level is the increasing photographic explicitness in magazines like *Playboy* and *Penthouse*, available at every newsagent. At another level is the toleration of filmed sexual perversion. In 1990 an English film, *The Cook, The Thief, His Wife and Her Lover*, left Western censors quite unperturbed: perhaps they imagined the public would be edified by pictures of a naked man being coated in excrement and urine, the torture of a child including the cutting out of its navel, the choking of a man to death with pages of a book, and a lengthy and explicit depiction of cannibalism. The furthest degradation, again tolerated, is the exploitation of children, in direct violation of the central civilised interdict to protect the innocent. The vast majority of ordinary citizens in Western societies retain a basic piety in this regard, and if they knew what was happening they would hang their heads in shame. As much as they do know, their outrage does not transform itself into action.

c) *Test-Tube Babies.* As Marx asserted, in the principal axiom of *The Communist Manifesto*, the great revolutionary force in modernity is capitalism itself. This economic system overthrows all traditions in its forward march. As much as capitalism, or rather industrialisation, has been the dynamic cause of secularisation, its own dependence on technological in-

novation has bestowed on science an unprecedented prestige. And just as modern societies have failed to check the march of technology, they have also failed to check scientific research. In areas such as nuclear fission we have seen that once the genie is out of the bottle no collectivity, West or East, can get it back in. Custom, tradition, morality all crumple before the economic and scientific juggernaut.

A new area of scientific research which depends for its continuation on the turning of a blind eye to some of the most profound taboos in Judeo-Christian culture has now been flourishing for a decade with only minimal checks. That is the research on the *in vitro* fertilisation of human embryos. Under the persuasive rationalisation of helping infertile couples to have their own children, experiments have been conducted that transgress our traditional laws of what may be done to a human being. Eggs fertilised in test tubes, eggs that have begun the life process, alive and containing within themselves the complete genetic material to form the full human individual, are experimented upon as if they were segments of plant matter - frozen, injected, dissected, killed. This business has gone so far that it was possible for an issue of the *Australian Journal of Biological Sciences* in 1982 to publish without editorial comment a report titled, 'Polyethylene glycol-induced Attachment of Human Spermatozoa to Zona-free Rat Ova in vitro'.[8] The experiments were conducted in a hospital in Adelaide - as pretty, civil and genteel a town as can be found in the Western world. Apart from one or two concerned Catholic commentators picking up the fact that medical science was now cross-breeding humans with rats, the Australian media reacted with a comprehensive lack of interest. One is tempted to ask, what would it take today to shock editors and journalists, apart from the rancorous political fashions like South Africa? It was a nightmare fantasy of the Middle Ages that in hell humans are cross-bred with monsters. Bosch's paintings give graphic illustration. The devil did the cross-breeding. Today, lionised scientists are openly carrying out the devil's work, and no one blinks.

d) *The Protestant Ethic.* The moral disposition of the pivotal social group in modern society, the middle class, was summed up by Max Weber as the Protestant ethic. One aspect of this ethic was an attitude to work, that it should be done for its own sake, with as thorough and skilful application as are humanly possible. There are pervasive signs that such an attitude to work in the West is in retreat, partly due to the major long-term trend of a decline in the proportion of jobs in which workmanship is possible.[9] The other aspect of the Protestant ethic of great significance for the common weal was the notion of civic duty, that it is the obligation of every adult member of the community to spend some time working for the collective good. Clubs, charities and a myriad of local associations were the practical manifestation of this ethic. Since the 1960s they have suffered from a diminishing commitment with each new generation.

I want to concentrate here on another area, the one isolated by Max Weber as the centre of the capitalist revolution in morals, the business community. The 1980s saw an outbreak of crooked dealing in the big business sector of Western societies. The leading practices were 'creative accounting' and 'insider trading'. The spread of fraudulent accountancy, rationalised with some unintended wit as 'creative', has meant that any company that wishes can shop around for an accountancy firm that is willing to cook its books. Reports from the highest sources in Australia indicate that such a company will not have to look very far. Insider trading occurs when managers, directors or stock brokers who have inside knowledge about impending company takeovers either sell that knowledge or use it to trade their own shares. A scandal in New York in 1986 gave wide publicity to this practice.

There are two quite different sides to the collapse of social conscience implied here. Firstly, one of the professions, accountancy, has been shown to have many of its practitioners holding none of the scruples which form the inviolable conditions of entry into membership of the guild. Accountants are well rewarded in money and prestige for their position of responsibility, and they have abused the public's confidence. For those in the older professions like the law, who condescendingly comment that what can one expect from such an upstart group of counting-house boys, the obvious reply is that, in America at least, numerous members of the legal profession have been involved in the same practices.

Secondly, the capitalist ethos, as interpreted by Weber, meant that within the business elite in most Western societies there was an unwritten code of proper conduct. Certain things were just not to be done, however high the personal gain. Such an ethos was maintained within such elite institutions as gentlemen's clubs, sanctioned, not by law or government regulation, but by one's peers. There were signs in the 1980s that this code is breaking down.

A cautionary note should be added. There have been outbreaks of business malpractice in the past, and they have been checked. For example a share boom in the late 1960s in Australia brought with it a plague of shady activities. However, the stock markets themselves, with the help of some government legislation, got their own houses pretty much in order. This was the case of the collective conscience being strong enough to take action.

e) *High Culture and its Elites.* In the middle of the nineteenth century Western High Culture took an about-turn away from its traditional role of transmitting the truths and the laws that govern the human condition. Modern art, literature and philosophy have in the main portrayed life as meaningless and absurd, morality as conditional and relative, and truth as an illusion. Through the eyes of the most gifted and perceptive of modern interpreters, life appears as bleak and miserable, as a sort of living death. This is the about-turn to nihilism.

In painting, Manet's *Olympia* of 1865 was something of a watershed. It took one of the conventional subjects of Western art, the female nude, and turned it into a frigid and profane object, emptied of all spiritual and moral content. Manet was in explicit rebellion against the masters of the tradition, in particular Titian, who always set these potentially transgressive subjects within strict emotional and moral limits, hence preserving the sacred status of the human, and especially female, body.[10]

Edvard Munch is arguably the greatest exponent of psychological realism in modern art. His work is one version of the idea that everything is permitted. In his vision love means chronically depressed men and hysterical, icy and sometimes vampirish women. Passion always metamorphoses into ashes, attraction into despair. In *The Morning After* the woman sprawled across the bed does not care a fig for anything. Munch's *Madonna* is without child, herself a martyr to self-obsessed neurosis, not even able to mother herself.

The most brilliant and influential theorist in modern art was Marcel Duchamp. At the centre of his enterprise was his mocking of the classical tradition - its technical accomplishments, but even more its moral and spiritual core. In entering a urinal as a work of art he set the most profane of human acts as equal to the crucifixion. His largely unwitting accomplice in the demolition of Western High Culture was Picasso, without peer as a cultural celebrity. Behind the playful virtuosity of this man, endowed with extraordinary talent, lies a complete nihilism. Picasso himself admitted as much in an interview late in life:

> When I am alone with myself I haven't got the courage to think of myself as an artist in the grand and ancient sense of the word. Giotto and Titian, Rembrandt and Goya were true painters. I am only a public entertainer who has understood his times and has exploited better than he knew the idiocy, the vanity, and the greed of his contemporaries.[11]

In literature we observe a similar pattern. Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* gave flesh and blood to Nietzsche's insight into modern consciousness, that behind the veils of cultural illusion the reality is that life is either absurd or horrible. Kafka portrayed his individuals tormented by an inexplicable and crushing guilt, evoking a fantasy underworld of bugs, moles, torture camps and totalitarian bureaucracies. Gide produced his immoralist and the celebration of gratuitous murder. Dada turned the absurd into the central and single value. The theatre of the absurd and the theatre of cruelty followed. Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, is about the possibility, or impossibility, of life in an amoral world, where everything is permitted. Joyce's *Ulysses* and Musil's *Man Without Qualities* are nihilistic works, as is Camus' *Outsider*, in which the hero, who is a half-hearted depressive, suffers from a sort of psychotic breakdown during which he murders a quite innocent stranger. The snobbery and fake religion that underlie Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* echo the same emptiness; the influential early poetry of Eliot, and his *Wasteland,* belong here.

In philosophy too the central thread has been nihilism, with Nietzsche as the decisive figure. The Nietzschean view, anticipated by Kierkegaard, and accepted by every major subsequent philosopher who has taken morals seriously, is that modern man is left to pursue comfort and nothing else. Nietzsche went on to argue in favour of an overthrowing of all morality, in a sort of nihilistic orgy, with the absurd hope that some strength of character might appear the other side. Conrad had not been so deluded. The most popular of twentieth-century philosophers, Sartre, centred his existentialist work on the concept of 'nothingness', borrowed from Heidegger. Sartre's other abiding images were of life as 'nausea' and human action as 'bad faith'. Anglo-Saxon philosophy in the twentieth century, from Russell through logical positivism to Wittgenstein and his Oxford acolytes, in its refusal to discuss ethics and its retreat into a narrow and pedantic academicism, has in effect accepted the nihilistic credo. As Nietzsche knew, logic is like a snake that can merely turn around and bite its own tail.

The most original and influential theory developed in the twentieth century has been that of Freud. Behind its sophisticated and powerful interpretative psychology it too is inherently nihilistic. Freud's view was that religion is an illusion, in fact a projection of the father problem. Morality too, what is good and evil, is a projection, an emanation from psychological crisis. Even the incest taboo, posited as universal by Freud, is a utilitarian response to instincts that without check would produce a parricidal and fratricidal bloodbath from which no human community could survive. In other words the small area of morality which is universal is not so because of some absolute law, but because of functional necessity. Furthermore, in the practice of psycho-analytical therapy, guilt is read as a psychological and not a moral problem. It is to be eradicated by therapy. In short the force within the individual that enforces morality is interpreted as psychological, deriving from the parental environment. The ethical domain is merely a helpful mask, to be delicately stripped away by the analyst once it becomes troublesome.

Psychoanalysis has contributed to another twentieth century plunge into disenchanted relativism. That is the tendency to redefine acts that are criminal, sinful or evil in medical terms, in the language of disease. The appropriate social response is not then punishment, but therapy. Dostoevsky foresaw this. A central theme of *The Brothers Karamazov* is the main character's refusal to be let off a murder charge because of psychological or biological arguments that he was not responsible. The twentieth century has seen the growing tendency to excuse the criminal because his parents treated him badly in early childhood, or he came from a poor, underprivileged social background, or he suffered from a chemically induced psychotic episode, or he had

forgotten to take his pill, and so on. Once you start to think like this, scientifically, then there is no responsibility, no morality, only illness and health. This is the therapeutic model of society.[12] In it everything is permitted. The cultural elites in the West have come to think more and more in therapeutic terms. They have come to find it difficult to call evil acts evil, preferring such descriptions as disturbed, schizoid, psychopathogenic, and even animal. At this level they have succeeded far more than Nietzsche would have ever imagined, in going 'beyond good and evil'.

The last institution for the transmission of high culture, given the demise of the Church, has been the University. There were earlier signs of a collapse of morale amongst the teachers, noted for instance by Max Weber in his 1918 lecture, 'Science as a Vocation', and by F.R. Leavis in his 1943 book, *Education and the University*. But they report mere squalls compared to the storm that hit in the 1960s. The result has been that any 'idea' of a university, to use Newman's term, has evaporated, leaving at best a conglomeration of specialist disciplines with no meaning outside their own narrow techniques, and at the worst a deflated and rancorous nihilism in the heart of the University, the Humanities and Social Sciences.[13] No one for two decades has wanted to discuss the meaning of a University, its philosophy, its reason for existence. In that period the one issue to bring staff together, and to induce some enthusiasm, has been threats to superannuation or tenure. There has been a serious decline in the carrying out of even the most uncontroversial of the institution's traditional functions, the training and cultivation of the society's best young minds. The collapse of the authority of the teachers produced, with a time lag, the second disaster to strike the universities: the disappearance of the student elite. Sometime in the latter half of the 1960s, the year varies from country to country and institution to institution, there stopped the gravitation together of the most able and ambitious students into a collection of connected clans that ran the student councils, newspapers, theatres and political and other societies. While the old student elite had been cocksure and brash, it had provided a central student community with a high morale that encouraged real cultural life. Almost overnight they disappeared, leaving the best students to pick their way through their courses on their own, with no intellectual community to draw upon, neither one of peers nor one of teachers.

The quintessence of the demoralisation of the Western cultural elite was shown in the case of Sir Anthony Blunt. Blunt, through his golden career as art historian and connoisseur, reached the inner sanctum of the British establishment. He was knighted in 1956. He was in turn Slade Professor of Fine Art at Oxford and Cambridge, Fellow of the British Academy in 1950, and Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1960. He was appointed Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures from 1952, and Advisor for the Queen's Pictures and Drawings from 1972.[14] His work was distinguished by a scrupulous thoroughness and exactitude. He brought to his scholarship an ethical rectitude that led the world fraternity of art historians to regard him as a master, perhaps without equal. His teaching is reported to have sustained a similar rigour. Moreover, as George Steiner notes, his reception by royalty underlined the judgement of his profession, that in Sir Anthony Blunt the qualities of intellectual and moral integrity united at the highest level. In addition, Blunt's major work as an art historian had been on Nicholas Poussin, a painter singularly remarkable for the integration of formal construction and execution in his canvasses with a profound moral and spiritual content.

Sometime in the late 1920s or early 1930s Blunt, while at Cambridge (he became a Fellow of Trinity College in 1932), was recruited by Soviet Security. He acted mainly as a talent spotter, and as a father figure over a circle of young men. Blunt's homosexuality is the key to the whole story. Further on, he worked within MI5 as a Russian agent during the period of the Second World War in which Stalin and Hitler were allies. In other words he was guilty of treason in its hard-core form - working for the enemy in the time of war, indeed at the moment of his own country's greatest danger since at least Napoleon, and arguably since the Spanish Armada. In 1951 it was Blunt who tipped off another Russian mole, Burgess, early enough for him to escape to Moscow. Steiner argues persuasively that the fact that Blunt, who was known from the 1930s to have views sympathetic to communism, was not only taken into MI5, but survived until his confession in 1963, suggests that he benefited from protection in high places. Were others involved, or was it just that the Establishment closed ranks? Blunt was a gentleman; he belonged. In 1979 when the business became public it was only the popular press in London that came out and called treason by its name. *The Times* invited Sir Anthony to lunch and served him salmon sandwiches. 'Top people' rallied to his support. One Cambridge don commented, 'Certainly nothing has happened that would make him less of a friend.' Oxford did not ask him to resign the honorary doctorate it had awarded him. University College, London, immediately offered him lectures, as a Visiting Professor. One of his publishers spent two minutes in an editorial meeting joking about the case, then decided to take no notice. *The Times Literary Supplement* continued to publish reviews by Blunt.[15]

Evidence Opposing the Religion-Morality Thesis

a) *Government.* One of the implications of the thesis is that there should be a collapse of authority at the institutional centre of Western societies. Without the backing of religion there will be a loss of legitimacy. At the top level this means that political systems should have become steadily less stable. This has simply not happened. Indeed where rapid modernisation has produced political chaos in the West, in Germany for example, the fact is that

since 1945 an impressively stable parliamentary democracy has been created. The French polity has never been as stable as in recent decades. It is perhaps worth noting that in both the German and French cases the restoration was carried out by devout and conservative Catholics, Adenauer and de Gaulle. The American political system has shown no signs of shaky legitimacy in modern times: it had little trouble withstanding a presidential resignation due to scandal in 1974. In Australia, the polity survived with hardly a flutter the Governor-General sacking the elected Prime Minister in 1975. Parliament in London does not look shaky. In short, throughout the parliamentary democracies of the West, institutions of government have maintained their authority, and in some cases increased it. People may feel strongly about which party is in office, and which out, but virtually no one questions the system itself.

b) *The Judiciary.* The religion-morality thesis implies also that the Law should be losing authority. Again, signs are just not there of a significant long-term decline in Western legal institutions and public confidence in them. Of course there are cases of corruption here and malpractice there. The publicity and censure that such cases receive indicates that the collective conscience is strong in relation to the Law and the Courts, and it will work vigorously to protect and maintain judicial reputation and due process.

c) *Labour and Capital.* The religion-morality thesis implies a spreading disorder in the conduct of everyday life. I merely choose here to address that most important segment of daily existence, work. The relations between employer and employee, in the century since Marx argued that they were the fundamental source of social conflict, have undergone a sustained trend towards greater conciliation and less hostility. The steel-fist methods of the lock-out and the strike now appear as typical of the nineteenth century, in contrast with a more civilised labour market that has developed since the Second World War. Since the 1970s trade union membership in all Western countries has been in decline.

d) *Violent Crime.* The main psychological function of man's conscience is to check his aggressive impulses. It is one of civilisation's greatest achievements to have developed in individuals a greater bad conscience over violent responses to setback or frustration. A civilised man swallows his rage; he sublimates it. For the religion-morality thesis to hold, a general weakening of the collective conscience should transform directly into a rise in violent crime.

It is not easy to generalise with confidence about crime because of the unreliability of the statistics. Where they are most accurate is in the case of murder. In the United States the murder rate per 100,000 of population has risen slightly from an average of 6.7 in the years 1916-20 to 7.2. in the years 1966-70. A jump after 1970 took the figure up to 9.8 in 1981. However, the average in 1931-5 had been 9.1.[16] In the United Kingdom there have been minor fluctuations in the murder rate during the twentieth century, but no upward trend.[17] The Australian figures show a steady decline from 6 to 3 between 1900 and 1942, followed by a steady rise back to 6 by 1976.[18] In other words there has been no sign of Dostoevsky's prediction of rampant murder.

The most common form of violent crime is assault. The definitive study on crime in Australia concluded in 1981 that crimes against property had increased dramatically since 1945, but crimes against the person had not. Rates of assault in twentieth century Australia show a similar pattern to murder. Likewise French, West German, Dutch, Swiss and Danish figures show no trends upwards.[19]

There are countries where the statistics do show a marked increase in assault. In the United Kingdom between 1950 and 1960 felonious or serious woundings almost doubled, and malicious or less serious woundings almost tripled. However, the major study on crime in this period heavily qualifies these figures, due to changes in statistical methods, and a big increase in the recording of crime. It notes that what had changed in this period was tolerance of aggressive behaviour: it had decreased, leading to more reporting of violence to the police.[20]

In the United States the crime statistics show a 50 per cent increase in aggravated assault (excludes simple assault) between 1937 and 1957. Between 1957 and 1981 the rate quadrupled. This jump is heavily influenced by the race problem peculiar to America. In 1981 nearly half of those arrested for murder, rape and aggravated assault were Blacks.[21] More importantly for the discussion here, violent crime in America is a class phenomenon, almost entirely restricted to the poor working-class areas of the larger cities.

The key social grouping in modernity, whether one considers social and economic power or cultural innovation, is the middle class. What the crime statistics show is that even in countries with an increasing rate of violent crime the middle class is not involved. Other evidence would show that where there are outbursts of middle-class violence they take the form of schizophrenic breakdown in individuals, or of small-cell terrorism, as in Germany and Italy. Overall the number of individuals involved is insignificant. The case of Australia is particularly instructive. Australia is an affluent, highly urbanised (second only to Belgium), modern society, without the race problem peculiar to America and to a lesser extent Britain. Violent crime against the person does not exhibit a twentieth century trend upwards. Furthermore, there is no more secular Western society than Australia, none in which God is in any measurable sense more dead. In comparison, the United States, where religious practice is far more widespread, is a much more violent society.

e) *Popular Culture.* Popular culture in the West has retained its moral sense. In the Blunt case it was the London popular press that came out and called a spy a spy, and treason treason. In most areas the

common consciousness has not followed high culture and the elite intelligentsia in their nihilistic attacks on tradition. It has not turned to picturing life as absurdity and nothingness.

Television has become the central organ of popular culture since the 1950s. The programmes with the highest proportion of viewers have generally been of the 'soap opera' variety. Soap opera has consistently kept up its ethical orientation, defending basic values. In the family or community genre, from *Coronation Street* and *Father Knows Best* in the early days to their 1980s equivalents, such as the Australian *A Country Practice*, a traditional code of morals is forcefully explicit. The communal values of nurture, of helping others, of togetherness during crisis, of adult responsibility for the community and its innocents are asserted through the depiction of varieties of emotional and moral crisis. The police and detective genre of soap opera, while introducing the dimension of power and violence, generally supports the same values. The very successful American series, *Magnum*, had as its hero a notably kind, honest and upright detective, a defender of the weak who had little interest in fame, fortune, or even the love of women.

The soap opera with the greatest impact so far throughout the West was the American series, *Dallas*. Its central character was a ruthless, power-obsessed egoist with little conscience outside his family circle, and an erratic one within. Nevertheless, the series took the form of a traditional morality play. The audience was invited to identify with power incarnate, triumphant and free from any of the normal ethical checks. Power is one of the human temptations and *Dallas* permitted its indulgence in fantasy. However, it also provided the checks. It did so directly through the mother, brother and sister-in-law, who all exhibited a high moral conscience, and provided, explicitly or implicitly, a running condemnation of power rampant. It did so indirectly by making the hero an essentially empty character, apart from his power: a hollow man without friend or real attachment.[22]

The popular press was true to form in giving vent to outrage against Blunt. It continues a running fight against the lenient sentencing of violent criminals, especially rapists. It keeps up a sense of shock at white-collar fraud, corrupt police and judiciary, welfare cheating, trade union thuggery, prostitution and deviant sexuality. Its moral temperature is as high as ever. Admittedly this often becomes sensationalist and sanctimonious, and intrusive into the lives of victims to the point of indecency. Indeed sensationalism is the vice of the popular press, but it is a very different vice from the nihilistic one of high culture.

Another vital area of popular culture that endures is sport. Football in all its codes remains the most popular of sports. Football is a team game which in its practice depends upon a rigorous obedience to the virtues of courage, honour, selflessness and excellence. It is a modern embodiment of the traditional warrior ethic, and teaches that ethic to all boys and young men who follow it. It is a very successful moral educator.[23]

Conclusions

Some obvious conclusions may be drawn. The vast majority of ordinary people in Western societies retain a strong moral sense, a belief in law and that not everything is permitted. As a result any straightforward version of the religion-morality thesis fails. On the other hand, while the cultural and social elites are not becoming more violent, they betray many signs that they do not believe in anything.

There is a refinement of the religion-morality thesis that makes it more plausible. It holds that religious belief and practice serves to build up a sort of moral capital in a community. Any group of humans lives in part off its past; it gains energy and direction from custom and tradition. Also, it is anchored by a collective wisdom or culture transmitted from past generations. Religion is constitutive here. The conclusion is then drawn that when communities lose their religious attachments their moral culture continues, funded from the reservoir built up over generations. That moral capital, however, will steadily run down. In other words there will be a slow long-term trend towards the view that everything is permitted.

The moral capital adaptation can explain the explosion of cultural nihilism in the 1960s. It can go further and observe earlier signs in the 1920s and 1930s and before that the 1890s. It can plausibly suggest that the sort of national crisis enforced by such an episode as the Second World War does tend to strengthen the collective conscience, and in particular the predominance of masculine values, and hence for a time counter the long-term trend. But how does the moral-capital version stand up to the counter-examples? For it to hold in relation to popular culture and the conscience of the majority there would still need to be signs of a weakening moral sense. They have simply not appeared during a century of secularisation - in the entire domain of political and legal legitimacy. Moreover, in all sorts of ways the average person is as moved as ever by the triumph of good over evil. Conversely, the victory of evil over good is as demoralising as it has ever been.

The most important distinction to emerge from this analysis is that between the cultural elite and the rest. The question remains whether the elite is going to succeed in corrupting the majority within its own nihilism, as it did for instance in the case of censorship after its victory with *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. I think there is little doubt that the majority of citizens would be outraged to hear of scientific experiments fertilising rat eggs with human sperm. They never found out because the journalists, as part of the intelligentsia trained in the nihilistic universities, did not consider the matter worthy of attention. It may be that journalists who write for the popular press are coming under the thrall of their higher status colleagues who create the 'quality press'.

An optimistic reading is possible. It would note that it is only in ephemeral areas that Western culture is decadent. A change of cultural mood could quickly reimpose stricter codes of public decency. There have been cases of the rapid restoration of business ethics, and a similar collective will could easily check the permissible scope of scientific research. In the important areas, of political and judicial institutions, where a loss of legitimacy might take decades to restore, Western societies have held firm. The legal profession, a key segment of the elite, has largely maintained its ethos. Moreover, we have seen from the history of the English upper-class family that a rather free and casual mode in the late eighteenth century gave way to the far more hierarchical and punitive Victorian family.[24] The greatest obstacle to such an optimistic reading is the massive weight and influence of Western High Culture. Perhaps something could be made from the undecadent elements from within the great tradition: Henry James and William Faulkner, the American Western, and such intellectuals as Simone Weil and George Orwell.

The decisive counter to such optimism comes from the mainstream of modern thought. The art, literature and philosophy of the last hundred years has not been mere fantasy, not purely a rancorous misreading of the times. It has in good part been portraying what it saw. Levels of psychological repression and guilt have increased with civilisation.[25] The world described by Kafka is comprehensible to twentieth century Westerners, but it would not have been understood by their ancestors, nor by people from most other cultures. One of the two theories of Western decadence, the Romantic one, picks this up and argues that too much repression is the modern problem. Too much repression has meant in concrete terms neurosis, restlessness, rootlessness and above all depression. The world painted by Munch and analysed by Freud is all too real in modernity. The sense that life is absurd, that nothing is really worth doing, is the surface symptom of over-repression, of which half-heartedness and weak desire are the emotional correlates.

The low level of violence in the modern middle classes has more to do with high levels of repression than a strong sense of morality. This is illustrated in a squeamishness about violence, a hyper-sensitivity to pain that includes a paranoia about disease, and a range of anti-violent causes that include pacifism, vegetarianism, animal liberation, fanatical conservationism, and the purging from children's literature and television of hostility and aggression. It is a perception of the same dynamic that leads some outsiders who get to know the English to suspect that the people's famous capacity for tolerance has as its under-side an essential indifference, that a private vice has been turned into a public virtue.

Freudian theory links severe repression with a strong conscience (superego). However it is conscience as a psychological agent of inhibition rather than a discriminating moral one. Men who are moral, are active; they have a capacity for immediate decision and action. This capacity is in marked contrast to the dithery, overintellectualised, and paralysed response to important events typical of over-repressed individuals - ones in whom the conscience as a psychological inhibitor is detached from the conscience as a moral agent directing the sublimation of instincts into action in the world. Nietzsche was the first to make this distinction, in his central contrast of master and slave morality.[26] Going beyond Nietzsche, high levels of guilt which are not sublimated through religious practice into penitential acts will generate a psychopathology in which masochistic tendencies predominate. Nihilistic culture is one projection of such guilt into what amounts to be self-punishment. Dostoevsky's Stavrogin and Camus' Meursault are literary case-studies.[27]

For most people in modern societies the death of God has not led to everything being permitted. Why is this? The elites have shown, especially since 1960, that morality without some external backing, relative morality, is no morality. The solution is in the meaning of the phrase, 'the death of God'. God is dead in a double sense. The Lord God of the West's religion, Christianity, has become incredible to the majority of modern individuals - he is culturally obsolete. At the same time religious practice has by the late twentieth century declined into marginality. In short the Lord God is dead and His Church is empty.

The Law, however, is not dead. Alive and well is the unconscious attachment to the belief that there is a higher order stipulating a set of moral laws universal to all men. The laws are not relative and not negotiable. They must be obeyed. The common man knows that everything is not permitted. It is not something that he has necessarily learnt at home, at school or in Church. He just knows it. He knows it in the same way that Oedipus knew he was the most morally polluted of men, although he had no inkling it was his father whom he was killing and his mother whom he was marrying - indeed he had spent his life avoiding committing these crimes. His story teaches that even the man who in human terms is innocent, is guilty, because the Law is above. This is why the religion-morality thesis does not work. What is true about it is that a cultural failure to articulate universal laws, combined with the Western historical development of individuals suffering from high levels of guilt, can produce a state of psychological inhibition projected into a depressive, nihilistic interpretation of the human condition that drowns out the voice of the Law. Furthermore, as the Gospels teach, he to whom the Law does not speak, will surely work against it.

Let me finish with one man's reflections on his experiences during the Second World War. The man is Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop, a colonel and surgeon in the Australian army. He spent most of his service running hospitals in Japanese prisoner-of-war camps, in the main on the Burma-Thailand railway, infamous for killing one man for every

sleeper laid. He acted as commanding officer of the prisoners as well as surgeon. His patients were men who laboured all day in the mountainous tropical jungle, their bodies weakened by malnutrition, dysentery and at times cholera, their flesh eaten down to the bone by tropical ulcers. In his hospitals the death rate was a fraction of that in others. He achieved this partly because of a common sense about diet and hygiene: Sir Edward fought a relentless battle with the Japanese to supply more food like eggs which contained protein, and he insisted that latrines be located away from the hospital, and that they be fly-proof. Equally important was the military hierarchy and morale he managed to maintain in the camps, in good part because of the almost worshipful regard the men held for him. He was a man of extraordinary physical stamina, and of virtually irrepressible cheerfulness and wit. On a number of occasions he stood up to the Japanese on behalf of his men, for which he received near-fatal beatings and kickings. His diaries are the observations of a sane, urbane, intelligent, courageous and yet modest individual of men living under extreme conditions. Not a religious man himself, Sir Edward came away with the feeling, in his own words, 'there is a bit of God in every man'. Furthermore, his experience was that in spite of the constant presence of unremitting and appalling suffering and death, the ministers of religion - who were active - did not play a significant role in keeping up the spirits of the men. The flicker of hope and salvation did not come from a light held by the Christian ministry. The sense the men kept of the world being a lawful place, and their terrible corner of it being part of an order, in other words their morale, came from elsewhere.[28]

Notes

1. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life,* Allen and Unwin, London, 1915, p. 53 and p. 466.
2. All reacting, of course, against the French Revolution. Jane Austen's most explicit criticism of modernity in these terms comes in *Mansfield Park.*
3. *The Gay Science,* section 125.
4. The phrase is used first in the major fiction, in *Crime and Punishment* and then the argument is developed more fully in *The Possessed* and *The Brothers Karamazov.* The same connections had been anticipated with a brilliant vividness by the painter, Holbein, in the early sixteenth century. Works such as *The Ambassadors, The Corpse of Christ* and *The London Merchant* already equate humanism with a deathly nihilism. Dostoevsky thought the painting of *Christ's Corpse* in Basle the most horrible thing he had ever seen.
5. It is implicit throughout Kafka's work, and most obvious in such parables as *Before the Law.* It is central in Heidegger's late work, especially the *Vortäge und Aufsätze* of 1954. Hannah Arendt's *On Revolution* (Faber, London, 1964) and Philip Rieff's *Fellow Teachers* (Harper and Row, New York, 1973) are the final references. T.S. Eliot's *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* (1948) take as central the mutual dependence of religion and culture.
6. *Suicide,* Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1952, pp. 378-84.
7. Lukes, S., *Emile Durkheim,* Allen Lane, London, 1973, p. 237.
8. Vol. 35, no. 2.
9. Illustrated by Studs Terkel in his *Working* (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1977) and theorised by Hannah Arendt in *The Human Condition* (University of Chicago Press, 1958).
10. The explicit reference made by Manet is to Titian's *Venus of Urbino* and *Venus and Cupid,* both in the Uffizi. Goya had in part anticipated Manet in his *La Maja Nuda.*
11. Reported by Giovanni Papini, *Prose Morali,* Verona, 1959, pp. 724-6.
12. Philip Rieff, *The Triumph of the Therapeutic,* Harper and Row, New York, 1966, and *Fellow Teachers,* op. cit.
13. On this, Rieff's *Fellow Teachers* (op. cit.) and more recently Allan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind* (Simon and Schuster, New York, 1987). Also, John Carroll, The Post-Humanist University: Three Theses, *The Salisbury Review,* December, 1988.

Sophist's Corner

...The GDR has taken a fair old kicking today. However, not everything in the GDR was worthless. The social guarantees available in the GDR constitution are worthy of comment, as are the welfare benefits and women's rights. I visited the GDR and witnessed the care and attention given to young people in nursery schools and I met a 108 year-old woman in an excellent old people's home. There was no homelessness in the GDR. Perhaps much of the housing was at a level that Members of Parliament would not be prepared to accept, but when I look around my constituency, or around London as a whole, I see a lot of people who would be grateful to be driving a Trabant home to an East German flat.

Tony Banks, Labour MP for Newham North-West, in the House of Commons debate on German Unification, 19th October, 1990.

14. Most of the material used here comes from a very thorough essay by George Steiner, 'The Cleric of Treason', *The New Yorker*, 8th December, 1980.
15. On the decadence of the English upper class in the twentieth century there is excellent material - Gertrude Himmelfarb's essay, 'From Clapham to Bloomsbury' (*Marriage and Morals Among the Victorians*, Knopf, New York, 1985) and Martin Green's book, *Children of the Sun* (Basic Books, New York, 1976).
16. *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970*, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census; *Uniform Crime Statistics*, U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1981.
17. *Criminal Statistics*, Home Office.
18. S. K. Mukherjee: *Crime Trends in Twentieth Century Australia*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1981.
19. Dane Archer and Rosemary Gartner: *Violence and Crime in a Cross-National Perspective*, Yale U.P., 1984.
20. F. H. McClintock: *Crimes of Violence*, Macmillan, London, 1963, p. 74.
21. *Uniform Crime Statistics*, op. cit.
22. The disquieting thing about *Dallas* was that all the characters were wooden. There was an insincerity that pervaded the series. I am not sure whether this was a deliberate distancing device, or just an outsider's unsympathetic view of one side of American life.
23. John Carroll: 'Sport: Virtue and Grace', *Theory, Culture and Society*, vol. 3, no. 1, 1986.
24. Lawrence Stone: *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1977.
25. This is argued at length in my *Guilt* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1985).
26. *Beyond Good and Evil* (1986) and *The Genealogy of Morals* (1887).
27. The argument is one of the major themes of my *Guilt* (op. cit.).
28. E. Dunlop: *The War Diaries*, Nelson, Melbourne, 1987 and personal conversation.

Pale Pink Humbug: Orwell on the Left?

David Heald

In his essay 'Will George Orwell Survive 1984?', Leopold Labedz undertook a devastating analysis of the appropriation of George Orwell by the Left. He shows how critics such as Raymond Williams and Bernard Crick, anxious to claim Orwell as 'one of theirs', have distorted his meaning and used selective quotations taken out of context to justify what Labedz calls the ideological 'body snatching' of Orwell. [1]

A close study of the four-volume *Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell* (hereafter CE) reveals how dishonest these critics have been. [2] The claims by the Left to 'ownership' of Orwell are hollow and sophistical. For the tyrannical, self-censoring orthodoxy of the left-wing intelligentsia he had nothing but contempt. There is hardly a charge - from moral and physical cowardice to hypocrisy, cant and conformism - that Orwell does not level at them.

What Orwell objects to most vehemently about what he calls 'the boiled rabbits of the Left' is their 'economy with the truth', and their unwillingness to face reality: 'What sickens me about left-wing people, especially the intellectuals, is their utter ignorance of the way things actually happen' (CE, I, 395), and 'the emotional shallowness of people who live in a world of ideas and have little contact with physical reality. Many intellectuals were flabbily pacifist up to 1935, shrieked for war against Germany in the years 1935-9, and then promptly cooled off when war started.' (CE, II, 95)

In his *Notes on Nationalism*, written in 1945, Orwell delivers a broadside against what he calls the 'transferred' or 'negative' nationalism of the Left, a compound of self-hatred and intellectual confusion so virulent that it amounted to a hatred of Britain, which led in its extreme form to a covert desire to see Britain lose the war:

> Within the intelligentsia, a derisive and mildly hostile attitude towards Britain is more or less compulsory, but it is an unfaked emotion in many cases. During the war it was manifested in the defeatism of the intelligentsia, which persisted long after it had become clear that the Axis powers could not win...The average intellectual of the Left believed, for instance, that the war was lost in 1940, that the Germans were bound to overrun Egypt in 1942, that the Japanese would never be driven out of the lands they had conquered,

and that the Anglo-American bombing offensive was making no impression on Germany. He could believe these things because his hatred of the British ruling class forbade him to admit that British plans could succeed. (CE, III, 425-429)

I detected a similar chagrin in the media at British victory in the Falklands War.

Orwell's criticism is not confined to the Left intelligentsia; on several occasions he attacks the Labour Party. Orwell was never a member of the parliamentary party, and could be as hard on it as on the Conservative Party, towards which he shows a profoundly ambiguous attitude, half hostile in a determinedly class-conscious way (the Etonian who wanted to belong to the working class), and half grudgingly admiring. In a 1984 BBC *Arena* interview, a friend of Orwell, Dennis Collings, told his interviewer that Orwell 'had no use for a Labour government'. When the interviewer expressed surprise, Collings went on: 'None whatsoever. Because his idea was that they were not trained. They hadn't been brought up in the right way to run a government.' [3] This reaction of Orwell's is characteristic of him, and reveals that he never really shook the Etonian out of his system, even when slumming it in Paris or London. His feeling that Labour were not bred for office echoes the apprehension in royal and Conservative circles when Labour first came to power in 1924, a feeling that this coalition of trades unionists and well-heeled public school socialists simply had not got the necessary experience to run the country.

A perverse streak in Orwell, born of an unrelenting honesty, ensured that, though broadly sympathetic to socialist principles (and prepared to live by them), he would never be anything but a difficult maverick constantly embarrassing those he might be expected to support. In *The Road to Wigan Pier,* commissioned by the archetypal millionaire salon socialist, Victor Gollancz, Orwell was frequently witheringly critical of 'Labour Party backstairs-crawlers', 'parlour Bolsheviks' and of 'pale pink humbug even more ineffectual than the parliamentary Labour Party'. Indeed, there are very few favourable references to the Labour Party in Orwell's entire work.

Orwell's main criticism of the Labour Party, almost wiped out in the 1931 general election and condemned to impotent opposition for most of the 1930s, was that, lacking a consistent policy and leaders of stature (though Orwell had a high regard for Ernest Bevin, unlike many members of the Labour Party), they were unfit for office. It was on the issues of rearmament and appeasement that Orwell found the most glaring inconsistencies and weaknesses in Labour policy, and although he could be just as critical of Conservative policies, he conceded that the Conservatives were more fit to govern. They were able to appeal to patriotism (which Orwell, British bulldog at heart, admired), and could present a more united front in times of national crisis. However much he may rail at the snobbery and the vested interests of the Conservatives, he had a perverse atavistic attachment to them and to what they stood for.

In many ways the Conservatives are the more populist party in Orwell's view, capable of responding to and embodying the mood of the people. Writing in 1938, after Munich, Orwell anticipates the results of the next general election, due in 1939 or 1940, and predicts that the Conservatives will win, not despite, but because of their policy of appeasement. Orwell may not approve of Chamberlain's policies, but he sees them as a certain vote winner, and Labour's mixture of defeatism and occasional bellicosity as confusing to the electorate:

Unless the Conservative Party splits right up I prophesy they will win hands down. Because the other bloody fools can't produce any policy except 'we want war', and however ashamed people may feel after we've let down Czechoslovakia...they'll shy away from war when it comes to a showdown. The policy of simultaneously shouting for a war policy and pretending to denounce conscription, rearmament etc., is utter nonsense and the general public aren't such bloody fools as not to see it. (CE, I, 394)

Four months before the outbreak of war the Labour Party voted against conscription, and refused to share the burden of government in wartime until the spring of 1940. In the year that Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia, the Labour Party conference voted not only to reduce the establishment of the RAF, but to abolish it altogether. Writing after the war in 1946, Orwell returns to his criticism of Labour's position on conscription, making the damning point that their opposition to it weakened morale and hindered the development of strong armed forces, the lack of which nearly led to disaster in 1940. (CE, IV, 152)

Orwell's contempt for the fellow-travelling and pacifist Left increased as the war went on. Many intellectuals, he notes, greeted the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939 with 'positive delight' (CE, III, 258), a pact which 'only a few pessimistic Conservatives foretold.' (CE, III, 339) It was Stafford Cripps who declared in 1936 that 'he did not think it would be a bad thing for the British working class if Germany defeated us.'[4] Ernest Bevin and Hugh Dalton were among the few Labour politicians to support rearmament. Attlee continued to oppose it, arguing that 'it is very dangerous to give Generals all they want'.[5] The party officially accepted that some increase in armaments was necessary, but as A.J.P. Taylor points out, 'in July 1937 the parliamentary party decided henceforward to abstain over the armament estimates instead of voting against them. In this way, they hoped to escape the reproach that they were preaching strong action without providing the means for enforcing it, and yet to show their lack of confidence in the government's policy.'[6]

Orwell sees through the Left's humbug about Chamberlain's Munich sellout, and argues that the morale-sapping anti-British attitudes of the Left had

contributed to a national mood of defeatism which made firm resistance to Hitler unpopular. He comes to the defence of the 'Blimps' so glibly derided by what he called 'the Bloomsbury highbrow with his mechanical snigger'.(CE, II, 96)

> Both the *New Statesman* and the *News Chronicle* cried out against the Munich settlement, but even they had done something to make it possible. Ten years of systematic Blimp-baiting affected even the Blimps themselves and made it harder than it had been before to get intelligent young men to enter the armed forces. (CE, II, 95)

In 'The Lion and the Unicorn' Orwell analyses the origins, composition and record of the Labour Party. He concedes that it is 'the only Socialist party that ever seriously mattered but that it is impotent to effect any major change because it has never possessed a genuinely independent policy.' (CE, II, 113) Towards the Empire it had an equivocal attitude, vaguely committed to the emancipation of all the coloured peoples allegedly held in thrall by the British ruling classes, but also interested in the prosperity of British capitalism and of the British Empire since the living standard of the working classes it claimed to represent depended upon it:

> It was a party of the trade unions, hopelessly parochial in outlook, with little interest in imperial affairs and no contacts among the men who actually held the Empire together. It would have had to hand the administration of India and Africa and the whole job of imperial defence to men drawn from a different class and traditionally hostile to socialism. Overshadowing everything was the doubt whether a Labour government which meant business could make itself obeyed. For all the size of its following, the Labour Party had no footing in the navy, little or none in the army or air force, none whatever in the Colonial Services, and not even a sure footing in the Home Civil Service. In England its position was strong but not unchallengeable, and outside England all the points were in the hands of its enemies. (CE, II, 114)

The dilemma which Labour faced between the wars is familiar to us today:

> Once in power, the same dilemma would have always have faced it: carry out your promises and risk revolt, or continue with the same policy as the Conservatives, and stop talking about Socialism. The Labour leaders never found a solution, and from 1935 onwards it was very doubtful whether they had any wish to take office. They had degenerated into a permanent opposition. (CE, 11, 146)

After the war Orwell engaged in a running battle with the fellow travellers who, he claimed, had infiltrated the Labour Party. In a letter to the *Partisan Review* in May 1946 he asserts that the Labour leadership is seriously worried by this infiltration. Orwell put the number of Communist sympathisers at about only 30 out of over 300 MPs (CE, IV, 221), but points out that they have taken control of important unions. He names in particular the trade unionist leader, Arthur Horner, and the MP Konni Zilliacus, as well as sympathisers like J.B. Priestley and Wyndham Lewis (who had been converted, like E.H. Carr, from Hitler to Stalin), as leading apologists for Communism and Stalin. (CE, IV, 222) Zilliacus replied to Orwell's accusation in a letter to *Tribune,* in which he denied that he had ever been a member of the Communist Party. Zilliacus is pained that Orwell of all people should have criticised the party, complaining that 'it seems to me a quite despicable thing for Mr. Orwell to do, as he is supposed to be a supporter of the Labour Party.' (CE, IV, 226) In his essay 'In defence of Comrade Zilliacus' written in 1947, Orwell deplores the glib anti-Americanism and anti-Bevinism of *Tribune,* and the continuing post-war flirtation with the Soviet Union from which, he insists, the Labour Party must dissociate itself. (CE, IV 449-455)

Ever the thorn in the side of the Left, Orwell maintains that it was the Left, by constantly carping at British institutions, which gave most comfort to Goebbels during the war, and now, after the war, maintains a mendaciously pro-Soviet stance:

> By and large the Nazi radio got more material from the British left-wing press than from that of the Right. And it could hardly be otherwise, for it is chiefly in the left-wing press that serious criticism of British institutions is to be found. Every revelation about slums or social inequality, every attack on the leaders of the Tory Party, every denunciation of British imperialism, was a gift for Goebbels...The readers who attacked *Tribune's* Vienna correspondent so violently accused him of untruthfulness, but they also seemed to imply that the facts he brought forward ought not to be published even if true. 100,000 rape cases in Vienna are not a good advertisement for the Soviet regime: therefore, even if they have happened, don't mention them. Anglo-Russian relations are more likely to prosper if inconvenient facts are kept dark.(CE, IV, 54)

This is the world of *1984.* Much of Orwell's criticism is directed, with searing intellectual integrity, at the *trahison des clercs,* the betrayal of truth by the very people who might be expected to uphold it. Such people could transfer their emotional allegiance from one totalitarian ideology to another with equal facility: 'It is possible that the russophile intelligentsia, if they had not succumbed to that particular myth, would have succumbed to another of much the same kind. But at any rate the Russian myth is there, and the corruption it causes stinks.' (CE, IV, 94)

George Orwell, though broadly a socialist, was always an implacable enemy of the intellectual and moral idiocy in which the Left indulges. Such idiocy is as rife today as it was in Orwell's time, and the vigourous and clearheaded manner in which he dealt with it is as necessary now as it was then.

Notes

1. L.Labedz, The Use and Abuse of Sovietology, *Survey*, vol 30, no. 1/2, March 1988.
2. *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell*, Penguin, 1970.
3. *Orwell Remembered*, ed. A. Coppard and B. Crick, Ariel Books, 1984, p.78.
4. M. Cowling, *The Impact of Hitler:* British Politics and British Policy 1933-1940, Cambridge, 1975.
5. A.J.P. Taylor, *English History 1914-1945*, Penguin, 1965, pp.483-84, 507 and 544.
6. Taylor, ibid., p.507.

Salisbury Review for Central Europe

The response to our appeal for gift subscriptions for like-minded people in Central Europe has been tremendous, with eighty subscriptions so far. We would like to thank all those who have contributed and look forward to receiving many more.

The English Graveyard

Jean Wilson

In 1631 John Weever, distressed by the depredations which the religious upheavals of the previous century had made on pre-Reformation church monuments, set out to record as many of the surviving ones as he could. As an Introduction to his archive, he wrote a defence of the usefulness of monuments and epitaphs. Quoting Camden, he says that 'in them love was shewed to the deceased, memorie was continued to posteritie, friends were comforted, and the Reader put in minde of human frailtie: and indeed the frequent visiting, and advised reviewing of the Tombes and monuments of the dead....with the often reading, serious perusall, and diligent meditation of wise and religious Epitaphs or Inscriptions, found upon the tombes or monuments, of persons of approved virtue, merit, and honour, is a great motive to bring us to repentance'. Weever goes on to point out that the tombs of the great in Westminster Abbey were a major tourist attraction: 'What concourse of people come daily, to view the lively Statues and stately Monuments in Westminster Abbey? wherein the sacred Ashes of so many of the Lord's anointed, beside other great Potentates were entombed. A sight which brings delight and admiration, and strikes a religious apprehension into the mindes of the beholders'.

The tombs in Westminster Abbey are still a major tourist attraction, although whether they still strike a religious apprehension into the minds of beholders is more doubtful. But they are an attraction to which the present policy of the Church of England has determined our own age shall make no contribution, imposing an egalitarian blanket on what previous ages have seen as the legitimate celebration of individuality and an expression of devotion.

Most of those who bury members of their family desire some permanent memorial to them; this may, when the predominant emotion is the desire that this particular death may be of some moral use, be expressed in the form of requests for donations to a favourite charity, but in the majority of cases some record of the name and life of the beloved is what is wanted - a recognition that the deceased was unique. In their policy on memorials, both the Church and the administrators of municipal cemeteries deny that uniqueness. The form which memorials may take, the materials from which they are made, even the wording which may be inscribed on them, are strictly prescribed. The message to the modern bereaved is that in the sight of God we are all equal - and equally insignificant and boring.

The grounds for such prescriptions are puzzling. 'Taste' is a standard often invoked: the regulations for churchyards may ban green granite chips on precisely this ground. Yet the aesthetic which defines black marble with gold lettering as tasteful and green granite chips as vulgar is a highly subjective one. There is an innate vulgarity in mediocrity, and this is what is being imposed. Certainly the modern churchyard provides but a frosty and conditional welcome for art. Those who wish to celebrate their loved ones with something more distinctive than the uniform products of the local monumental mason are thrown back on a small number of specialist engravers. What is engraved will be merely the name, dates of birth and death, and possibly the marital status and/or profession of the person commemorated, together, perhaps, with some suitable quotation from scripture; nothing which would tastelessly differentiate them from the others who share their dissolution. Such anodyne uniformity glories neither the dead, nor their Maker.

The churches of Britain are repositories of the work of some of the greatest artists this country has produced: Epiphanius Evesham is known only from the memorials he made, few works by Nicholas Stone survive outside ecclesiastical premises. Withyham in Sussex has Cibber's masterpiece, the

Sackville tomb; elsewhere are monuments by Inigo Jones, Roubiliac, Chantrey, and Flaxman. The nineteenth century culminates in that extraordinary masterpiece by Alfred Gilbert, the monument to the Duke of Clarence in the Albert Memorial Chapel at Windsor; but this, one of the finest tombs in Britain, is also the last which has any claim to greatness, being both spectacularly traditional and spectacularly of its era. The tomb of George V and Queen Mary is stuffily conventional, that of George VI an aesthetic abdication, although perhaps in tune with the pinched drabness of the time it was erected. Few monuments since the War have succeeded in breaking the restrictions of conformity (although the number of attempts to do so thwarted by bureaucracy is of course, impossible to guess): I know of no effigy-tomb later than 1947. The twentieth-century church has almost ceased, in this matter, to provide a home for art made to the glory of God.

The reason for this suppression of art is not, however much it may masquerade under the colour of 'taste', aesthetic. The monuments of any age vary in quality; the sublimities of Gilbert were produced at the same time as a host of nauseating cherubs and badly-proportioned angels, and the crudeness of the work of some of Evesham's contemporaries is striking. What is being suppressed nowadays is not just the bad, or what the church authorities determine to be bad, but the good: potential works by modern Eveshams and Gilberts, as well as modern weeping cherubs. What is being excluded from the churches and graveyards of modern Britain is individuality.

Yet what is wrong, or opposed to the teaching of the Church, in the celebration of individuality? Christianity preaches the value of the individual: why do we suddenly find that this doctrine ceases to apply in death? The true motive for this suppression is, of course, the belief that individuality is bad if it results in the recognition that some people are richer, cleverer, more powerful, more virtuous and more socially useful than others. It springs from the politics of envy. The church must not admit any distinction in humanity. But in enforcing a regulation designed to humble the rich, the administrators of burying places may well end up offending ordinary people. In the Cambridge area in recent years there have been two cases where families have been denied their wished-for expression of their grief by the petty-minded officialdom that administers local graveyards. In one case, the families of two young people, engaged to be married, who were killed together in a car-crash wished this fact to be reflected in the erection of a joint headstone. In another, the bereaved parents of a child wished his monument to incorporate a toy. In both cases the regulations of the burying places were invoked to prevent the chosen memorials from being erected. It is hard to see why. No-one could possibly be offended by such harmless expressions of natural emotion. If many of us would find such monuments sentimental, we are neither harmed nor offended by their presence: it is difficult to imagine a more sentimental monument than the Sleeping Children in Lichfield Cathedral, yet we cannot fail to recognise either its greatness as art, nor the desolation which gave rise to it. Why should supposed 'good taste' exclude universal human emotions? In the case of many cemeteries the truth is that the regulations, though they may be disguised under the banner of taste, are governed by administrative convenience. Double and oddly-shaped gravestones make the job of mowing the graveyard more difficult. Human emotion is being sacrificed to the convenience of municipal employees.

The perception which underlies the egalitarian regulations is, in any case, not necessarily correct. It may be only the distinguished, by birth, or riches, or talents, or virtue, who are celebrated in church monuments: it is certainly not only the wealthy. The churches and churchyards are a fascinating repository of testaments to what is valuable and valued in people. It is in them that the great absence of women through history is corrected: in them that we may read what the women of the past were valued for. We may trace in them changing attitudes to childhood, patterns of friendship, lives of quiet worth. The humble are recorded as well as the powerful: a parkkeeper at Hunsdon in Hertfordshire; a waiting-gentlewoman at Haslingfield near Cambridge, black servants at both Culworth in Northamptonshire and Ashley, Staffordshire. The reticence of modern permitted inscriptions denies us these details. The burying grounds of today exemplify the excision of our sense of history.

Or rather, they exemplify the triumph of a Marxist sense of history. The denial of the importance of extraordinary individuals is a logical development of the view of history as a product of inevitable social forces. The individual cannot be of historical importance; therefore all evidence that most people believe to the contrary must be rigorously excluded from our public commemorations of them. The fact that our burying-grounds and churches are stuffed with extraordinary monuments to extraordinary and historically important persons (one thinks, for instance, of the very different but equally remarkable monuments to Burton and Speke, the one at Mortlake, the other at Dowlish Parva, Somerset) must be galling to those who subscribe to the modern Marxist intellectual consensus. No doubt they seldom enter them. Indeed, it is clear that they do not. Lawrence Stone's remarks about the small value placed upon childhood in the English Renaissance is faced with grief-stricken contradiction in parish churches all over the country.

There is a dangerous modern solipsism in the drabness of our modern graveyards. The sociological and historical value of the records that our ancestors have left us in their monuments and epitaphs is enormous: yet we are determined to leave no such legacy to future generations. It is as though, for us, history has stopped. The interest which can be found in epitaphs is ignored by those

who impose the regulations. And yet this interest is enormous. I was recently in Culford Church in Suffolk studying the memorial to Lady Bacon, and had the opportunity to observe the reactions of a number of other people who came in. There is a ledger slab in the church commemorating two children of Charles Cornwallis who died in 1656 within a few weeks of each other. Everyone who came in noticed this inscription, and was interested and moved by it. They did not lack imaginative sympathy with the bereaved parents of three and a half centuries ago. Only those who draw up the rules governing the churchyards in the Diocese of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich can see no relevance to themselves in such records of private desolation.

Culford is a good example of what has happened to our funerary practices. This tiny and remote church is well-supplied with monuments to persons whom their families loved and thought important. Sir Nicholas Bacon, one of the greatest English-born artists of his age is commemorated in a wall tablet with a bust based on his own selfportrait, the supporters the palettes of his amateur vocation. His widow, Jane, sits surrounded by her dead infant daughter and grandchildren (one sitting on her lap) with an inscription which records how she kept the families of both her children together during the upheavals of the Civil War. The grandchildren who figure on her monument are also commemorated in ledger slabs elsewhere in the church, as is her daughter-in-law, described by her widower as a heroine, remarkable for her learning and for her wifely and motherly virtues. The eighteenth century is well-represented, and the last great monument in the church is that of Lady Cadogan of 1907, on a table-tomb in court dress. But everything after that is governed by the mean-minded regulations pinned up in the church porch - no books, no statuary, a Faculty needed for the use of the Cross - and the most recent stones restrict themselves to name, date, and anodyne remarks - 'a beloved mother', etc. No visitors will come to Culford for the twentieth century monuments and find themselves moved to pity, as do twentieth-century visitors by their seventeenth-century predecessors.

Perhaps Weever may help us here. In describing the uses he perceives in the study of monuments and the motives for their erection, he mentions three factors: the emotion of the family and friends, who are comforted by the opportunity to give enduring testimony of their affection; the epitaphs were didactic, improving the characters of those who read them, and the epitaphs reminded those who viewed them of the constant possibility of death. None of these factors seem to have much weight in modern consciousness, but it is a measure of our moral impoverishment that it is so. Death announcements and obituaries have to a certain extent taken over the first two of the uses which Weever perceived in epitaphs, but these are, by their nature, ephemeral. English people of the twenty second century will not be able to read of the heroism of a twentieth century mother who sacrificed her life to save her baby, as we can read in Exeter Cathedral on an eighteenth century epitaph. There will be no twentieth century testimonies to marital affection as moving as that of the seventeenth at Quainton, Bucks, available for the perusal of the twenty third century. It even seems as though we will no longer leave images of our rulers for the people of the twenty fourth, twenty fifth and twenty sixth centuries to wonder at as we can gaze on those of Elizabeth I, Henry IV, or Edward III. We seem to be suppressing the sense that history is made up of individuals: that single persons, of extraordinary energy, or virtue, or heroism, can make a difference in human life. Or at least, that is what those who now control the ceremonial of our deaths would have us do.

And what they most want to exclude from our consciousness - shamefully in the case of the Church - is Death. Weever saw the outstanding value of monuments in reminding viewers of their mortality, and so bringing them to repentance. He belonged to a culture which saw life as a preparation for Death. Death is no less inevitable for us than it was for Weever (despite all the statistics, in any era, the death rate is one hundred per cent), but we blind ourselves to this, and the graveyard authorities, who ought to be those most concerned with bringing it to our attention, are the leading obfuscators. What the modern imposition in tomb styles seeks to destroy is not just individuality, but humanity: the fact that in any grave there lie the remains of an individual who lived, who was different from any other individual, whose life was important, and whose death counted. We cannot any longer cope with death - the plethora of counselling services which spring up in the wake of any mortal disaster are a reminder that we have forgotten that we die tomorrow, that death is in the midst of life, that God may require our soul of us at any time, all of which our ancestors knew. In trying to repress death, we suppress life and consequently oppress the individual.

What I have written applies as much to the administrators of private cemeteries and municipal graveyards as to the Church, but it is the Church which is the most blameworthy. In its rush to turn itself into just another social service, it has lost the heart of its Christian message, and that message centres on Death. Its commitment, as expressed in its churchyards, is not to Christianity, which values the individual, but to socialism, in which the individual is subordinate to the perceived interests of the mass. In its determination to allow no differentiation between rich and poor, distinguished and obscure, it has imposed a bourgeois repression on the natural emotions of the bereaved, so that both high art and sentimentality are excluded from its precincts. But high art and sentimentality are both legitimate aspects of humanity. In its funerary mission it is about time the Church accepted those to whom it ministers for what they are, instead of imposing its prissiness upon them. Art, history and common humanity would all benefit.

The Rulers and the Ruled

Rolf Gruner

No true conservative is obsessed with politics; he is not one of those for whom politics is the only thing which matters or who see everything in political terms. Nor does he try to escape from politics. He knows that this would be futile, since the consequences of political action forever catch up with us, most drastically in the form of war, civil war and revolution. He is also free from the illusion that political relations can be transformed into something else, into legal or moral relations, for instance. Politics, he recognises, is irreducible and inescapable because power is always present in the public realm, no matter what the social arrangements may be. Contrary to Marxian theory it is present even when there is no division of labour; in a tribe of hunters, the man who is so skilful that he can procure game where no one else can inevitably acquires power since others come to depend on him. This would be so even if men were angels, although power would then never be perverted. As it is, and as no conservative ever forgets, men are not angels; while malice, greed and envy have to be counteracted by the use of power, the abuse of power is always to be feared. The difference between rulers and ruled, then, is a fact of life, whether we like it or not, and a man unable or unwilling either to command or to obey is a poor fellow while the command of one who has never learned to obey lacks competence.

'All power corrupts,' cries the liberal; for him the powerless are always much nicer than the powerful. and coercion is necessarily a bad thing. But being optimistic by nature he sees in history a process in which men's power over other men is gradually fading away. By power he means political, social and economic power; the idea that intellectual power, too, might corrupt rarely occurs to him. Nor does he see that power is never good or bad in itself, that it all depends on how it is used and for what purpose. The human race may well be so depraved that no one should be trusted with much power, including the power represented by knowledge; but no believer in progress could possibly agree with this, since he has a picture of men in which congenital evil finds no place.

It has become the fashion to discover relations of power where none were suspected before, between men and women, for instance, or parents and children. But this is meant as critique; behind it lies the idea that power ought to be equalised, and equalisation amounts to abolition - the power of all is the powerlessness of all, just as nobody is anybody when everybody is somebody. When power is merely divided or separated it remains power, which is the reason why there is now less interest in separation than in emasculation, by means of 'bills of rights', 'freedom of information acts', and similar devices. Such demands, where they are not prompted by the desire to make the state ungovernable, rest on the fanciful notion that a country may be run like a committee, any member of which has no greater power than any other. Nor is it sensible to say 'sufficient power to do good, insufficient power to do harm'; for depriving a ruler of all power to do harm is depriving him of power altogether, therefore also of power to do good.

What is called the rule of law is indeed a *sine qua non* of any decent political order; but in the strict sense persons alone can rule. It is only that in doing so they may or may not observe the law, and only if they do are the subjects safe from arbitrary and unpredictable treatment; and a state in which bad laws are observed is preferable to one of anarchy, when a man has to go armed to protect his life and property, and the weak always go to the wall. No doubt, so long as the ruler submits to the law the law stands above him and represents the highest authority; but only by his leave. For the law can be overruled by power, and he may set it aside by declaring a state of emergency, just as a usurper or revolutionary sets it aside once he has come to power.

Though power will always be with us it can never be its own end. This fact, often ignored later, was always present to premodern thought, which is why the concepts of the good life and the common good were then so important. These are no 'idealistic' notions; Aristotle for one always kept his feet on the ground and so always remains topical. The purpose of politics, of the political order, of the state, cannot be mens' physical survival since politics is not essential to it. Since it cannot be the end of human life to maintain itself, not even to maintain itself in safety, it cannot be the state's sole purpose to ensure peaceful conditions for economic activity. The life rather must be worth living, worthy of beings such as men, and this is not the same as an easy, affluent or riskless life.

The concept of the common good is no less required. Men are always keen to further what they see as their own good or as some sectional interest, in disregard of everything else; government is required to keep the public interest in view. Today more than ever, politics has become a battle-field of 'pressure groups' including groups which press on behalf of some wronged, or allegedly wronged, section of the population - children, cripples, prisoners or what not. They press on government, directly or via public opinion, and are prone to imagine or overestimate the importance of their case. When they have their way as they wish the common good fares badly. Although it is perverse to put all the emphasis on the common good and forget the good of individuals, it is more perverse

to do the opposite, not to mention the view that there is no common good at all, that it is a myth invented by 'the ruling class'. And there is no justification either for thinking that common and individual interests must always and everywhere, or even as a rule, clash with each other.

The old question after the best political order is the question after the best for achieving the good life and safeguarding the common good. But orders come and go; even the best is far from ideal and will not last forever. No constitutional arrangements can ensure permanence; they are in any case less important for a regime's quality than the character of both rulers and ruled; and these being men are never perfect. To say with many moderns that before the best order can be realised man must first be reformed, made into a 'new man', is utopian; man can never be changed in this way, and all attempts to do so have pernicious consequences.

It is always the best who should rule, i.e., those who by their character are best suited to rule; aristocracy in the literal sense - rule of the best - is to be aspired to. This may be 'elitism' but it is an obvious truth nevertheless. The required attributes of character, too, ought to be obvious even if they no longer are; they may be listed as clear-sightedness, self-control and right-mindedness, all mutually related. To be a good ruler a man must face the facts as they are, free from illusion, self-deception and wishful thinking. He must not place too much trust in men's wisdom and virtue, and not too little either (although this has been less of a danger of late). Nor must he forget that the common people may preserve their common sense longer than many of their betters, for instance, when they reject a government which has become unsure of itself or when they disregard the promises and mutual denunciations of political parties.

The demand for self-control is expressed in the old commonplace that only that man is qualified to rule others who can rule himself, who is not governed by his appetites and passions, hopes and fears. Only then will his rule be neither arbitrary nor inconstant, and he will not lose his nerve in an emergency. The passion for political power also falls under the principle, no matter in what good cause the power is to be used; consequently those most eager to rule are not well suited to rule, even if, in places where power is open to competition, they are the most likely to rule.

To demand right-mindedness of a ruler is to demand that he is not unscrupulous, does not regard the end, however desirable, as justifying the means, any means, does not serve himself, his party or his cause but his country or those he rules. The belief that good states may be governed by bad men is wrong, as wrong as the belief that a state's virtue is independent of the virtue of its citizens. But good states are not governed by moralists either, let alone by moral fanatics. In politics it is always the 'ethics of responsibility', never the 'ethics of conviction' which is called for; for no good ruler follows a course of action irrespective of the consequences for common good, simply because it is right. Put more generally: he is not doctrinaire and does not swear on any theory whether it is moral, political, scientific or whatever; in politics principles ought to be kept in the background, ever present, never intruding.

A good ruler will abstain from *ad hoc* intervention in the laws, will promote his subjects' obedience to the laws, and will do his best to ensure that those who obey the laws are stronger than those who do not. He will reform or replace laws which are obviously bad but will proceed warily in doing so, knowing that it is often preferable to keep an imperfect law if it has custom on its side. 'For the law has no power to command obedience except that of habit, which can only be given by time, so that a readiness to change from old to new laws enfeebles the power of the law' (Aristotle, *Politics*, transl. Jowett, 1269a20). A good government will not be proud of having got many new laws on the statute-book; indeed, it will generally follow the maxim that where it is not necessary to change it is necessary not to change, and will presume till given evidence to the contrary that change is not necessary. In the same spirit it will uphold the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate rule while conceding that illegitimate rule may in time become customary and thereby legitimate. Political change is sometimes to be welcomed, but sudden change is always fraught with danger, including the sudden fall of a tyrant or the sudden dissolution of a hostile empire.

It is one thing to recognise that politics becomes senseless without the notions of the good life and the common good; it is another to expect salvation from politics and to see in it more than a fallible activity of fallible men. Yet in modern times the position has been reversed; the sights have been lowered where tradition had set them high and heightened where they were set low. Governments have been told by theorists not to combat their subjects' vices but to take advantage of them, to counteract one vice by another, to use selfishness to improve the condition of all. Then came the recommendation of laissez-faire and the ideal of a government which merely guarantees property and public order, without interfering with vices so long as they remain private. This notion of the night-watchman state gradually gave way to that of the umpire state, the state which confines itself to 'holding the ring' and enforcing the 'rules of the game' in the fight of conflicting interests. Finally the licence to do as one pleases was extended from the private to the public realm provided that no rules are broken and no harm results. Since rules may be suitably changed and experts are not lacking who show that no harm results or can be proved to result, not even from indecency on television, the outcome has been the 'permissive society' and the right to do in public what was still proscribed thirty years ago. Here our rulers no longer try to rule; only in cases when public order and security are under threat do they still feel entitled to act as censors.

While in this respect the state's responsibility has almost lapsed, in others it has very much increased, and with it has increased the state's power. Gone are the days when the state confined itself to serving the five 'classical' functions of defending the realm, maintaining relations with other states, preserving internal order, administering the legal system, and collecting sufficient revenue to pay for all this. Not only does it now serve these functions in vastly expanded ways, it also has added numerous others, not least in the fields of welfare, education and the economy. In consequence the citizen is hemmed in by regulations as never before; whether he wants to build a house, kill a pig, fell a tree, buy a gun, open a shop, sell or manufacture this or that, he first requires a licence from government, central or local.

As everyone knows, these confinements are related to increase of population and changes in the style of life; but they also have to do with people's minds. Thus *safety first* has become the general rule. State interference is not resented but insisted on where it is thought to diminish risk to life, health and property. Having largely lost the sense of the precariousness of existence men now almost feel resentment that such things as injury, disease and death still occur. Whenever a disaster strikes we can be sure of the cry for a 'public inquiry' so that future occurences may be prevented and the search can begin for a culprit. More often that not the blame in the end is attached to the government, and there are demands for legislation and compensation. For the state is regarded as an insurance company, with the premiums included in the taxes.

In addition to being saddled with the duty 'to do something' in case of emergency, government is also expected to meet continually rising expectations; many people feel that their government owes it to them to ensure that standards of living and health are forever going up. Though government may find these expectations inconvenient, at times it tacitly encourages them in the belief that only thus can the country survive and flourish.

But there is more behind it than that. Since the seventeenth century the idea has been with us that man is perfectible but will be perfected only if he is discontented with his lot; to be happy to manage with little is to be a savage. By enlarging a man's appetites we enlarge his views; new and more wants stimulate improvement; so contrary to ancient wisdom, rulers ought to increase their subjects' desires, not diminish them. But by multiplying and intensifying people's needs one multiplies and intensifies their dependency on the paraphernalia of modern civilisation and therefore on the modern state.

This talk has become part of the messianism with which politics has become tainted. Today the rulers are driven as much as the ruled by the dream of a New Heaven and a New Earth when disease, poverty, injustice and spoliation have as good as ceased, when 'holocausts' and world wars are forever horrors of the past. Some want to establish this millenium now or very soon, by one mighty effort; others think in terms of centuries and a long process of piecemeal engineering, with no doubt in their minds that the problems have solutions. The point is not just that all this is wrong but that rulers and ruled are too close to each other; the extent to which they share the same outlook, order their priorities in the same way, is so great that no ruler can even try to correct his subjects' faults; nor can he learn anything from them.

Demands on government are increasing, therefore its power is growing; since power is also increasingly disliked the call is raised for government by discussion, argumentation, persuasion. But a ruler ceases to rule when he begins to plead or reason with his subjects; he then puts himself on a level with them. People who say that in politics it is a question either of using force or of convincing by argument show that they know nothing of authority, as they also do when they use 'authoritarian' as a term of abuse. *Auctoritas* does not argue, nor is it based on force; to the extent to which force or the threat of force has to be used authority has failed. Where it succeeds there is the subject's spontaneous acknowledgement of the ruler's superiority in the relevant respect, therefore his willing submissions. This does not impair the subject's freedom; only those who confuse freedom with sovereign autonomy can believe otherwise; but the same people as a rule cannot see that when authority is 'subverted', as they recommend, the way is open, not to sweet reasoning but to the use of force. Force then becomes the normal instrument of power rather than its last resort.

Of the one hundred and sixty or so independent countries in today's world few can be called democracies. Yet rule by consent, not rule by authority, is now everywhere the ideal, and democratic government alone is regarded as legitimate. Against this it must be said at once that government without the consent of the governed, i.e. of the majority, may also be legitimate, while consent has often been given to non-democratic rule. The uncritical use of 'democratic' as a word of praise, and 'undemocratic' as one of blame, is to be deplored.

The written constitutions of modern democracies often begin with declarations to the effect that all power issues from the people or that the people are sovereign. In plain words this means that the adult population has the right to elect the government, therefore also the right to elect a tyrant. The further principle that the government is responsible to the people is no obstacle; any modern tyrant will profess this responsibility. The people themselves, on the other hand, are not said to be responsible to anybody, not even to God; so if power really issues from them it is power without responsibility. To circumvent this unpleasant conclusion it is customary to declare that the common people are now educated, are no longer illiterate peasants, and thus will recognise their true self-interest. But how? Many who have been educated for years still only read the gutter press, and even in university depart-

ments people may be found who have mastered their specialism and nothing else. If education became compulsory into old age judgement and choices would not become thereby more responsible.

Although today's democracy is representative and not direct as it was in the days of Aristotle, his words still apply to it: 'two principles are characteristic of democracy, the government of the majority and freedom. Men think that what is just is equal, and that equality is the supremacy of the popular will; and that freedom means the doing what a man likes. In such democracies everyone lives as he pleases, or in the word of Euripides, 'according to his fancy' (ibid. 1310a28). The evident fact that men are by nature unequal is deemed to be politically irrelevant; prerogatives are formally abolished; everyone has officially the same say.

Yet even with 'one man, one vote' the political weight remains unevenly distributed since other factors come into play. Without this difference between theory and practice the system would be much worse than it is, indeed could not long survive. But it is just what causes the ire of many; our type of democracy, they complain, is not sufficiently democratic, or not democratic at all. So for a start they favour proportional representation against the relative majority procedure, preferring mathematical fairness to stable government. And beyond this they hold that greater political equality can be established only by greater social and economic equality. So apart from advocating the redistribution of wealth they press for the abolition of all remaining 'privileges', that is to say, of all different rights and duties associated with different kinds of people, male and female, young and old, clever and stupid, and so on. They also agitate for the voting age to be lowered further and the vote to be given to convicted criminals and the insane. In the past it was only tyrants who included as many as possible as full citizens so that they could rule over a homogeneous mass of equals.

As for freedom, everyone speaks in its favour; the greatest despot will proclaim that it is safeguarded under him, and the bracketing of freedom with democracy has become habitual. But it remains as true as ever that 'where absolute freedom is allowed there is nothing to restrain the evil which is inherent in every man' (ibid. 1318b40), and a regime whose tolerance knows no bounds will soon come to an end. The question of freedom, in short, is the question of its limitation. In a reasonable political order even the celebrated freedom of speech, freedom of assembly and freedom to own property will not be absolute.

But living as one likes has less to do with the enjoyment of specific liberties than with the gratification of desires unhindered by religion, custom and the state, as well as with having enough wealth and leisure to make it possible. This realm of freedom is a hedonistic paradise; the old dictum that men are qualified for liberty only in so far as they can put chains on their desires is no longer acknowledged (least of all by the intellectuals who have told us for years that restraint is harmful, effort unnecessary, that learning should be painless 'fun' and so on).

It is because they see in material abundance the precondition for gratification that people demand government to be always preoccupied with the country's economy. They also value efficiency because it increases leisure, by which they mean the free time available for any chosen activities, including those which are degrading or inane. In truth, however, material goods and free time are desirable only when the ends they serve are desirable; nor must their amounts be excessive, for 'all things useful are of such a nature that where there is too much of them they must either do harm, or at any rate be of no use to their possessors' (ibid. 1323b8). And yet it is the common belief that there can never be enough wealth and leisure when these are had by all.

But then so long as possessions remain unequal it will not be admitted that they are had by all. As affluence has increased so has the talk of poverty; for being poor now only means, at least by and large, having to manage with less than the average person, no matter how well off the average person may be. Today anyone with insufficient means to buy a television set counts as poor because the vast majority are able to buy one - when most can afford caviar he who cannot is a poor man. Much of the current pleading for the poor is thus concealed pleading for greater equality: it is 'unfair' when most can and a few cannot.

The democratic programme, with its ideas of equality and freedom, respects no frontiers, as is witnessed by the statesmen's talk of making the world free of fear or safe for democracy, and by the lectures on 'human rights' which heads of government give to each other. They do so not only with their electorates in mind, though they have them in mind as well; they also believe themselves in what they say. But however applaudable it would be if all governments treated their subjects decently, moralistic foreign policy is bad, even if it sees itself as the only good one. A statesman's first responsibility is to his country, not to the world; here, too, he has to keep within limits. If, as now so many affirm, imperialist expansion is wrong, then interference in other countries' affairs which is not necessitated by one's own country's interest is also wrong, and interference for 'idealistic' reasons is not so necessitated.

Wars, all reasonable people would agree, ought never to be waged for high ideals or as crusades aiming at a country's or régime's annihilation because it is the seat of sin. The diplomacy of moral righteousness is equally unjustifiable. Those who engage in it regularly declare, of course, that to promote rights and freedoms in other countries is to strengthen them also at home; but they are talking humbug or deceive themselves, as they deceive themselves in the expectation that a dangerous foreign power will become less dangerous

when it becomes more democratic. And how can we believe that the establishment of popular governments makes wars less likely or more rational, when it is just these governments which bring zeal and fervour into politics!

In spite of democracy's current triumphs one cannot give it a very long future; for this is a system which seems to depend on fair weather. Throughout its existence, except for short intervals, the common people's living standards have in the old democracies always risen and life has steadily become more easy and easygoing. It is safe to assume that when this progress gives way to stagnation or regress democracy will also disappear; and if today's worries about the 'environment', overpopulation, and so on, are justified, then it will not be so very long before progress does come to an end.

Yet even if democracy passed away tomorrow it would still have existed for more than a century which is longer than any other system which has been tried during that period. Comparative success, whatever its causes, is something, and a conservative will not deny it. Nor will he forget the difference between the feasible and the good, so that it must be an important consideration with him that under present day circumstances no better political system stands a chance, that notwithstanding the many points which speak against democracy any feasible alternative would be worse.

On the other hand, there is no justification for lauding what is relatively best as absolutely good. Even if any attempt now to introduce a qualified franchise were to lead to civil war, because of the unresolvable fundamental disagreements on how the weight should be distributed, the equal vote for all would still be unjust. While it is right not to bemoan unalterable circumstances, it is wrong to hallow them because they are unalterable.

A Conservative Education

Brian John

Teaching, unlucky craft, suffers under great expectations. While we have ceased to expect doctors to eradicate illness, lawyers to lessen crime or politicians to run the country successfully, any citizen who has crept unwillingly to school feels an educational expert, competent to make, in the twilight of corporal punishment, the teacher a last whipping boy. The English master has more to put up with than his colleagues; mathematicians do not endure an incorrect equation on every hoarding, no conspiracy of cartographers claims that John O'Groats is really Land's End. Between glib academics and specious bureaucrats, one may agree with Ruskin that 'It is simply impossible, for the English public, at this moment, to understand any thoughtful writing'. It is an index to this ignorance that no outcry occurs when, according to the Bullock Report, a third of all secondary school teachers engaged in teaching English have no qualifications in the subject. Nor are these bad workmen aided by sharp tools; schools which squander thousands on playing fields, fast food cafeterias and instantly obsolete computers begrudge buying books. Who does not recall their School Shakespeares with bleary texts submerged under a palimpsest of departed pupils' pencilling? Children disdain so shabby-genteel a discipline; a love for the inside of books begins, like all affections, from the outside; Chaucer's 'twenty bokes clad in blak or reed' or Leigh Hunt as a child doting over the rich ornaments and type of Cooke's sixpenny poets.

Not only physical resources but metaphysical resources are deficient. A typical guru, Geoffrey Summerfield, extols 'a liberal education' free from 'constraint, indoctrination, parochial guilt and shame.' Mr. Summerfield should know that indoctrination means merely 'to teach, to instruct, imbue with an idea or opinion' while a glance at the tabloids will reveal a resurrection of pre-educational England, before Wesley and *The Spectator* taught their contemporaries to go to heaven like gentlemen, dog-fighting, house-burning, child-biting, only two letters and centuries separating Mohock and Mohawk. Guilt is a humane and scholarly emotion, only felt from falling short of one's standards. It is the business of a true English education, a *conservative* education to provide, protect and preserve these standards.

English, like Creation, must begin with the spoken word. A voice is its spirit's ensign; it is no accident that those of children climb achingly, innocently upward, until, during puberty, something else seems to snap along with the voice; that drab adenoidal twang, its incessant double negatives and bragging complaints of boredom are as disturbing to the perceptive as the affected 'Oxford Cuckoo' tones which exasperated D.H. Lawrence. Thomas Mann claimed 'Speech is civilisation itself.' Any good teacher loves the sound of his or her own voice, but it is the nature of love to proselytise, to encourage children to speak as clearly and carefully as they can, gently but firmly weaning them away from pet repetition or treadmill epithet. Ironically, the liberal linguist with his quirks against 'standard English', insisting that all cultures are the same in the dark, helps ensure that lack of social mobility the Welfare State has done so little to counter. In my experience, pupils from a foreign background are often the first instinctively to delight in the octoroon eccentricities of the English tongue; it is the cant of 'multicultural education' that sustains linguistic ghettoes, those denied High Culture soon find other heights denied them. It is undemocratic to offer the poor anything but the best; in a certain

religion they have been the promised Kingdom of Heaven. It is an insult to give instead gutted editions of *Goldfinger* and *Jaws*.

Children's speech often combusts spontaneously; they rarely write well naturally. Innocence is only acquired with a great deal of experience. Even Blake studied Spenser, Shakespeare mimicked Marlowe. Left to their own resources neither might have gone past 'nice' and 'boring'; we can only spend from our capital. For a writer, these resources are what the Anglo-Saxons called his 'wordhoard'. In this four year old's writing, an Anglo-Saxon appetite for alliteration is already evident:

Whamp! goes the wind on the window,
And the window goes Whamp!

A child first experiences language as an adult hears a foreign tongue, as a beautiful noise. To arouse their enthusiasm, as the Duchess should have said, take care of the sounds and the sense will take care of itself. The sure sign that a child has any talent is an addiction to exuberantly unnecessary polysyllables; this is the puppy fat of language and should be encouraged. A modern child is starved of verbal succulence, any scanty Biblical knowledge taken, not from the sternly lovely cadences of King James but from the railway sandwich prose of the NEB, a 'mirror dimly' for 'a glass darkly'. I remember how the word 'diligently' in 'go and search diligently' used to haunt me with its cavernous sigh. We must build up the wordhoard, making sure that whatever words are learned on the active list not the half pay of set vocabulary tests. The primary school, intent on not force-feeding children, frequently fails to feed them at all, or offers only a breakfast of scattered facts. It is up to English to provide some sense of unification, one common frame of myth, proverb and catchphrase to cement these fragments. Facts are bricks but wisdom is a wall. A child given a wall may decorate it, or sit under it, or climb over it, but the only thing you can do with a pile of bricks is pitch them through a window.

Having manured the mind we can proceed to plant seeds of a sturdy prose style. As ill-prepared pedagogues find to their cost, children are born with built in crap detectors which respond very favourably to such writers as Shaw, Chesterton, or Orwell, masters of a terrifying clarity whose naive belief in reason instantly communicates with the young. But clarity is not enough; they should be exposed to difficult writers, particularly Shakespeare, while they are young enough to feel it a compliment rather than an imposition. Children enjoy what they don't understand, that's how they come to understand it. Instead of making them express Shakespeare in their own words, why not bring their own words nearer Shakespeare's? Too much of English is devoted to *Comprehension* instead of *Apprehension*. Educationalists too often erect a false dichotomy between imagination and accuracy of expression, as if either was not aided by increased facility in the other.

If good prose consists in finding a word that seems inevitable, the secret of poetry is finding a word simultaneously inevitable and surprising. A child can be helped to see how all of a poem may build to one word as 'When I *crumble*' in de La Mare's *Epitaph* or how rhythm moulds meaning so 'We in dreams behold the Hebrides' is poetry while 'We behold the Hebrides in our dreams' is not. They can savour like raspberries the thistledown of 'ephemeral' or 'darkling', the percussive onomatopoeia (itself a magnificent word) of verbs, the sheer crankiness of 'defenestration' or 'antidisestablishmentarism'. Then, as Robert Frost said, they begin in delight and end in wisdom by tracing the ancestry of words to find language is ultimately fossilised metaphor ('wrong' for example originally meant a bitter taste which distorted the mouth). If children can be encouraged to use metaphor well, to see it as essence rather than excresence, that in the words of Johnson it gives you 'two ideas for one, conveys the meaning more luminously and generally with a perception of delight,' then half the battle is won and they may feel Edward Thomas' joy in 'English words....light as dreams, Tough as oak, Precious as gold....Strange and Sweet equally'.

Words are often seen as a means of eluding reality. But Escapism is often a healthy desire, frequently a moral necessity in preserving the young from the meanspirited tyranny of this year's 'relevance'. Those who attack the value of words are really attacking what these words mean, even the meaning of Meaning itself. A defeated people always loses its tongue, especially the self-defeated. The child who cannot speak his or her feelings has lost reserves of an articulate courage or tenderness, the end may be an illiterate heart and no feelings at all. The Graffiti artist compensates for his lack by smearing the world with brute monosyllables, before curse descends to kick. He needs words to conjure with; indeed the word 'grammar' once meant magic. The English master, like the Gryphon's, teaches 'laughter and grief'. How else can Mock Turtles become real?

Whither Romania?

George Ross

> If this had happened elsewhere, in another country, and if one had learned about it in the newspapers, one would be able to discuss the matter peaceably, examine the question on all sides, draw conclusions from it, objectively. One would organise academic debate, one would have experts come, writers, lawyers, *femmes savants*, artists. Men of the street as well, that would be interesting, stirring, instructive. But when you are so involved in the event, when you are suddenly confronted by the harsh reality, we cannot but feel directly concerned. One is too violently overcome to maintain one's *sang froid*. Me, I am overcome, I am overcome, I am overcome! I will not return.
>
> Eugene Ionesco
> RHINOCEROS (Act III), p.78.

Introduction

On 20th May 1990, Romania established a record: for the first time in European history, in ostensibly free elections, the communists were swept into power. The world watched in disbelief, with barely contained amusement and more than a touch of contempt.

Those committed to freedom and democracy, those who have striven to see the abolition of the odious tyranny that has plagued Romania for forty five years, were stunned.

In the following pages, I put forward a brief analysis of what happened and suggestions for future actions: they are my own thoughts and wishes and do not necessarily represent the views of persons, committees or organisations with whom I am associated or to which I belong. The motivation behind this document is very simple: I would like to stir up a debate, an argument, amongst all those who hold dear the cause of Romania, of its position in the world, of the freedom of its people, of its success and prosperity. I hope that a consensus could be reached and a concrete programme for implementing the conclusions attained would be formulated. Even if this proves to be too vain an ambition, most people would agree with Joseph Joubert's dictum, namely that 'it is better to debate a question without settling it, than to settle a question without debating it.' Besides, Oscar Wilde's words are quite apposite: 'On an occasion of this kind, it becomes more than a moral duty to speak one's mind. It becomes a pleasure.' Only that, for me, on this occasion, it is a very sad pleasure indeed.

Fact or fiction?

There is growing evidence that the whole world has been taken for a ride. In 1989, we all assumed that the movements for freedom and democracy in what was the communist camp were genuine and spontaneous. Of course, we all realised that the process was being acquiesced in by the Kremlin, because the economic imperatives in central and Eastern Europe and in particular in the Soviet Union dictated it, and because the Gorbachev administration adopted a more realistic - perhaps fatalistic - attitude, quaintly named the 'Sinatra doctrine' and resignedly bowed to the inexorable. What has become obvious in 1990, was that the expert hand of the KGB has been at work in most, if not all, satellite countries.

With superb discretion, accomplished stage management, impeccable timing, consummate aplomb and breathtaking cynicism, coups d'état, disguised as popular movements, were carried out, if necessary with cruel, ruthless, unnecessary, avoidable, criminal human sacrifices.

Relics of the 'stagnation period' who, like Ceausescu, became an embarrassment, a liability and an obstacle in the way of the envisaged, urgently needed, economic reforms, were to be replaced by a more photogenic team at the top. The coryphæus, moulded in the image of the Soviet leader, was to be recruited from amongst Gorbachev's acquaintances - for example, former fellow students - and was to become a trusted lieutenant. Thus, *ipso facto,* he was to be selected from amongst those that constituted the top layer of the communist establishment, the *nomenklatura.* In all probability he would have reached this position by climbing the party ladder wrong by wrong (*pace* Mae West) by being an *apparatchik.* The team was to be chosen and organised long in advance: at the appropriate time, a contingency plan would be activated and the new leadership would spring into action - fully armed and with a tremendous battle cry - like Minerva from the head of Jupiter. True dissidents would be rapidly isolated and marginalised. A limited programme of economic reforms was to be introduced, with as few political changes as possible.

Apart from the loathed and abhorred dictator, his immediate family and no more than a handful of his closest acolytes, the *nomenklatura,* was to be left largely unchanged, if a bit reshuffled, but miraculously transmogrified overnight into staunch democrats and unflinching fighters for liberty.

That something was afoot became obvious in London when, during 1989, a few faithful fellow-travellers, if not collaborators, of the Bucharest regime, started to denounce and attack Ceausescu in a sustained crescendo, although being most careful not to indict the political system that made possible his accession and absolute rule for a quarter of a century. Since those condemning the excesses and abominations of the 'first family' were putting their

careers, livelihoods and even their safety (or that of their loved ones) on the line and since they did not betray any conspicuous signs of insanity, it became clear that patrons in very exalted positions offered licence and even encouragement.

I must confess that, by mid-December 1989, I was convinced that the uprising in Timisoara would be quashed, if need be in a bloodbath. The establishment had the means of doing it. Instead, the junta used the incident (possibly exacerbating it deliberately, by provocation), skilfully distorted the reality and, by activating a contingency plan, engineered the coup of 22nd December.

Such putsches took place in most communist countries, following more or less the same pattern. Whether the proposed scenario is true, we shall not know for a long time, if ever: it is, at least, plausible. As was revealed by John Simpson in *The Times* of 30th May 1990, in Czechoslovakia the plan almost succeeded. Things got out of hand - like for the sorcerer's apprentice - only when Zdenek Mlynar, a friend and former fellow student of Gorbachev, a leading figure in Dubcek's Central Committee, declared that he had no interest in leading the Communist Party. No doubt, he sensed that the people of Czechoslovakia wanted nothing to do with reformed communism. In Romania and Bulgaria things went, alas, according to plan. Poland is still saddled with the 'reborn democrat' Jaruzelski, of martial law fame, the 'closet liberal' that made Solidarity illegal. Hungary has always been the enfant terrible of the communist bloc and East Germany was, presumably, exchanged for promises of massive help to prop up a disintegrating Soviet economy and a beleaguered leader.

Was the West's acquiescence obtained for this process? Did the West help it? Did some horse-trading take place at the Malta summit? Was Eastern Europe bargained for Central America? Was the continuation of a diluted form of neo-Brezhnevism agreed and confirmed, involving perhaps some cosmetic change, such as - to quote the *Critique of Cynical Reason* by Peter Sloterdijk - a replacement of communist 'omnipotence' (i.e. total domination and exclusion) by 'hegemonic power'? For the hardened student of the East European scene over the last half century, such questions, such hypothetical considerations, need not be altogether products of a febrile mind, warped psyche or eccentric imagination, still less paranoia: alas, such possibilities have a tired, déja-vu, air about them. However, evidently, one can only speculate. I doubt whether we shall ever be able to contemplate the whole truth.

Thus, in the version of events that I suggest, the change of leadership was not the effect of a clamour for freedom and democracy, but its cause. Despair leads to apathy, apathy to conformity (as Havel put it): the people, however thirsty for liberty, were too terrified, cowed, crushed, to bring about the havoc in which

> Domestic fury and fierce civil strife
> Shall cumber all the parts of Romania.

However, a coup, such as that originated by the Romanian junta, acquires a momentum of its own. Once the lid of Pandora's box is blown open, the demand for changes, reaching beyond those originally intended, cannot be easily stifled. The people sensed that, for the first time in 45 years, genuine freedom and democracy were within their grasp, and went for them: Elections had to be promised.

Which is to be master?

For reasons that I find difficult to articulate, the 'presidential' election that took place on 20th May, reminded me of the bumper sticker seen in the United States during the Nixon/Kennedy presidential election campaign, in 1960: 'BE THANKFUL ONLY ONE OF THEM CAN WIN'.

Messrs Ratiu and Campeanu are great patriots. They have lifelong records of activity for the Romanian cause. They have done more for Romania than most people and, I trust, will continue to fight for freedom and democracy in our country. However, where their participation in the 'presidential' election campaign is concerned, the kindest thing that can be said is that they have displayed an appalling lack of judgement. To start with, their participation in the 'presidential' race, implied that there was a position of 'president' to be filled.

The twin attacks of amnesia should have given rise to some concern amongst all their wellwishers: they did not seem to remember that the King was forced to abdicate at gun-point, in a coup inspired by Stalin, stage-managed by Vyshinski and carried out by the scelerates Gheorghiu-Dej and Groza. By accepting the existence of a vacant 'presidency' they conferred, *ipso facto,* legitimacy upon the whole communist period, upon every single one of its abominable and criminal acts. It is not without piquancy that Mr Ratiu, (rightfully) regarding the 'presidential' elections as undemocratic, demanded them to be declared null and void, being strangely oblivious of the fact that the forced abdication - since it was even less democratic - even more must be considered null and void: no 'presidential' elections should have been held at all, or, at any rate, Messrs Ratiu and Campeanu should have refrained from having anything to do with them.

Iliescu - one of Ceausescu's close acolytes and accomplices - is desperate to establish an alibi and, to this end, is fond of repeating that he 'fell into disgrace' in the mid-1980s.

All those familiar with Ceausescu's machiavellian machinations know that, in his paranoia, he made sure that all those in the top echelons of the party and government were constantly moved around, so that no one could acquire the expertise and power base to become a threat and an alternative. This he had in common with all dictators of the past, whose methods he absorbed and applied. Elias Canetti's comments on Hitler (in *Conscience of Words*), uncannily befit Ceausescu:

> He never deviates from his notion of power, he has absorbed all the power of his historic models and sees the reason for his successes

in his consistent maintenance of power. Yet, he fully realises he cannot exercise power without the few people who helped him to rise and who have proven themselves. He permits them a great deal, so long as they serve him and accept each decision uncontradictingly. He has a keen eye for any weaknesses of theirs, which go as far as corruption. So long as he *knows* them, so long as nothing is hidden from him, he puts up with them. Omniscience in regard to them too is one of his cardinal demands. He makes sure of reserving that omniscience for himself, by keeping the power areas of others strictly apart. *He,* however, must be informed about everything, which no one else is allowed to be. He considers himself a master in this separation of what he assigns to each of his helpers. He makes sure not to pull them constantly into his proximity, because they could thereby find out more than he wishes them to.

Iliescu was Ceausescu's faithful lieutenant. He accepted the rules of the game. He knew that he would be pulled in and out of Ceausescu's proximity. It seems obvious that Ceausescu had reasons to be wary of Iliescu, a man of undisputed ability and charisma, as well as of ruthless determination and ambition. He never had any disagreement of principle with Ceausescu, and, even when at the aphelion of his orbit about the dictator, he was still in the exalted circle of the top *nomenklatura,* with all the privileges reserved for them. He has been curiously reticent about revealing any details of his past positions, links with *Securitate,* tasks and responsibilities. His whole formation has been within the framework of the highest echelons of the communist party. By donning sheep's clothing and pretending to be a reborn liberal, he now hopes to fool everybody. However, his true colours were revealed soon enough after the 'elections', even before his 'inauguration'. He demonstrated to everybody's complete satisfaction, how well he remembers to make use of *Securitate's* unleashed fury (and desire to recapture their former status): the marauding hordes of skull-cracking, maiming, hoodlums masquerading as miners, to whom he gave the free run of Bucharest on 14th and 15th June showed that, like the scions of another ancien regime, he forgot nothing and learned nothing.

Iliescu needed to acquire a certain image in the world and the respectability that a properly contested election would confer upon him. Messrs Ratiu and Campeanu were the answer to his prayers and played right into his hands. Apart from the most important aspect of the *legitimacy* of the 'presidential' elections, which alone should have deterred any true democrat from taking part in them, Messrs Ratiu and Campeanu put up with all the dirty tricks in the communist arsenal that were displayed during the campaign, instead of withdrawing indignantly. Even more sadly, they appeared unaware that, rightly or wrongly, they were perceived by the population at large as anachronisms, redolent of another era: they projected a Trollopian image. I do not think that the self-imposed, but compelling, long years in wandering, were held against them: after all, de Gaulle or Lenin were also forced into exile and, from it, were swept into power. Messrs Ratiu and Campeanu gave the appearance, perhaps unjustly, that instead of putting themselves at the country's disposal and offering to help in any capacity, they were seeking self-aggrandisement. There was also the thought, no doubt mistaken, that having missed the Kafkaesque traumatising nightmare through which the country had passed, they cannot empathise with the population. History can be very cruel: one well-known and oft-repeated example consists of the results of the post-bellic elections in the United Kingdom: having just won the war, Churchill was nevertheless perceived not to be able to address the needs of the people in the new era.

By participating in the 'presidential' election game, Messrs Ratiu and Campeanu have done great harm and, in the process, they have diminished their stature and the prestige that, until this unfortunate episode, they so deservedly enjoyed. They lost abjectly and Iliescu, the past master of manipulation, was offered, on a silver platter, his triumph.

Why did it happen?

Why was the situation in Romania so much worse than in the other countries of the communist bloc?

First, the regime itself was the most ruthless and odious in Europe. Dissenters have had a hard time everywhere in Eastern Europe: they were arrested, persecuted, held in lunatic asylums, concentration camps or - at the very best - under house arrest. In Romania they were mostly exterminated: a few lucky ones managed to escape abroad. It is not very well known that the first free trade unions in a communist country were the Free Syndicates of Romania. Most of its leaders were arrested and disappeared. How many in the West heard about the miners' strikes in the Jiu valley in 1977, when reliable sources suggested that hundreds were shot? Journalists were denied access to the area and could not send first-hand reports. Similarly, the strike in the Motru valley - again brutally crushed - in 1981 went unreported in the West. Only the strikes in Brasov in 1987 were better known because, by then, the West had started to change its perception and thus began to get a truer picture of Romanian realities.

The second reason, related to the above, was the absence of an international organisation in Romania like the Catholic Church. Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, because of the presence of the Church, have never known the isolation of Romania. Also, the Romanian diaspora in the West is relatively small, compared to that of other subjugated nations. Since in Romania it was a criminal offence to communicate with foreigners, a wall of silence and ignorance was built around Romania.

Finally, however, there was the Western attitude

towards the communist bloc in general and towards Romania in particular.

In the first post-war years, Western policy was one of total isolation of communist countries of Europe. Towards the mid-seventies, this rather rigid, blanket attitude started to be replaced by one of 'selective encouragement and support'. Its aim was to create indents in a Soviet system, perceived as enfeebled and weakening, economically and politically: countries that displayed a more defiant attitude towards Moscow, a more independent attitude towards the Comecon, were to be encouraged and rewarded. Comecon, indeed, destined a third-rate place for Romania, which was supposed to remain a backward, agricultural country. Was not plucky little Romania the only communist country that did not join the Warsaw Pact forces that crushed the Prague Spring and put an end to Dubcek's era? Did not little Romania defy Goliath and maintain diplomatic relations with Israel after the Six Day War - the only communist country to do so? Why, brave little Romania, valiant little Ceausescu, must be rewarded: Nixon and de Gaulle visited Romania and gave Ceausescu their endorsement. The United States Congress gave Romania the status of the most favoured nation and advantages in commercial transactions. Then, Ceausescu's apotheosis - his moment of triumph and the accolade of recognition came in 1978 (less than a year after he quashed in a bloodbath the miners' strike in the Jiu valley) with his state visit to UK and investiture with the Order of the Bath. The honorary knighthood was withdrawn only *after* his last ditch flight last December, on the eve of his execution.

Given those circumstances, what hopes could a dissident movement in Romania have had? A movement of resistance or even an organised opposition, an alternative 'government-in-waiting', would have been unthinkable!

Romanians in exile and their friends, individuals and organisations, tried, in vain, to alert public opinion about Ceausescu's appalling domestic record on human rights. Nobody wanted to listen, let alone believe.

The West started to wake up only when Ceausescu overplayed his hand and launched his plan to demolish some 8,000 Romanian villages. To be absolutely honest, I fail to see why this particular action captivated the imagination of the West. After all, it was a desideratum enshrined in Marx's Communist Manifesto. The idea of implementing this tenet was Khrushchev's - he originated the idea of agro-industrial combines. However, be this as it may, this insane, diabolical plan, acted as a catalyst and, suddenly, the West changed its perception of Romania's desperate plight, became aware of the dreadful human rights record and modified its attitude towards the odious leadership.

It was only then - about two years ago - that an embryonic dissident movement could start in Romania.

The worst legacy of the Ceausescu era is not the ruined economy. It is not the poverty. It is the way in which forty five years of communist rule have warped the human psyche.

Vaclav Havel captured this mood in his famous letter to Gustav Husak (published in the volume entitled *Living in Truth*):

> Seldom in recent times, it seems, has a social system offered scope so openly and so brazenly to people willing to support anything at any time, as long as it brings them some advantage; to unprincipled and spineless men prepared to do anything in their craving for power and personal gain; to born lackeys, ready for any humiliation and willing at all times to sacrifice their neighbours' and their own honour for a chance to ingratiate themselves with those in power.

A whole generation - indeed two generations - have grown up in Romania cowed, without experience of democracy, without experience of the responsibilities of a citizen in a democracy. This explains why, in December 1989, there was no organised opposition, no alternative structure ready to take over: Romania was virtually without any sort of underground, independent civil society. The distinguished intellectual élite Romania once had was decimated: a large part of it had been exterminated, a substantial segment forced into exile, and most of the remainder coerced to compromise to such a shameful extent that they lost all moral authority and, with it, the right to be heard.

Iliescu and his acolytes formed, on 22nd December, the 'National Salvation Front', for which the instantly coined sobriquet 'The Front for the Salvation of Communism' was a more appropriate expression of its structure, membership and methods. Ceausescu's judicial murder, by a kangaroo court, after a 'trial' recorded but never completely shown, was meant to silence him, lest he brought down with him all his old comrades, who were determined - not altogether surprisingly - to save their skins.

A weak and hesitant opposition started to emerge, inexperienced politically, prone to make every single mistake in the book, an easy prey for the determined, cunning and shrewd 'provisional government'. The list of blunders is far too long to be discussed in detail, but here are a few major *faux pas:*

a) It was imperative that the opposition presented a united front. The creation of a grand coalition, of an all-embracing league for freedom and democracy, should have been offered as an alternative to former communists (or neo-communists), under their new disguise of reborn fighters for liberty. The frivolity of having some 70 political parties was more than proof of political immaturity - it was an indication of a wish to commit political suicide.

b) I regard the resuscitation of the historical parties as a mistake. Political parties are living organisms: they change as circumstances change. The leadership changes, not only in the sense that one generation succeeds another, but the social group to

which the leaders belong, their education, experiences, values, occupations, even aims and approaches, are constantly modified, with little else besides the name of the party to suggest continuity. If one attempts to revive a party after 45 years of hibernation, one can either put the clock back and risk losing the present generation, or make a huge leap in time and alienate the old faithfuls.

c) When, in January, the Front announced that it would participate in the future elections as a political party, reneging on the undertaking of December 1989 that it would act only as a caretaker government to prepare these elections, the opposition should have demanded at once inclusion into the provisional government. If refused, they should have withdrawn from the electoral campaign.

d) Similarly, the blatant manipulation by the provisional government of the media during the run up to the ballot, should have prompted the opposition to withdraw from the masquerade of the elections.

e) The opposition should have pressed for the postponement of the elections, in order to have more time to get properly organised.

f) The electoral manifestos of the main opposition parties could be accurately described as the longest suicide notes in Romanian history. They were hymnal in style and displayed more than a touch of messianism, rather than being sharp and cogently argued. They were naive and over-simplistic (even by electoral manifesto standards) and made appeal to 19th century values in tones borrowed from 19th century rhetoric. It is worth mentioning here that the National Salvation Front's manifesto was probably the most professional in structure and contemporary in style: even so, its betrayal of rigid and inarticulate minds, of dogmatic attitudes was remarkable. It is curious how communists, even in their new guise, still insist on an 'ideology', being blissfully unaware that the whole world has entered the post-ideological era, that the last rites of 'ideology' were performed by Albert Camus as long ago as 1946, when he became the first person to use the phrase 'the end of ideology', and its epitaph was written by Daniel Bell (*The End of Ideology*) in 1960.

g) Amongst all the shortcomings of the opposition, however, the most lamentable was the failure to understand mass psychology. As John Gray cogently suggested in *The Times* (22nd May 1990), 'the single most important factor influencing voting behaviour, especially when it has become volatile, is the voter's perception of his present and foreseeable standard of living'. Lord Boyd-Orr expressed the same idea in a more cynical way; 'if people have to choose between freedom and sandwiches, they will take sandwiches'.

h) The provisional government bribed the peasants in great haste by giving them a patch of land and thus earned their gratitude and allegiance. The opposition parties emphasised *ad nauseam* the need for privatising the means of production. It is unfortunate that, in Romanian, the words describing 'to privatise' and 'to inflict hardship' are very similar. Since, for obvious reasons, the expression 'to privatise' was not much used during the last 45 years in Romania, even educated people got the wrong message. Also, the Front's propaganda was astute, pandering to atavistic nationalism: too many believed that the opposition parties were plotting to 'sell the country to foreigners'.

Romania faces the same problems as all East European countries: how to transform, in time of peace, totalitarian institutions, an authoritarian machine of government, into democratic institutions. In particular, the need to convert an over-centralised, rigidly planned economy into a market economy is of fundamental importance. This implies that whole industries will have to be streamlined. In a country which already has a massive hidden unemployment problem, any measures, however urgent, for increasing efficiency, can have calamitous social corollaries. Even in the West, in spite of a more or less adequate welfare system, the demise of industrial dinosaurs has very unpleasant consequences, at least in the short run. In Romania, the effects would be apocalyptic. Although, rationally, everyone perceives the need - and inevitability - of change, it is a colossal mistake to ignore the deep fear that eats the soul, the dread of even more, possibly even worse, misery than that experienced so far. The opposition parties promised jam tomorrow and a pie in the sky: this is exactly what Romania has heard for half a century, and that was enough. Iliescu and his acolytes learned from Bismarck, *inter alia,* that 'people never lie so much as after a hunt, during a war or before an election', and promised that all jobs would be safeguarded. This was a very shrewd move: even professional people, who intellectually abhor Iliescu and everything he stands for, people who, in other circumstances, would be the constituency of the opposition parties, voted for the Front.

It is obvious that dramatic changes will have to take place. Nobody, however, should underestimate the effects of these changes on the human psyche, with all the possible corollaries - including social unrest - and the need to cushion the population against the worst immediate consequences of the ineluctable transformations. This is of paramount importance and the lack of a proper and adequate plan of action, of a social safety net, will cost dearly.

The so-called 'electoral campaign' was a catalogue of abuses perpetrated by the provisional government. In spite of reasonable news coverage, the West was still not completely aware of all the acts of intimidation, molestation and even murder of opposition candidates, their families or agents. The arbitrary measures intended to prevent the free flow of information, the distribution of newsprint, the fair allocation of television time, the unhin-

dered use of printing presses, have been only in part reported in the West.

In vain Western politicians and prominent figures were urged to go to Romania, to study not just the insertions of voting papers into ballot-boxes, but the two or three months of electoral campaign preceding them. Apparently, there were no funds available for this.

The teams of observers, insufficient in numbers in any case, descended on Romania only on the eve of the elections. Although some of them were perceptive, alert and critical, they could find little wrong with the voting as such: obviously, there was no need for the Front to resort to blatant dishonesty (like replacement of ballot-boxes), when the subtle dishonesty worked so well! Too many observers, even hard-boiled, experienced and high-ranking politicians, displayed tunnel vision and offered lyrical outpourings. They were, apparently, overwhelmed and overcome by their own fantasy: they saw themselves as the midwives of a democracy whose birth they thought they attended, but which, alas, took place only in their own imagination.

It was Voltaire who said 'if you want to discuss with me, you must define your terms'. In my book, 'democracy' implies not only the absence of machine-guns at the ballot box and the presence of more than one name on the ballot-paper. 'Democracy' implies the existence of a politically mature electorate, an electorate that is offered the opportunity to make an intelligent, considered, judicious choice, on the basis of adequate information. It may not be an exaggeration to say that 'democracy' is equivalent to freedom of communication. The absence of these was staring everyone in the face - alas, some susceptible observers did not seem to appreciate its significance. The Front won by a landslide. After all, it is well-known (Gumperson's Law) that the probability of anything happening is in inverse ratio to its desirability.

(The concluding part of *Whither Romania?* will be published in March 1991).

Editorial

The time has come to be honest with ourselves about the Middle East. For too long British policy in the region has been dictated by the Arabist lobby - that unique collection of fantasists and pederasts whose emotional bible is the *Seven Pillars of Wisdom,* and who have swallowed what Elie Kedourie has called the Chatham House version of modern history. Deriving from Arnold Toynbee, the Chatham House version gives credence to the myth of the Arabs as a 'nation', unjustly held down by the Western powers but destined in time to rise again, and to establish a real and thriving culture.

Middle Eastern politics has fed upon this myth. Tyrants strive to capture it, and to become accepted as the leader of the Arabs: indeed, this seems to be the only legitimacy that most of them care to have and the only one that many of their people understand. Not surprisingly, therefore, our Foreign Office - heavily influenced by the Arabists - finds itself repeatedly magnetised by the latest champion of the Arab cause, and implacable against those, such as Israel, who oppose it, or those, such as the Christian Arabs of Lebanon, who betray it. For a long time ignoring the madness of Saddam Hussein; conniving at the destruction of Lebanon; opposing our breach with Syria (after all, it meant the loss of an Embassy in one of the most beautiful Arab towns); paying court to the 'Palestinians'(in other words to Arafat, their self-appointed leader), and condemning Israel for one of the few legitimate occupations the modern world has seen - all in all the Foreign Office has achieved the sorriest of records in Middle Eastern Affairs. Not only did it wait for the invasion of Kuwait before making decisive statements about Iraq (by which time it was too late to arrange the escape of British residents); it has maintained the fiction of diplomacy in a region where any relation other than force is neither understood nor wanted. The dangerous habit of negotiating with people who treat all negotiation as a sign of weakness is one cause of the present instability. It is also the major reason for the existence of hostages: for it is our habit of negotiating for their release which makes the taking of hostages worthwhile.

Some blame the madness of the Middle East on the Arab character, with its supposedly relentless and schoolboyish desire to be the 'big shot', the 'top dog', the one whose boots are licked by all and sundry. There is truth in the accusation; but the Middle East is not merely Arab - indeed, the second-largest trouble maker in the area, Iran, is not Arab at all. Moreover, as the great civilising achievement of the Lebanon showed, it is possible for Arabs to gain and leave office without bullets, and to retain dignity, decency and modesty in the midst of public life.

Others, with more reason, see the root of the matter in Islam, which has never succeeded in wanting, let alone establishing, a separation between religion and politics, or a secular rule of law. It is certainly true that, with the centuries old decadence of Islamic culture, and the virtual extinction of Islamic jurisprudence, the underlying bellicosity of the Muslim religion has become, in our day, alarmingly apparent.

Again, however, we should beware of generalisation. There are Islamic countries, such as Turkey which have adapted themselves to modern circumstances, and established (admittedly in defiance of Islam) secular rules of law, bringing comparative peace and stability to their peoples. (Malaysia and Indonesia are also interesting examples of this process.) Moreover, in the great period of the Ottoman Empire, a real effort was made, through the *millet* system, to secure legal parity between the communities, and to educate the manners of Islamic law.

The last example points to the real cause of the Middle Eastern problems: the removal of imperial government, from a region which has no political culture of its own, but only the vestiges of tribal loyalties, and the feverish passions of a sick religion. The 'identity crisis' - of which pan-Arabism is more a symptom than a cause - came into being just as soon as the Sultan lost his jurisdiction, and the headless tribes of the neighbourhood found themselves without any over-arching authority, and with no external court of appeal. In such cases the emergence of gang warfare masquerading as government was all but inevitable.

We should now face the facts. The Middle Eastern tyrannies do not hate us. They merely despise us, for not responding to their provocations with a show of force. Their social and religious heritage gives them no motive to refrain from such wicked acts as hostage-taking; their law is for the most part nothing but the rubber stamp which seals the edict of a tyrant; and their culture has all but evaporated, leaving just a faint trace of perfume behind it. Their wealth, acquired without the educative benefit of labour, is an accident of geography, and it is our dependence on oil which leads us to take such an interest in their otherwise immensely tedious squabbles. With such people there is little point in being diplomatic; but there is much point in the use of force, which is the key to their respect. Moreover it is only when your opponent respects you that you can begin to talk with him.

Letters

Sir,

As a qualified (in retrospect) supporter of British rule in India up to 1947, I was rather disappointed to read Vinay Lal's review of *The Discovery of Nehru* by Kenneth Griffith in your September issue. Vinay Lal's line seems to be to accept that Indian bureaucracy 'is a monstrosity, a cancerous cauldron of inefficiency and inhumanity'. He then goes on to suggest that what he calls the 'practices of the colonial State' have become ossified in post-Independence India....and *étatism* has long since become enshrined as the reigning philosophy.' Now all this is very fine and large: but is it true?

I have to admit that my own experience of the Indian bureaucracy is not entirely different from that which Mr. Griffith describes. But then I would not expect as much from it as he appears to have done. I would be totally unsurprised, for example, if I were staying at a hotel free of charge, albeit purportedly as someone else's guest, if the manager were from time to time to mention the awkward question of who was going to settle his bill and when. I would also be unsurprised if my hosts attempted to dictate the content of the film I had been invited (if that really is the right phrase) to make at their expense even though they had previously informed me that I would have an entirely free hand. But then I flatter myself that I am a man of the world and that such things are known to happen, even in the West, as the world which considers itself civilised likes to call itself.

Then again, even if one accepts that some, many, even all Indians are reluctant to accept responsibility (and in my experience there are a fair number of responsibility-takers in India), *why blame it on the British?* Vinay Lal thereby seems to stand himself accused of the precise fault which he accuses his fellow countrymen, or erstwhile fellow countrymen of, namely failing to take responsibility. If Indians had been tougher, better able to govern themselves, the British would surely not have been allowed to rule India in the first place. India was never a 'colony' in the strict sense: it remained an Empire even before Queen Victoria became its Empress, and the British Government, and before it the Company, had ruled in the name of the Mughal Emperor. If the Indians had themselves been able to run that Empire successfully or turn it into something else of their own devising the take-over would never have happened and the British and French would have remained as traders and no more. The Empire of China, for example, was never wholly taken over by Europeans.

But Vinay Lal's critique goes deeper than that. Even assuming the necessities of the case, he seems to be arguing, nonetheless the British ran the Indian Empire badly. They kept the Indians down, failing to encourage them to take responsibility. Again the history of British India does not seem to me to bear out this charge. There was the Indian Councils Act of 1892, there were the Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909 and there were the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms of 1919, not to mention the Government of India Act of 1935 on which the present day Constitution of Republican India, for good or ill (and in my view in large part for good) is in significant respects founded. A friend of mine whom I knew well in retirement and who had been the last substantive British governor of the North-West Frontier Province told me, and the facts bear him out, that when he was appointed to the Punjab in the 1920s both his official and his legislative superiors were Indians. Lord Sinha, indeed, had become Governor of Bihar and Orissa in 1920 after being under-secretary of State for India in London. Vinay Lal himself concedes that there were Indians on the official Hunter Committee which inquired into the Jallianwalla Bagh killing in Amritsar. Indeed, he has produced what is in many ways an excellent critique of Kenneth Griffith's book, but he needs to try and answer some of the questions he has himself posed. For example, I agree with him that to attempt to draw a distinction between a people and its Government, especially when that Government is appointed from amongst persons elected by universal adult suffrage, is a false and facile one. There is no doubt also that the Indian bureaucracy can be very difficult to deal with. So can this one in England. So are people everywhere. It is a matter of degree. When people criticise and denounce bureaucracies I reply in the words of Burke: You cannot draw up an indictment against a whole people - nor indeed against a whole bureaucracy. As a former British civil servant myself, I can hardly go much further without risking a breach of the Official Secrets Act. Yet Vinay Lal and Kenneth Griffith will be unconvinced. They will each, in their different ways, adhere to the myth of an unpleasant elite bossing a kind, gentle, and long-suffering people. Vinay Lal will of course blame the unpleasantness, as he sees it, of that elite upon its erstwhile 'colonial' masters whilst Kenneth Griffith will perhaps rather be tempted to adduce some such concept as 'oriental despotism' or the 'incomprehensibility' of the East. Either way, there will be little or no attempt to understand the problems of administration as seen by the administrator.

In his final paragraph Vinay Lal traverses the well worn paths of the Jallianwalla Bagh controversy to which I will add nothing except to say that most contemporary observers regarded the firing at the Bagh as unnecessary and, even it if was necessary, the death toll to have been far too high and avoidably so. In the long term or rather the medium term as it turned out, the 'massacre' as it was inevitably dubbed made things worse rather than better for the future of British rule in India, however much it may have settled things through fear at the time. There is no doubt that there had been a lot of violence, including the murder of Europeans in Amritsar, before the firing, but there is equally no doubt that Dyer, through fear or fury, over-reacted. In a somewhat analogous though not in any directly similar way I venture to suggest as hesitantly as possible that Mr. Griffith may also have over-reacted to an experience of India which has not

been entirely pleasant, and one can only express the hope that he will be able to get on better with officials on some future occasion.

George Chowdhary-Best
London S.W.3.

Sir,
I have been living in Burundi for 2 years since the tragic events of August, 1988, and before that for 3 years in Swaziland. I thus feel well placed to comment on John Gardner's 'Africa's hidden Apartheid' in your June issue. The inaccuracies and puerile logic would suggest that Mr. Gardner has never visited, and has a very limited knowledge of, Burundi and South Africa. In addition it is obvious that he is totally unaware of the changes that have taken place in Burundi since August, 1988.

The inaccuracies concerning his description of events in Burundi are as follows:

Firstly, he states that the Tutsi migrated to Burundi at the beginning of the 1700s. This myth was expounded by the former colonial power, Belgium, in an attempt to explain differences between the Tutsi and Hutu. This has since been totally discredited as both groups speak the same language;there is no linguistic or other evidence to suggest migratory movement of the Tutsi.

The second inaccuracy is contained in the statement 'Sunday prayer meetings have been banned for Hutus'. This is total nonsense; the dominant faiths in Burundi are Catholic and Protestant, neither faith is the particular domain of either Tutsi or Hutu. Sunday worship is conducted freely. It is true that Christian missionaries were expelled under former leader Phillipe Bagaza, and that this was done in a harsh way; many are now returning. There is evidence however that in a number of cases expulsion was for legitimate reasons. In the same vein Jehovah's Witnesses and Seventh Day Adventists are now allowed to worship freely. The reason for their banning was their refusal to acknowledge the national flag and the state of Burundi. While we in the West find it easier to accept such beliefs, acceptance of this is difficult for emerging nation states. (I believe that there is the occasional rumpus in British social life, when some dastardly lefty refuses to toast the Queen!)

Another inaccuracy is to say 'the Tutsi army receives its weapons from the USSR' - it also receives weapons and training from France, Belgium and Germany. Incidentally, within the last year Hutus have been recruited into the army. The most glaring inaccuracy is in the statement 'shortly after the events of August, 1988 thousands of Hutu corpses were found floating in Lake Tanganika'. The events of August, 1988 took place in, and were limited to, the north of Burundi; Lake Tanganika is to the southwest, over 200 kms away! Mr. Gardner goes on to state 'The 1988 massacre failed to produce a modicum of outrage'. This is totally untrue - protests and threats to cut off aid were made by the EEC, the Catholic Church, the UN, the USA, the French and Belgian Governments, to name but a few; all were well documented. The quality press in Britain covered the event. At the request of the Burundi Government Belgian television's equivalent of 'Panorama' made a documentary that included interviews with President Bagaza, senior Ministers, local officials, students and peasant farmers. (It was in French and thus probably not suited to British Television)

At present the Ministerial portfolios are divided 50:50; serious issues such as national unity, multi-party democracy and national development are freely discussed. The important point is that the Burundais are trying hard to come to terms with the fact that the minority Tutsi rule that arose out of the former Belgian colonial policy of divide-and-rule has produced a classic economic class system. The issue is thus one of economic apartheid which I am afraid exists all over the world.

Alistair Danter,
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Africa.

Sir,
My reference to Burundi's historical migrations is supported by a number of standard reference works, such as the Encyclopedia Britannica, which are likely to be authoritative as any.

Although, like South Africa, Burundi has seen much inter-ethnic marriage, Burundi's minority ethnic group, the Tutsi, are an identifiable 15% or so of the population, and they continue to monopolise political power. This is acknowledged in *Squandering Eden*,1990, *Chronicle of the World*, 1989, *SA - The New Revolution*, 1989, *The Spectator*, February 1988, *The European World Survey*, 1987, *Operation World*, 1987, *The Economist*, August 1988, *The Times*, August 1988, etc.

My account of the 1988 massacre was based on first-hand reports by observers who were in Burundi at the time. I think Mr Danter is unduly mystified as to how a large number of Hutu corpses were found in Lake Tanganyika. 125 miles is not a particularly long distance, and the likely explanation is that troops drove the bodies there in trucks. This manner of disposal would have been much easier than burying.

Mr Danter confuses what happens in Burundi officially with what happens in reality. For example, although there is no official ethnic segregation in school, Hutus are largely still afraid to attend educational establishments for fear of a repetition of the 1972 genocide in which Hutu students and pupils were killed. As a result, whereas there may be no racial policy *de jure*, Tutsi educational supremacy is a stark reality.

Similarly, Mr Danter fails to mention that, though Hutus can vote, Burundi's ruling (and only) political party is controlled by the Tutsi. In 1984, for example, the Tutsi President achieved 99.67 per cent of the 'democratic' vote. Thus, political apartheid is as much a fact in Burundi as in South Africa. Restrictions on freedom of religion in Burundi have been well-documented by a number of human rights organisations, such as the Minority Rights Group.

As for the world reaction, I am not impressed by token paper protests which have long since died away. There is simply no way in which the international community's

embarrassed mumbles over the slaughter of thousands in Burundi can be compared to the ceaseless howling over South African rebel cricket tours. The purpose of my article was not to attack the Burundian government but to draw attention to and explain racist attitudes towards white-run Africa. No-one has done more to legitimise racism than Nelson Mandela, who told his followers at Wembley Stadium how grateful he was at the West's opposition to minority rule in South Africa and Namibia. Conversely, Mandela told a two-thirds empty stadium in Kenya that Europeans had no right to lecture other African governments on democracy. In other words, oppression and human rights violations mustn't be criticised if those responsible are black.

But where do Mr Danter's loyalties lie? With Burundi's people or with Burundi's politicians? Part of the answer may be found in his statement: 'While in the west we find it easier to accept such beliefs (the refusal to acknowledge national flags, etc.), acceptance...is difficult in emerging nation states'. On the contrary, Burundians who refuse to acknowledge national flags do not find such beliefs difficult. It is the government which does not permit dissent.

I have very recently returned from a two month study tour of South Africa which has enabled me to see for myself the devastating effects of apartheid on that country. I think it's high time the world took notice of the effects of apartheid on Burundi, too.

John Gardner,
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Sir,
Allow me to thank you on behalf of the Department of Applied Linguistics for the subscription to the *Salisbury Review*. The generosity of your readers is greatly appreciated, as is the opportunity to relearn ways of thinking which have been forgotten after so many years of indoctrination.

Many of us look back to the time between the wars, and draw strength from our democratic tradition. But even so, in the present fierce debate about how best to proceed, we sometimes fumble for the words to express the old values we are trying to recreate. It is no wonder; the attempt to eradicate all free thinking involved the replacement of meaningful language with meaningless official newspeak.

The language of the *Salisbury Review* throws new light on some often misinterpreted terms such as the 'right' to the NHS (how often have we heard from friends in the west of the advantages of our social services, and how blind they are to the evidence of the failure of the socialist system.) How important for our morale it was to see those east Europeans who had not forgotten how to speak the truth writing in the *Review*.

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Sir,
I have read with much interest and approval Paul Hollander's article 'Keep the Red Flag Flying' , in your issue of September 1990. However, I believe it contains a purely logical weakness the removal of which would strengthen his argument. The weakness appears in two short passages.

The first is this: 'The streak of personal intolerance that characterised Marx found expression in widely institutionalised political intolerance.' That is true enough, but the political intolerance of all communist regimes is merely the inevitable result of the attempt to plan the movement of an entire economy by centrally located authority. Once the wheels of a comprehensive five year plan have been set in motion, the general direction of the whole juggernaut cannot be altered; the whole apparatus of the state becomes committed. That was the logic of democratic centralism.

The second passage is this: 'East European intellectuals are also aware of the historical connection between capitalism and political pluralism and the denial of private ownership of the means of production'. Again, that is true enough. But the connection between capitalism and political pluralism is no mere historical coincidence.

I write this as one who remembers what it felt like to be a Marxist long ago. One had all the answers.

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Opponent to Unification Sought

In East Germany in the summer opponents to unification needed to find each other, which is why the PDS party newspaper, *Neues Deutschland,* started a lonely hearts column for like-minded left-wingers. The PDS is the former communist party - the SED- under new guise.

Some merely wished to announce that they thought and felt left; others were looking for something quite specific in their partners. There was the 31 year-old women looking for a companion 'not only whose heart beats left, but also to whom family harmony and joy in nature means more than earning lots of money and driving a western car'; or the young man of 22 who would like to get to know an 'affectionate partner' (*Genosse* is also the German for comrade) and to 'spend many pleasant hours with her in life and struggle'. One woman of 39 from Berlin was especially keen to find 'an opponent to unification, with whom she can spend the winter'. Another, a 36 year-old man, proclaimed in a thick red pen 'once red, always red'.

Book Reviews

A NOBLE MESS

Brian Crozier

The Liberal Conspiracy: the Congress for Cultural Freedom and the Struggle for the Mind of Post-war Europe, Peter Coleman, Free Press Macmillan, 1989, $22.95, pp. 333, (0-02-9064-81-3)

I have a confession to make, and an interest to declare. The confession is that I first became aware of the Congress for Cultural Freedom in January 1954, when I perused my first copy of *Encounter*. By then, the Congress was four years old, and *Encounter* not quite a toddler at less than one.

The birth of the Congress - a momentous event - was one of a myriad of happenings that had passed me by during an absence of nearly six years, first in my native Australia, and later in South-East Asia. The interest to be declared is that I was involved with the Congress between 1964 and 1966: see later.

The word 'momentous' is justified by the context. In the 1930s, the European intellectual scene had been dominated by the major fellow-travellers, such as H.G. Wells, G.B.Shaw, the Webbs. André Gide, Romain Rolland and so many others. The Hitler-Stalin pact had jolted them, but the Nazi invasion of Russia and the later victories of 'our glorious ally' had reassured them about the future that worked.

Many left-wing intellectuals had been shaken by Stalin's seizure of Eastern Europe, but to the Communists (who were organised, and largely funded from Moscow), events merely seemed to be confirming the inevitability of a preordained history. The bloodless Prague coup of 1948 was the decisive turning point. With honourable exceptions (among them Raymond Aron and Sidney Hook) the intellectuals of the West were on the whole disposed to surrender their independence to the wielders of power in the names of Marx and Lenin.

By then, Viktor Kravchenko's *I Chose Freedom* had converted me to the cause of liberal anti-communism. Many others, whose names carried far greater weight than mine, thought likewise. But intellectuals, as a species, do not normally join forces in political or ideological combat. Overwhelmingly, in the last few decades, they have done so as unresisting conscripts in one or other of the proliferating fronts organised by communist parties on behalf of the controlling CPSU (now partly marginalised, but still in nominal charge in Moscow).

'Something' had to be done, and the intellectuals, even doubting ones, were not going to take the initiative. 'Somebody' had to do it for them. And the 'somebody', as was revealed years after the event, was the American Central Intelligence Agency (with the approval of Britain's MI6 and other allied secret services). Collectively, and in many cases individually, the intellectuals of the West (and the East) owe a massive debt to the CIA, which few, even now, would be ready publicly to acknowledge.

To undertake to write a history of the CCF, let alone finish it successfully, was a daunting undertaking. The author, Peter Coleman, had been appointed Editor of *Quadrant*, the magazine of the Australian Association for Cultural Freedom in 1967, in the wake of the world-wide publicity about CIA funding of the parent CCF. His book is the fruit of ten years of research into archives scattered in many countries, and of conversations with the survivors of the great CCF experiment.

There are gaps, as he acknowledges. When he asked the CIA for its records, under the Freedom of Information Act, all he got was a cutting from the *New York Times* and a prize bit of American officialese: 'No other records responsive to your request were located.'

Despite the gaps, Coleman's narrative is always interesting and at times enthralling: a feat in itself, since accounts of a conference at which one was not present tend to be boring. There was, however, nothing boring about the inaugural meeting of the Congress, which was held in Berlin in June 1950 as the Korean War began. Many of the participants were former Communists, such as Arthur Koestler, Ignazio Silone and Richard Lowenthal. There were former 'Marxists', including Sidney Hook and James Burnham (whom, incidentally, I regard as my mentor). The philosophers included A.J. Ayer and Benedetto Croce, and among the historians were Hugh Trevor-Roper and Franz Borkenau. Novelists: Jules Romains and Nicolas Nabokov. 'Europeans': Julian Amery, Denis de Rougemont. A glittering assembly.

A less eminent name, at that time, was that of Melvin J. Lasky, who turned out to be the most durable product of the Congress and of its cultural and ideological legacy. Lasky, better known these days as the long-serving Joint Editor of *Encounter*, had been through his own 'Marxist' phase in his native New York, and was demobilised in Berlin after serving as a combat historian with the US Seventh Army.

Initially unpopular with the occupying Americans in the first post-war phase of close collaboration with the Soviet occupiers, Lasky was the first editor of *Der Monat*, launched in 1948 and the precursor of the many similar publications of the Congress. The key figure, however, was a man who, by vocation, never sought notoriety: Michael Josselson.

In those early days, Josselson was a US State Department cultural attaché in Berlin. That, at least, was how he was listed. In the unsought revelations

of 1967, he emerged as the CIA officer who had put the whole edifice together and went on to run it for many years, skilfully but unobtrusively, never blatantly interfering, yet constantly guiding the naturally anarchic concourse of intellectuals who owed him more than they would ever have wished to acknowledge.

Born in Estonia in 1908, the son of a Jewish timber merchant, Josselson (whose family had suffered at the murderous hands of the Nazis), was granted American citizenship in 1942. The American Daniel Bell described him, percipiently, as 'a Prussian by day and a Russian by night'. It was the day-time Prussian organiser, rather than the night-time Russian dilettante, whose influence survived.

The most influential member of the Executive Committee (in Peter Coleman's estimation) was Raymond Aron, who had started off in close collaboration with the unsavoury Jean-Paul Sartre, but soon broke with him over Sartre's collaborationist view of communism. His 1955 book *L'Opium des Intellectuels*, exposed the self-delusion and cowardly unreality of the overwhelmingly left-wing intellectuals of Paris in the 1950s. The penalty he paid was ostracism and charges of 'stooge' of the American capitalists and imperialists.

An extraordinary achievement of the CCF (meaning, in the last analysis, of Michael Josselson and the CIA) was the proliferation of journals, all of high literary standard, which emerged in many countries. *Preuves*, in Paris, followed *Encounter*, and London also had the more specialised *Survey* (edited by the erudite and argumentative Polish exile, Leo Labedz), *Minerva* and *China Quarterly*.

Japan had *Jiyu* ('Freedom'); Lebanon, in those more peaceful days, had *Hiwar* ('Dialogue'). In 1961, a Uganda-born Bengali, Rajat Neogy, launched *Transition*, which flourished until Milton Obote's terrible dictatorship wrecked it, gaoling Neogy for daring to preach and practise cultural freedom. Then there was *Cuadernos*, published in Spanish in Paris and serving Latin American readers (and writers). Another Iberian offering was *Cadernos Brasileiros* for Brazil.

In due course, the cultural tentacles spread to Australia, with *Quadrant* (which was where Peter Coleman came in). And this by no means exhausts the list.

The CCF also ran various press feature services, including *Preuves-Informations* and *El Mundo en Espanol*, both from the Paris headquarters, and Forum Information Service from London. That is where my declaration of interest comes in. I had left *The Economist* in 1964, after nearly ten years, and was enjoying the precarious freedom of the free-lance, when I was approached by the Congress. The three press services mentioned were all distributed free to a wide range of newspapers, mainly in the Third World.

The pick-up was considerable, but since there was no charge, there was no way of measuring the real value of the services. The CCF was thinking of commercialising and professionalising them. Since I was tri-lingual in the languages used, and a pro, would I be interested in doing it?

My first response was negative, but the intermediary came back some months later, with an interesting proposal: would I consider touring Latin America for eight weeks and writing a report on the usage of *El Mundo en Espanol*, with my own suggestions for a commercial service?

Not having been to the Iberian continent, I accepted, and spent August and September of that year on a tour that took me from Chile to Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Venezuela and Mexico. On my return, I wrote my report, then got on with other things.

Some months later, the CCF knocked at my door again. This time, it was John Hunt, an American writer who was Secretary-General of the Congress. His offer was concrete: to take over all three of the press services, and commercialise them. Where, I asked, would the money come from? His answer was that the new entity would become part of John Hay Whitney's press empire. I had known Whitney when he was the US ambassador in London. He was the owner of the old *New York Herald Tribune*, which collapsed after an interminable strike, though survived by its International edition.

I accepted, on condition that the Congress should drop out of the operation. My reason was a professional one. The existing give-away services were good, but carried too much Congress material of little general interest. My condition was accepted, and formal letters were exchanged.

Coleman's book lists me among the dozens of informants he interviewed. Indeed, he spent an hour in my office some years ago. He makes only a passing reference to the change, and I am sorry to say that he gets it wrong. He says (pp.221-222) that Josselson 'sold Forum Service to a company in London called Forum World Service (closing down its French equivalent, *Preuves-Informations*)'.

What happened was more interesting. Despite our agreement, I found that the board of Mr.Whitney's new company included John Hunt as a director. Moreover, although I had agreed to take over the French and Spanish language services (one of the attractions of the deal), Josselson had indeed closed them down (the Spanish one as well as the French).

Thus, on two major points, the Congress had unilaterally departed from our agreement. I wrote a protesting letter and contemplated dropping out, then decided to give it a try. At my suggestion, Mr.Whitney called the new holding company Kern House Enterprises, for no better reason than that its offices were at Kern House in Kingsway; the professional name I chose was 'Forum World Features' (FWF), not 'Forum World Service'.

When, in breach of our agreement, Hunt and Josselson insisted on flooding me with Congress material, nearly all of it unsuitable for a serious press service, I threatened to resign, and as a first step reduced my own salary by 35 per cent. Soon after, John Hunt left the board, and FWF was left in peace.

On one other, and relatively minor, point I thought I had spotted a further error. Coleman makes several references to Luis Mercier Vega, describing him as 'a Spaniard who had fought with the anarchists....in the Spanish Civil War' (p.207). I spent much time with Mercier Vega in Santiago in 1964, and he assured me he was French on his father's side and Chilean on his mother's. Linguistically, the evidence confirmed this claim, in that he spoke French without accent and Spanish with a French accent.

I tried this point on Melvin Lasky, who commented that Luis was a man with a variable biography. He confirmed that Mercier had indeed fought with the anarchists and suggested that he could have been a 'Spanish anarchist' in the loose sense that he had fought as one of them. Perhaps this confusion of origin and orientation helped to account for Mercier's later suicide.

Such blemishes hardly detract from Peter Coleman's feat in researching and writing his highly readable, and logically arranged account of what must have been one of the most disparate and loosely organised conglomerates ever pieced together.

In his penultimate chapter ('A Black Operation?') Coleman outlines the crisis that ended the CCF in its original form. The nub of the matter was the CIA funding. A series of investigative articles in the *New York Times* in 1966 did the initial damage. But the decisive blow was struck by the 'muck-raking' (Coleman's description) *Ramparts* magazine, in its issue of March 1967.

Having myself suffered from the attentions of *Ramparts*, I did some investigating of my own, and uncovered the fact that the magazine had got its material from the Czechoslovak StB, operating on behalf of the KGB. One wonders why the CIA, which presumably knew this, didn't disseminate the facts. This aspect is not mentioned in Coleman's book.

Whether knowledge of this kind would have saved the CCF and its many dependent magazines is, however, doubtful. By then, the Johnson administration was in deep trouble because of the growing unpopularity of the Vietnam war, and of course the exacerbating activities of the Soviet propaganda apparatus.

In the ensuing crisis, some intellectuals were less robust than others. All those associated with the Congress would have deplored the Active Measures of the KGB, which were on an infinitely larger scale than the CIA's counter-operations. The standard, knee-jerk reaction, however, was that 'our side' shouldn't be doing that kind of thing.

Deeply embarrassed, Michael Josselson wrote a Memorandum for his executive committee, admitting that CIA funds had been accepted, but asserting that the funds had been without strings. Controversy raged. Then came the worst bombshell of all: an article by Thomas Wardell Braden who, in the May 1967 issue of the *Saturday Evening Post*, boasted of the CIA's achievement in funding the CCF and, in particular, *Encounter*. Braden knew what he was talking about, for it was he who had established the CIA's International Organisation Division.

Stephen Spender, a lingering Marxist (as he told me some time later), and Frank Kermode resigned from *Encounter*. Melvin Lasky, who was made of tougher stuff, stayed on, with the support of such luminaries as Max Beloff, D.W.Brogan and Hugh Trevor-Roper. And *Encounter* weathered the storm.

In Paris, both Josselson and Hunt resigned. The Congress was mortally wounded, and soon made way for a successor, the International Association for Cultural Freedom, funded (this time 'for real') by the Ford Foundation.

The CIA's funding of the Congress and of similar bodies (including, for many years, Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe) offended the lingering Puritanism of the political descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers. The Puritanism imposed yet another handicap on the CIA and the publicly visible USIA: the notion that it was wrong to 'propagandise' the American people - a principle supported by President Johnson's Katzenbach committee, which met in the wake of the disclosures. Coleman mentions Katzenbach, but not the principle.

The author quotes the views of James Burnham, with which, not surprisingly, I broadly agree. A founder member of the Congress, Burnham had long been disenchanted. The fundamental flaw in the whole concept, as he saw it, was the CIA's decision to use the non-Communist Left in its fight for cultural freedom. This was the error of Allen Dulles, brother of John Foster and Director of Central Intelligence. Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and above all Vietnam, had shown that the organisations and individuals nurtured by the CIA had ended up undermining the nation's will and security.

In his book, *Suicide of the West*, and in his column in Bill Buckley's *National Review* (which I took over in 1978 after Burnham's stroke), Burnham coined the term 'mush-heads' to describe the left-liberals adopted by the CCF. To be fair to the late Josselson and others, there was some sense in targeting the mush-heads in that they were most vulnerable to the pressures and blandishments of the Soviet regime. The trouble was that the fear of being seen as 'right-wing' was often stronger than the will to fight communism. To be 'right-wing' in the sense of being anti-communist carried the dreaded risk of being labelled McCarthyist (as I know to my cost).

The sad fact, for the mush-heads, is that Senator Joe McCarthy, for all his crudity, was mostly right in his accusations. Doubters need only read the three key books on the issue: Whittaker Chambers' *Witness* (one of the fundamental books of our century); Allen Weinstein's *Perjury* (the ultimate vindication of Chambers, by an initially pro-Alger Hiss academic); and Burnham's own *The Web of Subversion*.

For all its faults and weaknesses, the CCF, on the whole, did a very difficult job surprisingly well. Was it, however, a 'liberal conspiracy', as the title of this remarkable book puts it? 'Conspiracy' is a pejora-

tive term for an essentially benevolent operation. 'Liberal' is an ambiguous term, with antithetical meanings in Europe and America, and two distinct meanings in Britain (the cap and l.c. connotations). The conspiring was not done by liberals of any shade, but on behalf of some of them. The CIA conspirers and their European allies did much to counter the ideological pollution from Moscow.

A mess, certainly; but a noble mess.

MARKET RENAISSANCE

Dennis O'Keeffe

The Fatal Conceit, F. A. Hayek, Routledge, 1988, £30.00; **A Restatement of Economic Liberalism**, Samuel Brittan, MacMillan, 1988, £10.99; **Free Market Morality,** Alexander Shand, Routledge, 1990, £30.00.

These three books make good combined reading. They all connect in particular with the revival of interest in the market, the most important rediscovery, in theory and in practice, of the late twentieth century. The strange fact is that the market, the basis of civilisation in its economic aspect, has become obscured in our era by the kind of interventionist activity which Hayek calls 'constructivism'.

These books oppose the interventionist error. They share the idea that markets are irreplaceable devices for the discovery of information under conditions of inadequate knowledge. Samuel Brittan, indeed, actually points out that many mainstream economists are still not equipped with this seemingly obvious insight; this explains why it still attracts the exotic title 'Austrian'.

The Fatal Conceit has not been universally applauded; yet its overall message is merely the continuation of its author's views. No one planned civilisation and its benefits; nor could anyone have done so. The human race is the beneficiary of a process of moral evolution, one tested not for its truth, but for its efficacy. The solidarity and altruism of tribal morality have been displaced in the wider sphere of economic evolution by a code of radical impersonality, involving ideas such as competition, gain, loss, contract and, above all else, property.

Christians will not warm to a morality whose truth-status differs so little from utilitarianism or Marxian instrumentalism. Functionally, however, the Hayek thesis in no way threatens believers. The extended order of economic life was a spontaneous evolution like those of language and science. It has given us productive powers which could, were they to be seized on in the proper spirit, make us more like the God-images of traditional theology.

I quarrel more in fact with Hayek's psychology. Hayek thinks the capitalist mentality has to be learned *in toto*, and that this learning then pushes out the more naturally 'socialist' psychology of inherited instinct. This is not convincing. The speed and ease with which people acquire the capitalist mentality, and the envious longing for free enterprise which contemporary socialist populations manifest, suggest a remarkable serendipitous correspondence to human nature. In other words, we retain, and indispensably, the inclination to solidarity and altruism; but the more significant and in evolutionary terms more dramatic drives, those of materialism and acquisitiveness, are novel only in the historical sense. The inherited psychology of our species renders them immediately meaningful and convincing, once they are encountered.

Hayek's sub-title is 'The Errors of Socialism'. His core argument is that socialism is intellectually false. It has a wrong theory of knowledge, and specifically misunderstands the sorts of information available to us for economic purposes. Socialism assumes either that the state knows what people want - it can collect the information needed to co-ordinate activity - or that it can substitute for the preferences of the population its own superior preferences. It has the real advantage, socialists always hold, of its own intellectually superlative cadres.

The reverse is the case. Socialism has signally failed to marshal the information needed for effective economic decision-making. It has ignored and scorned private economic preferences. It has fractured the standard free enterprise link between production and risk. Those who decide what is to be done with scarce resources do not have to risk their own. Socialism has obstinately set its face against the proper monitoring of its own output. It has imposed on society its own ideological hierarchies, in place of those which spontaneous social life would generate. Hayek says the world's population could not be maintained without capitalism. The case for the market is thus as practically important as it is theoretically overwhelming.

Like most good social scientists, Samuel Brittan is a good historian. In reviewing the Thatcher years to 1987 he points out that privatisation was a response to the immense difficulties created for governments which wish to cut expenditure. Whole sectors of activity are parasitical on the successful parts of the economy. These generate an intense pressure of special interest, ranging against the generally feeble or slumbering resistance of mass opinion. Most people do all right in the various public sectors; some do well; and the large tail of poor circumstance embraces mostly the weakest and least articulate sector of the population. This is *par excellence* the socio-economy of 'satisficing'. Most people are habituated to public finance; they do not know how much overall the system would improve under private finance; and in any case the speculative benefits of privatisation are small and diffuse; whilst disbenefits can be readily identified as intense by potential losers.

The most unacceptable aspect of Brittan's book is his neo-pacifism. His book went to press before the fall of international communism became fully ap-

parent. If the Western posture had been pacifist, 'neo' or otherwise, communism would not have collapsed.

Of course one is grateful for economists of Brittan's kind, who are not afraid to roam widely across politics and philosophy. But many who appreciate his severe rationality in matters of economic allocation, will not necessarily warm to his repudiation of the 'hawkish' patriotism of Thatcher and Reagan. Such an uncompromising defence of the home patch is part of the secret of those politicians' success. There is something rather limp about Brittan's internationalism. Part of the conservative rejection of economic reductionism involves precisely the right to adopt tough patriotic attitudes.

Alexander Shand should learn to write better. He seems unaware of some of the basic rules of grammar. This is a pity; as an account of, and an argument for, the Austrian perspective, his book is very good indeed. Anyone wanting a well-judged romp around the main theoretical and philosophical issues in economic science should read it. There are competent and well-referenced accounts of all the key concerns, such as equality, the welfare state, economic growth and its costs, freedom, knowledge and markets.

Only Brittan's book truly grapples with the most crucial question now before us as we approach the twenty-first century; what lends to socialism - in the residual form it takes in free societies, namely the deployment of irresponsible public monies - its abiding attraction? The theory as such is in ruins. The large scale attempts to apply it are hugely discredited. Yet the tenacious peristence, in market economies, of socialised education, health and welfare provision, suggests that we need some alternative theory to capitalist economics, whether neoclassical or Hayekian. We need, in fact, an economic sociology. In the British case we face the possibility of the election of a government committed indefinitely to the unaudited showering of the welfare state with public monies. In Europe, we may be in for a bout of fiscal largesse which at best will be parasitic on the advances of 1992, and at worst will abort them. Europe needs 'public choice' analysis.

Even Brittan does not fully pick out the effects of habit on the preservation of large pockets of socialism in societies like ours. Public health, education and welfare systems get by; they 'satisfice' at a low level. As long as the crucial flow of privately produced consumer goods and services continues, the overall package persuades most people, who are averse to risk, to make do with the present situation.

The mere existence of a seemingly unfathomable supply of private production enables socialist enclaves to muddle through on the proceeds of the predatory taxation which governments can fix on private flows of income and expenditure. Above all, there are interest groups and busybodies keen to envelope us in their public nets.

Successful private production means also that shortages in public sectors are usually merely financial. Our schools, for example, have of late often been short of books and equipment. This is, however, because they lack funds, not because there is no material for them to purchase. Under socialism proper, the plight of schools is far worse, since books, writing materials, etc. are literally unavailable.

Then there are the combined effects of guilt and envy in a civilisation which lacks the metaphysical or cosmological reverence needed to contain them. These seem to have endless potential. Putting it at its crudest, we often have publicly financed activities because quite large minorities would rather drag the average down than leave too exposed a tail. If they are themselves prosperous, a deep sense of guilt moves them. If they are indigent, envy does its corrosive work. The result is that complementary bedfellows end up promoting the extension and intrusions of the state. The democratic state is not too strong. On the contrary, it is too weak. Its political leadership proves unable to trim it, even when overwhelming electoral mandates have been secured.

ARTICULATE UNIONIST

Patrick J. Roche

Under Seige: Ulster Unionism and the Anglo-Irish Agreement, Arthur Aughey, C Hurst & Co. Ltd., and The Blackstaff Press Ltd., 1989, pp.214.

The humiliation and disorientation of unionism, as a preliminary to its complete capitulation to the demands of Irish nationalism, was a major objective of the Anglo-Irish Agreement signed on 15 November 1985. Unionists have not (yet) capitulated. Rather, the Agreement has stimulated a debate amongst them on the nature of unionism. Aughey's book is a major contribution to this debate and a corrective to the 'inarticulateness' of unionism.

The core of the book is an exploration of the character of unionism in terms of which Aughey presents the 'profound unionist opposition' to the Agreement. Articles 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the Agreement give the Dublin government a 'guarantor role' with respect to northern nationalists and consequently underpin the sectarian nature of Irish nationalism. Article 1 is, in effect, a statement of British neutrality on the issue of Irish unification, a virtual admission by London that it has no interest in properly governing its own citizens: 'The text of the Agreement makes bland and innocuous what is quite an amazing confession by a modern state - that it cannot determine adequately and alone the welfare of a proportion of its citizens'. (p.57)

The operation of 'direct rule' within the context of the Agreement means that the Intergovernmental Conference (established under Article 2) makes a greater input to laws and policies for Northern Ireland than the Parliament of the United Kingdom. Aughey argues that unionism is an under-

standing of the state for which equality of citizenship is foundational. But if equality of citizenship is a right (and not the 'gift' of government) then the qualification of citizenship such as has occured under the Agreement, without the consent of those affected, cannot be legitimised by appeal to the notion of parliamentary sovereignity (p.85-86). The Agreement is, therefore, not merely on the basis of pragmatic considerations but on the issue of right, a 'constitutional monstrosity ... a corruption of the idea of the modern state'. (p.57)

Unionist opposition to the Agreement is not, contrary to standard nationalist polemic, the expression of conditional loyalty which David Millar in *Queen's Rebels* has argued is characteristic of unionism: 'To accept the authority of the idea of the Union (being loyal to the British state) means in effect that unionists must admit the prevailing political values of the state. However this does not imply acceptance of the right of any particular government to weaken or to dissolve the Union ... Millar's thesis needs to be stood the right way up. It has been the consistent policy of London to be conditional in its loyalty to the United Kingdom ... In violation of the integrity of the United Kingdom as a state, Northern Ireland has been treated as a place apart' (p.23-25). Unionist opposition to the Agreement is based on the entirely legitimate understanding that 'it is not in the gift of a government to alter the conditions of the union' (p.26).

How did the Agreement come about? During the early 1980s the Conservative government developed a dual approach to Northern Ireland. The attempt to establish 'devolved structures' by both Humphrey Atkins and James Prior (both appointed life peers in 1987) was combined with London-Dublin summits which resulted in the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference in 1981. The period also marked a change in the direction of Irish policy towards Northern Ireland based on the strengthening of direct Anglo-Irish relations as the focus for the resolution of the Northern Ireland issue. Aughey maps the development of 'a persuasive intellectual consensus among politicians and officials in London and Dublin and their academic minions in favour of joint action by both governments as a first step towards the resolution of the Ulster crisis'. (p.52)

The joint action favoured by constitutional nationalists (an accepted but misleading designation) was contained in the *Report of the New Ireland Forum* published on 2 May 1984. Aughey, and the Irish historian Clare O'Halloran in her *Partition and the Limits of Irish Nationalism*, have unearthed the (to quote O'Halloran) 'tattered remnants of irredentism' from the conciliatory rhetoric (which fooled most commentators) of the Report. Aughey perceptively reads the crucial Article 5.8 of the Report as meaning that 'the two sovereign governments should establish a constitutional *fait accompli*, setting up institutions compatible with the idea of Irish unity, and ... that the British government should use the resources at its disposal to encourage unionists to come to terms with it'. (p.51)

Aughey's analysis of the policy assumptions which guided the British and Irish officials during the intense dialogue between London and Dublin after the publication of the Report (and Thatcher's initial dismissal of the major options) is a significant contribution to an understanding of the evolution of the Agreement. Briefly, both governments had an interest in 'containment' and the British acceptance of the 'naturalness' of Irish unity matched the aspirational politics of the Republic. The British Prime Minister's belief in the Union was worn down by the persuasive powers of British officials: 'Three times she lay down between the shafts ... but we got her whipped up again'. (p.53)

The British government signed the Agreement to 'buy off the barbarians' (p.204) - an entirely apt quotation from Lord Salisbury. The policy has failed. Dublin has used the Agreement, not as the basis for security co-operation with Britain, but to pillory the British legal system (p.190-95). Extradition will not occur under the 1987 Extradition Act (claimed as a major achievement of the Agreement) due to an Irish Supreme Court ruling in April 1990 which refused extradition on the grounds of 'political offence' and the likelihood of ill-treatment in British prisons. The Agreement has reduced Anglo-Irish relations to the politics of farce.

The substantive involvement of the government of the Republic in the affairs of Northern Ireland and the nationalist perception of the Agreement as suggestive of a British willingness to withdraw (Article 1) has intensified the violence of the IRA and the unificationist thrust of SDLP policy. On the 12 January 1988 (a few months after the Remembrance Day massacre in Enniskillen) the SDLP leader entered into talks with Sinn Fein/IRA. The SDLP-Sinn Fein talks were projected in the media by Hume and his constitutional nationalists as an attempt to 'put an end to all violent and military activity'. The issue was put with somewhat different emphasis to Sinn Fein/IRA in discussion documents exchanged between the participants: 'The real question is how we end the British presence in Ireland in a manner which leaves a peaceful and stable Ireland'.

Aughey displays a sure grasp of the *realpolitik* of constitutional nationalists in his consideration of Hume's *pas de deux* with Adams: 'With suitable encouragement - for example, an IRA ceasefire - the British will be only too happy to leave.' With the renunciation of violence Sinn Fein would guarantee itself a seat at a new constitutional conference which London and Dublin would be prepared to sponsor. The task of this conference would be to settle the arrangements for the accommodation of the protestant interest in a new Ireland. In that scenario it was of no consequence if unionists were outraged.

The strategy of the constitutional nationalists was to exploit the bargaining strength of Sinn Fein/IRA and to marginalise the negotiating role of unionists to produce an agreement between the British and

Irish governments on Irish unity. The SDLP failed to persuade Sinn Fein/IRA that the armalite was now a barrier to British withdrawal. But the talks were highly significant - the SDLP conceded the decisive role of Sinn Fein/IRA in any resolution of the Northern Ireland problem favourable to nationalists.

Hume has not given up on involving the IRA. In the 25-27 May 1990 issue of *The European* he exhorted the British government to significantly meet the IRA demand (repeated *ad nauseam* by Haughey) for a statement of withdrawal. The British government was assured by Hume that Sinn Fein/IRA 'will not be found wanting' if there is an appropriate British response to their conditions for negotiations. The IRA is regarded by Hume as a crucial piece in the constitutional nationalist end-game.

The assumption is, of course, that once Sinn Fein/IRA have been used in the process of 'persuading' the British they will be easily discarded. The achievement of Irish unity would put the IRA out of business and the Sinn Fein rhetoric of Third World solidarity (not entirely inappropriate given the current socio-economic profile of the Republic) would have little appeal for the Irish electorate. Aughey has exposed the hypocrisy of constitutional nationalism and has fully taken the measure of Hume - a duplicitous 'hawker of platitudes' intent on Irish unification. This, for Aughey, is no mean achievement given the standard media presentation (with the notable exception of Conor Cruise O'Brien) of the SDLP leader.

Aughey's book has a significance beyond its sustained advocacy of 'full and equal citizenship within the United Kingdom'. (p.VII) It is a powerful corrective to much that has been written about Northern Ireland, and should help to liberate the understanding of unionism and the politics of Northern Ireland from nationalist mythology and stereotype.

J'ACCUSE

Stanisa Vlahovic

The Rape of Serbia: the British role in Tito's grab for power, Michael Lees, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, pp. 328, 1989, $29.95

The author of *The Rape of Serbia* was a British Liaison Officer (BLO) with the Yugoslav royalist guerrillas under General Mihailovic between June 1943 and May 1944. He fought behind enemy lines in southern Serbia, disrupting the enemy's transport of troops and arms on the Belgrade to Thessaloniki railway, and blowing up bridges in the area.

Lees' book can be summarised in two words: *j'accuse.* To his bitter disappointment he discovered that the British had betrayed General Mihailovic's Corps and the BLOs who served with them. M04 command in Cairo, from whom BLOs took their orders, jumped on the Titoist bandwagon set in motion by the Italian capitulation and the duplicity of the western allies, in particular the British. The armchair warriors in Cairo and London began their dealings with Tito without knowing what was happening in Yugoslavia, and ignorant of (or ignoring) the fact that by promoting Tito they were helping the Comintern to achieve its purposes as well.

The BLOs with Mihailovic found themselves betrayed by their own government, and written off as 'terrorist gangs'. The promise which M04 command in Cairo had given BLOs, to send in regular supplies by plane and maintain contact by W/T, was broken. Captain Lees found himself during the sharp winter of 1943 barefoot, his battle dress in tatters, without a greatcoat, and with a W/T that had broken down. He survived on the friendship and food of Serbian peasants.

Forty years later - after publishing *The Special Operation Executed* in 1986 - Lees concluded that the official British version of Anglo-Yugoslavian wartime relations was humbug. He embarked on a thorough research of the Public Record Office in London where he found most of his signals from Serbia in the War Office series. Some of them had been tampered with, some were not completely decyphered, others not decyphered at all and, it seems, those which were, were decyphered too late. The signals appear not to have been shown to anybody in authority but merely filed away to gather dust. The bridges and railway he blew up, Mihailovic's destruction of the bridge at Visegrad in Bosnia and the German garrisons at Prijepolje and Rudo; all these brave exploits were ascribed to Tito's partisans by British command in Cairo and the BBC back home. Tito's communists were eulogised and the BLOs under Mihailovic condemned as terrorists.

Lees quickly discovered in the course of his research that the betrayal and abandonment of Mihailovic and the BLOs originated in communist inspired disinformation in sections of the British intelligence service in Cairo, London and New York. It was this disinformation, Lees demonstrates, that became the 'received wisdom' in London. He has amassed an impressive array of irrefutable historical evidence which tells the true story.

He traces the origin of those communists in British wartime organisations who fought hard for the imposition of communism in Yugoslavia after the war. In Cairo the Yugoslav desk in SOE was in the hands of communists and fellow travellers. In New York, in British Security Co-ordination (BSC), there were several highly placed communists whose job it was to recruit Canadian communist miners of Croat origin. These were sent to the Middle East for training and indoctrination by Major James Klugman and others before being parachuted into Yugoslavia to fight for Tito. The BSC officers responsible for recruiting Canadian communists were Colonel W.S. Bailey and Captain F.W. Deakin. Deakin recruited the Yugoslav communist (and experienced telegraphist) Branko Radojevic, alias

Captain Charles Robertson, in December 1941. Nine months later 'Captain Robertson' was dropped to Mihailovic's Corps with the task of spying on the General and his BLO, Captain Hudson.

Bailey was parachuted in to Mihailovic on Christmas Day 1942 as chief of the British mission with the General. He stayed until February 1944. The previous summer in Canada Bailey had been in close contact with Tim Buck, secretary general of the Canadian Communist Party. Buck introduced Bailey to Kovacevic, Comintern's North American agent. Lees questions Bailey's loyalty in view of the damage he did to the royalist cause in Yugoslavia, and the part he played in sending the communist 'Captain Robertson' to spy on Mihailovic. Is it possible, asks Lees, that Bailey was a communist mole?

The chief officer of Cairo's SOE Yugoslav desk in January 1943 was Major Basil Davidson. On 30 January 1943 Davidson sent Deakin to see Churchill, who was passing through Cairo on his way from the Casablanca conference. He told Deakin to recommend to Churchill the establishment of direct links with the communists in Yugoslavia. Thereafter, Deakin became the chief spokesman - apart from Fitzroy MacLean - for the Yugoslav communists.

Lees has cut to shreds the so-called MacLean Report to Churchill of 6th November 1943. How, asks Lees, could MacLean have written an objective report when he had no command of Serbo-Croat, and when, during the 23 days of his sojourn with Tito, he saw no-one or nowhere else? The report was a fraud; it contained a great deal of communist propaganda specifically designed for western consumption. It led the British government, early in 1944, to issue the following directive: 'In future, Mihailovic forces will be described not as patriots but as terrorist gangs; we shall also drop the phrase 'red bandits' as applied to Tito's partisans, and substitute *freedom fighters.*'

Michael Lees has successfully debunked the legend of Tito, and the fraudulent myths that enshrine him in British official thinking. Of the betrayed and abandoned Serbs, a brave and patriotic people, he writes: 'In truth, their only sin was to have been in the wrong place at the wrong time, and....to have trusted in the western allies.'

NATIVE DEMOCRACY

Robert Thomas

The Mind of South Africa : The Story of the Rise and Fall of Apartheid, Allistair Sparks, Heinneman, 1990, £16.95, (0-434-752665).

The Mind Of South Africa traces South African history from its stone age roots to the present day. It is a task for which Allistair Sparks is well qualified, having spent many years reporting on South African affairs for the *Economist* and other journals.

It is perhaps surprising, therefore, that despite his long experience the author detects in the African National Congress (ANC) an essential moderation and believes the ANC when it declares its intention to establish in South Africa a non-racialist democracy. This is in spite of the influence of communists in the ANC (which the author acknowledges) and of the 'Khmer Rouge' element amongst the 'comrades' (whose atrocities the author has witnessed). The low intensity guerrilla warfare waged by the ANC was the consequence of military failure rather than 'restraint'. The uprisings of the townships and the indiscriminate ANC terrorism of the mid-1970s were similarly a symptom of the ANC's thwarted military policies.

The book contains ample refutation of the leftist view which equates capitalism with apartheid. Apartheid was a reaction against capitalism; the pioneers of apartheid espoused the cause of 'socialist nationalism', and Verwoerd, apartheid's grand architect, expressed well the attitude of the Afrikaaners when he wrote that South Africa should choose 'to be poor and white rather than rich and multi-racial'. Sparks is sceptical about the ability of market forces to act as an agent of reform. He accuses South Africa's entrepreneurs of political quietism, but his narrative makes plain enough the fact that such quietism was the product of a long divorce between South Africa's industrial wealth and its structure of political power. While South African industrial expansion and the enrichment of the blacks that followed may never have abolished apartheid, the connection between them demonstrates the absurdity of the view that capitalism and apartheid go hand in hand. The price South Africa paid for apartheid was economic retardation.

When the South African government needed to harness the engines of capitalism in order to act as a regional superpower, her businessmen demanded reform in return. The reform they got may have been no more than 'neo-apartheid' but it released a market-generated wave of mutual self-interest which would lead to apartheid's eventual abolition.

Apartheid as an example of social engineering was a many-sided system of control; it sought to control peoples as well as markets. Its ideologists were obsessed with the myth of the Voortrekkers, and attempted to perpetuate what they termed 'natural native democracy'. Thus the living tradition of history stagnated in triumphalist pageantry. The journalist T.E. Robertson watched a Boer rally in 1938 and observed that 'girls in Voortrekker *kappies* leaned out of the windows in Fordsburg where relentless assembly belts were moving as the wagons passed.' Industrial reality marched incongruously with the rural Boer idyll.

In his closing chapter Sparks argues that if the black population is to negotiate successfully with the De Klerk government it must create an opposition 'grand alliance'. Such a sinking of differences between black tribes would be useful; it would

strengthen the hand of the moderate blacks and would hold out the possibility of the development in South Africa of the concept of a loyal opposition. An unwillingness to tolerate political opposition has been a common feature of the so-called Marxist-Leninist, but in reality tribal, states in Southern Africa (in Angola, Zimbabwe and Mozambique). It is to be hoped that South Africa will not follow their example, though the township murders of recent months hold out little hope, symptomatic as they are of deep-seated tribal enmities the scope of which are barely apparent yet to the rest of the world.

Sparks urges the Western world to 'constructively engage' the South African opposition whilst maintaining the threat of selective economic sanctions. This formula is outdated: Nelson Mandela is already 'constructively engaged' with the South African government. In the west his views and those the ANC are swallowed thoughtlessly and with guilty passion, regardless of the fact that they are obnoxious to the majority of blacks, as recent events demonstrate. The sanctions for which he calls would be damaging to a government threatened with a conservative backlash. Sanctions would also bring poverty to the blacks in South Africa and in the emergent states with economies dependent on South Africa's own.

The South African government has abandoned the intransigent elements of the *Volk*, who will now be left to drift into the atavism of the Afrikaaner Resistance Movement (AWB) and the South African Conservative Party. If the peace process is to succeed the ANC must abandon permanently the murderous twilight of the 'armed struggle' - Winnie Mandela described the recent suspension of the armed struggle as a 'mere strategy'. Additionally, it must end its alliance with the South African Communist Party. It may, however, be that the communist knot weed is so tightly bound around the aspirations of the ANC that this is impossible. The aim of the negotiations between government and opposition in South Africa should be to perpetuate a society based on free enterprise and legal order. It is to be feared that if a crypto-communist ANC government is able to impose its vision of the future on South Africa then that country will be subject to the same economic and moral devastation as afflicts much of the rest of Africa.

PETER THE GREAT

Alistair Cooke

Tory Seer: The Selected Journalism of T.E. Utley, edited by Charles Moore and Simon Heffer, Hamish Hamilton, 1989, £15.95 (0-241-12728-9)

This admirable selection from Peter Utley's immense corpus of published work is prefaced by tributes from Mrs Thatcher and Mr Enoch Powell. The Prime Minister describes him as 'the most distinguished Tory thinker of our time'. Mr Powell attributes to him an 'influence on his country's affairs (which) exceeded that of most of those who held even high political office during the same period'. Those judgements certainly do not exaggerate his importance. However, they might conceivably have the effect of leading some people to believe that from the start of his career this Tory seer deliberately and systematically sought to promote one particular kind of Conservatism - that which emerged strongly in the 1960s (thanks to Mr Powell) and which triumphed in the 1980s (thanks to Mrs Thatcher).

It would be quite wrong to regard the young Utley as the intellectual advance guard of Powellism and Thatcherism (the latter term was, in any case, always offensive to him). The chief characteristic of the Toryism, which he embodied so perfectly, has always been its capacity to adapt to changing conditions without compromising the permanent values which it represents. Everyone is familiar with that fundamental truth. In our day, however, no-one has expressed it with so much wit, skill and intellectual brilliance as Peter Utley. And, of course, the impact of the judgements which he delivered during a period of over forty years was increased by the elegant, yet extremely economical and precise manner in which he wrote. (An Utley piece always goes straight to the heart of the matter. Writing in 1963 about an issue to which he returned many times, he begins by asking: 'What should happen to an Anglican bishop who does not believe in God?', and continues, 'the Bishop, of course, says that he is not trying to dethrone God, but to redefine him in a manner acceptable to those who will not adopt the premises of the Christian religion.')

The young Utley did not rail against 'the middle way' adopted by the post-war Conservative leaders: on the contrary, he embraced it warmly. At that stage he found full employment and the welfare state wholly compatible with Toryism. He rejected both Sir Waldron Smithers and the followers of Professor Hayek. In a defence of the Eden Government, published in 1957, he stressed that:

> The doctrinaire policy of *laissez faire* was objectionable to the Tory mind on the ground that it rested on an oversimple view of human nature in its bearing on politics and on the ground that it reflected the social ideals of only one social class and denied those of the rest....Post-war Toryism stands and fall by the rejection of that proposal.

If Charles Moore's and Simon Heffer's excellent compendium has a fault, it is the comparative deficiency of material drawn from the 1940s and 1950s (the passage quoted above does not appear in it). That makes it difficult to trace the evolution of Peter Utley's opinions.

The general position, however, is clear. By the early 1960s he had become convinced that Toryism had to be defined afresh to correct the errors that

were then being made by adhering too inflexibly to the Toryism that had emerged in the 1940s. The 'middle way' was veering remorselessly to the left. Neither then nor later did he believe that the growing army of right-wing intellectuals had much to offer. He rather deplored the impression which the Tory Party sometimes gave of treating intellectuals seriously. He once wrote that the Party had become 'obsessed with the thoroughly misguided view - for which much of the blame must be set at the door of Lord Butler - that, though scant attention should be paid to the intelligentsia when it is getting on with its proper work, there ought always to be an intelligentsia on the doorstep, helping the Shadow Cabinet, hanging on its coat-tails and advising it in a theoretical way about day-to-day issues'. Such a disposition promoted argument and discord which prevented the Party from always striking the right note of national unity. In any case most of the fresh thinking that was needed had already been done by Enoch Powell, about whom Peter Utley wrote with more skill and understanding than any other commentator (some of the best extracts from this part of his work are included in this collection).

When Mrs Thatcher appeared on the scene, he at once recognised her as an authentic Tory. He saw it as one of his chief tasks to emphasise this reality, and so defend her from the fashionable charge that she was a doctrinaire radical - a task made harder, in his view, by some of the rhetoric employed by Mrs Thatcher herself and some of her over-enthusiastic acolytes. Nevertheless he persisted: and the Prime Minister has never been depicted more convincingly in her true Tory colours than in the articles about her included in this book.

In one respect - which was for him the most important respect of all - he was deeply disappointed. He felt that no serious attempt was made during the time when Mrs Thatcher's power was at its height to re-examine Conservative policy on Ulster, the subject that was closest to his heart from the late 1960s until his death. As he once said, Mrs Thatcher would normally box the ears of any civil servant who brought her tired clichés instead of new Tory policies: but as regards Ulster the old orthodoxies were allowed to prevail. In his view, Conservative policy towards the Province continued to be infected by the liberal illusions which he exposed so devastatingly in his *Lessons of Ulster* (1975), widely considered to be his best book. If a new policy for Ulster based on the Tory principles he espoused should ever emerge, it will owe much to the inspiration which so many have derived from his analysis of the problem, and of what should be done about it. This selection of his written work, and the fund that has been set up to encourage young journalists, provide two fine memorials. But the memorial that would have given him the greatest pleasure of all would be a distinctively Tory policy for the Province he loved so much.

MILL'S HUMANITY

James MacNamara

Mill and Liberalism, Maurice Cowling, Cambridge University Press, (1963), 1990, £9.95, pp.161, (0-521 38872 4)

Old-fashioned militant liberalism, at least in its arcane philosophical form, may well have expired last year with the passing of Sir Alfred Ayer. This elegant monograph on its founding-founder, John Stuart Mill, which first appeared in 1963, anticipated the obituaries and shocked the academic Mill industry into some plaintive rejoinders. The *Mill Newsletter* even went so far as to suggest that this was the revenge of Cambridge for Mill's attack on Sidgwick five generations earlier. The author, Maurice Cowling, remains unrepentantly at Peterhouse College, and has furnished this reprint by CUP with a large second preface placing the provenance of the essay in the context of post-war British politics. The additional material gives the publication a double interest to those who wish to know what new twists are currently being given to liberal ideas.

The original essay undertook to show that Mill's disciples did not truly understand their master's intentions about the Art of Government, or if they did, then we should beware of them. There are no changes to the text to suggest that Cowling has revised this judgement in the case of contemporary liberals - the party of virtue as he calls them. In fact this is the most comprehensive devastation of Mill and his legacy ever mounted. There have of course been entire libraries of philosophical criticism directed against his chief ideas of negative liberty, utilitarian rationalism, and disinterested government the most effective being those of Stephens, Bradley and Moore. But they all tend to start from the same premise, that he was hopelessly inconsistent and the best course was to try to 'save the appearances' of liberal theory as a whole. The strategy was to apply his own logic to the various texts, *Representative Government, On Liberty, Utilitarianism,* and so on, admit that they were both internally contradictory and in normative conflict with each other, and then trade in comparative textual small print to invent a new restored Mill. The problem with this approach is that it fails to supply an answer to the vexed question of why liberal progressive opinion drawn from these sources of doubt is so certain and utterly self-congratulatory, and how popular political sentiment over a century after his death could still be in thrall to such a mediocre philosopher. *Mill and Liberalism* provides some chilling answers.

Essentially what Cowling does is to reinstate Mill as a coherent political theorist by truncating his libertarianism. This is very neat, perhaps too neat given the porous nature of the subject, though it is important to add that this is a study which remains

very firmly rooted in a wide selection of Mill texts, and that it does not avoid complex analysis. Proceeding through its six closely argued chapters, it gradually becomes apparent that liberal philosophy is going to pay a very heavy price for its intellectual consistency. The figure who emerges from these pages is not the familiar one everybody has learned to love or hate, the gentle apostle of individual freedom against arbitrary Laws, the exponent of universal tolerance, the lover of diversity; on the contrary, this is a Mill with an extremely nasty dogmatic streak right through his character. It is the mark he has passed on to his many descendants without it seems their being aware of it. Cowling doesn't deny that the liberty side of Mill exists; the advocate of minimum government, a free press, the emancipation of women, representative institutions and the rest of the usual programme. What he wishes to demonstrate is that this interest is entirely subordinate to another far more grandiose, and far-reaching project - the replacement of the Christian religion by that form of liberal, rationalistic utilitarianism which went by the name of the Religion of Humanity. The emphasis in his work on negative liberty is thus a strategic affair which fits into the larger scheme. It was an instrument to be used against existing Victorian society, a method to ensure the systematic disembowelment of settled moral habits, of transcendental Christian principles, and of customary rule.

Cowling takes us through Mill's philosophy of history in order to set his programme in its proper context. Mill, it appears, hated his own society because it did not take sufficient political account of its own intellectuals. Therefore he wished to secure by a subtle advocacy of moral revolution, the transition from one type of social cohesion, the traditional, to another marked with the stamp of his own higher rationalism, the refined utilitarian. And the type of social cohesion enjoined in the new mentally engaged order required a more comprehensive sense of political obligation than anything conceived within the looser forms of historical arrangements. There are not two Mills then, as many critics have surmised, hovering between libertarianism and authoritarianism; there is one, the cultural elitist. Cowling is at his best when demonstrating with a wealth of quotation that as a category of thought, negative liberty, is and was intended to be, *both* rationally destructive *and* rationally authoritarian at one and the same time. At the end of this exposition there stands revealed a consistent philosopher who corrupted political philosophy, or as the essay puts it, (p.63) 'It exposes... a socially cohesive, morally insinuating, proselytising *doctrine.* Mill was a proselytiser of genius: the ruthless denigrator of existing positions, the systematic propagator of a new moral posture, a man of sneers and smears and pervading certainty'.

On its first appearance *Mill and Liberalism* provoked general outrage amongst reviewers. Its new second preface mentions some of these as having obligingly identified themselves as 'archetypes of its targets'. Words like 'dangerous' and 'unpleasant' were thrown about. The author was clearly delighted to receive confirmation that liberals, like their master, still believe that fearless criticism is not a two way process. A trawl through the contemporary reviews is both instructive and revealing in other ways also, providing a useful commentary on the central thesis.

It was Roland Hall in *Philosophical Quarterly* who described the book as 'dangerous, pretentious,and unpleasant'. It is a curious piece in which the reviewer is mostly concerned to count the number of times that Cowling uses certain words. He also objects to a 'levels of analysis' approach to Mill; contextualisation is all. This is even odder because it is precisely what Cowling's synthesising treatment amounts to. The difference is that Hall thinks the text will always yield a Mill of extreme libertarian dispositions, 'A subtle and honest thinker and an interesting man'. Professor Wollheim in the *New Statesman* also recoiled from it all, 'an irascible essay' which 'made depressing reading' and refused to take seriously the proposition that Mill might have believed in Liberty mainly as a way of subverting religious Faith. This was the assertion which touched all the reviewers on the raw. Yet the importations of Mill-type principles into the Church of England has unquestionably subverted religious belief. Maurice Cranston in the *Listener* avoided this topic directly and chose a middle path. He called the book 'Shrill and unjust' and thought the new interpretation to be 'a simple inversion of the popular version of Mill'. An amusing correspondence between reviewer and author about whether they were both talking about the same book went on for some months in the letters column in which Cranston eventually conceded that Mill might have had 'a slender streak of the authoritarian', though Cowling had exaggerated it. The author responded that 'the middle way is the worst place to assess this mid-Victorian moralist whose great talents and considerable arrogance helped to lay its foundations in the first place'. Stephen Lukes in *New Society* began well and ended badly. He deftly got straight to the heart of the matter by bringing in the influence of Coleridge, Carlyle and Wordsworth upon Mill's positivism, the romantic strain which turned him into a quasi-religious proselytiser. He also agreed that the principle of Utility, the lynchpin of the system, is never properly proved. Having got that far he then relaxed and declared that for all his faults, the founder of Liberalism was rational, his case well-argued, and since he was progressive any scepticism about him is self-refuting.

It was left to the great guru of Mill philosophy, J.C. Rees, to reply to Cowling at great length in *Political Studies*, under the title 'Was Mill for Liberty?' He doesn't say much more than the dominant view is that Mill was *indeed* for liberty. One wonders now whether this has become the sub-dominant view since Cowling's re-appraisal. The other problem is that Rees so stresses the Libertarian element in the course of his article that one begins to

wonder whether Mill had a theory of political obligation at all. At least after a reading of *Mill and Liberalism* one is left in no doubt that he did, and an insidiously tyrannical one, too. And that is where it ended, apart from one or two splutters in U.S. journals. An opportunity to open up the horizons of liberal theory in the late twentieth century was missed by the very academics most qualified to render this service. It would appear that to the conventional mind at least, Liberalism *is* the medium of intellectual exchange, and cannot therefore appear on any list of negotiable items to *be* exchanged.

This probably explains why Cowling's new preface bears only a tangential relationship to the original text. The people who actually ran with the anti-liberal ball he and others in the early 1960s had kicked on to the field were a collection of journalists, politicians and all purpose thinkers, from mixed ideological backgrounds and with a mixture of motives ranging from opportunism, to a healthy desire to get some fresh air. Cowling names them exhaustively and with the relish of a mind which loves serious games. The reservations he finally expresses are for the various new styles of conservative-liberalism which bring back certain features of Nineteenth Century liberalism in new colours but with all the old fervour of the totally converted. He states his own preference for complete political scepticism of the conservative style which can still see off a Mill when it needs to. How far the so-called 'New Right' will be able to maintain his rigorous distinction between political Doctrine and Political Philosophy, (the bar on which he broke Mill), or how far the rest of the century will let them, remains to be seen.

FUNDAMENTALLY RIGHT

Mervyn Hiskett

Islamic Fundamentalism, Youssef M. Choueiri, Pinter Publications, London, 1990, (0-86187-923-6)

This informative, and sometimes provocative work appears in the publisher's 'Themes in Right-Wing Ideology and Politics Series', hard by *The Extreme Right in Europe and North America Since 1945*, *Race and Right in Contemporary Politics* and similar titular thunder clouds. The assumption is undoubtedly that Islamic fundamentalism is a phenomenon of the Right, and this becomes apparent in the text.

It at once raises the query: If there is an Islamic Right, where and what is the Islamic Left? Presumably it must, by definition, include the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party. But Ba'thism has thrown up Saddam Hussein. The European Left might quail at receiving him as a fellow. It is true that the main emphasis of Ba'thism is on Arab nationalism but it can hardly be judged unIslamic and secularist on that account, as the recent call to Holy War against unbelievers, addressed to all Muslims, not just Arabs, makes clear. I find it difficult to distinguish this posture from any other display of Islamic militancy. One must therefore ask whether there really is a useful distinction to be made, for instance, between this present apparition of Iraqi nationalism and pan-Islamism, and earlier manifestations of Islamic extremism, that can be framed in terms of the European notions of Left and Right?

Then there is the Ayatollah Khomeini (whom the author, correctly but unfamiliarly spells 'Khumayni'). Unlike Saddam Hussein, who does not even earn a place in the index, the Ayatollah rates an *Epilogue*. As Dr. Choueiri points out, Khomeini was inspired by Ali Shari'ati's 'Islamic Marxism' and adopted a strongly anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist stance. Yet if there is such an entity as 'Islamic fundamentalism' as opposed simply to 'Islam' - a moot point that Choueiri assumes but does not adequately defend - then it must surely be Khomeini's Iranian Revolution. But given its antecedents, its Rightist credentials seem questionable.

Dr. Choueiri seems aware of such dilemmas when he strives, not very successfully, to extricate Sayyid Quth, the ideologue of 'Islamic radicalism', from the odium of fascism and Nazism by leaving him 'suspended in mid-air between religion and science'. (pp.148-9)

A tendency to resort to cut and dried categories and neat but jarring cut-off points pervades this book. For instance, there is an early attempt (p.15) to divide Islam into'historical' and 'modern' at c. AD 1453, as a basis for the forthcoming discussion. This is open to more caveats that can be entered in this review.

Much is assumed in the peremptory distinction between 'Islamic Revivalism' and 'Islamic Reformism', which lead somewhat glibly on to 'Islamic Radicalism' and 'Islamic Fundamentalism'. This cuts many Gordian knots and has a superficial methodological attractiveness. All the same, I am not to be persuaded that an Islamic 'revivalist' is one who inveighs against the idolatrous veneration of the tombs of Muslim holy men, whereas an Islamic 'reformer' is one who is spurred on to emulation by visiting a Western cannon foundry. If only it were that simple!

I sympathise with the author in his search for a satisfactory terminology to describe Islam. I have been perplexed by it myself. But it is not to be resolved by anachronistic short cuts and culturally alien concepts. Islam is to be understood in terms of tendencies, moods and emphases, not movements. Dr. Choueiri would have been well advised to follow certain learned contributors to *The Cambridge History of Islam,* and think in terms of a 'defensive modernism' and a shading of attitudes for and against it, that pervade all levels of Islamic thought but are exclusive to none.

The book has no footnotes and the author places

occasional references in the text. I find Sulaiman's colourful but feral *A Revolution in History* a startling authority upon which to base an assessment of 'Revivalist Islam' in northern Nigeria!

Having recorded these reservations concerning his general approach to his subject, it is fair to say that much of Dr. Choueiri's detailed work makes an original contribution to the understanding of present day Islam. I particularly appreciated Chapter 2, which successfully untangles a plethora of recent Islamic initiatives - for example Salafism and the Muslim Brethren. Chapters 4 and 5 deftly trace the influences that contributed to what he calls fundamentalism. Chapter 6 explains the perceived 'qualitative contradiction between Western civilisation and the religion of Islam' that is basic to that fundamentalism.

All of this - and Dr. Choueiri's clear, unencumbered prose - are good reasons for recommending his book to those who are intrigued by the study of Islam.

A GREEN HILL FAR AWAY

Helen Pickthorn

Octavia Hill: A Life, Gillian Darley, Constable, 1990, £17.95, (0 094963303)

Many people have never heard of Octavia Hill. Yet she was very well known in her lifetime. There is still, just, an Octavia Hill Society in Philadelphia, U.S.A. Two royal princesses, Princess Louise and Princess Alice in Germany, both daughters of Queen Victoria, were personal friends and admirers. Lord Salisbury, leader of the Conservative party and author of an article 'The Mischief of State Aid', did his best to promote knowledge of her enterprises in housing and in training to change the situation of poor people. Few know that Octavia Hill was the driving force behind the National Trust, campaigning for open spaces both in towns and countryside from the 1870s.

Gillian Darley's biography is full of new and illuminating material, well arranged and easy to digest. It is also relevant to the interests that concern us today - green feelings, inner cities, self-help, local management, self-regulation as opposed to inspection, and above all, how to nurture and not destroy family life, all considerations that have been pushed aside in this century's manic drive for 'progress'.

It was from an aesthetic angle that Octavia may have sensed the danger. Child and grandchild of gifted parents, she trained first as an art-copyist under Ruskin. Throughout her life, when exhausted by her work, it was to places like Sienna and Assisi that she travelled to recuperate. Her first housing schemes were financed by Ruskin and for years afterwards he was a supporter, until eventually a painful break occurred, Octavia deeper and deeper into her flock of fellow workers, Ruskin into sad seclusion in the Lake District.

What was the nature of her work? In responding to questions from a Royal Commission in 1884, Octavia told how they bought rooms 'perfectly teeming with people, and then we gradually get them to move into larger or to take additional rooms; and we deal with everything gradually....with a view to bringing out the powers of the people, and treating them as responsible for themselves within certain limits.'

As with so many people of her day, the Bible, meditation and prayer accompanied everything she did. Tolerant of others' beliefs, from an Owenite non-conformist family herself, in straitened circumstances, and with borrowed funds, she was managing fifteen blocks of housing for the very poor by the time she was thirty-six years old. Areas of Kent and Cornwall, footpaths, common lands, 'quaint, picturesque, out of the world places - greeting the eye with a sense of repose', all these and more were secured by her for posterity, first through various small societies and then with, Canon Rawnsley, through the National Trust which they founded in 1895.

She fought on committees alongside and against most of the famous names in philanthropy of her day: William Morris, George MacDonald, Charles Booth, Lord Shaftesbury, Emily Davies, Elizabeth Garret Anderson are a few of the names that come to life in these pages. It is sad to note how many of their battles have worked out now in suburban sprawl, tower blocks and vast impersonal hospitals and schools.

Octavia was not much interested in politics. She preferred, she said, to work 'on a small scale'. She identified with those she was at pains to help; and yet she was not sentimental. In 1869 Octavia set out her opinions in a paper entitled 'The Importance of Aiding the Poor without Almsgiving'. Her friend and helper, Henrietta Rowland wrote, 'She held that it was impertinent to the poor and injurious to their character to offer them doles. They should be lifted out of pauperism by being expected to be self-dependent and in evidence of respect, be offered work instead of doles, even if work had to be created artificially.'

Close acquaintance with the poor, fortified by her religious faith, may have given Octavia an understanding and respect for all human nature, an understanding which seems to have been lacking in many of those around her who chose a more political path. Beatrice Webb, for example, although interested at first, preferred to be author of, among other things, the Minority Report which recommended separation of the provision of the support of the 'able-bodied' and the 'non able-bodied' and a series of committees to deal with education, health, asylums and pensions. As we all now know to our cost, it is the Webb influence that has dominated.

In Short

Wings of a Man's Life, S. Gorley Putt, The Claridge Press, 1990, £16.95.

There are three reasons for writing an autobiography: to present a picture of the author, to advance some cause, or to capture one man's experiences so that others may share them. It is this last which seems to have inspired Gorley Putt. Although he was at Cambridge in the 'thirties, worked at the BBC under Reith and at Bletchley during the war, taught at three universities and was Warden of Harkness House, it is on friends and friendship which he dwells. Cambridge put him in touch, as he himself says, not with the famous spies but with C.P. Snow, Leavis and Charles Allberry.

Putt does not enlarge on his political views but it is plain that he holds all the liberal ideas proper to his generation and profession but combined with a tolerance far from usual in modern liberal circles. Indeed if one were searching for complaints, one might be that he is almost too tolerant. A really harsh judgement is only once expressed, on those teachers in comprehensive schools who refused to allow their pupils to apply for places at Oxford or Cambridge, and even then the culprits are not named. This coolness makes it unlikely that the book will be made into a television documentary but it is a refreshing change from some recent efforts. The general impression left by the book is of a life both useful and enjoyable. (D.S.)

Opting Out: An Opportunity for Church Schools, Frank Field, Church in Danger, PO Box 132, East Rudham, Norfolk PE31 8QT, 1990.

Frank Field, Labour MP for Birkenhead, here urges the Church to exploit the 1988 Education Reform Act. Opting-out provides the Christian with the chance to help end the damaging monopoly over education presently enjoyed by the country's pedagogical elite, by placing in the hands of the parent and governor the power 'to opt into a new partnership with the Church.' Surveys show what most parents have known all along: that church schools are less fashionable and therefore more reputable than many of the larger county schools.

Field's argument is fine as far as it goes; a more libertarian education system is broadly desirable. But it raises as many problems as it solves. It is not only Christians who will want to make use of this greater freedom: Muslim parents insist that they too have a right to state schools of their own. The issue is especially difficult for conservative-minded Christians (like Mr Field) for whom the spread of multifaithism is as disturbing as the public funding of Islamic schools would be. Does he agree with his party's education spokesman, Jack Straw, that it is unjust to deny public funds to Muslim schools when the privilege exists for the Anglican, Roman Catholic, Methodist and Jew? In this area, as in many others, it is in the public interest that the consumer is *not* king.
(JA de C)

EMU Now? Tim Congdon, Centre for Policy Studies, 1990.

EMU Now? is well timed; Britain at last has joined the Exchange Rate Mechanism and attention swings to what has always been the final solution: a single currency in a United States of Europe.

Mr Congdon is surely correct to emphasise that the transition to EMU cannot be achieved without costs. These may well be significant, and it is to the detriment of the protagonists of EMU that they imply them to be a minor hiccup if they refer to them at all. But his own omissions are equally serious when he assesses the benefits of a single currency. He speaks as though after EMU, when the currency is once more 'steady state', everyone would be a bit better off and that would be it. But some of the most important implications are for economic growth. It would not be long before even the meagre benefits Mr Congdon allows would amount to progress which far outweighs the initial costs.

Ultimately however, the economic arguments over EMU remain of secondary importance. The motive behind EMU is as much political as economic. For Mr Congdon and for many others a United Europe requires sacrifices of a Nation State that no mere promise of economic prosperity can justify, so what price political union when this promise may be unfulfilled?
(E.F.)

Public Funding of Minority Languages: the case against, Ray Honeyford, Majority Rights, BM Box 3515, London WC1 3XX, 1990.

Since being driven from his post as headmaster of a Bradford secondary school, Ray Honeyford has worked tirelessly to promote the peaceful integration of minorities into British society. His latest contribution draws attention to the necessity of a standard national language as 'the single most important way of creating and maintaining an integrated and coherent multi-ethnic society and state'.

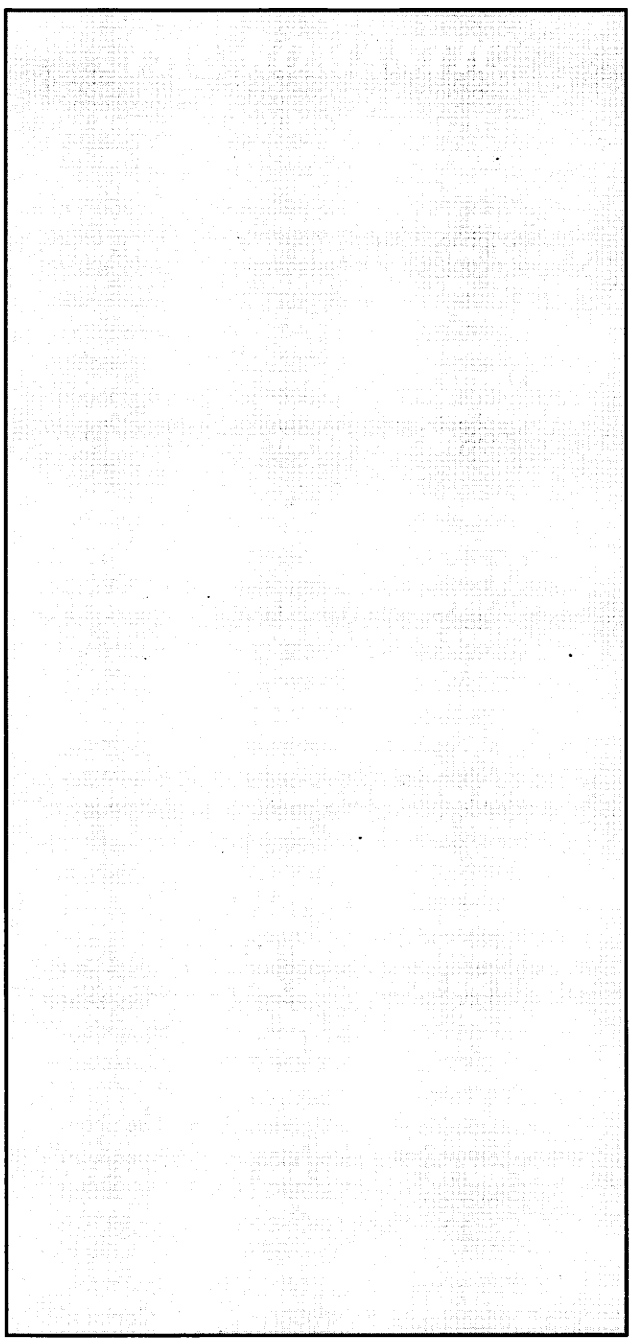
Mr Honeyford warns that the demand for separate language rights for minorities comes neither from minority parents, who appreciate the importance of their children learning English, nor from the Palace of Westminster, but from the race relations lobby; a group so blinded by their hatred for the culture of the majority of British people, and so convinced that the English language is a covert conspiracy against 'black' people, that they are able to recommend policies which would only serve to hold back the patient advancement of minority groups in British society.

Rather than waste resources on an impractical policy of multilingualism in our schools, and thereby ensure that immigrants remain immigrants, isolated from their English-speaking neighbours and incapable of realising the opportunities that citizenship confers, we should welcome an increase in public funding of English classes.
(JA de C)

Teachers Mistaught: Training in theories or education in subjects? Sheila Lawlor, Centre for Policy Studies, 1990.

The main reason for our weak educational performance is not the teachers but those who train them and in the process, pervert them. The government realised this some years ago, but the reforms of the 1980s have been hijacked by the 'Wayward Elite' who have succeeded in keeping their damaging sociological nostrums in place.

In this trenchant and informative pamphlet Dr. Sheila Lawlor suggests radical remedies; graduates should train on the job, as they always used to; the PGCE should be abolished, thereby releasing the graduate from tedious Marxist baggage; non-graduates should take a two year Certificate of Advanced Studies; those unsuited to the classroom should be identified at an early stage; and the Inspectorate should be reformed.
(M.C.)



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