

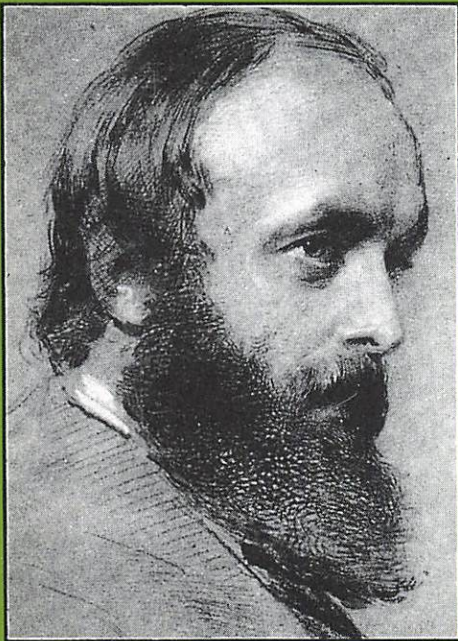
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The Third Marquess of Salisbury
1830 - 1903

Confessions of a Euro-Sceptic

E. J. Mishan

The Sacred in Art

John Tavener

American Feminists

Christina Sommers

The Health Obsession

Bruce Charlton

Euro-Culture

Helen Szamuely

The Council Tax Disaster

Vivian Linacre

The Claridge Press

The Salisbury Review

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The law of England excludes a Roman Catholic from the Crown. But there is no law to forbid our Parliament from surrendering its powers to a Roman Catholic President of Europe. How did this extraordinary 'presidency' arise? How is it that an agreement for free trade between the European democracies should have spawned a quasi-socialist dictatorship, whose insolent self-opinion rivals that of the former Communist Party? In a trenchant article, Ezra Mishan questions the whole basis for our entry into the EEC, suggesting that the economic reasons originally offered have never been valid. Reflecting on Professor Mishan's arguments, one can only conclude that political, rather than economic considerations have carried the day. But why? What conceivable political benefit is it to our country, to relinquish its position as centre of the English-speaking world and keystone of the only viable alliance, in order to sit uncomfortably at the edge of Europe, its national customs swallowed by the socialist Euroculture described in these pages by Helen Szamuely?

The causes of the disaster are many, and lack of effective leadership is undeniably one of them. But this lack of leadership has deeper roots. Our society has experienced a certain failure of nerve. And this failure of nerve has a religious source. The new Briton lives fearfully amid his brief possessions, without faith in salvation or hope for a world to come. In politics as in life his principal response is to hedge his bets. Hence the obsession with health, described here by Bruce Charlton: an obsession whose social, political and economic consequences have been incalculable. The Labour Party has little appeal to modern Englishmen save through the idea of 'Health Care', conceived as a universal sacrament and the bread of life. It is the collective clinging to life and its pleasures that leads people to view the state as their natural guardian, and the fairy godmother to all in need. Rational solutions to the problem of poverty — such

as the system of voluntary taxation defended here by B. M. Craven and C. L. Marston — hold no appeal for modern people, who find suffering intelligible only when reduced to statistics, and only when its cries are answered by an impersonal and all-providing State.

Statist ways of thinking enter as much into the assumptions of the Conservative Party as into those of its rival. As Clive Dunwich demonstrates, in a wide-ranging discussion, market solutions are seldom embraced by modern governments, once a tradition of centralised decision-making has arisen. In particular, modern governments exacerbate the problems of monopoly, by creating legal monopolies of their own, while impeding the free flow of information necessary for a healthy market. Although there is no doubt that the Tory Party is guilty of Mr Dunwich's charges, it is also true that its long-standing advocacy of a 'property owning democracy' (an idea whose history is briefly reviewed by George Chowdhary-Best) has made it suspicious of socialist schemes and anxious to thwart them — unless, of course, they are devised in Brussels. But if suspicion of the opponent is all that is left of Tory thinking, the party has little chance of providing what our country needs.

Not that conservatives have an easy time elsewhere. In the United States, for instance, hitherto a bastion of conservative values, a new culture of the victim is spreading like a cancer through the entire social organism. Christina Sommers documents one of its outbreaks, and one cannot fail to notice, through her gentle irony, the determination and aggression of the feminists whose lunacy she is describing. With Hillary Clinton at the helm, American society is likely to take decisive steps towards the feminist utopia. The result will be sexual apartheid, with the female phalansteries supported by massive handouts from the State. Perhaps we can look forward to the day when marriage itself is regarded as politically incorrect.

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Conservative Journals: *The Daily Bugle*

Published in Canterbury, Victoria, *The Daily Bugle* describes itself as 'the occasional journal of the Tom Wolfe Society', though which Tom Wolfe it has in mind is unclear. Edited by Ruth Browning, and appearing three times a year, the journal mounts a sustained and fearless attack on the Australian left establishment. Like the *Salisbury Review*, it has an interest in Central Europe, specifically in Romania, and recognizes communism as one of the decisive modern experiences, which we still need to understand. But, like the *Salisbury Review*, it searches for an alternative, and for the philosophy that will vindicate our way of life and resurrect its decencies.

In the issue for September 1991, the editress (as she styles herself) defends censorship as the only coherent response to pornography, and the necessary safeguard of an equally necessary innocence; while in the same issue the poet and barrister Hal Colebatch mounts a sustained response to the American liberal establishment's endorsement of publicly-funded obscenities, such as the notorious exhibition of photographs by Robert Mapplethorpe. For these articles

alone, the journal is likely to be banned from enlightened universities. But the *Bugle* does not stop there. M.A. Casey writes movingly, if somewhat despairingly, in praise of piety, while Diana Lakehurst — described as a 'sixth former and an existentialist', and evidently Australia's answer to Julie Burchill — paints a vitriolic portrait of her politically correct schoolmistress, the unfortunate Miss MacLeish. The volume also contains an Allan Bloom-like criticism of pop music from Ernest Zannatta, together with articles on Franz Kafka (one of the *Bugle's* culture heroes), on science fiction as the quintessentially liberal literary genre, and on New York.

The Daily Bugle offers a regular John Pilger Prize for 'committed journalism', and is proof that Australian conservatism still has a young constituency, able to respond to the powers that be, and to renew its belief in the European heritage of that drifting continent.

The Daily Bugle is available from the Editress, 17, Mont Albert Road, Canterbury, Victoria, 3126 Australia.

Confessions of a Euro-Sceptic?

Whatever Happened to Those Promised Economic Gains? asks E. J. Mishan

Since those who sought to persuade the British public, in the years prior to 1973, of the wisdom of joining the EC put the weight of their rhetoric on the economic advantages, it would not be premature if the public were to insist that the government produce a report assessing the magnitude of the economic benefits which – unbeknown to us – we have been enjoying over the past two decades.

The reluctance of successive governments to undertake, or at least to publicise, an economic assessment of Britain's net gains consequent upon our membership of the EC is understandable. For notwithstanding the feverish coining of extravagant phrases about the immense economic advantages to be reaped by entry into a Common Market of "over 200 million customers", the few rough estimates of the economic effects that have been attempted lend no support whatever to those original claims. Quite the contrary, such estimates reveal that ever since we bound ourselves to this economic union, the country has suffered substantial losses, which are certain to grow in the future.

Britain's annual contribution to the EC budget exceeds its receipts from it by more than £2 billion, an annual drain on its resources which it can ill afford at a time of acute balance-of-payments deficit. The second most obvious statistic is our balance of payments with our EC partners which continues to worsen. In the five years prior to our entry, our exports to EC countries were on average some £200 million less than our imports from them. In the five years following our entry, the deficit rose to £2000 million. Today it stands close to £12,000 million.

A third statistic, yet more glaring, is the contrived reduction in our standard

of living, inasmuch as an essential condition of our entry in 1973 was our acceptance of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). This meant that we were no longer free to follow our traditional policy of importing foodstuffs at competitive world prices. Bound by the terms of its new agreement, Britain was compelled to raise its tariffs against both Commonwealth and other food-producing countries. Consequently the greater amount of the food we buy today is produced by EC countries, at prices that are far above world prices. Support prices established by the CAP for grains and butter are about twice those in other parts of the world.

Today, an average family of four is paying about £1,000 a year more than it need to maintain and encourage large numbers of inefficient farms in France and Germany

According to recent estimates, British families over the last few years have been paying about 50 per cent more for their food than they would have had to pay if, instead, Britain were allowed to import its food at world prices. Today, an average family of four is paying each about £1,000 a year more than it need to maintain and encourage large numbers of inefficient farms in France and Germany. The difference that such saving in food expenditure would make to low-income families, were

Britain able to opt out of the CAP, need not be laboured. Admittedly, there has been recent agreement within the Commission to trim some of the agricultural support prices. But this will contribute little to reducing the CAP burden, because farmers agreeing to withdraw land from cultivation require compensation from taxpayers.

How the British People Were Hoodwinked Into Accepting EC Membership.

To understand how the British people were conned into accepting the claim that entry into the EC was desirable we must return to the Sixties and try to recapture the political atmosphere. This decade was notorious for unremitting self-deprecation. "The British disease" – or by way of variety "the English disease" – was in great favour among the cognoscenti whenever attention was drawn to the low growth of GNP in Britain compared to that of "The Six". The decade was no less notorious for the spread of the popular conviction that this dread "disease" could be overcome only if the country married into wealth, and became part of the European Community.

The oracular phrases being spun with carefree abandon by financial editors, politicians, historians, and others eager to acquire a reputation for statesmanship and hard-nosed realism, did indeed have the effect of convincing the greater part of the British public that the country did not really have any choice; that only by entry into this new and prospering customs union could we survive as a viable economy. Thus it was repeatedly alleged that if we missed this singular opportunity, that of becoming a member of this fast-growing economic union, varying

degrees of calamity would engulf the country: we should "fall behind in the race;" we should "stagnate alone;" we should "be pushed into a backwater;" we should become "economically unviable;" and much more tending to the same catastrophe. The provision of evidence and economic analysis was unnecessary. The fanciful metaphor spoke for itself. And its ceaseless repetition alone took its toll on the public's credulity.

The business community was continually being invited to contemplate the mouth-watering prospect of unlimited export opportunities within a rapidly expanding European market of wealthy customers. But the price we should have to pay for entering this imaginary El Dorado was overlooked—the loss of Commonwealth and world markets for our goods. What was also downplayed was that Britain's trade with the Commonwealth and other countries was more valuable, pound for pound, than her trade with Europe. The bulk of Britain's trade with the former countries involved the export of industrial goods and equipment in exchange for raw materials and food-stuffs, such trade being mutually beneficial and relatively stable. In contrast, Britain's trade with her high-income European partners would be mostly composed of the exchange of manufactured goods and equipment—which were fairly close substitutes and, therefore, yielding limited gain. Such trade would also be far less stable.

Certainly, the "pro-Europeans" had to concede that our food imports would be more costly once we subscribed to the CAP. But this consideration, they alleged, was hardly a deterrent. The CAP would initially add a little to the cost-of-living index. That would be a small price to pay for the privilege of being a partner in this new dynamic forward-looking Europe. In the event, the CAP has proved to be an irremovable millstone round the neck of the British consumer.

Two other claims that featured large in the pro-Market propaganda of the Sixties fare no better. Close association with the Six, it was asserted, would act to bring down the high rate of inflation in Britain, a desideratum that

would emerge from "the discipline" exerted by the Market. Secondly, this same association with the Six would act to quicken Britain's rate of economic growth, a consummation that would flow from "the dynamic" of the Market.

It seems incredible now how willing people were to be deceived when elementary economic considerations should have made them sceptical of either claim.

Countries having relatively small internal markets such as South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, Canada, and for that matter the island economies of Hong Kong and Singapore, enjoy high and rising living standards.

Whatever the causes of the high rate of inflation during the Sixties and beyond, it was certain that the significant rise in the cost of imported food, which could be anticipated following our entry into the EC, would give a fillip to workers' wage demands, so quickening the rise in the price level. This was not all however. Our over-all balance-of-payments deficit was soon to be aggravated by the inevitable redirection of our foreign trade which was to result in a devaluation of sterling and, therefore, a quantum rise in the cost-of-living index. Thus these two effects combined to give impetus to an already vicious wage-price spiral that we were struggling to control.

Finally there are those much-acclaimed long-term advantages, which were so confidently expected to result simply from hitching the British economy to those more "dynamic" economies of the Six. Although the pro-Market propagandists attributed the prosperity of these countries to their formation of a customs union in

1958, the truth is that their average growth rates over the five years preceding the Treaty of Rome were at least as fast as in the three years following.

The economic mechanisms by which the sprint in Britain's economic growth—it was repeatedly affirmed—would be realised once it entered the Common Market were never explained. Two imaginary connections, however, did persistently surface during the debate. The simple-minded believed that merely by close association with our more "thrustful" European neighbours, their economic virtues would somehow brush off onto the British economy. Hardly less naive was the popular idea that in the modern "high tech" world, a really large *internal* market is needed to exploit the so-called economies of scale, an idea that is not borne out by the evidence. Countries having relatively small internal markets such as South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, Canada, and for that matter the island economies of Hong Kong and Singapore, enjoy high and rising living standards. The latter, having populations that are a small fraction of ours, are particularly successful in competing in world markets and can boast of economic growth rates well in excess of those found in Western countries.

What is it that keeps Britain in the EC?

We may conclude that there are no long-term economic advantages to Britain of remaining in the EC to set against the considerable and calculable losses from doing so. Neither is there any manifest political advantage to this country from merging its future in an expanding union of diverse European countries that is uneasily and erratically exerting itself to conform to a timetable directed to culminate in the virtual erosion of national sovereignties. We may well ask just what it is that keeps us in the EC.

First, let us acknowledge that it would indeed require great political courage for the nation as a whole to confess, after some two decades, that it was

gullible enough to be misled into making a colossal blunder. And since both the Conservative and the Labour Party were clearly instrumental in taking the country into the Common Market, neither Party would be inclined, officially, to admit to having committed so egregious an error of judgement. Hence an irresistible temptation to disregard the sorry economic record of the past two decades and to continue to make emphatic pronouncements about our leadership of, and our prospects within, this "powerful and expanding union".

There is, secondly, the unavoidable pressure of administrative inertia operating against any potential decision to make the many political changes to sever the nation from a misalliance to which we have become accustomed. Such a reorganisation would involve a dismantling of the machinery of EC consultation and cooperation. Moreover, transitional economic losses would necessarily be incurred over a period of two or three years during which we would be readjusting the pattern of our foreign trade. But such incidental costs, it should be stressed, are transitional only. They are *not*, contrary to occasional assertions of committed "Europhiles", such as to place Britain at a disadvantage in international trade and investment.

Once free of the EC, more of our foreign trade will be directed to the US and to Commonwealth and Third-World countries. Certainly, EC countries may choose to discriminate against British exports just as Britain may choose to erect barriers against their exports. But since British imports to the other EC countries greatly exceed their imports from Britain, we are in a stronger bargaining position in negotiating a trade agreement with the remaining EC countries.

The fallacious belief that foreign investment in Britain will fall off should we break from the EC can have nothing to do with the fact that the British economy, by itself is smaller than the Common Market, for countries smaller than Britain, Taiwan, Austria, and the island economies of Singapore and Hong Kong, continue to attract foreign investment on a large scale. If, instead,

this belief hinges on location within the EC, and the investment is one designed to serve the whole of the Common Market, consideration of transport economies would in any case select their location within the Continent, not in off-shore Britain. While no great insight is required to conclude that foreign investment is attracted to countries with favourable economic prospects and a stable political establishment, at least for a country like Britain, foreign investment is not that important. Once investment in British industry becomes profitable it can easily be financed – along with imports of any currently unavailable machinery or expertise – from modest sources.

The most strenuous resistance to a proposed British withdrawal from the EC will come from our Euro-personnel; from those of our citizens who have been elected or who have been chosen to represent this country within the political organs of the EC – in the Council, in the Commission, in the European Parliament, and in all the committees, secretariats, and other bodies. Far removed from reminders of the uncouth economic magnitudes mentioned earlier, rubbing shoulders daily with other EC officials and nationals, engaged in promoting or challenging ambitious Euro-legislation, or in generating new regulations and directives, attending conferences, and press meetings, being feted and applauded, this new legion of Euro-Brits, permanently addicted to Euro-speak and permanently pickled in Europhoria, has lost touch with reality and is no longer capable of economic reasoning or political judgement. The growing range of its official business and of its social activities with its European colleagues only acts to confirm its self-importance and to reinforce its faith in the potential of the Community.

What is the Shape of our Future if we remain in the EC?

Despite the pressure exerted by recent GATT negotiations and the agreement by the Commission to lower some of the price-supports, the CAP will con-

tinue to consume about half the EC budget, currently running at £50 billion. So long as we remain in the EC, we have to resign ourselves to paying far higher prices for our food than if we were allowed to buy at world prices.

Our annual contribution to the EC budget, is sure to increase, if only because of the new Mediterranean members, Greece and, soon, Turkey, as well as Spain and Portugal, to say nothing of potential entrants from Eastern Europe. These new countries will be receiving grants from the European Regional Development funds in order to finance large capital expenditures in the attempt to raise their living standards closer to those of the high-income EC countries. Such investment in these poorer member countries will be at the expense of domestic investment in Western Europe and, therefore, also at the expense of domestic investment in Britain. Whether or not living standards in these new member countries do improve significantly, the necessary reduction of the investment potential in Britain will certainly act to depress the standard of living of our own people.

What of the adjustment mechanisms in balancing our foreign trade if we elect to remain in the EC? The arguments against Britain's maintaining a flexible exchange rate and in favour of returning to the ERM and, at a later date, abandoning sterling for a single Common-Market currency, the *ecu*, are generally simplistic or skewed, or both. In any case, they miss the crucial issue.

The simplistic argument is that exporters and importers are deterred by uncertainty if they cannot count on a stable exchange rate. While it is true that traders would prefer a fixed exchange rate or a single currency – for that matter businessmen would also prefer monopoly power, state subsidies, and government support prices – such preferences are not necessarily economic essentials. The fact is that a shift from a fixed price for sterling to a flexible price can hardly be thought to daunt British businessmen. Exchange rate uncertainty can effectively be skirted simply by a hedging operation

on a forward exchange market. For a small premium a British exporter can be certain of his future sterling receipts; an importer of his future sterling payments.

The skewed argument favouring fixed exchanges turns on its repressive effect on domestic inflation. Admittedly, where the trade deficit is largely a consequence of an inflation rate in Britain higher than that of its trading partners, the fixed price of sterling enforces 'discipline' by creating unemployment; a harsh medicine which – as we now know in Britain – can be counted on eventually to damp down the rate of inflation. If, on the other hand, the deficit arises chiefly from an exogenous reduction for British goods, restoring equilibrium through a decline in the value of sterling would be much less painful than the unemployment that would result from maintaining a fixed parity for sterling.

One cannot ignore the increased sensitivity of organised labour since World War II to any significant rise in the cost of living. Unless workers show more restraint in the future, any persisting decline in sterling that produced a discernible rise in retail prices would trigger off demands for compensatory wage increases, so pushing up prices further.

But a resolution of the debate on the respective merits and demerits of fixed versus flexible exchange rates is not, as it happens, the pertinent issue. For a decision to re-join the ERM, or to become part of a single-currency area, would not merely reflect a preference, on balance, for fixed parities. It would also be a tacit admission of a lack of confidence in our own institutions; tantamount to a belief among the British people that they no longer possess the ability or the discipline necessary to manage their own economic affairs.

The main issue, is whether future decisions to intervene or not in the money and foreign exchange markets – in effect to determine whether, when, for how long, and by how much, interest rates should be changed and/or sterling be devalued or revalued – are to be left to the discretion of the British people as expressed in their own institutions or whether, instead, the power

to determine the value of sterling over the future is, by treaty, to be irrevocably surrendered to the EC. And this is but a prelude to the total replacement of sterling by the *ecu*. Choice of this latter option also means surrender to an EC agency of the primary instruments of British economic sovereignty, those used in monetary (and, later,

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fiscal) controls.

The beginning of this year (1993) sees the implementation of the provision of the Single European Act of 1987 devised to abolish all national border controls within the EC. This ambitious bid to remove all hindrances to the free movement of goods and peoples within the EC area will add little to our collective prosperity and a great deal to our troubles. During the adjustment phase, some industries will tend to expand and others to contract within each of the EC countries. The more immediate experience, however, will be the plight of those working in firms that will lose business or close down altogether as the winds of competition blow more fiercely. Government intervention will follow in response to protests and political pressure on behalf of threatened industries.

Yet while this provision for the free movement of goods within the Common Market may be viewed with complacency despite initial 'teething troubles', the same cannot be said of that for the free movement of peoples across national boundaries of the EC countries. Misgivings have already been

voiced about this new freedom for drug dealers, terrorists, and criminals. What should alarm us more is the enhanced opportunities provided by the removal of border inspections for would-be immigrants.

Given the existing wage-differentials between the original West European countries and the new Mediterranean and Iberian countries of the EC, there will be a strong incentive for families from these countries to move Northward. Much worse, however, this freedom to move within the EC area without let or hindrance can only accelerate the portentous South-to-North movement of peoples, soon to be supplemented by an East-to-West migration. Groups able to infiltrate at soft points along the borders or coasts of a growing number of new member states will now also be able to move freely into Britain or any other high-income country. The weakest link just now is the long northern coastline of the Mediterranean which is certain to be the focus of millions of North Africans seeking to escape the consequences of the population explosion in their countries.

Who can blame them for attempting to escape from poverty or improve their material prospects? Yet a continuing increase in the already large numbers of ethnic minorities now living in the West will produce economic strain and social turmoil. It is more than likely that the mutual resentments and conflicts engendered by the growth in the numbers of these minorities and in their collective activities – and consequently the political opposition that will also grow in response to their increasing presence – will soon come to dominate the political scene both in Europe and America.

A final reflection is one that is apt to stir ambivalent emotions in the breasts of those who, like me, regard our entry into the EC as an act of consummate folly. I referred above to the resistance that may come from those industries adversely affected by the removal of all trade barriers. But this resistance, perceived as a factor operating to retard progress toward the ideal of a unified Europe, is eclipsed by a more powerful consideration. The fact that the EC has

foolishly expanded from the original six closely-knit West-European countries to twelve more diversified countries and, in its unbridled ambition, anticipates further expansion to include East European nations, to say nothing of the Scandinavian countries, provokes a vision of a tower of Babel. Will it become too unwieldy to operate? The tottering structure may just collapse.

Reaching binding decisions by twelve or more countries, and in twelve or more languages, on a common foreign

and defence policy and on a host of internal matters, regulations, and directives – binding decisions also on all critical issues pursuant to economic “harmonisation” – is not going to be easy, noting their substantially different material standards, their different trade balances, their different rates of inflation and rates of interest, not to mention their different political structures, their different cultures and traditions. As incongruities in national interest and disharmonies in national cultures begin to surface, and as the

bureaucratic superstructure continues to expand, so also will the time and the cost of reaching and implementing agreements – the more so as the EC is distended by new members. Thus as the EC expands so will hopes of its developing into a Federal superstate recede.

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Sister Soldiers

Christina Sommers Observes the Feminist Steam Roller “Over There”

The Hyatt Regency in Austin, Texas, is a pleasant hotel, but not all the 500 participants in this year’s National Women’s Studies Association Conference were happy with it. One woman from a well-known southern College complained to me about the weddings being held there throughout the weekend. “Why have they put us in a setting where that sort of thing is going on?”

Dissatisfaction was a conference motif. The Keynote Speaker, Annette Kolodny, a feminist literary scholar and (until recently) Dean of the Humanities faculty at the University of Arizona, opened the proceedings with a brief history of the “narratives of pain” within the NWSA. She reported that ten years ago the organisation “almost came apart over outcries by our lesbian sisters that we had failed to listen to their many voices adequately.” Five years ago sisters in the Jewish Caucus had wept at their own “sense of invisibility.” Three years later the Disability Caucus threatened to quit, and the following year the women of colour walked out. A pernicious bigotry, Kolodny confessed, persisted in the

association. “Our litanies of outrage ... overcame our fragile consensus of shared commitment and the centre would no longer hold.”

At past conferences women oppressed accused other women of oppressing them. Participants met in groups defined by their grievances and healing needs: Jewish Women, Jewish lesbians, Asian American Women, African-American Women, Old Women, Disabled Women, Fat Women, Women Whose Sexuality is In Transition. None of the groups proved stable: the fat group polarised into gay and straight factions, and the Jewish women discovered they were deeply divided: some accepted being Jewish, others were seeking to recover from it. This year concern extended to “marginalized” allergy groups. Participants were sent advance notice not to bring perfumes, dry cleaned clothing, hairspray or other dangerous irritants to the conference out of concern for allergic sisters. Hyper-concern is now the norm. At the first National Lesbian Convention in Atlanta flash cameras were outlawed – they might bring on epileptic fits.

Eleanor Smeal, the former president of National Organization of Women, was scheduled to be the first speaker on the NWSA “Empowerment Panel,” but her plane had been held up in Memphis. To pass the time, we were introduced to an array of panellists who were touted as being experienced in conflict resolution. One woman was introduced as a member of the Mohawk nation who “facilitates anti-bias training.” Another, an erstwhile dancer, was described as a Black lesbian activist who was “doing an amazing, miraculous job on campuses building coalitions.” A third, who had training as a holistic health practitioner, headed workshops that “creatively optimise human capacity.” The moderator told us, “These women have agreed to come to us as a team and work together to help us figure out how we might begin to deal much more effectively... With issues of inclusion, empowerment, diversity.” To keep our spirits high, we were taught the words to a round which we dutifully sang: *We have come this far by strength, leaning on each other. Trusting in each others words. We never failed each other yet. Singing*

Oh, Oh, Oh. Can't turn around. We have come this far by strength. After several minutes of singing, and still no Smeal, panellist Angela (the former dancer) took the mike to tell about "ouch experiences." An "ouch" is when you experience racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, ableism, ageism or lookism. One of Angela's biggest ouches came after her lesbian support groupsplintered into two factions, black and white. Tension then developed in her black group between those whose lovers were black and those whose lovers were white. "Those of us in the group who had white lovers were immediately targeted.... It turned into a terrible mess. I ended up leaving that group for self-protection."

A weary Eleanor Smeal finally arrived and was pressed into immediate service. She confided that she was feeling discouraged about the feminist movement. "We need totally new concepts. In many ways it's not working. It is so depressing. We are leaving ...the next generation [in a] mess." Smeal's liveliest moment came when she attacked "liberal males on the campus," saying, "they have kept us apart. They have marginalized our programs. We need fighting madness." Despite the call to arms, Smeal's talk was a downer, and the moderator acted quickly to raise our spirits: "What we want to do now is to dwell for a minute in success.... Think about the fact that we have been so successful in transforming the curriculum...." It was soon time for another song.

We are sisters in a circle. We are sisters in a struggle. Sisters one and all. We are colours of the rainbow, Sisters one and all.

As it happened, I did have a real sister (in the unexciting biological sense) with me at the conference. Louise and I were frankly relieved to have group-sing interrupted by a coffee break. Half-and-half was available, but perhaps not for long. The eco-feminist caucus has been pushing to eliminate all meat, fish, eggs, and dairy products at NWSA events. As the break ended Phyllis, the panellist from the Mohawk nation, holding two little puppets, a dog and a teddy bear, came round to inform us, "Teddy and his friend say

its time to go back inside." Louise, who is a psychologist, was beginning to find the conference professionally intriguing. Phyllis's native American credentials, it turned out, were not all that solid. In addition to Mohawk, she was French and Irish with traces of Algonquin. Having established her unique racial persona, she said, "Let us take a moment to give ourselves a big hug. Let me remind us that the person we're hugging is the most important person we have in our life." Phyllis continued: "Let's do it again! Each and every one of you is my relative.... We are interconnected. We are interdependent. And we have respect. Those are principles. So, what would I need from you in a loving relationship, is the reminder that I have gotten away from my principles here; and to help me get back to my principles. Even if I have to say "ouch" and hug my puppets-or whatever I have to do."

***An "ouch" is when
you experience
racism, sexism,
classism,
homophobia, ableism,
ageism or lookism***

To conclude the empowerment panel session, a "feminist facilitator" led us in a "participatory experience." We were told to turn to our neighbour and tell her what we liked most about the NWSA. Louise turned to me and asked, "Have we accidentally stumbled into a convention of borderline personalities?" After that debilitating morning session, Louise and I visited the "Exhibition Hall". There, dozens of booths offered women's studies books and paraphernalia. Witchcraft and goddess worship supplies in aisle one. Adjoining aisles sold handmade jewellery, leather crafts, ponchos and other peasant apparel (which, for Louise, solved the mystery of where many of the participants did their shopping). One booth offered videos on do-it-yourself menstrual extractions and home abortions for those who want to avoid "patriar-

chal medicine." Available for viewing throughout the conference were such films as "Sex and the Sandinistas" and "We're Talking Vulva." The philosopher Paula Rothenberg spotted me and approached. She knows I am a sceptic. "I am very uncomfortable having you here. I saw you taking notes. We are in the middle of working through our problems. I feel as if you have come into the middle of my dysfunctional family, and you are seeing us at the worst possible moment." But Professor Rothenberg's "dysfunctional family" has had many such moments. Ouchings and mass therapy are more the norm in academic feminism than the exception. Last year, at a meeting of Womens' Studies Program Directors, everyone joined hands to form a "healing circle." They also assumed the posture of trees experiencing rootedness and tranquillity. Victim testimonials and new age healing rituals crowd out the reading of academic papers at NWSA conferences.

Does it matter that a bunch of high-strung, anti-intellectual, chronically offended, "dysfunctional family members" get together for a conference and say and do a lot of odd things? It does, because on more and more campuses these consciousness raisers are driving out the scholars. Within the past fifteen years the academy has witnessed the inception of more than 500 Women's Studies Programs and more than 30,000 courses, along with the formation of some fifty major feminist institutes. Most of the women attending the conference are in the academy in one capacity or another: either teaching women's studies, directing programs, or in the administration. Others head women's centres.

These women run the largest growth area in the academy. Though their conferences may be untidy they are politically astute on their campuses. They have strong influence in some key areas, most notably in English Departments (especially freshman writing courses), French Departments, History Departments, Law Schools, and Divinity Schools. They are disproportionately represented in the Dean of Student's office, in the dormitory administration, in the harassment office

and various counselling centres. They are quietly engaged in hundreds of well funded projects to transform a curriculum that they regard as unacceptably "androcentric". Their moral authority comes from a widespread belief that they represent "women." In fact their version of feminism falls short of being representative.

Most American women subscribe philosophically to an older "First Wave" kind of feminism whose main goal is equity. A First Wave or "equity feminist" wants for women what she wants for everyone: fair treatment, no discrimination. The equity feminist crusade that was initiated over a hundred and fifty years ago called for constitutional changes to guarantee equal opportunity, especially in politics and education. Much of the equity agenda remains to be completed, but by any reasonable measure equity feminism is a great American success story.

Women's Studies practitioners ride the First Wave for its popularity and its moral authority but most adhere to a more radical "Second Wave" doctrine: that women, even modern American women, are in thrall to "a system of male dominance" variously referred to as "hetero-patriarchy," or the "sex/gender system." According to one feminist theorist, it is "a system of male dominance made possible by men's control of women's productive and reproductive labour." Another describes it as "that complex process whereby bisexual infants are transformed into male and female gendered personalities, the one destined to command, the other destined to obey." Every human achievement is said to bear its impress: philosophy, science, music, language itself. One professor at the City University of New York expresses the widely felt enthusiasm for the new perspective when she says, "Now that the sex/gender system has become visible to us, we see it everywhere."

Heady claims are made for the new way of looking at society and its impact on scholarship. According to the philosopher Elizabeth Minnich "What we are doing, is comparable to Copernicus shattering our geocentricity, Darwin shattering our

species-centricity. We are shattering andro-centricity, and the change is as fundamental, as dangerous, as exciting." The sociologist Jessie Bernard compares the explosion of research in women's scholarship to the storming of the Bastille or 'the shot heard round the world.' "Academia will never be the same again." Gerda Lerner, Professor of History at Wisconsin, cautions that attempts to describe what is now going on in women's scholarship "would be like trying to describe the Renaissance – ten years after it began." Some feminist scholarship is innovative, sound and necessary. Literary scholars have discovered and rescued many gifted women writers from undeserved oblivion. Women historians and social scientists have found that much

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previous research did not apply to women. The best research on women does not use the radical feminist prism, but unfortunately a good deal of what is assigned in women's studies classes is not disciplined scholarship but "gynocentric" ideology. The amenable student learns to unmask the subtle, inimical workings of patriarchy. Committed instructors declare their classrooms "liberated zones" where "silenced women" will be free for the first time to speak out in a safe gynocentric ambience. This is a pedagogy which aims above all to cleanse the academy of masculinism. In 1985, the American Association of Colleges issued a seemingly innocuous report on the importance of the college major. It spoke of:

"the joy of mastery, the thrill of moving forward in a formal body of knowledge and gaining some effective control over it..."

"The NWSA 1991 Report to the Professions saw in this passage a blatant example of "phallogocentric" discourse: A feminist analysis of this rhetoric reveals... an analogy between knowledge and sexual subjugation, an idea of learning as mastery or control. Clearly embedded are unconscious androcentric assumptions of dominance and subordination between the knower and the known, assumptions that all too readily bring to mind the traditional relationship of men to women; of the colonisers to the colonised; indeed, of the master to the slave. Such phallogocentric metaphors ... are not the accidental usage of one report, but replicate the dominant discourses of Western empiricism which women's studies... critiques...."

What sort of approach to learning would satisfy the preternaturally alert authors of the NSWA report? We get an idea by looking at a model introductory women's studies developed by twelve Rutgers University professors. One of the stated goals of the course is to "challenge and change the social institutions and practices that create and perpetuate systems of oppression." Forty percent of the student's grade is to come from

1) performing some "outrageous" and "liberating" act outside class and then sharing feelings and reactions with the class.

2) Keeping a journal of "narratives of personal experience, expressions of emotion, dream accounts, poetry, doodles, etc."

3) Forming small in-class consciousness raising groups.

The exhilaration of feeling themselves at the cutting edge of a new consciousness infuses feminist pedagogues with a doctrinal fervour unique in the academy. "The feminist classroom," say four Professors from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, "is the place to use what we know as women to appropriate and transform, totally, a domain which has been men's. ...Let us welcome the intrusion/infusion of emotionality –

love, rage, anxiety, eroticism — into intellect as a step toward healing the fragmentation capitalism and patriarchy have demanded from us.”

Exultation over the new “female ways of knowing” is accompanied by bitterness over sexually aggressive “male ways of knowing” that have intimidated so many women in the past. Catharine MacKinnon, Professor of Law at the University of Michigan, gives extreme expression to feminist anger for having so long been taken in by patriarchal constructions of knowledge; “In the Bible to know a woman is to have sex with her. You acquire carnal knowledge.... Feminists are beginning to understand that to know has meant to fuck.” In this manner does victimology add spice to the invigorating idea of a “feminist epistemology.”

The nonconformist character of feminist pedagogy has not impeded its burgeoning growth. Is *anyone* resisting? Most faculties have been sceptical, but at the same time, passive and permissive. The administration has been cooperative. The one academic estate that resists are the students; but students have little political standing on the American campus. An undergraduate may take Freshman Composition, Baroque Art, or Egyptology and discover on the first day of class that it will be taught from a “gynocentric” perspective. Students tend to like opinionated teachers who breathe commitment, but even so most are not buying the story of a gender war. Women’s studies professors often describe their classrooms as being in “crisis” because of “rebellious students”, a situation that has been aggravated because, on so many campuses, women’s studies courses are now mandatory. Instructors tell of the inevitable “mid-semester blowup” in which students protest angrily about the one-sidedness of courses. Feminist pedagogues call it the “blame the messenger” reaction, or the “denial” stage. Ordinarily, instructors facing persistent student protests would be moved to reconsider their own methods and arguments. But in the feminist classroom opposition, counter-argument or complaints about methods serve primarily to convince the

instructor that she is encountering backlash. At the Austin conference the “White Male Student Hostility” workshop was packed. One workshoper triumphantly concluded, “If the students were comfortable, we would not be doing our job.”

To succeed as they have, feminist academics needed strong support from friendly administrators. They got this in two ways: First, by getting themselves into administrative positions in disproportionate numbers. Secondly, by doing all they could to put cooperative people into positions of power. Increasingly, aspiring presidents, deans, professors and program directors in all academic fields have to pledge allegiance to feminist educational agendas if they want to get hired. The American Association of Colleges disseminates a widely used questionnaire entitled “It’s All In What You ask: Questions for Search Committees to Use.” Among the questions asked: How have you demonstrated your commitment to women’s issues in your current position? (lead question) What is your relation to the women’s centre? How do you deal with backlash and denial?

This kind of screening was used at the University of Maryland in their recent search for a president, according to an enthusiastic report by a Ms Betsy Schmitz, who now assists the new president. All candidates for the position were prepared for the questions and many, including, President Curwin, had the right answers. The screening procedure proved effective. President Curwin has come through with \$500,000 of University funds for a curriculum transformation project. In allocating that sum, the President obligingly bypassed the faculty senate. Now, Ms Schmitz, a specialist in curriculum transformation projects, reports that many Maryland faculties are outraged and that the President is taking the heat for “a lot of backlash.”

The proposition that “the knowledge base” must be radically “transformed” on feminist lines is now asserted by prestigious mainstream educational organisations such as the National Council For Research on Women and the American Council on Education.

According to the latter feminist challenges to “conventional ways of knowing and thinking” set a new agenda: “What has yet to happen on all of our campuses is the transformation of knowledge, and therefore of the curriculum...”

At the root of all transformation projects is the thesis that not just people but also ideas and disciplines are gendered. But, as the academic promoters of the politics of sexual identity are beginning to learn, gender is not sacrosanct as a principle of social division. Why should identity politics be stabilised at two? A woman can be simultaneously a victim, and, depending on her race and physical status, also a white, able-bodied oppressor of Latins, black males, and the disabled. The middle class educated women who discovered the sex-gender system are now being forced to regard themselves as oppressors in a complex ecology of domination and subjugation. But perhaps “ecology” is too orderly a concept for a victimology that is spinning out of control.

One would normally expect that more objective and less partisan academics would quickly demolish the outsize claims being made for feminist theory and its transformation projects. That they hold back is a tribute to the reputation feminists have for their ruthless *ad feminam* ways of dealing with unfriendly comment. Adverse criticism is never examined with any seriousness. Instead the critic is denounced as reactionary. Few disinterested scholars have been willing to take on the unrewarding job of critically examining feminist arguments. When the respected Shakespeare scholar Richard Levin challenged some of the more fanciful feminist interpretations of Shakespeare’s tragedies, he was denounced and ridiculed in the *Publications of the Modern Language Association*. One particularly nasty letter boasted 24 signatories: signing in groups is a standard feature of feminist critical response.

Academic feminists are easily as accomplished at squelching and silencing uncooperative women as anyone else out there in the “heteropatriarchy.” After somehow learning

that I had been commissioned to write an article on feminism by a popular monthly, a radical feminist from the University of Illinois wrote to the editors urging them to suppress its publication. Later, in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, she justified her action comparing herself to someone combating holocaust revisionism. "I wouldn't want a nutcase who thinks there wasn't a holocaust to write about the holocaust." Group censure of Camille Paglia is now routine and the "*argumentum ad Nazi-um*" has also been used against her: in one attempt to get it removed from a reading list, Paglia's scintillating and erudite *Sexual Personae* was compared to *Mein Kampf*. To invite Paglia to your campus is to invite a lot of in-house trouble. When someone in the Brown University English Department asked Paglia to give a talk, outraged faculty feminists wrote a memorandum asking for an explanation and requesting that the English Department meet to discuss its procedures for inviting speakers to the campus. That Paglia would be blackballed by her detractors had been predicted by Yale professor, Harold Bloom:

"They are totalitarians, they are sanctimonious, they are self-righteous. They are, in fact, truly illiterate people. They are *careerists*."

Bloom noted that "someone as brilliant, as learned, as talented, as ferociously burning an intellect as Paglia" belongs in the Ivy League or at some place like Berkeley or Chicago. But the "bureaucrats of resentment who are appointed in the networks because they are politically correct" will continue to do their utmost to make sure that this does not happen. "They will blackball her everywhere." Few academics are prepared to trigger the ire of zealous colleagues in constant agitated communication. There is therefore an appalling dearth of critical scrutiny of feminist theory and little resistance to the spread of its anti-intellectual influence. But the faculty's incapacity to impede the radical feminist colonisation of the liberal academy cannot be ascribed to mere timidity. The deeper reason is that a confused academic community has persistently failed to

distinguish between the traditional "First Wave" equity feminism, which is responsible for the main achievements of feminism in this century, and the Second Wave gynocentric feminism which, since the early Seventies, has taken centre stage in the universities. A befuddled liberalism has provided fertile soil for the growth of an intolerant, powerful gynocentric academic feminism. Even now the studied posture of affront and victimisation keeps a liberal academy permanently off balance, giving a scholastically weak group of academics power far beyond their numbers and abilities. As a result, the highly successful feminist effort to transform the American academy has gone virtually unchallenged.

Gender feminists sometimes boast among themselves about the way they use naive liberal sentiment to gain their ends. Paula Goldsmid, a former Dean at Oberlin College, muses "You might wonder... how we managed to generate a Women's Studies program that has a catalogue supplement listing more than twenty courses, that offers an Individual Major in Women's Studies, that has been able to involve several committees in working to transform the academy in various ways." She then notes with cosy candour, "There is great reluctance to say or do anything publicly that goes against the liberal and 'progressive' Oberlin stance. Oberlin's liberal values can be turned to *our* advantage." (Her emphasis). Paula Rothenberg seconds that explanation. How did she and her sister feminists get William Patterson College (New Jersey) to require all students to take women's studies?

"Our surprising success was due... to the presence on the curriculum committee of... some old style liberals who found it difficult to disagree with the idea of such a requirement, at least in public."

Two years ago I wrote to the British novelist and philosopher, Iris Murdoch, asking for her views on some recent trends in Women's Studies. In her reply she said:

"Men 'created culture' because they were free to do so, and women were treated as inferior and made to believe they were. Now free women must join

in the human world of work and creation on an equal footing and be everywhere in art, science, business, politics etc. ... However, to lay claim, in this battle, to *female* ethics, *female* criticism, *female* knowledge... is to set up a new female ghetto. (Chauvinist males should be delighted by the move...) 'Women's Studies' can mean that women are led to read mediocre or peripheral books by women rather than the great books of humanity in general... It is a dead end, in danger of simply separating women from the mainstream thinking of the human race. Such cults can also *waste the time* of young people who may be reading all the latest books on feminism instead of studying the difficult and important things that belong to the culture of humanity. (Her emphasis)"

Murdoch's remarks about scholarly dead ends and the penchant for ghettoising women apply all too well to much of what goes under the name of feminist scholarship in American universities.

The best feminist scholars do their work within their established disciplines and meet the traditional, standards of those disciplines. Some are under fire from the gynocentrics. Eminent researchers like the classicist Mary Lefkowitz of Wellesely, the literary critic, Cynthia Griffin Wolff of M.I.T., the historian Elizabeth Fox-Genovese (Emory), or the sociologist Rita Simon (American University) write and teach about women, but they are reproved for failing to stress male hegemony and women's subjugation. While these outstandingly competent women were gaining "mastery and control" over their fields of study, the gynocentric feminists who find fault with them were busy networking, workshopping, forming councils and committees and joining governmental commissions. Many are now deans; some are university presidents. Many were at the Austin conference.

The conference received a warm letter from Governor Ann Richards welcoming us to the Great State of Texas. The governor called the assembled feminists "the vanguard of the latest incarnation of the women's movement" praising their leadership as es-

sential. The NWSA audience broke out into thunderous applause as the letter was read aloud. It is, however, unlikely that Governor Richards was aware of the witchcraft booths, the menstrual extraction videos, the teddy bear puppets, the paranoid exposures of "phallogocentric discourse" – let alone the bullying of students and the implacable hostility to all exact thinking

as "male."

Less innocently benighted are such government agencies or foundations as the Department of Education, the Ford Foundation and the Mellon foundation – that keep groups like the NWSA "empowered." Those who irresponsibly abett the spirit of Austin have much to answer for. Perhaps, in penance, they should be made to view

the tapes of the conference and then asked to hug themselves till they "ouch."

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The European Arts Festival

Helen Szamuely deplores the arrival of Euroculture

When the political or economic aspects of an ideology appear to fail, its advocates turn to culture, insisting that without a particular (usually unlikeable) ideological framework the arts would not flourish. Occasionally the same arguments are used about sport but those remain less acceptable.

Such propaganda points used to be made by defenders of the old East European and Soviet political system. In fact much of the culture of these countries had flourished before the installation of the ideological framework and continued, if at all, to exist despite it. As for the vast, state-subsidised events and institutions, so admired by our own "intelligentsia", these were intellectually and artistically arid. As a result of the Soviet state's close concern with intellectual life in the country, Russian culture, among the most vibrant at the turn of the century, has become moribund, producing, at best, pale imitations of Western ideas.

The rapid collapse of the Communist system and the attendant revelation of the cultural and intellectual poverty of societies now having to recover from it may not have surprised us, but it undermined support for that particular cultural ideology. Another one has grown up in its place, just as pervasive and misleading: that of "Europe". The old ideology ignored the difference

between, say, Russia, Georgia and the Soviet Union; the new one pretends that a "European" culture can be defined. The old ideology for a long time deliberately refused to appreciate émigré arts and literature, preferring second-rate Russian and East European artists and thinkers who had remained within the Soviet system to first-rate ones who had left; the new one deliberately limits Europe to the twelve states within the European Community.

The more political and economic aspects of communism were challenged the more we heard about the culture of those countries. The more people in all countries question the political and economic principles of the European Union, the more persuasive the apparatchiks of "European culture" become.

Numerous other parallels can be drawn but perhaps one will suffice. Article 128 of the Maastricht Treaty states: "The Community shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore." The absurdity of the concept and the pomposity of the language hides the underlying sinister promise of control. The Soviet Union's avowed policy was

to foster and, of course, regulate cultural development of its various parts according to the principle of "socialist content in national form". One can discern a similar absurdity and pomposity as well as a similar hidden message.

The most immediate display of cultural propaganda in Britain was the European Arts Festival, timed to coincide with the presidency of the European Council (so far less than totally successful politically and economically). Some of the events in this festival would have taken place anyway. They simply acquired the Euro-stamp of approval in the shape of a rather goofy looking lion. Popular promenade concerts and scholarly conferences were hijacked to glorify the "European ideal" rather as Tchaikovsky was used to justify the Soviet ideal. But many more concerts, plays and shows were planned, one assumes, with the festival in mind. This included the grand finale in Edinburgh in December and the lighting of beacons (which was done in the past to save Britain from invasion rather than to celebrate surrender), all paid for by the British taxpayer, who may have other ideas about cultural heritage.

The programme booklet for the European Arts Festival is very strange.

On the regulation blue cover the aforementioned goofy lion shows the slogan of the festival: Discover the first Language of Europe. A message (with a photograph) from John Major explains that the first language is culture, which is really what Europe is about and time we discovered this. Again one is reminded of Eastern Europe in days gone by, when no publication from philosophy to cookery could appear without an epigraph from Stalin or one of his successors. It is unlikely that a democratically elected Prime Minister should relish such a role. The programme then explains in careful short paragraphs that Europe must be understood through its culture as well as its politics and economics. The card forced onto the reader is marked. It is doubtful whether one can talk seriously of a European cultural heritage that has lasted uninterruptedly from the Roman Empire (Mediterranean and Near Eastern as well as European) to the present day. One wonders what happened to the Judaeo-Christian influences. Moreover "Europe" means only the twelve countries of the European Community. Large tracks of Europe and its culture, such as the writings of Ibsen, Strindberg, Kafka and Dostoevsky, the music of Kodaly, Bartok, Dvorak and Sibelius, the art of Schiele and Munch are consigned to oblivion as being inconvenient. One suspects that in the future contemporary artists who do not "respect national and regional diversity" in the approved manner will also be flung onto the rubbish heap of European history. A somewhat sinister development is the announcement of six European Curriculum Awards that will be given annually to schools that produce curriculum development of the European dimension in the Arts. How long will it be before we have a Delors medal or a Leon Brittan award to the Head of the school which has shown the clearest understanding of the European ideal?

European culture, defined by European ideology, is used in the fight for minds and souls. Jacques Lang, the French Minister of Culture, has tried to influence the French people to vote for Maastricht by organising a huge

concert, an idea that was ridiculed contemptuously by his opponent Philippe Seguin. Less spectacularly, we are being influenced to think favourably of the not very popular European Union because Beethoven wrote magnificent symphonies and Manet painted equally magnificent pictures. But there is something else: the European Union aims at control, as anyone who has read the Maastricht Treaty knows. The European Arts Festival is a shameless attempt to strengthen the idea of the need to control culture.

Kafka and Dostoevsky, the music of Kodaly, Bartok, Dvorak and Sibelius, the art of Schiele and Munch are consigned to oblivion as being inconvenient

In a number of interviews John Drummond, the Director of the Festival, has suggested that until "European" money supplied by, among others, the "insular" British taxpayer) started flowing towards various grandiose plans, once again reminiscent of the now defunct East European edifices, Britain was a cultural desert. For a man who is also the Director of the Proms, the largest, most varied and popular musical festival in the world, this is a curious attitude. What can one say about the exhibition of which he seems to be most proud, that centres on Manet's *Execution of the Emperor Maximilian*? It is fine and it is fascinating but it is no finer or more fascinating than many other exhibitions of the last few years, particularly those in the Royal Academy that receives no state subsidy of any kind. Not receiving "European" money may well be an advantage. How else could they have exhibitions of Tibetan art, the paintings of Egon Schiele as well as those of Claude Monet? A careful visitor to the Manet exhibition at the National Gallery would have

noted the true role of the state in an artist's life: a number of Manet's paintings were banned by Napoleon III's government because presumably they did not advance the "French" or the "Bonapartist" ideal.

Drummond admires the French government for its unstinting investment in the arts and compares it unfavourably with our own, even though we have acquired a Minister for National Heritage. He also hopes that this imbalance will be rectified by the European Community, who will know even less about either quality or what is really wanted by the people of this country than our own government, being even further removed and even more bureaucratic and irresponsible. Pursuing his idea of the right kind of artistic patronage, Drummond concludes that there is something wrong and distasteful in asking a "family of grocers to finance an extension to the National Gallery". This ungrateful and snobbish statement shows an odd misunderstanding of cultural history. First the ethics: why should it be more virtuous to finance artistic endeavour out of taxes that people pay involuntarily than out of voluntarily given money? Second the politics: as we have already seen, Euro-finances bolster European ideology. Third the aesthetics: many of the finest pictures in the gallery had been commissioned by families of grocers (and butchers and bakers and candlestick makers). Private patronage, commissions, the open market and friendly assistance have been responsible for a good proportion of the finest European art in the true sense of the word, the art of various European countries. State subsidised, state commissioned, state controlled art, as we can see from the examples of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia (and even in much that has been financed by the Arts Council and other such organisations), is of low quality but often spectacular. Its aim is to glorify the state and its ideology.

A state that wants to control culture or even feels that culture is somehow its business wants control over our minds. The pending European Union aims at that kind of control; though

whether it will achieve it is a different matter. But art, music, literature, scholarship are just tools for it to build its own edifice. "European" money will give us "European" art and culture as defined by the cultural apparatchiks of the EC. We can guess what that will mean. After all they have already redefined Europe.

Helen Szamuely is a writer and translator.

10th Anniversary Celebration

A hundred subscribers and contributors enjoyed a convivial evening on January 27th. Lord Salisbury presided and both he and Roger Scruton remembered warmly those who had been closely associated with the Review in the past. As well as delighting us with his ironic wit, Roger Scruton reminded us that contributing to the Review could change your life. Speaking the truth in this country was not fatal but you could become a martyr, as Ray Honeyford and others have found. Our guest speaker, Baroness James, spoke of English people's natural conservatism, lamented the state of the Church of England and rejected the Left's notion that conservatism was incompatible with intelligence and high culture. Ray Honeyford proposed the vote of thanks suggesting that every civil servant should read a P.D. James novel, not to fill an idle hour, but as an exemplar of style.

History Has Not Ended

*Clive Dunwich looks forward to the end of the
producers' domination*

Francis Fukuyama achieved fame with an article, 'The End of History', and a book *The End of History and the Last Man*. His thesis was that the capitalist democracies of the west represent a final stage in the organisation of human societies and that little further significant development could be expected. The question then posed was 'Will this state produce a stable society?' Or, as Fukuyama closed the book, using the analogy of the wagon train; '*... Nor can we in the final analysis know, provided a majority of the wagons eventually reach the same town, whether the occupants, having looked around a bit at their new surroundings, will not find them inadequate and set their eyes on a new and more distant journey.*'

But is Fukuyama's analysis 'final'?

Although the western democracies are usually characterised as capitalist, their essential feature is that they are, to a greater or lesser degree, *markets*. A capitalist society is a market society in which one of the objects of trade is capital. Capitalism can only exist in a market society, but a market society is not necessarily capitalist; in principle at least a market Islamic society would not be.

The original organisation of all societies was *authority*, with decision-making vested in a leader, whose own authority was believed to be backed by that of some supernatural figure. Such societies lack *stability*, however, and this stability relates essentially to *information*. The most favourable case of an *authority* society is benevolent despotism. But even the most

benevolent despot lacks the information to be benevolent to all his subjects, and sooner or later his ignorance will lead him to being so unfair to one of his subjects that his authority is rejected, so that the despot needs to use force. Modern societies have all evolved from primitive authority systems, Fukuyama's essential thesis is that this process is now ended; that the evolution is complete. It can be shown, however, that this is not the case, and that a bright future remains to unfold.

The evolution of our Western societies from *authority* has proceeded in two complementary streams: to economic control by the market, and to political control by democracy, which is also a form of the market, although highly constrained. In the economic sphere it is usual to speak of free markets as if

this type of control was all-pervasive; but in fact large areas of the economy in all Western nations, and perhaps particularly so in Britain, are still under *authority* control. We should now look at these.

Road Transport

Suppose that the invention of the motor car had preceded that of the steam locomotive. The condition of the public roads was inadequate, however, and so the companies exploiting the new invention *had to build roads*. Over the years the system developed to give a system of trunk roads and motor ways, similar to those we enjoy today, but with one quite fundamental difference: *the system is under the control of the market*, and the companies owning the roads must recover all costs from road users.

The system we enjoy in Britain today is one which makes even the most ramshackle nationalised industry seem a model of efficiency and profitability. Road transport is a *system out of control*; it is not controlled by the market, and it is not controlled by democracy, since the overall shape of road transport has never been debated in Parliament, nor may questions about overall road transport be raised at planning enquiries.

A nationalised industry too, has some sort of accounting, from which it is possible to assess profitability, *but for our road transport system there are no figures for costs available from official sources*. However, estimates can be made; and that by Dr John Whitelegg of Lancaster University suggests that the annual *subsidy* to road transport is £20bn. The staggering size of this subsidy can be appreciated from its equivalents in taxation: in round figures, Income Tax could be reduced by 40%, or Corporation Tax be abolished, or VAT be reduced from 17.5% to 6%. Road users meanwhile would need to pay for all costs, which would increase taxes on fuel some five times, bringing the cost of petrol around £10 per gallon. The out-of-control nature of road transport is not, of course, the end of the story; for road transport is in competition with rail. And rail is

required to conform to strict financial control! Great Britain suffers from this imbalance more than the other nations of Europe: rail is generally subsidised much more. (Which is the next best thing to not subsidising the roads.) France, Italy and Spain make a direct charge for use of many of their motorways, while Germany is introducing a charge disc for lorries on its motorways.

The direction of change is always from *authority* to market control but it is clear that no change in the control of road transport is to be expected. Privatisation of the roads has never appeared as even the most distant objective of Tory policy. As is often said, politics is the art of the possible; but what is possible, politically, is determined by what people believe: by *information*. Information is of fundamental importance in the working of markets, and its relevance in this case is that there is a deeply held belief, assiduously nurtured by motoring interests, that motorists contribute far more than they receive from the roads. The market of democracy will not achieve the transition to market control of road transport until this belief has been laid to rest.

There is one more detail: we may suppose that, because of the greater flexibility of road building compared to rail, the imaginary companies never needed to obtain rights of 'Compulsory purchase at market price'. This is a quaintly self-contradictory description of our own practice, which is, of course, the negation of market control, since the market price of an item is its price in a *voluntary* exchange. A society served by privatised road companies exerts complete control over the environmental aspects of road building. Although land will generally change hands through normal market operations, land of outstanding natural beauty, or of particular historical or scientific interest, is never sold for road building because it comes to be owned by individuals or associations for whom its value is infinite. It is an interesting comparison with our own *authority* control, which destroys, first the market in land of special interest, and then the land itself, by a process

that has no more logic or validity than the compulsory purchase of Rembrandts at the market price of canvas.

Trade Unions

From Adam Smith onwards, *monopoly* has been recognised as disruptive of market control, and all capitalist governments take various steps to limit it. It is strange therefore that governments, and above all Britain's, maintain a whole network of law to *maintain* the monopoly rights of trade union leaders. Because of their uniquely privileged position, trade union leaders behave like old fashioned top-hatted capitalists. They have monopoly rights on the variety of labour they control; and so they create an artificial scarcity by strike action to force up prices. But there the resemblance to old fashioned capitalists ends; for they were never met with cries of 'We are with you in your glorious struggle' from the other capitalists harmed by the action.

Again we see the enormous power of information in a market; the notion, assiduously fostered, that trade unions have something to do with socialism, or the interests of the working class as a whole, is believed by almost everyone, even Mrs Thatcher. And as a result we have another out-of-control system. This is a tragedy, since licensing a group of men to demand with menaces that wages be increased, with no corresponding increase in output, is by any definition, *inflationary*.

Control will be exerted ultimately in one of two ways: socialism or market. If trade unions were socialist organisations they would act in a *centralised* way. Having agreed with government on the amount of money available in each year for wage increases, they would decide how this was to be split between the various unions, and then use the force of the movement to bring this about. Such a system would be unstable; but it would be reinforced if government restricted legal immunities to unions acting in this socialist way. The alternative *market* regulation of the unions will only occur when there is a general understanding that strike action attacks the rest of the

community, which must then involve a determination to break the strike.

Again, Britain suffers from this lack of control more than other nations; American unions, for example, are perceived more as businesses, and so more subject to market control, while in Germany, the unions are controlled by an admirable set of laws, written by ourselves, one of the provisions of which is that unions must not be associated with political parties. The informational distortion in this country, where the Labour Party is particularly active in promoting union activity as in the interest of the working class as a whole, is thus avoided.

Advertising

Suppose that the development of popular newspapers occurred a few decades later than actually happened, at a time when the consumer market was already flourishing. As newspapers began to achieve mass circulation, one entrepreneur, observing the welter of competing goods available, sought to sell a newspaper partly on the value it could offer its customers in shopping news, searching out value, novelty and quality. As his competitors were beginning to use the advertising format we know today, he too adopted it for his shopping news. The newspaper was a success, and had many imitators; in due course, broadcasting arrived, and radio and television gave shopping news as naturally as they gave any other kind of news.

Instead we have a world dominated by advertising, and advertising-supported media. An advertisement may be defined as '*An announcement by a seller, concerning goods or services for sale*'. There is an American organisation calling for 'Truth in advertising'. The search for such truth could prove elusive, however, since it does not make the vital distinction between the truth of an *advertisement*, and the truth of an *advertising medium*. Consider a simple advertising statement: 'Bloggs' Beans cost 35p for a tin'. This statement may be undeniably true, but it is going to be embodied in an advertising medium, and at that point it becomes potentially

misleading, because the medium does not contain, indeed it *may well suppress*, the statement 'Coggs' Beans come from the same factory, but cost 25p for the tin.'

Information is fundamental to the working of a market; an item cannot be purchased if its existence is unknown. Economic texts make much of *perfect information*; information has a cost, but perfect information would have infinite cost and cannot contribute towards the working of a real market. The condition of a real market in its mature phase is that individuals assess the value of market information to a particular transaction, and purchase as much of it as they judge they need; this judgement is itself determined by market information. In any mature market – the financial markets, betting, antiques, to take a few examples – the actual market stimulates a parallel market in market information. The ultimate consumer market, however is dominated by advertising, one of whose major messages is that it *is not necessary to purchase market information*.

Market information falls into two broad classes – product information and market information. Product information supplied by advertising is flawed, since an advertiser will not knowingly or willingly give information which he believes detrimental to sales. Therefore a whole range of product information: data on reliability, safety, etc., is absent unless required to be there by law. Overall, this is the less serious distortion, since both government and non-governmental consumer organisations tend to remedy it, and this activity then acts directly on manufacturers.

The distortion in market information is potentially much more serious. At one pole we have classified advertising, which because it is cheap and ubiquitous, represents the market it covers well enough. At the other pole is British television advertising. Although television is normally considered as a vehicle of entertainment and general news, its other major function is never discussed: it is a purveyor of *consumer news*, like 'Which' magazine. The form is quite different, but the content in both cases is the same:

news and comment on goods and services available in the *market place*.

By any standards, this role is badly executed, for the goods and services featured are not representative of the available market at any time, showing a particular bias towards large and wealthy companies. Advertising undoubtedly *works*; and some considerable proportion of purchasing decisions is governed by advertising. Since, by definition, the information carried by advertising is flawed, the market determined by advertising is itself flawed; and as time passes this flaw becomes built into the bricks and mortar of the real market. And Britain, with its national newspapers and regional television networks is worst served by its advertising, as anyone will know who has visited the United States, and observed the essentially local and factual nature of much of its advertising.

Equilibrium Restored

We have looked at three major areas of the British economy which are not controlled by the market. There are, of course, many others, great and small. Education, where the precious evolution of a hundred years was destroyed almost overnight; the whole panoply of tariff barriers; the monopoly position enjoyed by doctors and lawyers; the massive distortions of the EEC, enshrining perhaps the worst of all, the CAP. The list is endless. All represent *authority* rather than *market* control; but they all represent something else as well: *control in the interest of producers*. We like to believe that we live in a democracy, where government is by the people; but so pervasive are the producer-favouring distortions of the market, so profound their effects, and so independent of the policies of the parties, whether in power or opposition, that it would be more accurate to describe our form of government as *paragocracy*: government by the producers of goods and services.

Equilibrium is a term often used in Economics, and it has a particular relevance to market economies. We can best consider the term as it applies in Physics. A kettle is heating on a gas

ring. Until the water is boiling, there is very little we can predict about the system. Once the water is boiling however, there is a new situation: the system is *at equilibrium*. The system is stable and self-regulating; it will react in such a way as to oppose any applied force. If we turn up the gas on the kettle, the temperature does not increase, and the system adjusts by increasing the amount of steam evolved. Real systems are never *at equilibrium*, but always moving towards it, and conditions can be adjusted so as to facilitate the movement.

Equilibrium in physical systems provides a useful analogy to the behaviour of a market. A market is a stable, self-regulating system, moving always in the direction of stability and equilibrium. It exists when individuals interact by means of *bargains*. In a bargain, both parties have increased their perceived holding of value, and this is the drive of a market.

Like a physical system, a market tends to resist applied change. In the currency market, for example, if there is a fall in the external value of the pound, the system moves to oppose this change. It reduces the external price of British goods, *increasing* the demand for pounds. Imported goods, meanwhile, become more expensive, *reducing* the demand for foreign currency. Home-produced goods become relatively cheaper, encouraging home manufacturers, again leading to a reduction in demand for foreign currency. The system reacts, tending to reverse the effects of the external change. The authority-controlled fixed rate system has a corresponding *instability*: the perception of a currency as over-valued is a self-fulfilling prophecy, working through the simplest self-interest of every individual in the market.

Our market system as a whole is clearly not self-regulating; in fact, the characteristic of all market economies has been the continuously increasing degree of government action they appear to require: consumer protection, protection of the environment, the control of inflation... The system is actually moving *from* equilibrium.

The life-blood of a market is

information, and in any case of supposed market failure we should first consider the information supply. We have considered three major elements of *authority* control within the market system; and each of these acts to constrain the information supply. Paragocracy promotes advertising as the dominant mode of commercial information to the market; it sanctifies by a network of law the right of trade unions to deflate the currency; and it presents the enormous subsidy to road transport as a universal benefit.

Every accident of history and geography conspires to create the forces which impede market regulation in Britain, except one, the British Broadcasting Corporation — a large broadcasting organisation not subsidised by advertising. It might be expected that the independence of advertising of the BBC would be reflected in its output. Yet strangely, its ethos is exactly that of the advertising-subsidised press. Free comment on articles of commerce is permitted if they happen to be books, records or theatrical performances; any other comment is restricted to the negative and destructive form of the so-called 'Consumer' press. Any discussion or analysis of the value to the community of the £6bn expenditure on advertising is proscribed.

The BBC is under threat; yet there is one move that the BBC could make which would not only secure its own future, but change the future of the world. The remit of the BBC is to entertain, educate and inform. The remit of commercial television, with which the BBC is in competition, is to *misinform* in the large output of consumer news contained in the advertisements. Logic, and indeed *duty under the Charter*, require the BBC to correct the situation. This it could do by broadcasting consumer news in the format of ITV — bright, entertaining and positive, but reflecting the realities of products and markets; educating the nation in consumer matters by promoting all that is best in value, service, quality and novelty.

Nothing could have a more profound effect. The self-interest of the BBC would be served, since the competition

would be weakened; further, a solution to the vexed problem of the funding of the BBC could be found. ITV is funded essentially through a sales tax, the cost of advertising embodied in the price of consumer goods. It would therefore be entirely logical if the BBC, once it was providing consumer news in the interest of the nation, were funded through VAT. It would require a mere half percentage point in the VAT rate to do so; from the present 17.5% to 18%.

Externally, beneficial effects would spread; manufacturers would be spared the need to subsidise television; but, more importantly, competition would increase enormously. The lowest priced competing goods would be promoted, tending to control inflation. Quality too, would be promoted, raising the standard of manufacturing industry. Newspaper publishers would face a new environment as advertising subsidy withered, and it would be necessary to produce a product for which *people would be happy to pay the whole cost*. This has never been a problem for the publishers of books, however. They would address themselves to one interest only: that of *people*. Local newspapers would be strengthened; providing the shopping news that puts value into people's pockets and much better placed to police local politics, achieving the control that Mrs Thatcher's ill-fated Poll Tax was supposed to give.

The improving control of the economy removes the need for malign government intervention, with its consequences. The control on road transport is one of the largest items of public expenditure, and reduces the greatest threat to the environment, while the increasing control of the economy in the interest of the consumer achieves further environmental benefit. Intense competition and the freeing of the labour market as trade union control weakens, reduces the unemployment and inequalities of wealth of paragocracy... Government withers as more of its functions are taken over by the market.

The move from paragocracy gathers strength all over the world. With the demise of the EEC, world free trade is stimulated, particularly benefitting the

poorer economies. Governments weaken and countries become ill-defined. War, which is the conflict of the monopolies called states, is no longer possible...

The world approaches the equilibrium state of *people's capitalism*. We can make no prediction of the nature of that state because it represents a continuing response to

ever-changing external circumstances. But we know that a market, as it moves to equilibrium, will always find the best interest of the people within it.

Give a man a fish and you've fed him for a day;

Give a man a fishing rod and you've fed him for a lifetime.

But hire a man a fishing rod, and use

the proceeds to buy more fishing rods; and you've started a process that, in time, will feed, clothe and pacify the whole world.

And that is the end of history.

Clive Dunwich is a freelance writer.

As a Fool to his Folly

George Ross offers some reflections on the General Elections in Romania

As a dog that returneth to his vomit
So, a fool that repeateth his folly.

Proverbs 26. 11.

Marx is vindicated: he was right when he said that history repeats itself: the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce. After the tragedy of May 1990, Romania suffered now the ignominious farce of an electoral circus. The tragi-comic campaign ended with the voting on 27th September (first ballot) and 11th October (second ballot) that produced a president and the members of the two chambers of the Romanian parliament for the next four years.

The second ballot was held in all instances where, in the first round, no candidate scored an overall majority: this included the highest office.

The results are well-known by now: apart from fragments of the former Soviet Union itself, Romania remains the only country in Eastern Europe still governed by communists (or, at any rate, by the former nomenclature). President Iliescu, grandee under Ceausescu, has managed to continue his hold on power, thus demonstrating that he is the Harry Houdini of totalitarianism and the undisputed godfather of the merry gang of escapologists

constituting the new "establishment", who are the apparatchiks of the ancien regime of the now departed Conducator (leader). On a high turnout (approx. 75%), his share of the vote has dropped from a Stalinist level of 85% in 1990, to an at least plausible, if probably fraudulently inflated, 60%. Iliescu will be assisted by an inauspicious parliament, consisting of a Chamber of Deputies and a Senate, in which his own party, FDSN (the Democratic National Salvation Front) has only about 35% of the seats, compared to the about 24% of the main opposition coalition, the Romanian Democratic Convention (CDR). No doubt, Iliescu will enlist the support of friendly stablemates, such as the extremist groups (the label "left" and "right" are meaningless in this context) representing the Party of Romanian National Unity (PUNR) and Romania Mare (approx. 12%). Thus, he seems to be able to govern with the help of a minority government: this is bound to prove an unstable – and, in the end, an unworkable – political constellation.

How could these results be explained? After all, Iliescu offered himself as a candidate – and fought the campaign – being compromised to an extent

unmatched by any other victor in any elections recorded in recent European history, and this taking into account all 28 countries that were components of the Soviet Union and of its satrapies. Given that all opinion polls (ah, the opinion polls!) predicted a convincing victory of the Democratic Convention (the centre-right coalition), the results seem to corroborate Thatcher's law: "The unexpected always happens". Indeed, Romania has become the looking-glass country in which not only one can believe impossible things (and more than six of them before breakfast), but (*pace* the White Queen) one can have the confidence of seeing them materialise. Inter alia, the nonsense of these elections is quite enough to make the Red Queen exclaim that, compared with it, calling a hill a valley would be as sensible as a dictionary!

A complete and rigorous analysis of these disappointing results is not easy. The Romanian elections belonged to the fairly broad category of such public consultation exercises that are half won (by those in power) and half lost (by the opposition), but the Romanian process displayed disturbing aspects, which were, alas, not wholly unexpected.

The start of the campaign was

dramatic, having its underlying agenda set by Bishop Tökes's hunger-strike. Tökes was the catalyst of the genuine protest of 16th December 1989 in Timisoara, skilfully and cynically exploited by the Gorbachevite caucus in the communist party and Securitate for disguising their putsch as a popular uprising. The purpose of the hunger strike was to bring to the attention of international public opinion that those men guilty of murder during the carnage of December 1989 had not yet been identified and still less brought to trial. Bishop Tökes wanted to highlight the role of Securitate (or of its new reincarnation, the Romanian Service

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of Information [SRI]) and the part played by Iliescu in the bloody rampage of the "miners", in June 1990, which had never been properly – or, at any rate, officially – cleared up and the culprits never brought to book. This was even more scandalous as SRI documents contained in 18 bags, discovered on 18th May 1991 in a shallow grave, in a wood near the village of Berevoiesti, next to a large mound of only partially burned papers as well as ashes, clearly pointed to a direct link. This discovery, a small part of which was reproduced since then in the independent press, was so significant in its implications, that it was called the "Romanian Watergate", or "Berevoi-Gate".

Another important mystery, never unravelled, was the fate and whereabouts of the considerable fortune amassed, and salted away, by Ceausescu. The extent and destination

of the wealth accumulated by the vanished communist party was another jealously guarded secret, whose exposure was long overdue. Both puzzles were pointers to fraud, embezzlement and corruption on a massive scale.

It was tragic that Bishop Tökes had to resort to such desperate means to convey his point of view and to draw the attention of international public opinion to the Romanian situation. That such actions were deemed necessary, was a dire indictment of the political climate in Romania and showed that the democratic processes in this country could not be trusted, indeed, that the democratic processes there were a mere travesty. The hunger strike which took place only three weeks before the general election boded ill and was a clear indication of the lack of confidence in the fairness and freedom of the campaign and of the voting procedure.

Bishop Tökes pointed an accusing finger at the rulers. They stood indicted not only of being part of Ceausescu's nomenclature and pillars of the past regime, and so of bearing their share of responsibility for the misdeeds, perpetrated in the not so distant past, but also of crimes initiated, organised and carried out by them since Ceausescu's fall in December 1989. Moreover, by protecting those who executed the orders, the rulers became open to being accused of perverting and obstructing the course of justice. The scent of scandal was hanging upon Iliescu and his acolytes who were perceived to be the perpetrators of a colossal cover-up.

It was clear to everybody – and to them – that, should they have lost the elections, they would have had to contemplate the prospect of a long spell not on the opposition benches but in prison or exile, as fugitives, and the latter option would have been open only if a political regime sufficiently friendly leaders could have been found anywhere in today's world. Electoral defeat would have spelt their political obsequies.

For the leaders of Romania there simply was no alternative: come hell or high water, they had to win. Fear concentrates the mind wonderfully and,

after all, they were the past masters of dirty tricks.

In order to understand this process, remember that Lenin invented the organisational model of all totalitarian states and parties. He was the creator of the fundamental rule that governed such regimes, namely that intrinsically, thoroughly ideological parties, as all communist parties were, did not recognise any principle in politics. This may appear as a contradiction in a society governed by logic, but not in the looking glass underworld of totalitarianism, whose mentality is still pervasive in Romania. There was only one goal, and this was *power*; everything else became just a mere means to acquire more. Naturally, this real aim was concealed: after all, Newspeak was so constructed as to render heretical thoughts and questions unsayable and unthinkable. This must be remembered when trying to make sense of events in the country in which Ceausescu's "sultanistic" legacy is still so powerful.

Prime minister Stolojan, who formed his coalition government as a direct result of the second invasion of the "miners", in September 1991, proved to be, qua administrator, relatively uncontroversial and became the man whose seriousness and economic competence had won the confidence of the West. Qua politician, however, he was a nonentity, devoid of any power-base, eager to please his political masters and mentors to the extent that he was only too ready, if not happy, to acquiesce in the shameful abuses and criminal cover-ups. Although a former communist of some standing, he was brought to lead the cabinet as a technocrat and a compromise choice. There were indications that the West would not have been hostile to his continued leadership, for he would have implemented a much needed program of economic reform and especially of privatisation of industrial and commercial companies, still largely state-owned and virtually bankrupt. Nonetheless, it was a foregone conclusion that he would not carry on after the elections, once a new government could be sworn in.

The electoral campaign began and

developed with all the stops out and with no holds barred. No matter that bread – or other basic necessities – were (and are) in short supply and that inflation runs at some 220%; the new establishment excelled at providing the circuses. Michael Jackson, no less, was brought in between ballots and most political leaders and notables of all shades thought it essential to be seen at the jamboree. One banner proclaimed: “Michael Jackson – gift from God”. No matter that the entertainer — if, indeed, endowed with transcendental dimensions — would appear rather like an emanation from the other side: this says everything about the straw-grasping fever that is gripping looking-glass Romania, about the confusion, disturbed perception and escapism that permeates this unhappy country.

Newspapers, do not reach, and are not much read in, the rural areas, where most of the population still lives. The radio and television are firmly kept under state control. The general slant of the broadcasts and the biased allocation of time for political broadcasts, were obvious. The disinformation machine worked relentlessly: the television, for instance, was forbidden to broadcast any film clips or even still photographs that showed Iliescu next to, or near, his great mentor Ceausescu. Not surprisingly, the propaganda was a contributing factor to the striking polarisation of the vote, with the rulers scoring far better in villages than in urban areas. The alarm-mongers amongst the top-ranking nomenclature spread rumours about the imminence of a military coup and the certain installation of a South-American type regime, should the opposition win. It was bad enough that they had unhindered access to, and were allowed to use the state-controlled media. But this message was repeated, endorsed and sanctioned by their stalwarts in the West hiding behind, and thus being invested with, the authority of agencies that still enjoy prestige and credibility in Romania and which, alas, offered their generous co-operation by beaming such noxious and pestilent agitprop to an unsuspecting and gullible people: this was mischief-making

of an infinitely worse kind, and far more effective.

One salient – and worrying – aspect of the result is the comparatively high proportion (about 10-12%) of the votes won by the candidates of chauvinistic, extremist parties in their bids for presidency and for seats in the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. The origins of this phenomenon can be found towards the beginning of Ceausescu's period, in the 1960's. This was the time when the efficient and resourceful ideological machine at his disposal started a thorough study of the pre-war, quasi-nazi, Iron Guard movement. In particular, it attempted to grasp its popular appeal, with the obvious aim of emulating it. Soon the

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Communist party hierarchy was using the idiosyncratic argot of the Iron Guard and — with the language determining the perceived reality — it adopted and appropriated not only its slogans, but also values, outlook and trends. Thus, “the national revolution”, with all its overtones, replaced the communist idea of “internationalism”. The totalitarian state was centred around a “Conducator” (Leader, Führer). A regime of the kind that usually employs culture as a weapon, started a campaign against intellectuals, against the very concepts of democracy and critical analysis (notwithstanding that they were never applied; lip service had previously been scrupulously paid to such aims). All previous standards were

destroyed: a new identity had to be found and a legitimising mythology created. At the same time, a fairly innocuous cultural movement, the protochronism, begun by a scholar of integrity whose original aim was to highlight the originality of Romanian culture, deplored the fact that Romanian contributions, such as Surrealism or Dadaism, although they had often anticipated creative efforts in the West, had not always been acknowledged as such. They started to be exploited by the regime in an aggressive sustained crescendo of jingoism and became an argument about patriotism, betrayal and anti-Semitism. All those were signifiers of Romania's slide towards an extremist fascist-communist form of state. The periodical “Saptamana” (“The Week”), was, during the Ceausescu era, an enthusiastic mouthpiece of the system and undisguised organ of Ceausescu's Securitate, dispensing the new strident values, and a major contributor to the deterioration of the moral and political climate in the country. Overnight and without any ideological difficulties, after the putsch of December 1989, “Saptamana” transmogrified, lock, stock and editors into “Romania Mare” (The Great Romania), continued to uphold and propagate exactly the same views and quasi-fascist message. Soon the journal set up a foundation by the same name, a political arm (the eponymous party) and even a “Committee for the Investigation of Anti-Romanian Activities”! The “Party for Romanian National Unity” (PUNR) also has its roots in Ceausescu's ideological endeavours. Such dangerous political organisations are functioning unhindered, with Iliescu's blessing, doing the vicarious work of provocation and of creating perilous diversions, so necessary and useful to the present rulers. At the second ballot in the presidential race, the extremist parties rallied behind Iliescu.

The voting itself was rife with abuse. The enormous number (3.6 million. i.e. more than 10%) of bulletins declared “invalid” at the first round suggested malpractices: that many of those bulletins were incinerated at once,

instead of being kept for inspection, did nothing to alleviate such fears. Voting provisions made for people travelling on the ballot day were conveniently exploited, with many Iliescu agents being bussed between polling stations. Multiple voting was also obvious, with individuals collecting ballot papers for supposed relatives without proper empowering documents. International observers noted that the official stamps at polling stations were not locked away after voting closed, but were placed to one side in an open envelope for anyone to use at a later stage during the night. At the previous elections, in May 1990, some international observers were duped. But even those claiming that "the elections were fair, with no fraud and no incidents" acknowledged that some organisational aspects, while not illegal, could be a possible source of fraud. Fortunately, however, a large enough contingent of seasoned observers was present: sharp, thorough, and difficult to deceive. Their comments were sufficiently worrying to persuade a concerned United States Congress, on the 30th September (after the first ballot), to vote down a bill granting Romania most-favoured-nation trading rights. Requests to suspend substantial aid for propping up the Iliescu administration, were addressed also to other Western governments, by their observers. It is essential that such requests be heeded.

The fundamental question is not whether the ballot was fraudulent, but to what extent the abuses perpetrated distorted the results. What would have been the real parliamentary configuration and, of course, the result of the presidential election, had the proceedings not been tampered with? Alas, the answer to this conundrum will probably never be known.

One thing is virtually certain: all the propaganda, all the abuses perpetrated, all the fraudulent practices deployed, all the vote rigging, would not have helped, had the electorate been unflinching in their determination to see a fundamental change and had they expressed it through the ballot box, thus producing a landslide victory for the opposition.

But the electorate was, obviously, not prepared to give this kind of back-up to the coalition of the opposition parties, the Democratic Convention of Romania (CDR). There were many reasons for this lack of wholehearted enthusiasm. Mental fatigue and inertia were part of the cause, as, no doubt, was also opting for the devil you know. Old certainties appeared more safe and more alluring than embarking on uncharted territory, even if there was a chance of reaching the promised land of democracy and prosperity at the end of the journey. Obviously, the would-be Moses did not inspire the required confidence. It would be idle to deny that the opposition lost the elections because of a credibility gap. The opposition leaders projected the wrong image. Many of them were paralysed by mental rigidity, motivated by hubris, and belonged to a mind-set of bygone days. The opposition failed to mount a principled and united campaign, it failed to carry throughout the country a persuasive message and failed to convince the public of its fitness to provide a suitable alternative.

It also failed to find a plausible, powerful, political figure as its leader and candidate for the presidency: Emil Constantinescu, the CDR presidential candidate, an academic reminiscent of "finger lickin' good" Colonel Saunders, was totally unknown to the public at the start of the electoral campaign and it is clear that his 13 magic ingredients were not sufficiently miraculous to command the required endorsement. A former communist party boss of the Bucharest University, he became, after December 1989, its Rector. It is true that, after the fall of Ceausescu his attitude seems to have been brave and dignified, but those were the days when the road to Damascus was clogged up with traffic jams: this was the time when everyone was busy creating, discovering or inventing anti-Communist credentials! Emil Constantinescu may have been (and I have no reason to doubt that he was) a man who did not harm anyone, who did not commit any crime and who, on the contrary, was kind, attempted to be correct (if that's the appropriate word to describe any

attitude and action of a man in such a job) and who helped many people. His present position, as Rector of the University, may have been correctly earned and, indeed, may be well-deserved. However, the opposition seems to have made a very odd choice. Out of 23 million Romanians, couldn't they have picked, for the highest office in the country, a candidate without such a past, couldn't they have selected someone untainted by associations with the communist hierarchy?

One reason for this selection might have been the desire to reassure former ordinary party members and even junior party bosses that they have nothing to fear from a victory of the opposition and to assuage any misgivings they may have about such an event.

The main issue of the transition to the post-totalitarian period is that of moral regeneration, of the total, complete and irreversible break with the communist past and with its perpetrators. In this crucial period, "living in truth" acquires a fundamental significance. The highest office in the State must be the supreme symbol of the spiritual renewal of the country and its incumbent a person of the highest moral stature and dignity, untarnished by unholy connections with the former regime. If offered the choice between two candidates, the first of unimpeachable integrity and the second with a past tainted by having occupied important positions in the communist hierarchy, most right-minded people would vote for the first, even if the second were of higher ability. However, if forced to choose between two candidates, both having achieved some seniority in the nomenclature and thus both revealing a disturbing lack of mettle or, in "politically correct" lingo, both being "morally disadvantaged persons", many honest people might well prefer the one who went further. In other words they may have voted for the candidate who demonstrated that he had the quasi-simian shrewdness and cunning to manipulate the system more effectively.

The opposition lost and now must take a hard look at itself in order to find ways in which it can become relevant and plausible. This missed opportu-

nity will have dire consequences for the country. With great sorrow, I am reminded of Robert Mallet's words (*Apostilles*):

"It is not impossibilities which fill us with the deepest despair, but possibilities which we have failed to realise."

These elections have not spelled the end of the Gorbachevite project in Romania. Let us hope that they indicate, at least, the beginning of its end. Iliescu is now the last perestroika apparatchik in power. He has outlived not only his stable mates Krenz, Grosz or Urbanek, but also Gorbachev himself, the creator of the last of utopias, that of smiling communism. Iliescu cannot survive indefinitely, not without the KGB life-blood.

Romania will probably enter a period of instability, during which minority governments will be formed only with the help of shaky coalitions and their

functioning will depend upon the reluctant support of a parliament containing a large hostile group. Nobody expects the present parliament to last its full term of four years. The opposition would be wise not to force an early demise, but to allow the regime to collapse by itself. It won't take long, provided that opposition leaders do not attempt to extend its existence, by offering a life-line. The West must not attempt to prop up such a fragile and unrepresentative administration. Sooner or later, what in East-European vernacular has become known as "the second revolution", will take place and then the country will be able, at long last, to contemplate its communist-free future. That will be the moment when the assistance of the advanced nations of the world must really help the country and not merely prop up a bankrupt regime; only then help should

be offered, when genuine steps towards democracy and economic reform would be well under way.

These elections were depressing: they revealed a people ill at ease with itself, and deeply divided, in a country in which only incipient forms of civil society and a rule of law exist. Perhaps the most apposite description of the Romanian malaise was put forward by Norman Manea, in one of his short stories (*The Sweater*), published in the volume *October, Eight O' Clock* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1992):

"Time itself had sickened, and we belonged to it."

It seems that we still do.

George Ross is a lecturer at King's College, London, and Vice-President of the British-Romanian Association.

Conservatism's Big Idea

George Chowdharay-Best looks at the origins of our property-owning democracy

W F Deedes (*Daily Telegraph*, 31 August 1992) deplored the doldrums that home ownership was in because of the recession – the idea of a property-owning democracy, central to Conservative doctrine for nearly fifty years, is now in a state of eclipse.

It struck me as odd that even Lord Deedes could not recall when the idea had first surfaced; nor apparently could such standard historians of the Conservative Party as Lord Blake, T.Y. Lindsay and Michael Harrington, John Ramsden, and Martin Pugh. The nearest John Ramsden gets to it in his *Making of Conservative Party Policy* (1980) is to mention a committee on share-ownership set up in 1958 under Sir Toby Low (afterwards Lord Aldington) which called for a commitment to a 'share-owning democracy'.

The idea of a property-owning democracy must be earlier than this. But how early?

The actual phrase 'property-owning democracy' was invented by the Scottish Conservative MP Archibald Noel Skelton (1880-1935), who wrote about it in three articles published in the *Spectator* in 1923, which were afterwards reprinted as a booklet, *Constructive Conservatism*, in 1924 with an introduction by Sir Robert Horne. He pointed out that Skelton's purpose was to provide Conservatism with 'a philosophy to sustain faith and a policy to inspire conviction... Stagnation must not be allowed to masquerade as stability'. The real menace to Conservatism was no longer Liberalism, for with the extension of the franchise 'the main business of the

Liberal as such was gone'; it was Socialism. By 1924 Labour had, indeed, already formed its first, minority-Government. But Socialism, argued Skelton, could neither increase wealth nor develop character. It meant 'the omnipotent State, the kept citizen, responsibility checked, initiative crippled, character in cold storage, wealth squandered'. The caretaker's attitude was not good enough for Conservatism. A positive, active alternative must be presented. Britain, unlike France, had achieved political democracy without the disaster of revolution. Could a similar success be achieved in the economic sphere?

Conservatives could advocate 'the widest possible extension... of the private ownership of property'. Britain was now, electorally, a complete

democracy. And education had made great strides. Writing in 1923, Skelton had 'never wavered in his conviction that it was largely due to the extent to which the mass of the people had absorbed the benefits of some forty years of strenuous education that we owed our achievements in the War'. Conservatives must recognize that an alert, sensitive, and receptive habit of mind had replaced one traditionally prone to be 'sluggish and prejudiced'. Although it was true that Socialism appealed to greed and envy; it also appealed because it had a 'view of life', which captured the new mood. It had 'fundamental principles' which must be countered by Conservative ones. Although 'Conservatism believes in a restricted field for the action of the State', it would not do to confuse the politician's function with that of the policeman. The fundamental problem was that for the mass of the people, 'political status and educational status have outstripped economic status. Until our educated and politically minded democracy has become predominantly a property-owning democracy, neither the national equilibrium nor the balance of the life of the individual will be restored'.

The wage-earner had been trying to do this for himself, through the Co-operative movement, Friendly Societies, Savings Banks, and even the benefits side of Trade Unions. He had been trying to build up 'something of his own'; and his determination to do this was also convinced by the tremendous success of the War Savings Certificates scheme. But this effort had not solved the problem. His status as a worker had not been altered.

The liberals had done nothing for him, the Conservatives not enough, and the Socialists were trying to persuade people, sometimes successfully, that ownership by the State amounted to ownership by the people, implying that this meant a property-owning democracy. Of course, it did not. 'What everybody owns, nobody owns; and far from expressing the wage-earner's ideal, Socialism makes it unobtainable'.

Skelton then went on to discuss the nature of Conservatism. A 'stable

condition of society' was its main preoccupation. When change was resisted, it was because of the fear of confusion and instability. Sometimes, however, only change could itself produce stability and in those circumstances the Party had been fearless in carrying it through. Stability, moreover, was not stagnation; it must be accompanied by progress, or it fails.

The second principle enunciated by Skelton was 'character', 'everything that weakens individual character and lessens individual effort and initiative is anathema to the Conservative'. The action of the State must be limited as

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far as possible to 'helping the individual to help himself'. The acquisition of property by honest means had a beneficial effect upon character because getting it exercised thrift and self-control; and using it increased a sense of responsibility and a wider economic outlook. Private property also had a close relation to Skelton's other principle – stability. In the past the franchise had been restricted to those with a property qualification. In 1924 the property qualification still existed in local government, and its last vestiges were not abolished until much later in the century.

The means to achieve a property-owning democracy were outlined. First, 'industrial co-partnership' (co-partnership) or its half-way house, profit-sharing; secondly, small ownership for the agriculturist and agricultural co-operation for the rural community as a whole; and thirdly, the Referendum. Under the first of these, the wage-earner's share of the profits was to be

paid to him partly in cash, partly in shares, and, 'as the workers became capitalists, "seats on the board"', i.e. worker-directors, would follow. The benefits of such a system would, thought Skelton, include a reduction in strikes and of such doctrines as that of 'canniness', and an improvement in standards, since a share-holding wage-earner would not so readily submit to his own good work being neutralised by his neighbour's slackness or his manager's incompetence.

Skelton's agricultural views were less clear. What he wanted was a better system of starting small holdings than then existed. The Referendum had been called for in 1910 and 1911 to save the House of Lords. Democracy needed to be able to protect itself from 'Socialism as its scarcely disguised enemy'. 'Socialism is fearless and untiring in setting out its aims and ideals', he concluded. 'Liberalism is dying because its principles are dead. It will fare ill with Conservatism unless it breaks its silence and makes clear to the nation that it, too, has a vision of the future — (of a property-owning democracy), master of its own life, made four-square and secure, and able therefore to withstand the shrill and angry gales which, in the new era's uneasy dawn, sweep across the world of men.'

It is interesting that share-ownership formed such a strong feature of Skelton's scheme, whilst home ownership hardly features at all.

Skelton died during the General Election campaign of 1935. He had been Unionist Member of Parliament for Perth, 1922-23 and 1924-31. In 1931, together with John Buchan and D.M. Cowan, he became one of the Scottish University Members; and he joined the National Government as Under-Secretary of State for Scotland. At Dundee on 29 November 1935 Stanley Baldwin paid his tribute: 'a fine character, a type of cultivated Scots gentleman — and there is no finer type in these islands — a man of culture, a man of ideals and a man of vision... I can think of no individual in the ranks... who has contributed more in his work to make our party in Scotland.. an integral part of Scottish life and.. thought.'

In *The Way the Wind Blows* (1976), the present Lord Home described how he was taken on as Parliamentary Private Secretary by Skelton in the 1931 Parliament. 'He would have gone a long way in politics had he not died in his early fifties.'

Robert Rhodes James in his *Anthony Eden* (1986) has explained how in 1929, after the Conservative defeat, Eden joined a small group of Conservative MP's who met weekly to dine and work in the cause of 'Liberal Conservatism'. 'Its most brilliant and influential member was a young Scotsman, Noel Skelton, who coined the phrase "a property-owning democracy" which Eden never forgot,

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and was to use to great and enduring effect much later'. Other members of this group were Oliver Stanley, William Ormsby-Gore, Walter Elliot and W.S. Morrison. Stimulated by this company, and especially by Skelton, Eden launched a series of speeches advocating the expansion of private ownership of property as widely as possible, 'to enable every worker to become a capitalist'. Many Conservatives disliked share-options for workers and partnership in industry both then and now. The idea of worker-directors both in Germany and England dates back to well before the First World War. It has been tried fairly successfully recently in the steel industry but many Conservatives frown on it. It was not until 1945, so far as I have been able to discover, that a Conservative General Election manifesto spelt out 'our desire to see property widely spread'; and when the theme was spelt out more fully by Eden in a speech to the Party Conference on 3 October 1946, the emphasis was

firmly on home ownership. The Party's objective, he affirmed, was 'a nationwide property-owning democracy', whereas that of the Socialists was the concentration of ownership in the hands of the State. 'Our opponents believe in State capitalism, we believe in the widest measure of individual capitalism'. 'Ownership of property', he went on, 'is not a crime or a sin, but a reward, a right and a responsibility that must be shared as equitably as possible. We believe, for example, that it is desirable to elaborate schemes whereby the private citizen and the returned soldier should be in a position not only to rent a house but to own one. We believe that the tenant farmer should be assisted and encouraged to become an owner-occupier.

'We would welcome schemes designed to enable the workers in industry to participate in its development and in the ownership of industry to a greater degree than they do at present'. Following Skelton, he urged that it was essential that the worker should have status and not be merely a cog in a soulless machine. He would not acquire this under Socialism nor even under a system of free enterprise 'unless we are prepared to foster and encourage schemes for the distribution of capital ownership over a wide area'. As Rhodes-James has written, these themes of the individual and incentive have 'become central to all post-1945 Conservative political thought'.

Two days later (5 October 1946) Winston Churchill gave the phrase his ringing endorsement. 'We oppose the establishment of a Socialist state, controlling the means of production, distribution and exchange', he declared. 'Our Conservative aim is to build a property-owning democracy, both independent and interdependent... we seek, so far as possible, to make the status of a wage-earner that of a partner rather than of an irresponsible employee.... We do not wish the people of this ancient island reduced to a mass of state-directed proletarians, thrown hither and thither, housed here and there, by an aristocracy of privileged officials or privileged party, sectarian or trade union bosses.' Again, in 1948, Churchill returned to the theme, ac-

knowledging at last the Scottish origin of the phrase in a speech on 28 May; this duly appeared in the 1950 General Election manifesto, particularly in relation to home ownership. When Eden succeeded Churchill as Prime Minister in 1955, he gave the phrase even greater emphasis. The election manifesto of that year proclaimed that 'we wish to develop in our country the idea of a property-owning democracy. That means that people should be owners as well as earners. Our theme is that property, power and responsibility alike must not become absorbed into the State machine but be wide spread throughout the whole of the community. To this end, we shall encourage home ownership. We shall foster thrift.... We shall maintain the independence of the small trader and landowner and of the professional man.'

For ownership these policies have certainly born fruit. Of 22 million dwellings in 1983, according to the 1985 edition of *Social Trends*, 13 million were owner-occupied, compared with only four million out of 14 million in 1951; that is to say, in those thirty-two years, the owner-occupied sector had expanded from 29% to 60% of the total housing stock. Recognising this progress, the 1970 manifesto went further. 'We have already done much and will do more', it said, 'to develop a "property-owning democracy": now we must also progress towards the capital-owning democracy of the future'. The meaning of the phrase, in political parlance, had shifted towards home-ownership, 'real property' in lawyers' language, rather than property-owning in its broadest sense as understood by Skelton, Eden, and Churchill.

To be true to Skelton we must examine later developments. The 1980s were characterised by an expansion in share ownership. By 1990, nearly a quarter of the adult population aged 16 and over owned shares, compared with only 7% in 1981. The 1992 edition of *Social Trends*, however, also points out that although the value of shares held by individuals certainly increased between 1963 and 1990 their proportion of the total value of all shares in British companies more than halved.

Pension funds increased their holdings from 6% to 31% and insurance companies more than doubled their holdings. Moreover the percentage of people in different socio-economic groups owning shares continued to vary markedly from about 5% (between 1980 and 1987) amongst unskilled manual workers to over 40% amongst the professional classes.

Nonetheless, there has been some progress on the share-ownership front. On worker-participation in industry generally, however, I think that a great opportunity has been lost. Two years after Skelton's property-owning democracy articles, the *Spectator* published (29 August 1925) an article by E.J. Fox, Managing Director of the Stanton Ironworks Company, on 'co-partnership and workmen directors'. He wrote that before the first World War the South Metropolitan Gas Company, under Dr Charles Carpenter, had instituted a co-partnership scheme which resulted in a prolonged strike because of trade union objections. Ultimately the scheme was successfully carried out, but only after Unions had been banned. Fox was not in favour of

co-partnership schemes, and an admittedly somewhat sketchy survey both of Labour and of Conservative party history since that date suggests that they were unpopular at both ends of the political spectrum, with certain exceptions like the present Lord Amery. The

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views of the two ends of the spectrum may be caricatured as follows. The left-wing socialist or communist regards the worker-director as a traitor to his class, a tool of the management, whereas many Conservatives regard worker-directors as tools of the Unions or worse, potentially subversive members of the Board whose ultimate purpose could be to wreck the Company. And trade unions are against them

because, if successful they would tend to make the unions redundant. Nonetheless, the experiment has occasionally been tried, notably at British Steel from 1967 onwards, where it seems to have proved quite successful, the fears of both sides not having been realised. The success of German compared with British industry over the past forty or more years since the introduction of 'co-determination', with its elaborate system of worker representation both on supervisory and managerial boards in Germany, ought to give us pause for thought. So far we have tended to scoff at these boards and now we have another reason for opposing them, namely that they represent the hated Common Market system at its most Teutonic. There is an old phrase 'if you can't beat them, join them'; and maybe we should be thinking more seriously about this in the future.

George Chowdharay-Best is a researcher for the Oxford Dictionary.

The Sacred in Art

John Tavener explains the importance of religion in his music

My subject is *The Sacred in Art* – Art that is *athanatos*, without Death, without Change, without beginning and without end.

This is so difficult to discuss in a time when Man has lost his belief not only in God, but also in himself. We live in a culture in ruins.

'The modern concept of the artist as creative genius would probably have excluded him from Plato's Greece, because any artist who produced a work of sacred art could never think of

himself as a creative genius in the modern sense of the word. The artist of the sacred concretes, reproduces, must submit to the discipline of practising, through endless repetition of a given form until he has mastered all of it, so that its original transcendence begins to flow through him; no longer a matter of external copying or repetition, but a matter of directing the forces of primordial inspiration, of which he is now the vehicle, into formal patterns that long practice and meditation have

enabled him to master inwardly and outwardly...'

So writes Philip Sherrard in a recent book (*Art, Life and the Sacred*, Golgonooza Press, 1990) to which I shall allude quite freely at some points.

I would say that the "dictum" for all sacred Christian art must be as St Paul expresses it in another context: 'It is not I who live, but Christ in me.'

As a composer, living and working through these secular times, I work of course in a small area which does not

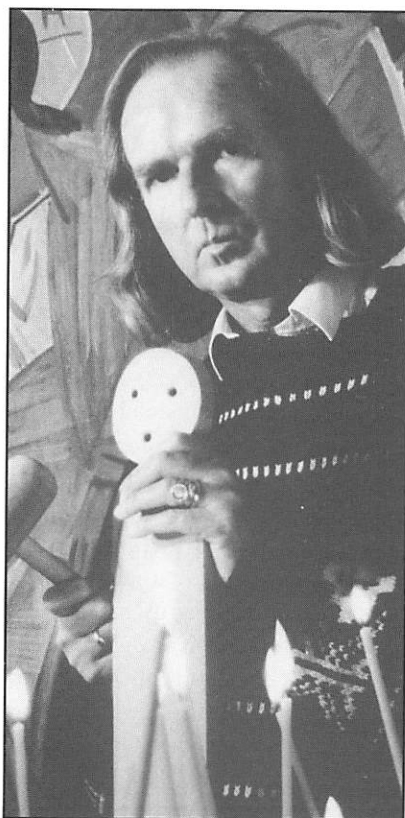
seem to concern many people. My increasing concern for the *Sacred* needs some explanation. For an artist to work in a *Sacred Tradition* he must first believe in the Divine Realities that inform that particular tradition. This is a *sine qua non* – not of course a guarantee for great art – but it is a *sine qua non*. Secondly, he must know the Traditions of the Art that he works in. He must know the tools, so that he can work with material that is Primordial, and therefore not *his*; not his or her expression, but the Tradition working through him.

The artist concerned with the Sacred must make an act of Faith. In my own case, it was a commitment to the Orthodox Church. First and foremost, a commitment to Christ-God as expressed through the eyes of the Orthodox Church. This is *radical* in the purest sense of the word and demands a gradual losing of self through a work of endless repentance, constantly falling, but picking oneself up, pointing ever more God-wards, to provide the vehicle through which the only Creator can work. There is nothing 'pie in the sky' about this; the task is daunting, awesome and exigent, and at the end of the day one can expect nothing but crucifixion and failure, because our strength, unique, as Christians, lies in our weakness, our frailty and our vulnerability.

I am aware that my thoughts make me sound like a crank in a technological, profane, ego-based, atheistic and psychologically oriented world. But, if I am mistaken then God is my judge.

I often wonder why the sacred music of any age should sound very different. The answer is that it *shouldn't*. If the composers in the West concerned with Sacred Tradition were trained in the disciplines of Byzantium, Sacred India, Judaic chant or any of the great Orthodoxies, instead of learning about Schoenberg's 'innovations', they would be aware that 'innovation' has nothing to do with Tradition; that is why no innovative art can possess 'Magnificence' or Magisterial Primordial beauty (emanating from the Divine Magnificence of God), making us creatures through which a Theophany can pass.

People talk about composers finding their own voice; this is another totally misleading concept. Not misleading, if the composer does not believe in Divine Realities; then, of course, he can be totally promiscuous in his artistic pursuits. And there is nothing wrong in this. It only becomes wrong if he believes in Divine Realities and, at the same time, digs from the endless so-called innovations of the last three hundred years or so.



The Ikon is the supreme example of Christian art, and of Transcendence and Transfiguration. It possesses simplicity, magnificence, transfigured beauty and austerity. Austerity, because the manner of painting has remained unchanged since the first mandelion (or 'Ikon not painted by human hands') bearing the face of Christ miraculously imprinted on a piece of material, and sent to the King of Edessa. Ikon-painting is a strict discipline, requiring fasting and constant communion. An Ikon does not express emotion (it is geometric and its colour palette is severely limited) and yet to the believer it inspires awe, wonder and the reverence of kissing. The Ikon is in one sense beyond art, because it plunges us straight into liturgical time and sacred history. But what makes a great Ikon?

I believe that it is the Holy Spirit working through the painter. It's a mystery.

How far can the art of Ikon-painting relate to music? I will suggest some ways on which the composer might meditate. If the composer knows the sacred 'tones' of the Orthodox Church, he will have the material. If he understands the significance of the *ison* or 'drone', representing the eternal, then he will have some clues. The composer may 'dance out' of or back into the *ison* (eternity note), but it must be somewhere present. He must also limit the tonal and colour palette, but always knowing where he must insert the divine archetype by a fully assimilated knowledge of the tones. All this has, at any rate, given me some ideas for the small patch that, as a composer, I feel compelled to work.

I see the act of re-creating in the end as a 'miracle'. After the ascetic pain of labouring to find the best way that I can to depict the subject, then this 'miracle' happens. But also each new piece is an act of repentance, stripping away unessentials, ever more naked, ever more simple... one might even say, ever more foolish.

Then comes a more practical question. How do you communicate this to a world that *has forgotten* and has little time for repentance, simplicity or 'foolishness'? The foolishness of Christ-God, the foolishness of the Mother of God, and the foolishness of all the crowds of Martyrs, Saints and Holy Fools. I said, however, that the world had forgotten and this seems to me to be the operative word.

A profound *amnesia* of simple primordial and eternal truths in favour of an insane, technological, psychological, intellectual culture. A culture in ruins, devoid of *gnosis* – as T. S. Eliot predicted, 'a civilisation which rejects what it cannot diminish'. If, as I say, the operative word is 'forgotten', then there must be a ray of hope. To reawaken the Primordial consciousness that lies dormant in all of us, somehow we have to provide a *temenos* or sacred space in which to work. The concert hall, the opera house and the art gallery are all glaring reminders of how fragmented and

dislocated we have become. Stockhausen has said that the churches will become the concert halls of the future, and there is more than a ring of truth about this. To move the *temenos* back into the cathedrals and churches, not to popularise, but to allow Sacred Art to breathe gently on the ancient stones. As an Orthodox Christian I am not particularly concerned about the present state of the Anglican Church, but it has frequently provided me with a platform, and for this I am ever grateful. Let the great medieval cathedrals of England be used to breathe back the medieval thought or *gnosis* that formed them.

Adherence to Primordial Tradition requires a very deep humility; a humility that at the end of the day says, in the Platonic sense, 'We know nothing'; a humility that requires a complete dismantling of the whole present scientific, psychological, popularist, profane and radical dehumanisation of our society, which has of course dislocated the whole *cosmic* realm. Theology in the Orthodox East has always been regarded as the expression of a given reality. But in the West, largely due to the disastrous teachings of Aristotle, it forced *Christian* theology into the *philosophical framework* of Aristotle. Instead of the Platonic elements which had served early Eastern

theologians as a vehicle for expressing an understanding of man confirmed through a life of prayer and contemplation, Western Aristotelian thought entered a ruinous epoch of abstraction and theory.

This surely is the root of the malaise. This is the cause of the apparent impotence of Western Christianity, Western life and Western Sacred Art. Impotent because Art has become abstracted and removed from its eucharistic function, removed also from Nature, from its sacramental roots and, finally, removed from life itself. Is there anywhere in the world today where the right notes or tones have to be found before Parliament can be opened? This was the norm in Plato's Greece.

I believe that we are in an abnormal state, split between imagination, reason, art and metaphysics. Our art is separated from sacred cosmology and the anthropological aspects of doctrines that affirm the sacramental nature of Creation. I know that, for instance, English hymns have references to God and the Saints, but they have nothing to do with Sacred Art. As Philip Sherrard says, a great deal of art expresses intimations of the Divine, aspirations for the Divine, glimpses of the Divine, either in the human soul or in the world of nature. And he goes on to say that the quality that distinguishes

a work of Sacred Art and that sets it apart from other works of art is one than can be described only by a word such as 'knowledge' or *gnosis*. As Dante writes:

'You who have sound intellects, Seek out the doctrine that conceals itself beneath the veil of the strange verses...

Indeed this invites us to seek out 'the intellect of love' — a disposition of being that induces and permits the God who constantly desires to reveal Himself (if only we could see) in our soul, desires our power of vision. This is the only way out of the spiritual and artistic catastrophe that faces us at the close of the twentieth century.

I am neither philosopher nor theologian, but my work — my work of repentance that may or may not lead me towards a Sacred Art — can be judged only on how near the music that I write comes to its task. This is my work within the area from which I must continue to dig and labour, to try and re-find something of the immeasurable magnificence, simplicity and magisterial beauty and power that emanates from God, who is the Source of Everything.

John Tavener is a composer whose most well known work is "The Protecting Veil" written for the cellist Steven Isserlis.

The Case for Voluntary Earmarked Taxation

B.M. Craven & C.L. Marston suggest a new method of funding public services

Opinion polls over the past 15 years have consistently found that people want high quality publicly provided services, especially in health care and education, and that they say they are prepared to accept higher taxation to pay for them.

After the General Election there was talk of a pact between the opposition parties in order to achieve proportional

representation. A new electoral system would enfranchise those voters who want more taxation and more public spending on areas such as health care and education.

Most people wish to see greater funding of publicly provided services but it can be achieved much more easily and efficiently through voluntary earmarked taxes than through electoral

reform. The concept of earmarked taxes is not new; but voluntary earmarked taxation has not received extensive attention.

During the 1992 General Election campaign period the Labour Party promised to abolish the income ceiling on earnings-related National Insurance contributions, whilst the Liberal Democrats explicitly stated that they

would impose an earmarked tax of one penny on the basic rate of income tax. The former's share of the vote at the election (by comparison with that in 1987) was unchanged whilst that of the latter fell by about 4%. Nonetheless about 53% of the voters at the election favoured these parties.

One of the main problems of achieving a democratic ideal is that if, as Arrow demonstrated, there are at least three choices that voters are able to order in any way, then it is impossible to devise a programme of public spending that gives voters what they want and provides a rational solution to the differing preferences of the electorate. In the UK there is a first past the post majority system. The result is that political parties promise a bundle of spending commitments which are usually not spelt out in detail in the manifestos. This means that the voter is often faced with wanting, for example, more defence spending and more welfare spending but finding no party offering both in the requisite quantities. The problem could be mitigated by the regular use of referenda on public expenditure matters but this is presumably ruled out on grounds of being 'politically impractical'.

In 1987 an article by Ralph Harris and Arthur Seldon resolved the paradox of the electorate voting for the party promising less taxation when opinion polls showed they wanted more. Their research showed that pollsters do not ask sufficiently specific questions but if respondents were questioned thoroughly about whether they were willing to pay personally for the desired public services a very different conclusion would result. The authors produced the following table.

Voluntary giving is preferable, economically, to coercive taxation as a means of achieving income transfers

The Vanishing Volunteers

How many want to pay more in tax for the N.H.S.? Base: total sample 2,011.

Degrees of approval	proportion %
1. More should be spent on public services	82
2. More should be spent on health: 39% of 82%	32
3. Willing to pay more tax 55% of 32%	17
4. Willing to pay extra 3p on basic rate: 58% of 17%	10
5p on basic rate: 27% of 17%	5
9p on basic rate: 16% of 17%	3

Harris and Seldon concluded that little over one in ten of the total sample would be prepared to pay an equivalent of an additional 3p in the £ on the standard rate of income tax. "Such an increase might yield around £5 billion if applied to *all* taxpayers, but only around a tenth of that total – a few hundred millions – if applied to the volunteers". Should the public services be denied a few hundred millions (*in 1987 prices*) if there are volunteers willing to pay?

Consider the characteristics of the donor. An individual will enjoy his own consumption of goods and services more if he has made a charitable donation to another person. The problem here is that others will benefit from the generosity of the charitable person. Non-charitable individuals may also feel less guilty if others have donated to relieve suffering. Economists call this an externality. It occurs when people other than those directly involved in the activity benefit from it. If this is really the case and the benefits of the donation are not restricted to the donor and the donee then there may be a case for state subsidy of charitable relief to the value of the external benefits. The subsidies could be financed by non-coercive taxation, because society would recognise the external benefits bestowed upon it and would contribute willingly. This is the outcome, although certainly imperfect, that approximates from the electoral processes.

The second approach (which is adopted here) is to take the ideas of Becker and regard charitable donations as a purely private good with benefits in the form of the 'feel good' factor being on the 'high moral ground'. Our

proposal recognises that the psychological benefit derived from charity is self righteousness and *depends* upon others in society *not* giving. This approach takes the view that those giving funds voluntarily are not influenced to reduce their generosity by the existence of the non-charitable. If others are not giving the need for charity from the willing donor is increased. On the other hand if many people are charitable and substantial funds are given to charity then individual donors may not feel the need to give quite so much.

Sugden suggests that this is a most implausible hypothesis but Harris and Seldon found some evidence to support the idea. In particular, they found that the relatively well off (ABC1s) seem to be willing to pay extra taxes to provide health services to the poor, the old, and the weaker members of society. They also want the less well off to escape the tax net altogether and seem quite happy to allow a large section of society to receive public services for which they have not personally paid even a minimal sum. Harris and Seldon assumed that this reflected the moral superiority of *noblesse oblige* as well as the lesser ability to pay of the C2DEs.

Voluntary giving is preferable, economically, to coercive taxation as a means of achieving income transfers. Firstly, the benefits of voluntary giving exceed those arising from involuntary tax transfers because the donor gains personal satisfaction. The chosen amount of the donation must maximise this satisfaction since if it were otherwise the person would have donated a different amount. Secondly there is the additional value to the

donor of what economists call 'the consumer surplus' – that amount of value received by the purchaser of a good over that paid to acquire the good. Finally, common to both, there is the benefit to the beneficiary.

Another benefit of voluntary earmarked taxation is that the administration of the expenditure should be more efficient than is achieved with compulsory taxation. The costs of administering public expenditure and charitable programmes will now be considered.

Giving benefits to deserving expenditure areas will incur administration costs. Clearly the cheapest way of transferring benefits is direct giving where the costs will be only those incurred by the donor. Handing a five pound note to a homeless person is easily done. This simple procedure is not always possible, for example, for someone starving in Ethiopia, or in need of an operation which cannot be performed by the donor. The practical difficulties in satisfying generous impulses of the donor have led to the rise of the charities acting as agents or wholesalers. Then there will be costs resulting from administration. Charity organisers prepare accounts to satisfy the needs of donors for information and probity. In the United Kingdom there is a legal requirement for most charities to publish accounts. As a consequence there is a form of market constraint on donations being taken as salaries for charity workers. The administration costs of voluntary transfers via charities are likely to be less than those of compulsory income tax transfers. This conclusion follows partly from the behavioural theories of the firm. Charities can be considered as competing firms with customers (donors) being unwilling to pay for relatively high priced goods (charities with high administration costs in proportion to disbursements to beneficiaries). In addition charities are likely to be able to avoid some administrative costs incurred by the state bureaux by taking overall responsibility for the direct installation of designated expenditures such as medical and school equipment, minibuses, books, computers, and

televisions. The Government employees on the other hand will be likely to behave in the style described by Niskanen where there are much greater incentives to extract 'fat' from the budget.

Voters who have been frustrated in their desires for higher taxation and public spending could donate as much of their wealth as they please to the charity industry. But despite the availability of these services the preference of the majority is for higher taxation. Voluntary earmarked taxation can be seen as part way between compulsory taxation, where there is no market mechanism ensuring efficient allocation of funds, and charitable donation which is subject to the rules of the

The administration costs of voluntary transfers via charities are likely to be less than those of compulsory income tax transfers

market place. Civil servants administering voluntary earmarked tax monies will be aware that competition can take their business away.

There are a number of possible methods of implementing and collecting the voluntary taxes. Based on the experience of the last election it would seem that education, the National Health Service, the weaker members of society such as pensioners, and the environment would be popular among those who wished to impose higher taxation levels upon all taxpayers, including themselves. Voluntary tax givers may not wish their contributions to further Conservative policy options. These individuals have the options of giving, for example, directly to non-trust-status hospitals or to their chosen charity.

If we consider these four programme areas, taxpayers could opt in and pay, for example, an extra one percent for each area they wished to support at the basic rate and an extra 1.5 percent at the higher rate. A person wishing to

contribute to all four areas would therefore pay basic rate tax of 29 percent and higher rate tax of 46 percent. There is little point in allowing voluntary payment of lesser sums since many electors made it clear that they were willing to pay substantial extra sums in taxation and wanted everyone to do so.

This extra tax could easily be collected via the PAYE system for employees. They would need to opt in by completing a suitable form before the start of the fiscal year. Adaptation of the direct assessment forms issued to persons whose income tax is not all collected by deduction at source would enable those taxpayers to participate. At a suitable point in the tax year the government would issue estimates of how much tax could be raised in the earmarked programme areas depending on the proportion of taxpayer volunteers. It could also outline the extra spending that could be achieved in the programme areas, such as the number of extra hospital beds that could be provided, the number of extra teachers, and increased pensions. This could go out with coding notices or annual tax returns.

An alternative method of implementing voluntary earmarked taxes could be to allow the taxpayer to pay, subject to a minimum, any sum to be earmarked to a specific programme area. A minimum is required in order that administrative costs are recognised and covered.

The administrative costs of operating the system should be deducted from the funds transferred to the recipients. The Inland Revenue should publish the amounts of tax raised and the processing costs incurred in passing the funds on to the earmarked expenditure programmes. The recipients of the funds, such as the NHS, should also publish accounts of earmarked tax funds received and expenditures made. By enforcing accountability the recipients could check that they had received full value from the Inland Revenue and the donors would be able to check on the efficiency of transfer via the Inland Revenue by comparing it with the efficiencies of private charities.

There are several advantages to these proposals. First, the donors will be much more likely to be satisfied that the extra taxes will be directed to their chosen services. Secondly, those employed in the services will appreciate that extra funding which is given voluntarily can also be removed voluntarily. Hence there will be, for the first time, a form of market test. Thirdly, the issue of a tax certificate could be used, by those who wish to do so, to demonstrate how high their moral principles are. This would not be a new form of behaviour. There are already many examples of this in the National Health Service: for instance named academic Chairs, wards, beds and equipment. Fourthly, if the numbers of (and amounts given by) donors were

considerable it would send a signal to the government of the day that higher taxation may well be closer to the preferences of the median voter. Low numbers and amounts would provide evidence to reinforce the efficiency of the electoral processes in correctly identifying voter preferences.

One strong objection to these proposals is that governments could not be trusted to maintain the tax funded levels of social expenditure if substantial voluntary contributions were available. However, government expenditure plans and the strategy for raising funds are set in advance of the fiscal year. The quantity of voluntary tax funds would not be known until the end of the tax year. A public outcry would probably follow if a government announced

public expenditure cuts afterwards.

We have argued that there is a way of enfranchising those who wish to see a greater funding of certain social activities. The traditional view of charity is to assume that it endows external benefits, with the usual problem of free riders. Hence non-coercive taxation is justified. However, if we accept that some people who see charitable giving as a pure private good then their demands could become more effectively satisfied by this relatively simple amendment to the tax system.

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The Health Obsession

*Bruce Charlton asks if we are becoming a nation
of hypochondriacs*

There is currently a national obsession with "health" a concept which has come to mean many things to many people. Health is the buzzword on all our lips, unchallengeably "a good thing", a talisman for the demagogue; yet nevertheless a concept seldom subjected to scrutiny. What is health? Is it really so desirable a goal as we are led to believe?

Much of the prestige attached to health is the result of its perception as the opposite of illness. Illness is of course not desirable. Moreover, it is a relatively straightforward matter, something about which there is typically a broad measure of agreement. So, to understand what we mean by health we should examine what we mean by illness.

Some writers define illness as the effects of disease as perceived by the patient: an underlying abnormality or lesion causes "symptoms" which the patient can report, and "signs" which

can be detected by the doctor during the process of examination. However, this distinction does not cover conditions whose cause is unknown. I prefer a simple, pragmatic approach to illness: something is called an illness when it is *useful* to call it an illness. "Useful" can encompass a number of aspects: for example when the illness can be clearly classified and distinguished from others when it follows a predictable course over time (i.e. has a predictable prognosis), when there is an effective treatment, or even when there is a social justification for allowing the privileges of "the sick role" any of these could be situations when it

was reasonable to diagnose (or label) somebody as "ill".

The concept of illness has both a *pragmatic* function and an *objective* quality (there is typically a broad agreement on what constitutes an illness). Partly this is because the conferring of illness-status belongs to the medical profession, which is a tightly-knit group of practitioners sharing a common training. The public at large has a lesser role in defining a "real" illness, but nevertheless sustained pressure can force the medical profession to give its seal of approval. Illness is therefore a valuable, perhaps essential, concept.

By contrast health is a much less useful term. The reason is that health is not the opposite of illness. That illness — by almost any definition — is a bad thing does not mean that health — by almost any definition — is a good thing. In the past health was just another name for the absence of illness — if you weren't sick you were healthy.

***Something is called
an illness when it is
useful to call it an
illness***

However, this is no longer the case.

The best way to demonstrate this change of meaning is to look at the ways in which the concept of health is used by different groups who are encouraging expansion in different (and sometimes mutually contradictory) directions. The result is a conceptual mess.

There is more than enough work for doctors, but there is nevertheless a constant temptation for them to stray too far from their areas of genuine expertise and seek influence over wider areas of life. This is partly in response to public demand. Some people seek a "holistic" doctor, a physician possessing some of the confessional and advisory functions of a priest. Other people want medical help for problems of living, rather than specific illnesses. Others may want the label of an illness to excuse them from responsibility.

Such pressures have combined with professional self-interest to result in the expansion of psychotherapy, or — as it is often called — counselling. Psychotherapy should be distinguished from the transmission of useful information from an expert to an uninformed person. It should also be distinguished from specific psychological treatments (such as behaviour therapy and cognitive therapy) which are applied to distinct illnesses (like phobic anxiety or major depression).

The bulk of psychotherapy and counselling occurs in situations where there is neither informational expertise, nor a diagnosis of illness, nor any evidence of therapeutic benefit. It is thus conversation purporting to enhance health. Once the link between illness and medicine is broken, and talking-therapies are applied to human *unhappiness*, then the scope for expansion is as great as the scope of human discontent.

Psychotherapy has expanded a professional, paid relationship into the emotional territory formerly occupied by affectionate and non-monetary relationships such as those with the spouse, family or friends. In this, counselling resembles prostitution, except that payment is for conversation and befriending, rather than sex. And the comparison with prostitution does not

end there. The artificially created "need" for counselling has as a consequence produced the pseudo problem of "transgression of therapeutic boundaries": in other words sex between therapist and client. Few counsellors have publicly defended this aspect of their "treatment"; most people regard it as a shameful abuse of power. Nevertheless, sexual relationships of this kind are reported to be extremely common (estimates of frequency are, for obvious reasons, highly speculative); and various public and media scandals have, paradoxically, resulted in calls for a greater degree of professionalisation of all forms of psychotherapy — with transgressors being "struck off" the register. But the easiest way to stop the sexual exploitation is to stop the therapy — or, at least, to stop any kind of professional, or publicly funded support for it.

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In the end we might conclude that counselling (like prostitution) may be an "inevitable" last resort for the socially isolated or emotionally incontinent. This does not mean it is worthy of approval.

Fitness and Beauty

The media equate health with fitness: either true fitness or sham fitness. True fitness involves performing measurable physical tasks: whether they be achievements in athletics, or just running for the bus. This kind of fitness is modestly fashionable.

But sham fitness is much more popular. This involves dressing in track suits and sweat bands, and the membership of trendy "health clubs". Sham fitness is really a strategy for seduction involving just as much true fitness as is

required to impress the object of desire.

Health of this kind has no special right to our respect — being neither more nor less important than other fashions — and there is no reason to assume it is desirable, nor that the government should support it (indeed certain kinds of fashionable "fitness" such as extreme weight training or endurance exercises are likely to cause illness). However, the media think otherwise. Magazines and television programmes typically blend advice about the prevention and treatment of illness, with health, fitness and beauty as if they were all the same.

The link between health and beauty exists in certain types of "aesthetic" plastic surgery when a perfectly normal, non-deformed structure is reshaped for fashion reasons. Rhinoplasty for the nose, "augmentation" or reduction for the breasts, lipo suction for the buttocks... these are all very common operations, especially in the USA and via private medicine, but also under the National Health Service. One excuse is that, for the person who wants aesthetic surgery, their psychological health is supposedly being damaged by their unfashionable shape — health in this sense being more or less equated with happiness. And, given the more widely accepted remodelling of bodies by make-up, hair dye, cunningly tailored clothes, dieting and exercise, it is difficult — on rational grounds — to draw a line which altogether excludes the use of aesthetic surgery; but the cost of such procedures should be borne in full by the patient. The NHS does not supply eyeshadow, so why should it supply nose-jobs?

The obsession with health has also brought the fear of aging. Just as our stereo-types of beauty and fitness are youthful, so is the stereotype of health. Aging is usually associated with an increase in illness. However a new development is that aging is itself seen as a disease, which results in the desire to "cure" the illness of aging; or to slow down its effects.

So it is that wrinkled and "sagging" skin is treated with plastic surgery, the (perceived) effects of age on memory are treated with drugs, the appearance is treated by a combination of exercise,

wigs and cosmetics. The result — eternal youth? Well, hardly — but despite the striking ineffectiveness of these attempts to defeat biological destiny, and the rather pitiful figure cut by those who think they have succeeded, the upshot is indeed an expansion of the concept of health. By this argument a “healthy” old person must not only be free from disease, but must also look young.

Alternative medicine (also known as complementary, unorthodox, unconventional or fringe therapy) is certainly thriving. The evidence may be seen in magazines, newspapers and on television, in the local chemist and in bookshops. The number of alternative practitioners has increased. Clearly, all expansion in the number of systems of medical practice implies an expansion in the concept of health. We now have a whole range of rival views of health and disease ranging from homeopathy and acupuncture to aromatherapy and flower remedies. It seems as though there is nothing which could not be converted into a therapy, and that every mode of sensation and manipulation of the body and the environment deserve equal consideration as a treatment. Alternative therapies cannot be disproved because many claim descent from pre-scientific eras when nothing could be disproved. There is no firm objective evidence that any specific treatment of any alternative medicine is *specifically* effective — everything can be explained by natural remissions, the placebo response, and selection of patients (indeed, alternative medicine scores highly for its brilliant manipulation of the placebo response — conventional medicine has a lot to learn here). In most cases the claims are so general and non-specific that they are impossible to verify.

Unorthodox medicine seldom competes with the orthodox kind when effective treatments for real illnesses exist. Alternatives are usually tried when the normal paths are exhausted. There is then a choice between accepting that there is no treatment and getting on with life, or trying an alternative medical system. But there are no rational grounds for choosing between the alternatives — they are all

disproof-proof. Because there is no good reason to choose any particular alternative therapy in the first place, there is no good reason ever to stop searching among them for a cure — a life might be spent wandering among the alternative therapies seeking for perfect health — happily spending money as you go.

Health and Politics

Because health is self-evidently desirable it can be used as a rhetorical weapon by all parties: right, left and centre — and of course green.

One strand of modern life is concerned to replace professional or “establishment” structures with a managerial or business based model of functioning. We are seeing this process in the health service at present, as well as at every level of public education. Health is defined in such a way that it is seen primarily as a consumer product: something which can be marketed, managed, bought and sold.

This “New Managerialist” impulse derives from a distrust of professions such as medicine: a recognition that the professional interest of doctors is not identical with the interests of the consumer. Health is not just “what is good for doctors”. But the new managerialism does not transfer power to the patients; it transfers power to the bureaucrats, with a massive increase in administrative costs. The medical professional interest has at least something to do with health, but this is not the case for the managerial *ethos*. Instead of market mechanisms leading to increased efficiency leading to reduced costs, we get more and more money absorbed in merely running the system.

The consequences in the USA are that health expenditure (funded through private insurance schemes) is rapidly escalating out of control despite a third of the population being almost without health services. The law of diminishing returns ensures that more money spent on the rich achieves less in preventing illness. Meanwhile the cost of health insurance is making American products less competitive in international markets. A great deal of

money is made from catering to the “health” of the rich, and professional self-interest will tend to expand the concept to provide new opportunities for entrepreneurial activity. Trivial illnesses are ludicrously over-investigated and cosmetic and fashionable procedures abound. The expensive and clinically worthless activity of “health checks” for perfectly fit people is another example.

Then there is the danger of single issue pressure groups. Such organisations may initially do a valuable job in alerting people to injustice, or improve the lot of the disadvantaged. But whether or not single issue work is beneficial overall will depend upon the relative need of the oppressed group. Disadvantages arise when a single issue is extended from drawing attention to obvious abuse to dominating the whole field of human endeavour. One worrying trend is the expansion of professional feminism into medicine.

Feminists have already decided what they will find in health matters. The concept of health is enlisted in “the struggle”, so that feminist research and discussion are directed towards comparing men and women with the goal of gathering further evidence of oppression. Feminists already know that this is the most important health issue. Any difference found may be interpreted as evidence in favour of disadvantage — greater use of health services is evidence of women being made ill by men, while the lesser use of services is also evidence of discrimination... Then there is the currently fashionable trend of systematically favouring women irrespective of their medical need, and irrespective of the priorities of illness. So — even in a time of cut-backs — we have a proliferation of well-woman clinics: the special provision of “health” care for a section of the population pre-defined as being free from any illness (a section who, incidentally, live considerably longer than their oppressors). A brave new definition of health indeed, an almost exact inversion of medical common sense!

Health needs have also been used as an argument in favour of a major redistribution of wealth. There is a body of

evidence which suggests that a more equal distribution of income within a nation is correlated with a longer average lifespan. Once a minimum threshold of national prosperity has been reached, it is suggested further improvements in life expectancy will only be achieved by a more equal distribution of wealth rather than an increase in average wealth. This is not unreasonable, given the law of diminishing returns. Perhaps the wealthy are already as free from fatal illness as money can buy, while being poor in a rich society (relative poverty) may bring particular health hazards: at present we do not know the mechanisms. However, the argument lying behind the use of this statistical statement is that our political life should be arranged primarily in order to promote longer life — policy must promote health, therefore greater equality is desirable. Stated this way the argument seems absurd — political policy is surely about much more than mere physical health. (Imagine a business run primarily in order to promote the health of its employees. Imagine how long it would survive....) It may be that for the “healthy” functioning of society as a whole, a sub-optimal life span may be one result. Just as, at an individual level, we should not devote our lives to the fanatical pursuit of long life, so should the same apply to the nation. Again, health must be put in context.

And so to green politics. With cavalier disregard of the facts, the anti-science lunatic fringe of the environmentalist cause will lay every ailment at the door of science, industrialism, “junk” foods, and “unnatural” conditions. Economic growth is blamed for diseases such as heart attack, cancer and stroke, without getting any credit for eradicating old diseases which used to kill us in droves before we could reach an age when “the diseases of affluence” had a chance to develop. It does not matter if you are not actually feeling ill; modern life is, simply, unhealthy. True health can only be attained through a radical and green perspective. Yet again “health” has spread into every crevice of individual and social life.

The Health Police

If these groups are criticised for using health as a rhetorical weapon in pursuit of politics, there is another group which sees the whole of politics in terms of health: this has been dubbed the “health police” (or, less kindly, the Health Fascists). Many of these people have jobs in health promotion and preventive medicine; others are crusading journalists, but most do it on a voluntary (or vigilante) basis. Such people would echo Lady Bracknell: “Health is the primary duty of life”.

The health police use concern about health as a weapon for getting their own way. It is another version of single issue politics. Health is not seen as only one part of a satisfactory life with claims to be balanced over needs like freedom and economic growth. Instead, it is the only thing which matters. If it is good for health it must be done, and damn the cost or consequences!

Such is the crusading zeal of these “safety Nazis” that they do not require firm, well-validated evidence before making their sweeping recommendations (or laws) about how we should live or spend our money. Just the suspicion of a danger is enough to precipitate action “to be on the safe side”. There is an explicit denial of the citizens’ responsibility for their own health. The HP’s model for human goals and behaviour is as restricted as its own views: they refuse to believe that rational and free citizens will *choose* to smoke tobacco, drink alcohol, eat “too much” of the “wrong” foods and refuse to go jogging, *even though* they know these things may be bad for the health. Normal people, as a matter of course, will happily sacrifice the possibility of an illness in the long term against present enjoyment. And who is to say they are wrong to do so: after all, as Keynes said, in the “long run” we are all dead. To the health police such rational agents are seen, not merely as unfortunate individuals, but as deluded, irresponsible, and plain wicked.

Preventive medicine frequently extends the definition of health. It sounds reasonable to assert that “prevention is better than cure”; but preventive medicine often involves telling some-

body who feels perfectly well, that they are in fact sick. Unless a clearly effective and safe treatment is available, this information will do more harm than good. One way of wrecking a child’s life is to tell its parents that their child has a heart murmur. Even if the child has no symptoms, even if there was really no murmur at all, he will probably be brought up as an invalid, missing school and sports and having few friends. A similar danger applies to telling an adult they have “slight blood pressure”: this label results in headaches, tiredness and days off work.

Health promotionists are so keen to do *something*, that they take action when doing nothing is the wiser course. A vastly expensive screening programme for breast cancer has been introduced in Britain despite the lack of evidence that it will save any lives. And if it does no good, it will certainly do harm by wasting resources, by increasing anxiety, and increasing the number of exploratory “minor” (but painful and disfiguring) operations. All women are also being advised to practice self-examination, and develop a hyper-awareness of breast cancer, despite no evidence that this procedure has any benefit.

On the other hand, inculcation of a morbid state of “holy dread” about illnesses is an effective preliminary to selling people something which is supposed to cure them whether or not it really does. The health police will not be happy until we are all suffering holy dread of illness from the dawn of consciousness until that long-awaited day which will at last prove them right — the day of our death.

Government should get out of ‘Health’

“Health” has expanded out of control. It has been cut loose from the disease-based definitions of science and medicine and has become a largely imaginary commodity whose production may be increased virtually at will. Illness is defined by doctors and is a useful and relatively scientific concept; health is defined by almost anybody for almost

any reason and is an aesthetic concept. Which particular version of health you adopt is a matter of what you consider beautiful, or wholesome; a matter, that is, of aesthetic judgement.

This is not necessarily a criticism; aesthetic sensibility is highly susceptible to fatigue, and we need change in order to remain stimulated. Just as jacket lapels are now broad, now rounded, so our "healthy" diet is now dairy and bacon, now pasta and olive oil — the one is as gimmick-driven and lacking in scientific rigour as the other. This is change for the sake of novelty, not progress.

We are all of us subject to fashion, and we should learn from the experience of the defunct Eastern Bloc and communist China that a country without fashion is also a country without innovation, lacking basic human vitality. But while I would argue that the government has a vital role in establishing the necessary conditions for the practice of good medicine and the treatment of illness, this does not apply to health. After all, there is no limit to health, and thus no limit to government.

A government bureaucracy is not even good at promoting "health" when it wishes to — think again of the communist totalitarian states which were simply unable to create the necessary richness of choice. Market mechanisms are undoubtedly the best place to generate novelty — the livelihood of entrepreneurs and advertisers depends on their success in stimulating us by a procession of ever more alluring fashions. They should be left to get on with the job of promoting health (within the

law and moral constraints). The state should concentrate its efforts and resources on more practical matters, rather than trying to meet the infinite and irreconcilable demands of diverse pressure groups.

The government may indeed have a moral duty to remind people that health isn't everything: there are other more important concerns for citizens who are not actually ill. Perhaps Britain is suffering an endemic illness, public hypochondriasis, caught originally from California, and incubating under the influence of those who would benefit from it — financially or politically. The government may wish to treat this ailment so that the nation does not become permanently enfeebled by it.

It is neither appropriate nor desirable for government, the bureaucracy, doctors or other professionals to concern themselves with health; their business is with illness. The concept of health is in a state of chronic and disintegrating chaos, but this does not really matter if health is seen for what it is: just one part of the rich tapestry of the mediascape: just another item to be thrashed-out between consumers and providers: something best balanced by the subtle summation of the "invisible hand" of the market, rather than by the heavy hand of legal and professional deliberation.

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Readers might be interested to know that Oscar Kambona (SR Vol.9 No.4) has returned to Tanzania after 25 years of exile.

His party, the Tanzanian Democratic Front, is campaigning for free elections.

Sophist's Corner

Both intercourse and pregnancy are literal, physical, material invasions and occupations of the body. The fetus, like the penis, literally occupies my body. In their extremes, of course, both unwanted heterosexual intercourse and unwanted pregnancy can be life threatening experiences of physical invasion. An unwanted fetus, no less than an unwanted penis, invades my body, violates my physical boundaries, occupies my body and can potentially destroy my sense of self. Although the culture does not recognize them as such, the physical and existential invasions occasioned by unwanted pregnancy and intercourse are real harms. They are events we should fear. They are events which any sane person should protect herself against. What unifies the radical feminism of the sixties and eighties is the argument that women's potential for material, physical connection with the other constitutes an invasion which is a very real harm causing very real damage, and which society ought to recognize as such.

The material, sporadic violation of a woman's body occasioned by pregnancy and intercourse implies an existential and pervasive violation of her privacy, integrity and life projects. According to radical feminists, women's longings for individuation, physical privacy, and independence go well beyond the desire to avoid the dangers of rape or unwanted pregnancy. Women also long for liberation from the oppression of intimacy (and its attendant values) which both cultural feminism and most women officially, and wrongly, overvalue. Intimacy, in short, is *intrusive*, even when it isn't life threatening (perhaps *especially* when it isn't life threatening). An unwanted pregnancy is disastrous, but even a *wanted* pregnancy and motherhood are intrusive. The child *intrudes*, just as the fetus invades.

From 'Jurisprudence and Gender' by Robin West (*The University of Chicago Law Review*).

Council Tax — the Recurring Nightmare

Vivian Linacre calls for a new look at the problem of local government expenditure

The tragedy of the poll tax was not merely the colossal waste of public money, nor the damage to the credibility of the Conservative Party's commercial competency, nor even its contribution to the downfall of a great and much-lamented Prime Minister, but rather that it could have been altogether avoided. Local taxation could have been totally scrapped and replaced by an increase of just 3 per cent in the rate of Value Added Tax. That, or alternatively a marginal increase in both VAT and the standard rate of Income Tax, is all that would have been required in order to have prevented the political and economic catastrophe of the Community Charge.

Yet, despite the appalling evidence of the havoc that it wrought and the consequences of its collapse, the government is still hell-bent on reinstating it under the guise of a Council Tax which comes into force on 1st April. (Incidentally, the first characteristic that the two regimes share is the illiteracy of their titles, reflecting the pernicious practice of using nouns as adjectives: for the community charge was a levy on individuals, not on communities, whilst the council tax will be imposed on households, not on councils!)

To have persisted with the experimental community charge in face of an early barrage of warnings from eminent experts that it was bound to fail, is hard to excuse; then to pretend, after its inevitable demise, that a thorough review of all the possible alternatives was conducted before prescribing this council tax as the ideal substitute — when actually the remedy of total abolition was never debated or even

investigated — is unforgivable. To present the council tax as a radical solution, when it is no more than a botched compromise between the community charge and the old domestic rate, is utterly damnable.

The review of options for a successor to the poll tax was conducted by the then Secretary of State for the Environment, Michael Heseltine, with all the meticulousness and prudence that were later demonstrated in his announcement of wholesale colliery closures.

The review of options for a successor to the poll tax was indeed conducted by the then Secretary of State for the Environment, Michael Heseltine, with all the meticulousness and prudence that were later demonstrated in his announcement of wholesale colliery closures

He had meanwhile, of course, judiciously assumed his new presidential role, bequeathing to Michael Howard the glory of implementing the council tax, as well as the registration of contaminated land and similar measures that this administration considers vital to our national survival.

The only merit of the poll tax was that it departed fundamentally from the long-discredited rating system based on property values; the council tax now perversely marks a partial regression to the old system. The popular notion that council tax bills will be largely determined by house-values is one of the many sad delusions that bedevil local government finance, for the actual amounts payable will be governed firstly by the individual authorities' spending plans, which are likely to vary enormously across the country — and secondly by the level of non-payment. Thus, the average bill for households on Orkney may be as low as £17, whereas those for properties of corresponding value on the Western Isles could exceed £500. The picture will be further distorted by "transitional relief", arbitrarily limiting increases between community charge and council tax; so that Wandsworth might again charge precisely zero.

By identifying one person within each household as liable to pay the council tax, it is hoped to reduce the level of non-payment, which for the poll tax was a ruinous 15 per cent or more, to 10 per cent or less. But that is still grossly inefficient; for the culture of defiance bred by the poll tax, making martyrs out of defaulters, will persist at the expense of the council tax. Likewise, generations of hostility, bred by the old rating system and intensified by the poll tax, between local and central government over councils' spending plans, will be perpetuated by the new dispensation.

Indexing council tax very roughly and remotely to relative house-values

(which are already two years out of date) will merely double the bureaucracy, and hence the cost, as well as the public confusion. The ramshackle juggernaut of the public sector is now towing a luxurious leviathan from the private sector, loaded with valuers and lawyers, in an ocean of lucrative disputes and appeals. The only "positive aspects" of the council tax claimed by ministers are that approval has already been given for recruitment of additional staff for the Valuation Tribunals throughout the country and that a "consciousness raising" campaign of advertisements will publicize the wide range of means-tested rebates, ensuring total exemption for most students and all those drawing income support. So the only merits for this new form of assessment are that extra public funds have been made available to assist citizens in contesting it or obtaining relief from it!

Otherwise, all the objectionable features common to the old rating system and the community charge survive intact. The enormous fiscal burden imposed in the midst of the slump, of dismantling the poll tax apparatus and installing the council tax machinery, will prove of no benefit. An average of 85 per cent of local government revenue in England (even more in Scotland and Wales) will still come from central government grants and the national non-domestic rate; so all the political uproar and administrative upheaval over these successive forms of local taxation have been endured for the sake of a paltry 12 to 15 per cent of municipal finance. It is because the structure of local government finance is so heavily 'geared' — the vast bulk of council expenditure depending directly upon Whitehall's ever-tighter purse-strings — that a relatively small excess or saving compared to ministerial targets will produce disproportionately high or low rates of council tax. In real terms, the actual amount of revenue raised by councils from local taxation has declined within the last four years (since the end of the old rates) by over 30 per cent; so that its regeneration is even less justified.

The most common excuse for retaining an element of local taxation

is to ensure councils' independence and accountability to the citizenry. But under the new rules, central government controls not only external support via the various exchequer grants but also the precise levels of council spending via the discipline of 'capping'; therefore the amount — i.e. the gap between central support to be raised by council tax and the capping limit on council budgets — must effectively be fixed by the Treasury too. The reasons why a cure was prescribed which is even worse than the disease are firstly pressures from the civil service and local government unions, secondly the sheer lack of political will to seek a real conservative antidote to this socialist malaise — especially during preparations for a general election — and thirdly because of the 'ratchet effect', which always eases the passing of new legislation while obstructing the abolition of redundant

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or oppressive statutes. Politicians and public 'servants' (what a quaint archaism that has become!) are in the business of legislative proliferation and enlargement of power.

Once it was admitted (outside the rating industry itself) that the rating system was obsolete, the sole concern throughout government and the public sector was "What do we put in its place?" Nobody would listen to, or even dare utter, the answer "Nothing!" Indeed, rates were retained for

business and industry, on the excellent grounds that those sectors command no votes, and replaced only for domestic property; this penalizing of commerce to continue, of course, under the new regime.

Another illustration of officialdom's inability to consider the 'Zero Option' is provided by the calamitous history of attempts by successive governments to impose a special tax on notional profits from property development, on the theory that gains in value from the granting of planning permissions belonged to "the community". This issue raged for almost forty years, wasting billions of pounds in parliamentary, departmental and municipal time and expense, until it was finally buried, since when it has never been mentioned again. First there was the Development Charge under the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947; next came Betterment Levy under the Land Commission Act of 1967; then Development Gains Tax under the Finance Act of 1974; succeeded by Development Land Tax under the Community Land Act of 1975. All proved counter-productive, merely stifling the market and failing to produce enough revenue to cover anything approaching the costs of administration. Even after these four failures, it took courage by the Chancellor, Nigel Lawson, to announce its extinction; yet when he did so, in the space of a few minutes during a Budget speech, there was not a murmur of protest.

Why, then, proceed with the council tax as a third attempt to sustain some pretence of local taxation, in face of the certain prospect that it, in turn will fail within a few years? The rating system itself was experimental, having originated from the Elizabethan Poor Law and Victorian parish relief. It makes no sense in a centralized state which provides welfare services nationally. Any form of local taxation now is doomed; firstly because every trend is towards divesting councils of their remaining powers — education, housing, police, fire, planning, etc. — in favour of national or provincial authorities or quangos, or privatisation, so that the actual amount of revenue raised from local tax in absolute terms

will continue to decline severely; as will its relative share of total revenue; and secondly because its reintroduction can only reinforce the present two tier structure of local government, which this administration is committed to reorganizing into unitary authorities.

The most compelling argument for scrapping council tax and the business rate is that we already have ample primary modes of taxation which are both efficient and intelligible: principally Value Added Tax, Income Tax, Corporation Tax and National Insurance Contributions, as well as the special imposts such as Capital Gains Tax and Inheritance Tax, and the vast range of excise duties. These relics of the rating system — cumbersome and esoteric — are in any event superfluous. Indeed, on economic grounds, VAT should ideally yield the exchequer the whole of its revenue: for if spending provided the sole source of taxation, freeing the individual and industry to pursue ever higher levels of earnings and investment, then the growth in private income and corporate profit — and hence in consumption — would be so great that this single base would satisfy every necessary demand from the Treasury. More realistically, VAT and Income Tax combined could cover the Chancellor's entire Budget. Retreating further, there is a very strong case for confining the sources of revenue to those two plus company taxation. Inheritance Tax is highly objectionable, as are National Insurance Contributions, which merely serve to disguise the true rate of Income Tax and also create an unwelcome tax on employment. If every other form of taxation were retained, we could bid good riddance to council tax and business rates without any strain to the fiscal constitution. Since the former rating system was always the prime candidate for execution, it is a grotesque folly to perpetuate it in this hybrid form of council tax-cum-business rates.

The council tax, like the poll tax, will bear little relation to the ability to pay and will aggravate the perennial conflict between central and local government. Meanwhile, business rates will continue to act as a severe brake on economic recovery. The immediate

imperative is to cancel the council tax; then arrangements can be prepared for the abolition of business rates within the life of this parliament.

The solution is to finance local government wholly by grants (and 'standard spending assessment') from central government, i.e. to increase the 85-88 per cent to 100 per cent. But in return for this total dependency, councils could actually be given greater discretion as to spending priorities than they enjoy at present; for it is surely more important in the interests of local democracy and good management that they are governed by the wishes of the electorate and by the highest standards of performance, than merely by hostile controls imposed from above. Local government has to be preserved, however much reduced its functions, and will still continue to consume forty to fifty billion pounds annually, which is sufficient to justify its being accorded the status in cabinet of a major department of state. Its slice of the national cake could be distributed among all authorities according to a single complex formula, based *per capita* but adjusted to reflect regional economic policies and other special weightings. Each council would quickly realize that undertaking to build a leisure centre at an estimated cost of £5m means that much less to spend on street cleaning and repairs; and that overspending on that project might jeopardize its town-twinning celebrations or even some essential services. As the total cost falls through thirty towards twenty billions annually, the virtues of this more autonomous regime would become more apparent, as would the need for stricter house-keeping and closer public participation.

Raising the profile of local government, subjecting authorities' accounts to public scrutiny and its policy decisions to popular debate, would at last ensure that the catch-phrase "accountability of councils" actually meant accountability to the people instead of to Westminster. The low percentage polls at local elections — which are the clearest proof of the rottenness of the current system — would soar to parliamentary levels. Feuding between Town Hall and Whitehall would

cease, and local government become largely depoliticized, because councils would have to concentrate on giving their electorate the very best value for a fixed amount of money, without any incentive to indulge in posturing over issues of (inter)national politics or partisan extravagances. If these benefits to the health of local government are so much wishful thinking, if the continuing profligacy and apathy are as inevitable as the unitary restructuring and stripping of functions, then obviously it is vital that the council tax operation is aborted before it becomes entrenched.

Naturally, the modest increase in the rate of Value Added Tax, or even more modest increases in the rates of both that and Income Tax, that will be required to offset the nett revenue anticipated from council tax (after deducting the huge savings in administration universally) are bound to be rejected as "politically unacceptable"; for that is the immemorial objection from time-servers and those desperate to protect their own interests at the nation's expense. Any government that can happily dole out welfare benefits with one hand and tax them with the other may be hard to convince of the need for this comprehensive yet very simple reform of local authority finance. But there will never be a better time to try.

Vivian Linacre is sole Principal of a surveying and valuation consultancy practice in Scotland.

Editorial

If you were to ask which institutions have been of greatest importance in defining the English nation, you would probably mention the monarchy, the Church of England, and the common law. It is to these quintessentially English traditions that the great conservative thinkers -- from Hooker, through Blackstone and Burke to Ruskin and Eliot -- have returned for the concrete illustration of their arguments. They are distinctive of our country, not merely as a political organism, but also as a unique form of social equilibrium. Each has a political aspect: the church is established, the law is subordinate to Parliament, and the Monarch is head of State. But it would be naive to suppose that these institutions are *merely* political, with no other meaning than their role in the brokerage of power. Our Head of State is *above* politics, and succeeds to the title without the consent of Parliament. Our law is a distinct social force, encumbered by statutes, but with a far-reaching capacity to find new solutions to the problems of social life. All three institutions illustrate the way in which power, in England, does not foregather at the political apex, but is dispersed through society, constantly returning to the place from whence the politicians capture it.

But our root institutions are not adapted to the modern, still less to the 'post-modern' condition. Their authority is above the social contract, inherited without discussion and imposed without consent. Their origin is sacred. The monarchy and the common law have been as closely tied as the Church of England to the syntax of the Book of Common Prayer and the language of the King James Bible. The idea of England is a religious idea, which gained new credentials through the English Bible and the English liturgy. It is to these that we return in our dignified moments. From the speeches of Churchill to Eliot's *Four Quartets*, their influence is everywhere manifest in our written language, and in our solemn moments it is the syntax of the English Bible that draws us together

and says that we belong. It is the misfortune of the English that their togetherness can be expressed only through the cadences of a language that is pre-modern in its assumptions. This is a misfortune that we share with the Germans, the Czechs and the Danes; but it is compounded by our natural coolness in matters of religion, which leads us to treat the institutions that define us as mere empty forms.

The monarchy, like the Church of England, depends on the belief in a divine dispensation whose beneficiaries are the English. In the post-modern world such a belief seems quaint at best, and in any case inconceivable without ritual, secrecy, and the maintenance of some kind of sacred awe towards the sovereign. Those commodities are in vanishing supply. Now that the media have discarded all restraint in their dealings with the Royal Family, not a shred of mystery remains to impede the gaze of the ordinary man upon lives that are, after all, not so very different from his own. How is the ordinary Englishman to believe that the Queen is anything more than a highly-paid civil servant, when the media constantly deride the ideas that would enable him to perceive her as his sovereign? And if he draws the conclusion (strictly absurd on the traditional understanding of monarchy) that she must pay taxes to the State, and so become a citizen, he is hardly to be blamed. For the ideas that make sense of monarchy play no part in the post-modern life -- the life in inverted commas.

Only the national Church could renew those ideas and myths, and the Church suffers from the same disease as its would-be congregation: it has turned away in embarrassment from the language and the doctrine that defined it, and re-modelled itself as a secular institution. God too has become a civil servant, an ordinary chap like you and me. The decision to admit women to the priesthood should be seen in this light: not as a revelation of God's hitherto invisible purpose, but as the surrender of a sacred to a secular mission. The new

English church, which sees itself as a communion of social workers, could not possibly 'discriminate' on grounds of 'gender': after all, it may offend thereby against the Sex Discrimination Act. The Church therefore re-fashions God in its own image, and finds that God calls women too to the priesthood; indeed, that he may be a woman himself.

It is doubtful that the Church of England will survive this latest transformation. But if it sinks into oblivion, so too will the monarchy, which draws on the same fund of real, but sceptical, religious feeling. For the monarch to be crowned by an Archbishop with no congregation, in accordance with a ceremony in which no-one believes, is to jeopardize the whole idea of kingship.

The process which has sucked the meaning from the Anglican liturgy and disenchanted the Crown is at work, too, in the common law. Judges have lost confidence in their role: their dignified aloofness means nothing now, when their decisions can be overruled by the bureaucrats of the European Court, and when the absurd edicts of the European Commission, which make it a crime to sell a carrot as a vegetable, take precedence over the careful reasoning of the common law. Judges too are becoming civil servants, whose decisions have more in common with the bureaucratic rubber stamp than with the workings of justice. The distinctive features of our common law have been its contempt for power, its respect for precedent, and its flexible (because apolitical) response to emerging social conditions. All these virtues will disappear as our legal system is colonised by that of Europe, and overlain by a mish-mash of Napoleonic edicts, issued in the expectation of disobedience.

It is difficult to accept that we live in a country whose Monarch is merely a well-paid citizen, whose Church is hostage to secular causes, and whose law is dictated by foreign bureaucrats. But how can we protest, when our nominal leaders advocate capitulation as the sole reasonable response?

Letters

Sir,

If I have to choose between William Norton's defence of our first past the post system and R. J. Barrett's call for some form of proportional representation I would choose Norton's argument. However, neither one addresses the real problems. These are the dictatorial Whipping in the House of Commons and the undemocratic choice of candidates in the constituencies.

It is the tyranny of party discipline that MPs must escape from, and proportional representation will make it more difficult. It is futile to think that the multiplicity of parties thrown up by proportional representation would solve these problems. Party discipline would probably be tighter and the selection of candidates would be in the hands of the party apparatchiks.

Three reforms are necessary:

Open Primary Elections
Secret Voting in Parliament
and its Committees
Fixed Length Parliaments.

Open primary elections enable the whole electorate to vote in each party's primary. A small charge could be made for each vote cast and paid to the parties. This would help solve the chronic cash problems most of them have. As well as the candidates on the official list, any local party member should be able to stand if he could obtain the endorsement of a number of the other local members.

Secret voting in Parliament and its committees would result in real arguments being heard in the House of Commons; the Whips would become advisors only. Members, however, would have to be open about their political and other allegiances when at the primary stage and produce a CV for the electors. Any lies or omissions in such a CV would have to result in the member losing his seat and not being eligible to stand again, perhaps even a fine. The use of secret voting in local government would also liberate the members of local authorities from useless party discipline.

Fixed length Parliaments would remove the threat, often used by Ministers, to ask for a Dissolution. A government would have to accept the occasional defeat and would only be in real trouble if it could not obtain supply. If it could not obtain supply then the majority party would need a new leader. In the last resort the Sovereign could take soundings from members of the

House to find someone who could command a majority.

Bertrand de Jouvenal observed, in his book *Power, the Natural History of Its Growth*, that "the more powerful the (party) machine becomes and the tighter the bands of discipline are drawn the less does debate matter: it no longer changes votes. The banging of desks take the place of arguments. Parliamentary debates are no longer a school for citizens but a "circus for boobies".

Gordon Line
Shoreham by Sea, Sussex

Sir,

I read with great interest Professor Norman Stone's scholarly and wholly convincing assessment of the extent of the German effort to contain the Partisans, which leaves my own estimate of twelve divisions looking ill-informed.

Yet I wonder whether this really does dispose of the military objections to a NATO intervention "to stop the Bosnian horrors?" In the first place, the present Serbian army has inherited an almost inexhaustible arsenal of Soviet weaponry, perhaps not quite as "smart" as that of NATO but good enough. In this it differs markedly from the relatively lightly armed Partisans and the comparison is therefore less apposite than it at first seems.

In the second place, a "NATO" force would in fact be an Anglo-American one. The rest can be ignored. With its present commitments, would not the British Army be seriously overstretched by taking on Bosnia as well? My serving informants assure me it would. But most important of all, where would it end? And would it in any case be worthwhile?

The British and French between them "pacified" most of Africa. They then held the lid on innumerable ethnic and religious squabbles for fifty years. When they departed, it all broke out again, almost overnight, notably the civil war in the southern Sudan, where northern Muslims are now "ethnic cleansing" southern Sudanese animists and Christians as hard as they can. Is the undoubtedly superb British Army not only to take on the Serbs on the battlefield but also to occupy Bosnia-Herzegovina for the next century? And why just Bosnia? Why not the Sudan? And Azerbaijan? And India? And any other part of an intractably quarrelsome world that misbehaves?

I leave aside the moral issue as to whether it is justifiable to use the British Army to assist in the setting up of an Islamic fundamentalist state in the Balkans; and to force Christian and secularist Serbs back into the position of second-class citizens of that state barely a hundred years after they have freed themselves from the clutches of the old Ottoman empire.

Mervyn Hiskett
Meopham, Kent

Sir,

Your opening remarks in the December '92 issue, together with John Marks's article entitled "The Pursuit of Truth" surely get to the heart of what the *Salisbury Review* is all about: namely what you call "the perversion of academic values", or, as John Marks expressed it "nothing less than the total deconstruction of the academic mode and of all the institutions that supported it".

This battle for the soul of academia is all the more important in view of the projected expansion of Higher Education. The government should spell out a few unpalatable home truths before throwing any more good money after bad. The idea that putting yet more youngsters into the clutches of our Stalinist intelligentsia will somehow enable us to compete with the Germans and Japanese must surely rank as the ultimate triumph of hope over experience.

Stewart Deuchar
Milton Keynes

Sir,

"Sophists' Corner" (September 1992) emphasizes whether "Women's Studies" is a suitable subject for the university syllabus. The university has long been regarded as a secular cathedral far removed from popular passions and political turmoil: a temple dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge. The distinguishing characteristic that informs academic subjects is that of free enquiry – a process which involves close attention to the definition of terms, the elucidation of concepts, and the formulation of meaningful and unambiguous propositions and hypotheses.

If a course labelled "Women's Studies" did indeed meet these criteria, any aspect of say, the history of women through the ages – their legal, social and family status – would properly come under the

supervision of history departments. Most subjects touched upon in the usual 'women's studies' brochures can be properly studied within the appropriate department.

From my observations as visiting professor at a number of North American universities, I had to conclude that the 'Women's Studies' courses can no more be accepted as a serious academic discipline than those ill-fated "Black Studies" once popular in the United States. The aim of such courses is apparently, to "raise consciousness" (a euphemism for indoctrination), to reinforce commitment to feminist perspectives, and to inspire enthusiasm for activities that are deemed congenial to feminist objectives. The popular generalizations that are impressed on the students are not intended to be subject to critical scrutiny.

There can be no objection for political and religious groups to disseminate and promote their beliefs, but a decision by the educational establishment to extend the imprimatur of the university to unscholarly courses serves only to erode the integrity and undermine the authority of the university.

E. J. Mishan
Brighton and Hove.

Sir,
I write to thank the *Salisbury Review* for including my late friend, Beverly Halstead, who died in a car accident in April 1991, in the Tenth Anniversary Roll of Honour. I would like to elaborate on Beverly's lifelong commitment to "writing the truth" — not always in ways that might be expected

from his latter position.

Beverly was born into a Communist family and remained active in the party until 1953. He left it after being disillusioned by a visit to Poland, but his ideals remained; he always claimed that these never changed, only the means to attain them. He campaigned tirelessly and often alone, against the tide. When most British academics were boycotting South Africa, Beverly went there and spoke out publicly against apartheid; his visa was promptly withdrawn. When he arrived to speak at a conference a couple of years later in Johannesburg, he was arrested at the airport. Characteristically, he publicised this in the Press.

He waged a continual campaign against Creationism, and elegantly inverted the Huxley-Wilberforce debate, with Richard Harries, the present Bishop of Oxford, at the British Association meeting in 1988. He argued as an atheist that evolution theory was not compatible with religion, while Harries argued that it was. Beverly also took on global issues. In 1985, he challenged the official government position that a test-ban treaty was not feasible because it could not be policed; yet it was known in scientific circles that geological techniques could indeed detect violations. Beverly went to the Geneva summit and lobbied Russian and American delegates. Shortly afterwards his house in Reading was burgled — or searched; nothing was stolen.

For many years Beverly's political affiliations were ambiguous. He found my socialism distressing, not because he then identified with the Right, but because for

him the Labour Party were the betrayers of the working class in the Thirties. Yet we shared many values — and he always encouraged our public dissent.

Beverly had enormous personal courage. He cared passionately about freedom, integrity and the rights of the powerless. Politically, he was a maverick; morally, he was completely consistent. For many things he believed in, he found sympathy with the *Salisbury Review*. He would have been pleased by the recognition you gave him.

Helen Haste
Bath

An account of Beverly Halstead's life, written by William Sarjeant, will appear in a special Memorial Volume of the journal *Modern Geology*, published by Gordon & Breach. A Trust has been established jointly by the Geologists Association and the Palaeontological Association, to commemorate Beverly by giving encouragement in various ways to young geologists and palaeontologists. Beverly at the time of his death was President of the G.A. Should people wish to contribute to this, please send donations to the Geologists Association (Halstead Trust), Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1V 9AG.

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Reviews

Communists Come to Confession.

Peter Coleman

Footsteps from the Finland Station: Five Landmarks in the Collapse of Communism, Michael Charlton. The Claridge Press, London, 1992. £16.95

Michael Charlton is probably best remembered in his native Australia as the leading Test cricket commentator of the 1950's or perhaps as one of the founders some 30 years ago of Four Corners, the Australian tribute to the BBC's Panorama.

But in England his reputation as 'the finest contemporary historian among our professional broadcasters' (to quote Keith Kyle of Chatham House) is based on his series of BBC broadcasts, interviews and books about the Cold War and global struggle, including *The Eagle and Small Birds* (about the Soviet empire), *Many reasons Why* (Vietnam) and *Star Wars History*, all enlivened with telling detail and anecdotes.

His latest 'oral history', *Footsteps from the Finland Station*, debates five landmarks in the collapse of Communism — Khrushchev's 'secret' speech in 1956; the rebirth of nationalism the Polish Pope; German Protestantism, and cultural freedom.

In every chapter Charlton talks with leading figures in the events. When discussing, for example, Nikita Khrushchev's well publicised 'secret' speech in 1956 denouncing Stalin, his story begins with Georgii Kumanev's account of the pre-emptive murder of Lavrenti Beria, the NKVD chief, at a meeting of the Politburo long after Stalin's death in 1953.

Kumanev tells Charlton that Khrushchev himself did not carry out the killing (as some historians have claimed). The deputy defence Minister Marshal Zhukov held a pistol to Beria's head, but it was General Batitsky who

shot him through the forehead while Beria was on his knees pleading for his life.

As for the 'secret' speech destroying the last remnants of Stalinism, Khrushchev's son-in-law Alexei Adzhubei tells Charlton that an important factor was Khrushchev's determination to avoid Lenin's mistake of denouncing Stalin in a 'private' testament that had no real influence: the point to remember however, is that the dying Lenin was terrified of Stalin who kept a spy at Lenin's side (the so-called secretary, Fotieva). 'He [Khrushchev] had a heart!', Solzhenitsyn once remarked to Charlton, although unfortunately the book has no full record of this conversation.

Milovan Djilas is his main contributor on nationality, the issue which, even more than the economy, triggered the disintegration of world communism. By opposing human nature the Marxists, Djilas says, neither interpreted the world nor changed it.

In the chapter on cultural freedom ('Newspeak and Doublethink') Leszek Kolakowski notes the fate of Soviet Man — the so-called new species, the Soviet dummy or mannequin who did not deliberately lie and even half believed the Orwellian mendacities built into communist language.

Kolakowski agrees with Solzhenitsyn that one of the first tasks is to compile a new dictionary that will help restore the Russian language.

Charlton put to Cardinal Koenig of Vienna his hypothesis that among the factors leading to the election of the Polish Pope may have been the Ameri-

can defeat in Vietnam and the subsequent demoralisation in the West. The Cardinal denies that these factors had any 'direct influence' but he agrees that the election of Pope John Paul was 'the first moving stair, perhaps, or the first crack in the (communist) system.' Recognising this, Gorbachev was still calling for 'a resolute and unrelenting struggle against religion'... in 1986!

Michael Charlton's blend, in *Footsteps* as elsewhere, of analysis and anecdote make his reports of the Cold War more accessible than more academic studies. By relying on interviews he has also more or less got around the 30-year restriction on the publication of official documents. For this alone his books deserve their wide currency.

**The
hottest places
in Hell
are reserved
for those,
who in time
of great moral crisis,
maintain
their
neutrality**

Dante Alighieri

The Politics of Chivalry

Henry von Blumenthal

Memoir of Kenelm Digby, Bernard Holland, Fisher Press (PO Box 41, Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 6YN), 1992, £4.99.

"The bones of the dead press down like a nightmare on the minds of the living", says the Communist Manifesto in one of its more readable passages. It goes without saying that a Marxist's nightmare is a conservative's day-dream, and it was the achievement of the early nineteenth century romanticists to turn much of their dream into reality.

By the time Kenelm Digby was at Cambridge in the early 1820s, Sir Walter Scott had already prepared the way for a revival of medieval ideals. But it was Digby who seized on them and effectively distilled them into an ideology of chivalry which has remained a strong source of influence over the traditionalist right, not only in this country but also in France, to this day.

Holland's *Memoir of Kenelm Digby* was written, he says, out of gratitude to and in memory of the subject. Holland was writing in 1919, and the enterprising Fisher Press, whose proprietor, Mr. Tyler, describes himself as "unashamedly backward-looking" has just reprinted the Memoir, with only minor editorial interpolations. This "act of madness", as the publisher himself calls it, will be welcomed by anybody who is interested in the development of modern right-wing paternalism, and particularly of the Catholic right.

It will be of particular interest to the readers of this journal. Digby's idea was that national salvation lay in a revival of the Christian virtues of our ancestors, in bearing the achievements and sorrows of the past constantly in mind when dealing with the present and planning for the future. I say "our ancestors" deliberately, because Digby saw the blood line as the conduit down which pride in the past flows.

Digby did not just dream about Chivalry but deliberately sought out heroic adventure for himself. In our less innocent and more cynical age we may smile at some of his more literally quixotic deeds: as an undergraduate he and a friend borrowed ponies and hop-poles and tilted at each other, before going to touch their lances on the walls of a nearby castle. He swam the Rhine as, later, Byron was to swim the Hellespont; neither feat was mean, and we can wipe the smiles off our faces when we remember that in our own day there are thousands of enthusiasts for just this kind of revivalist sport: the byroads of Kent are at this moment strewn with posters announcing publicly organised medieval tournaments, complete with jousting.

The action was meditated, and the result of the meditation was the publication of over forty volumes spanning sixty years. Much of them took the form of autobiographical verse, of varying quality but unvarying charm. The first two volumes of his best known work, *The Broad Stone of Honour*, were written before the central event of his life — his conversion to Rome — and he cannot therefore be assessed merely as an apologist for Catholicism, although, in common with the Oxford Movement, his belief in the virtues of medieval Christendom was central to his thinking. Indeed, one has to remember that his train of thought started long before the Oxford Movement, before Pugin's fervent assault on classical architecture, in an age which had not yet learned to distinguish Bonapartism from romanticism.

He wrote with the idea of glorifying what he calls the Ages of Faith, the centuries before the Reformation during which theological certainties

formed the basis of moral rigour and the borders of Christendom were more important than its internal frontiers.

His yearning for a revival of Christendom was no doubt fuelled by his constant European travels, largely on foot. He sought out the romantic places ("Broad Stone of Honour" is simply a translation of the name of a favourite castle on the Rhine, Ehrenbreitstein), and spent much time in France, where he was an ardent supporter of the Bourbons, as representing the ancient course of French history against the utilitarian and opportunist militarism of the Bonapartists. He was one of a handful of Englishmen to be accepted in the intellectual circles of Paris during the restoration period.

In the salons of Paris and London, and indeed in any wayside tavern where he happened to be, he expounded his simple idea. Our future is secure if we live up to the achievements of our ancestors. Nothing further is necessary. Chivalry, which rests, he says, on the eight Beatitudes, is within reach of all men, regardless of their station of life and the times in which they live. He illustrated the point with his astonishing knowledge of medieval and romantic literature, interlarding his conversation with quotations from Mallory, Spencer, Michaud, or Froissart.

A good many logical consequences followed from the thesis. The publication of *The Broadstone of Honour* was received rapturously by the Young England movement, which included Disraeli among its leading members, and which believed that national salvation lay in the resumption of aristocratic leadership and ideals. The romantic movement, fuelled in great part by Digby's writings, gathered pace and became unstoppable. Events as diverse as the establishment of India as an empire, the formation of the Boy Scout movement and the building of Neuschwanstein can all be traced to the development of the chivalrous and romantic outlook which Digby, if not its sole inventor, had at least discovered and nurtured for himself and his innumerable powerful connections.

Indeed, his thinking finds echoes as far afield as Japan, where the national-

ist writer Mishima's quest for "unity of pen and sword" and of "art and action" were foreshadowed by Digby's charming personal attempts to put his ideals into practice.

(This is not the only point of comparison: like Mishima Digby believed that physical development was bound up with moral virtue, and Digby's powerful physique enabled him to excel at swimming and rowing with the result that besides swimming the Rhine, he invented the modern Cambridge eight.)

Unlike Mishima, however, he was a modest and self-effacing man. The circle of his friends bears witness to this, and gives us a clue as to the possible extent of his personal influence. Disraeli, Newman, Wordsworth, Pugin, Gladstone, Ruskin, Edward Fitzgerald were among his many friends and acquaintances. It is safe to say that Digby knew every intellectual in Britain in his day, and many of the more important figures of French intellectual society as well. It is here, I think, that Digby deserves closer study, for he provides the bridge between the Traditionalist Catholic Right in France and Anglican High Toryism here.

In France the tension between utilitarianism and conservatism had become more obvious as the intellectual debate transferred itself into civil war and revolution. Napoleon seemed for a time to represent a synthesis of the two, with his deliberate echoing of the

Romans' progression from monarchy, via republic, to empire, backed up by glorious victories. But the intellectual right, as epitomised by the exiled Count de Maistre, and by the younger Chateaubriand whom Digby was later to befriend, would have none of Bonapartism, especially after the treacherous execution of the Duke of Enghien. When, at about the time Digby first came to Paris, the absolutist Charles X succeeded his more liberal brother, it seemed as if their day had dawned. However, the upheavals of 1830, 1848 and 1870 were setbacks from which the traditionalists have never recovered in France, in spite of the overwhelming monarchist victory in the elections which followed the Siege of Paris. Due, perhaps, to France's chaotic recent history, the radical right has been dominated by atheism and anti-Semitism, as expounded by nationalists like Maurras, which have eclipsed the God-King-and-Country traditionalism of Maistre and his followers, including Digby's friends Chateaubriand and Montalembert. It is, however, noteworthy that in the midst of the bi-centenary celebrations of the French Revolution, an opinion poll suggested that over 60% of the French would not object to a restoration of the monarchy. As Maurras' followers in Action Française, which has always supported the Count of Paris in his claim to the French throne, become

increasingly closely associated with the Front Nationale, the main body of royalist opinion has tended to turn towards the Legitimiste cause of the young Louis-Alphonse, which looks to Chateaubriand for inspiration, at the same time embracing exactly the kind of Catholic Conservatism of which Digby would have approved.

In this country, it is easier to trace Digby's direct influence. Chesterton was an acknowledged admirer, as was Baden-Powell. In fact, the whole concept of the English Gentleman may be partly due to the influence of Digby's writings.

It is now virtually impossible to obtain Digby's works, and this biography is therefore very welcome because it relies heavily on extensive quotations from Digby himself.

Holland did not suffer from the disadvantage of being a professional historian. His subject, already offbeat when he wrote, was chosen out of enthusiasm and, as he says, gratitude. A convert to Rome, Holland had found in Digby's forty volumes of writings an English peg on which to hang his Catholic mantle. He makes no secret of this or of his other pet loves; his refreshing honesty compels the Oxonian reader to forgive him his Cantabrian jibes, and the Anglo-Prussian his anti-teutonic francophilia.

Notes on Reviewers

Nigel Ashford is Senior Lecturer in Politics at the University of North Staffordshire.

Rodney Atkinson has worked as a merchant banker and is now a freelance financial journalist.

Jillian Becker is a writer and an authority on terrorism.

Henry von Blumenthal is a banker and treasurer of the Monarchist League.

Peter Coleman has written *The Liberal Conspiracy, a study of the Cold War and the Intellectuals* (v SR Vol 9 No 2).

Stewart Deuchar is Vice-President of the Campaign for Real Education.

Elizabeth Endycott is a writer on African affairs.

Ray Honeyford's most recent book, *Race and Free Speech*, was published by the Claridge Press in 1992.

Andrew Hubback worked for the International Freedom Foundation

Brian John teaches English at a public school.

Julian Lewis was a Director of the anti-CND group, the Coalition for Peace Through Security; he now works in the Research Department of the Conservative Party.

Robert Thomas works in the Research Department of the Conservative Party.

Politics in the Briar Patch

Ray Honeyford

Uncle Remus, or Mr Fox, Mr Rabbit, and Mr Terrapin, by Joel Chandler Harris, The R.S. Surtees Society, Tacker's Cottage, Nunney, Nr Frome, Somerset BA11 4NP 1992, £14.00.

This book is politically incorrect – or should I say culturally insensitive. This is another way of saying the book is entirely wholesome, hugely entertaining, and historically accurate. Unlike so many editions of this classic of American folk literature, this one is an exact replica of the original English edition published in 1881 – pirated by George Routledge. The negro plantation dialect is preserved exactly as the author wrote it; and the authentic illustrations of A. T. Elwes are reproduced in all their powerful and pristine splendour. In short, this is the selfsame edition which inspired our own Rudyard Kipling and his excited school mates. What is so heartening about this is that the R.S. Surtees Society – that expression of a quintessentially and determinedly English mentality – has cocked a snook at the anti-racist censors who, if they had their way, would have reduced this masterpiece of vernacular literature to a multicultural mishmash – as they have done to the version of *Huckleberry Finn*, now being used in so many of our schools.

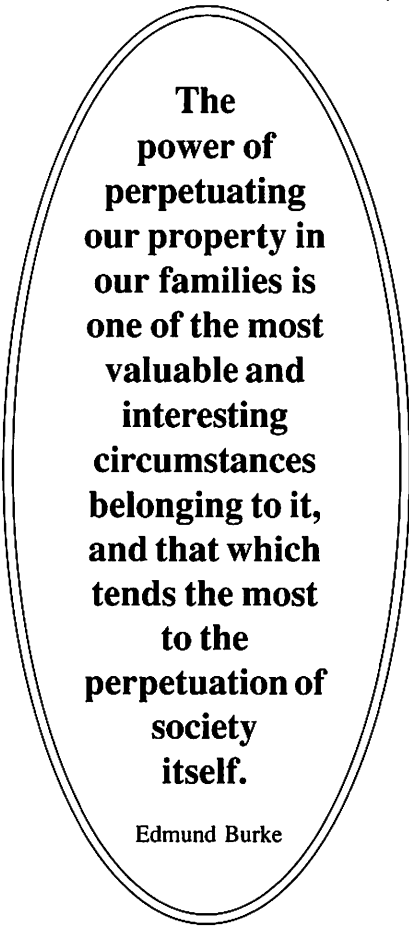
The absurdity and malice of the anti-racist language police is made patent by their attitude to a book like this – a book which reflects nothing but credit on the black community. If those tragic, underclass blacks of the American inner cities, whose spirit and character have been destroyed by liberal illusions and welfare-dependency, had access to the wisdom Uncle Remus weaves into the outrageous doings of Brer Fox, Brer Rabbit and Brer Terrapin, then they might have some hope of a decent future. Compare the following insistence on the need for children to respect parental authority with the

debilitating rhetoric of victimology as it is imposed on young blacks today, “Fine um whar you will en w'en you may”, remarked Uncle Remus with emphasis, “good chilluns allers get tuck keer on. Dar wuz Brer Rabbit's chilluns; dey minded der daddy en mammy fum day's een' ter day's een'. W'en ole man Rabbit say 'scoot', dey scooted, en w'en ole Miss Rabbit say 'scat', dey scatted. Dey did dat. En dey kep der cloze clean, en dey ain't had no smut on der nose nudder”.

These allegories have the timeless, wisdom of Aesop's fables and the folk stories of Marie de France, Edmund Spenser and La Fontaine. They are a tribute to the moral stature of plantation parents, who rightly believed that moral education was an essential part of successful child-rearing. There is about these homespun stories – and this despite the horrors of slavery – a marvellously rooted, mature and realistic optimism about what life has to offer. They also attest to the crucial function of the moral impulse, whatever the circumstances, and to the saving grace of humour. Alas, we are told by the inimitable Roy Kerridge in a well-informed and witty introduction that the tales have not survived the assault of the mass media and the ending of the plantation communities in the 1950's.

The author is as fascinating as the tales he told. He was illegitimate, and raised in abject poverty. He was intensely shy, and refused to display his talents in public. He had a striking sympathy for and affinity with the slaves – the only people amongst whom he could relax, and give vent to his marvellous storytelling and sense of humour. On one occasion – as Roy

Kerridge reminds us – Mark Twain invited Chandler Harris to Atlanta. When the children flocked to see their hero, they cried, “Why, he's a white man” – perhaps the ultimate compliment, for, as Mark Twain maintained, “Mr Harris ought to be able to read the negro dialect better than anybody else, for in the matter of writing it, he is the only master the country has produced”. I can recommend this marvellous book to all those who believe in freedom of expression, who enjoy a good read, and who, indeed, long for a state of race relations which grows out of a common, shared humanity rather than those misguided, authoritarian visions the race relations industry relentlessly strives to impose on us. Could there be a more humane and hopeful image of cross-racial harmony than this book's picture of the little white boy hanging on every word spoken by the old black man dispensing these age-old legends in the voice of his people?



**The
power of
perpetuating
our property in
our families is
one of the most
valuable and
interesting
circumstances
belonging to it,
and that which
tends the most
to the
perpetuation of
society
itself.**

Edmund Burke

Physician in the Dark Continent

Elizabeth Endycott

Monrovia Mon Amour, Anthony Daniels, John Murray 1992, £17.95.

Anthony Daniels is not a favourite of the care-and-concern-for-the-Third-world 'experts'. He is the only writer who travels in areas which do not immediately spring to mind when the words 'tourism' and 'holiday' are mentioned, takes a thorough and unpatronising look, and writes honestly about what he sees. But although First World 'experts' dislike this honesty (sometimes they seem deliberately to misunderstand it), citizens of the countries which he visits, and who are in a position to read what he has written, tend to be very enthusiastic. "At last," I have heard many Africans enthuse, "someone who tells it as it is!"

Daniels does not attempt to put a gloss on the dilapidation and corruption which he finds in so many of the world's less glamorous places. He does not try to 'understand' – an attitude which administers a paternalist pat on the head to those who have wrought the destruction – nor does he blame the wicked capitalist North. He judges by standards of efficiency and integrity which should be universal, and for that his many Third World admirers – who are not the well-heeled, well-fed and élite living in luxurious splendour, isolated from those whom they are supposed to be serving – are grateful.

Monrovia Mon Amour is about a visit to the West African state of Liberia, or rather, to its capital, Monrovia. The name of this small country derives from the word 'liberty'; it was founded early in the nineteenth century by Americans, so that slaves who had been freed could supposedly return to their roots, and not prove a threat by serving as an example to slaves who were still bound in servitude. These Afro-Americans, never more than a few thousand, with their background of Europeanisation, especially of Christianity, considered themselves

superior to the indigenous people, whom they regarded as degraded and idolatrous. Attempts to 'enlighten' the locals failed, so that the country developed a two-tier system: the indigenous people living their traditional lives in their traditional way, occupied the lower tier, while the Americo-Liberians imitating the life style of the Plantation owners from whom they had been freed, occupied the upper tier. For the latter, this resulted, to quote Daniels, in an inevitable '... conflict of identity between European thought and African feeling which neither the Liberians nor any other of the peoples of Africa have so far been able to resolve.'

Things changed with the arrival of the American Firestone Rubber Company in 1926. By the 1970's the country had achieved much prosperity and social development, at least around the estates of the multi-nationals and in the cities. Iron ore and diamonds were now being exported, as well as rubber, but the Liberian-Americans remained the most conspicuous beneficiaries of such prosperity as was going, although their rule, while being corrupt, was more or less benign. However, the import of a staple food, rice, was concentrated in the hands of the President, William Tolbert, and when, in 1979, he tried to raise the price, there were riots. A year later, in a coup led by a Master-Sergeant, Samuel Doe, the dominance of the Americo-Liberians was destroyed. Tolbert was killed and thirteen of his ministers were publicly executed, an event which was dutifully recorded for evening news consumption by the cameras of the International TV services, which sent a frisson of horror around the world.

Doe soon proved to be as corrupt as his predecessor, and Liberia slid into the sadly familiar African pattern of an autocratic president becoming

increasingly suspicious of those around him, and using every pretext to be rid of them, especially those who had helped him to power. Eventually Charles Taylor, an American trained Economist, led a coup (with some material help from Libya). At first he was supported by Prince Johnson, a former military preacher, but once they had got rid of Doe, the two fell out. A vicious civil war followed, at which the surrounding countries decided that it was time to intervene.

Daniels arrived, as he says, 'in the interregnum – no war, but no peace.' Even today, Taylor and Johnson are kept apart only by the presence of a ramshackle army made up of soldiers from various West African states. The book is a vivid account of the devastation of a once pleasant and reasonably prosperous city, brought about by war, and of the people who have survived. There is the Maternity hospital, its expensive equipment wrecked beyond repair, the University Library, the contents irretrievably destroyed and scattered in what Daniels sees as 'the revenge of the unschooled ...'. There is a meeting, in the company of several other journalists, with Prince Johnson himself, a pathological killer of frightening moodswings, who can exude charm when necessary; and there is a social evening spent with a pleasant family, viewing the gruesome video of the torture and murder of Samuel Doe by Johnson.

Yet, despite the horrifying nature of so much that is described, the book is a fascinating read, and well illustrated with photographs by the author. Anthony Daniels is one of the best users of the English language around today – clear and witty. He may never feature as one of those whom Melvyn Bragg deems worthy of attention, but as so much of Africa climbs (one hopes) out of the nightmare of several decades of post-colonialism (for 'Liberia' can be read Angola, Mozambique, and without even the aid of a war, Tanzania), *Monrovia Mon Amour*, like the previous *Zanzibar to Timbuktu*, will be enthusiastically read by ordinary citizens of countries of which the truth is so assiduously avoided by the current crop of African 'experts'.

Old War Crimes

Rodney Atkinson

Tracks of Death, George Kershaw, The Book Guild 1992 £12.95

George Kershaw suffers today from injuries to feet and arms sustained during imprisonment by the Japanese, in whose tender care he helped to construct the Burma-Siam railway between 1942 and 1945. As a result of those injuries he is today obliged to use the only type of vehicle which suits his disabilities and his pocket -- a Japanese car.

Tracks of Death is a shattering book. To accompany the author on his narrative of squalor, disease, starvation and cruelty suffered in the prison camps of South East Asia is a harrowing experience. When on 18th August 1945 the author was told "It may not be of interest to all of you but the war is over and we are all free", the reader cannot suppress his own emotions at the release from such a nightmare of hate and fear.

The author rightly feigns no objectivity in the description of his captors: the old (British and Dutch) sovereignty was replaced by something so barbarous and obscene that even now the world does not fully comprehend it and its perpetrators attempt to re-write history in order that its foulness may at least be unknown to its future population.

After the invasion of Singapore and the unspeakable attack on the Alexandra Military Hospital, Kershaw was one of 70,000 prisoners taken and, over the next three years, subjected, among other degradations, to: starvation, torture, execution, hard labour, the employment of captives on military enterprises and the destruction of prisoner correspondence.

Maggots and weevils became a source of protein and Kershaw positively looked forward to eating "Vitameal" — a pig food bagged in Lancashire in 1929. Thousands died for the lack of bandages, antiseptics and quinine

which, although available, were largely withheld by the Japanese, whose physical and verbal abuse of their captives ("white elephants") betrayed a racial hatred of the "in error race" of which Nazi propagandists would have been envious. Such racial hatred found its truest expression in the horrific treatment of the Chinese. Kershaw recalls Chinese prisoners having barbed wire "crowns" forced down on their heads, being bound, thrown into Singapore harbour and machine gunned.

The capacity of his captors for cruelty never failed to amaze the author. At the end of the war the Japanese were even contemptuous of their own soldiers as they retreated; wounded and starving — it was left to Allied doctors to treat them.

Dogs and cats befriended by the prisoners were maltreated and tortured to death by the Japanese, seemingly for pleasure. As the Japanese made a fire and cooking pot for a dog befriended by the prisoners, a CSM ordered to capture the dog was careless and the dog escaped. The CSM was beaten to death. Through the horror of the years of captivity the author recalls the seasonal arrival in the jungle of swarms of beautifully coloured butterflies — the Japanese even attacked them with sticks.

The author experienced the kind of cynical manipulation of Red Cross visitors to the camps which has more than a little relevance to Bosnia today. In July 1943 prisoners were each given 55 cigarettes, 20 oz tins of fish, butter, milk, shirts, hats and boots. The Red Cross came, took pictures, left and everything was taken away again.

I recall my own father's experience of the final days of captivity in German POW camps where many who survived captivity were killed at the end of the war by their own bombers. In 1944

92 of Kershaw's fellow prisoners in Burma suffered the same fate.

At the end of their captivity those who survived working on the Burma-Siam railway provided such a horrific sight for Allied troops that many were physically sick. Kershaw, previously a well built man of six feet two, had been reduced to 6 stones — barely recognisable by his relatives. The events described in this book belong to history, but those who ignore or forget history are condemned to relive it. Those who read today of German and Japanese atrocities committed during the last war are unsure whether the lesson of those events is of man's cruelty to man or whether some races and countries have a greater capacity for such cruelty — and it is no longer politic to inquire.

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The Primrose Path

Jillian Becker

Hubris: The Tempting of Modern Conservatives, edited by Digby Anderson and Gerald Frost, Centre for Policy Studies £10.00

The Government has become arrogantly distant from the people. It has succumbed to the temptation 'to do things which they cannot do and which government should not attempt to do', John Gray writes in his Introduction to this collection of essays. That is the essential contention of all twelve essayists, who write as conservative critics of the Conservative Government. The remaining eleven deal respectively with Social Policy, Law and Order, Education, The Family, Health, Europe, Foreign Policy, Defence, Northern Ireland, Economic Policy and Industrial Policy.

In all these spheres, our elected rulers have fixed their eyes on grandiose goals. As instances of their over-ambition, Professor Gray cites their 'plans to achieve "world peace", improve the "Nation's Health" or create a united states of Europe'. They are, he believes, listening 'more to the ideas of intellectuals, lobbies and bureaucrats than to the sentiments of ordinary people'; and by way of cure he advocates that Conservatives reflect continually on their traditional guiding principles and precepts.

Those principles and precepts are discussed by Digby Anderson in his essay on Social Policy. They concern family, values, habits, and 'derive from a knowledge that there is a world outside politics, much bigger and more important'. This other world produces all wealth and most welfare; and, he says, it 'demands from politicians, as a condition of any successful political action, respect and modesty, the sheer opposite of socialism's grand dreams'.

The Conservative Government's grandest dream is the Eurodream. There are good reasons why we should not be led by our noses into European political unity, and many of them are

given by Kenneth Minogue. But, he says, all the disadvantages of unity have been either not admitted or positively and mendaciously denied by the Government, whose involvement with Europe has induced it to 'abandon frankness with its own people'. It 'soothes and deceives'; it threatens the people with lost opportunities; and it contradicts itself, declaring that national sovereignty will not be affected while at the same time declaring that from the Treaty of Rome onwards Britain has tacitly accepted that the sovereign nation state is a thing of the past. In these ways, the Eurodream has been one of the chief causes of the distancing of government from the people. Instead of acting like a temporarily empowered body of men and women answerable to the electorate, the Government behaves as a political elite, 'acquiring a supranational allegiance so remote from our national interest as to require a consistent policy of having to hoodwink the electors and disguise from them the clear consequences of our European commitments'.

At the same time, Charles Moore observes, the protection of British territory – one of the two supreme duties of government – is but half-heartedly performed in Northern Ireland. Successive governments, most of them Conservative, have 'worked on the assumption that there is something good about talks per se; that negotiation is therapeutic for all those involved.' (Hence there was even once the extreme folly of talks between the British government and the IRA.) The effect of negotiation over many years has been to preserve political uncertainty, in the atmosphere of which terrorism flourishes. The number of fatalities in the sectarian strife since 1969 rose to over 3,000 in 1992, yet the

politicians go on talking about talks. The British Government should stop looking for a 'solution'. Moore recommends that full local government should be restored to the province, and its affairs 'should be debated in Parliament in the same way as other matters, in place of the present system of orders in council'. The Government should make it clear to all its citizens, to the Republic of Ireland, and to the rest of the world that Northern Ireland is British and will remain so forever – which is to say, for as long as Britain can defend its territory, by force if necessary.

Writing on defence, Gerald Frost points out that since the collapse of the chief enemy of the West – militant Communism with its nuclear-armed Warsaw Pact – there has been an illusory notion in British government thinking that the danger of war has diminished, while in truth that is far from the case. The Conservative Party, traditionally strong on defence, has relaxed its vigilance; it has cut the defence budget and reduced the number of infantry regiments, just when the danger of war has increased rather than decreased – precisely because the risk of total destruction by nuclear conflagration has been eased. The possibility of total destruction was a formidable deterrent. Now that the danger is less, states, nations, tribes, sects and factions rush to war. In addition, the danger of nuclear war looms again, this time between Third World enemies, as lesser powers, some with governments more dangerously irresponsible than those of the Warsaw pact, acquire nuclear weapons. Four states newly possess or are about to possess them. Seven Third World states have, or will have within a few years, 'offensive biological programmes in varying stages of development'; fifteen possess ballistic missiles, and more are acquiring them (which means that weapons fired from the Middle East could soon reach our own cities). The threats are real, serious, and proliferating, and there is no condition of certain peace from which we can reap some 'dividend' of re-allocated billions.

British defences, Frost reasons, need to be constructed in the light of

foreign-policy objectives; but what those objectives are, the Government seems unwilling to define. It is waiting on events, such as the possible emergence of a European political union with a common defence policy. Its uncertainties, prevarications, and discomfort with defence planning indicate that the Conservative Party 'only half-remembers a truth more precious than any it may have recently learned' – that defence of the realm is the most important function of the state.

Mark Almond deplores the Government's distorted view of what foreign policy objectives might be. Putting it right is made more difficult by our commitment to Europe. He sees the demand for unanimity among the twelve member-states of the EC as crippling. Surely, he pleads, plurality of opinion is better than 'relying on the lowest common denominator to determine policy'. The EC partners have 'replaced common sense' with 'the cult of consensus'. And while the politicians' desire for change in Europe hustles us into rash experiment, there is at the same time a deep reluctance to permit needed change elsewhere. The Commonwealth would have to be restructured to become a 'vehicle of mutual advantage'; but it continues as it is, its 'economic wastelands' serving neither our interests nor those of the ordinary people of post-colonial Africa, because of a sentimental attachment to it on the part of the British establishment. On their side the Commonwealth potentates 'have grown used to it as a forum for their displays of vanity' and their criticism of the Mother Country.

The 'foreign-policy establishment brought up on a combination of post-imperial Angst and nostalgia' holds stability to be an overriding good. That faith persuaded Britain and the other Western powers engaged in the Gulf war to 'unloosen the noose around Saddam Hussein's neck'; and it deterred the West in general from embracing revolutionary change in the Soviet bloc with enthusiasm. Only in the case of the Baltic states, Britain's long-standing refusal to recognize their

incorporation in the Soviet Union saved us from that folly. But no such independent policy will be possible when as one part of a European superstate we must reach unanimity with the other eleven.

After defence, the next most important duty of the state is to protect every citizen's person and property and in this too the Government is failing. The crime rate goes up and the morale of the police goes down. Christie Davies, writing on Law and Order, analyses why. 'The very belief that social conditions are responsible for crime is itself a cause of crime for it undermines the moral responsibility of the individual and generates excuses for malefactors. Social democracy is a powerful solvent of morality.'

Most people, Davies says, feel that to commit a crime is wrong, and that a sense of morality is the best deterrent of crime; not more leisure centres, more welfare, or even more policing. But ours has become 'a culture of explanations and excuses' -- especially in the schools. We are told that to be judgemental is wrong, when the truth is that to resign judgement is itself positively immoral. Criminals and juvenile delinquents are now regarded and treated by liberals as yet another victim group, rather than the victimizing group which they are. Davies advises that delinquent schoolchildren should be thrown out of school at as early an age as possible, so that (ideally, if not in our world of welfare) they would have to seek employment. 'Compulsory schooling,' he writes, 'beyond the early years has been a failure educationally, morally and as a crude device for keeping delinquents off the streets.' The majority of schools, and especially the state schools, while they have been 'unwilling to insist on reasonable standards of personal morality', have allowed teachers to preach 'all manner of egalitarian creeds'. Anti-racism has become an attack on British culture. The sense of common identity has been eroded, with a consequent loss of common morality. Moral decline is general in British society, and the trends Professor Davies describes 'amount to nothing less than the decay

and decline of our national character', and an actual 'loss of civilisation'.

Sheila Lawlor charts the mistakes of Education policy which have made education such a disastrous failure for many of our children. She advocates a return to the teaching of separate disciplines.

All this is cogently argued: bullseye criticism, sound analysis, recommendations confident and sage. It should be said, however, that the Conservative Party has in fact at last belatedly listened to the sort of advice which Sheila Lawlor gives and it has begun to implement better Education policies. It could also fairly claim that, whatever its economic failures have been, its anti-inflation policies are working well. Tim Congdon urges price stability as a goal, but it surely remains an impossibility, his complicated arguments notwithstanding. Here the critic seems more unrealistically ambitious than the Government. And when John Burton, writing on Industrial Policy, prescribes the New Deal remedy of putting 'the long-term unemployed' to work on 'projects of community benefit', he is tempting the Government with an ear of the socialist dog that bit it.

The Salisbury Review

We are sorry that some of our subscribers received their December issue with some of the pages missing.

The printers would like to extend their apologies for any inconvenience caused by this mechanical fault.

If anyone still has not received a full copy of the December issue please telephone Merrie Cave on 071-226-7791.

The Cauldron Boils Over

Robert Thomas

The Paper House: The Ending of Yugoslavia, Mark Thompson, Radius (London) 1992 £17.99

The Fall of Yugoslavia: The Third Balkan War, Misha Glenny, Penguin (London) 1992 £5.99

Anyone trying to write about the politics of Eastern and Central Europe faces a situation which can develop so fast as to leave the text out of date as soon as it is published. This problem is particularly acute in the former Yugoslavia where the process of peaceful political change has given way to armed strife. The authors of these two books have confronted this challenge in differing ways. Thompson has produced a travelogue which surveys the Yugoslav republics, and combines antiquarian curiosity and contemporary observation. Glenny relates in clear, economical prose the events he witnessed in his role as BBC Central Europe Correspondent, while Yugoslavia was propelled towards civil war. Both works offer valuable insights into the complexities of the politics and culture of these Balkan countries, and of the bitter conflict which now afflicts them.

Many of the characteristics of the Yugoslav conflict are elements common to other Central and East European countries writ large. The extraordinary nature of Yugoslavia's unravelling, however, must be explained by reference to the peculiarity of its historical circumstances and political culture. While initially loyal to the Soviet Union the rift with Stalin in the aftermath of the Second World war caused Tito and the Yugoslav Communists to look for an ideological variant on the Socialist plan. The scheme they came up with was known by the jargon of "self-management socialism" and was meant through participatory activism to lead to a system of democratic socialism. This idea foundered on the central contradiction of its professed

belief in the devolution of power and the reality of the all powerful Communist party presided over by Josip Tito. While Yugoslavia under Tito developed a degree of freedom not seen in the Soviet Eastern bloc, the Communist party in Yugoslavia remained an oppressive source of influence and all pervading patronage. Thompson states that "Like their Soviet counterparts they had no choice but to curtail free expression, because their only justification for keeping a monopoly of power was that they had a monopoly of truth". The most damaging aspect of this all-pervasive power structure was that it succeeded in crushing the life out of civil society and its institutions. The only rival concept which was able to survive the years of Communist control was that of the nation. As a consequence when Yugoslav socialism and the federal constitution with which it was entwined began to unravel the vacuum it left behind was filled by a nationalism which was narrow, exclusive and undiluted by the alien concepts of legal and civil order.

Croatian and Serbian nationalism was long nurtured as a cultural assertion of identity within the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires. This cultural resistance was exemplified by the Serbian traditions of heroic defeat and blood sacrifice which were developed around the medieval battle fought on the Plain of the Blackbirds, Kosovo Field. With this tradition of nationalism which looked backwards to the glories of lost national empires was another brand of nationalism dedicated to the pan-Slavic idea, which stressed the similarities between the

Serbs, Croats and other south Slavs. This pan-Slavic ideal was realised in the creation of the Yugoslav state, but national rivalries burst forth into genocidal strife during the Second World War. Tito, by reimposing the Yugoslav idea, linked it irrevocably to Socialism. The dis-crediting of Socialism consequently spelt doom for federal Yugoslavia. Glenny suggests that the extreme savagery and atrocities witnessed in the present conflict may be attributed to the fury of nationalists on both sides, obsessed with their own and special national destiny, who are faced with an enemy identical to themselves in terms of ethnicity and language, and who until recently were part of the same state. The predominance of nationalism has left the political and cultural landscape barren. In Serbia the opposition to the ruling Serbian Socialist Party mainly consists of even more extreme nationalist factions bearing names such as "The White Eagles" and the "Knights of Serbia". In Croatia the political choice is between the authoritarian nationalism of the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) and the black shirted neo-fascism of the Party of Right. Thompson observes that in the former Yugoslavia choicelessness had become a "Democratic national condition." Such a situation has produced an atmosphere of paranoia and war psychosis where propaganda and fact mingle freely in a self-fulfilling cycle of violence.

The process of replacing Marxist materialism by nationalism and the outbreak of war between the republics of Serbia and Croatia was intimately bound up with the characters and careers of the republics' leaders, Slobodan Milosevic and Franjo Tudjman. Milosevic is the perfect product of the Balkan Communist bureaucracy; according to Glenny the secret of his "success lay in the shameless exploitation of the most effective tools of Balkan politics: deception, corruption, blackmail, demagoguery, and violence". In so far as Milosevic has any political aim it is the preservation of his own power with any ideologies, be they Marxist or Greater Serbian na-

tionalist. In 1987 as Milosevic consolidated his power within Serbia (and later also in Kosovo, Montenegro and Vojvodina) as part of what was termed the "Anti-Bureaucratic Revolution", he was hailed by the uncomprehending West as a reformer in the Gorbachev mould. In 1991 when Milosevic was faced with popular resistance to his rule he managed to survive by appealing to nationalist sentiment, calling for the Serbs to unite in order to defend the Krajina Serbs against the newly independent Croats. When, however, the cost of the war became too great, Milosevic was quite prepared to abandon the cause of the Krajina Serbs as opportunistically as he had earlier taken it up. While the economic and political pressures now operating against Serbia might ultimately result in Milosevic's fall he may well continue his record of survival bolstered by Serbian nationalist resentment of outside interference, with his career serving as testimony to the ability of Communist power structures to survive even after their ideological clothes have long since fallen away. Tudjman, like Milosevic, has his political origins in the bowels of the Titoist Communist party. Tudjman, however, unlike Milosevic, appears genuinely to believe in his own nationalist mythology. While the revolt of the Krajina Serbs in 1991 was fermented and exploited by Milosevic it was also provoked by

Tudjman's blundering attempts to impose a Croatian national state — as opposed to a modern Western style state which could tolerate minorities within its structure — on the unwilling Serbian population. As the Croatian crisis gathered pace throughout 1991 the two leaders were locked together in an increasingly savage dance of death.

As Western liberals the authors are attracted by the Yugoslav cultural intelligentsia whose values embrace political and social pluralism. Glenny prefaces his work with a statement by the Serbian actor, Boro Todorovic, deploring the march to war dictated by the nationalist imperative. Thompson includes within his narrative interviews with the film maker Dusan Makavejev, the theatre director Ljubisa Ristic, and journalists from the Slovenian journal, *Mladina* (for which Thompson himself writes). Such cosmopolitan intellectuals are, however, an increasingly isolated minority. Where well-intentioned politicians such as the former federal Prime minister, Ante Markovic, have sought to apply this rational pluralism to Yugoslav government, they have found their efforts swept aside by the tide of nationalism. Where a constituency for such liberalism still exists in the former Yugoslavia it is restricted to the towns, thus setting urban populations against the surrounding countryside. Glenny cites the case of the 90,000 Serbs who

have remained in Sarajevo during the siege — with many fighting alongside other ethnic groups in defence of the city, against the forces of the Serbs from the rural hinterland. Similarly, according to Thompson, the defence of Vukovar was undertaken by a mixture of Croat, Serb, Ruthene, and Hungarian resistance fighters. It is perhaps in such attempts by alliances of nationalities to defend their local or urban identity against ethnic atavism that the tenuous survival of civil society can be observed.

The present war in former Yugoslavia, now centred on Bosnia-Herzegovina, may move on to flare up in other theatres of conflict (such as the province of Kosovo, a centre of accumulated tensions between the Serbs and the majority Albanian population) or else it may continue in Bosnia as an unresolved and bloody deadlock. Neither of these grim options offer much hope for a comprehensive peace settlement between the rival factions. Glenny concludes that "Historically, the only way to keep these people apart once the fighting begins has been for an outside power to intervene and offer its protection to all citizens, in particular, from the imperial urges of Croatia and Serbia. History will judge whether the international community is able to rise to the mighty challenge posed by the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina."

Poles to the Right

Nigel Ashford

Continuity and Change in Poland: Conservatism in Polish Political Thought, Rett R. Ludwikowski, Catholic University of America Press, 1991, £11.95, \$39.95.

Poland, like most of Central and Eastern Europe, is rediscovering its conservative and classical liberal traditions, suppressed under communism, in a great outpouring of books, articles and journals. Unfortunately the non-Polish speaking reader has been excluded from this, so this book is welcome. The author is Rett Ludwikowski,

Professor of Law at the Catholic University of America, formerly at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow, and himself a significant contributor to the historical literature in Polish on conservative thought.

Ludwikowski states that this book is "primarily, but not exclusively, a study of the traditions of Polish conservative

thought... Political ideas... are rooted in specific social, economic and political circumstances and are incomprehensible if not discussed within this context. Hence it is the intention of the author to analyze the development of Polish conservative thought against its historical background". The book therefore, provides an introduction to

Polish political history as well as political ideas. Unfortunately the relevance of the historical detail to conservative ideas is not always made explicit. Here is the basis of another book, a political history informed by the significance of political ideas.

A persistent theme is the dilemma of the conservative on what to conserve in a political order alien to conservative ideas. First, there was the lack of a Polish state, as the country was partitioned and repartitioned, followed by communist rule which repudiated every conservative value. The loss of independence at the end of the eighteenth century "need not undermine the foundations of society. The conservative believed that the hierarchical structure of society, natural solidarity among social groups, the position of the family, religious foundations, and moral values were still intact". What should be the conservative relationship with the existing order? In the nineteenth century, this took the form of a debate about 'genuine' and 'false' conservatism. Conservatives such as Hegel claimed that the reactionaries, influenced by de Maistre, "are too sluggish to think about the substance of preservation. They want to preserve everything that 'is' and that 'has been' merely for the principle of preservation, without regard for its purpose or importance for social relations". A later debate was on the relationship with the communist authorities. Conservatives such as Dzielski tended to favour 'evolutionary constructive opposition', to obtain more freedom for a civil society, against the 'anti-totalitarian revolutionaries', who were usually committed to socialism but opposed to the totalitarian nature of the regime.

The first chapter introduces the reader to Poland at the end of the eighteenth century and the rise of a conscious conservatism, and notes the importance of the short lived but influential constitution of 1791, including a reference to the British influence. The early nineteenth century was marked by the conflict between conservatives and reactionaries, and the attempt by Prince Drucki-Lubecki to reconcile conservatives and liberals. The author provides

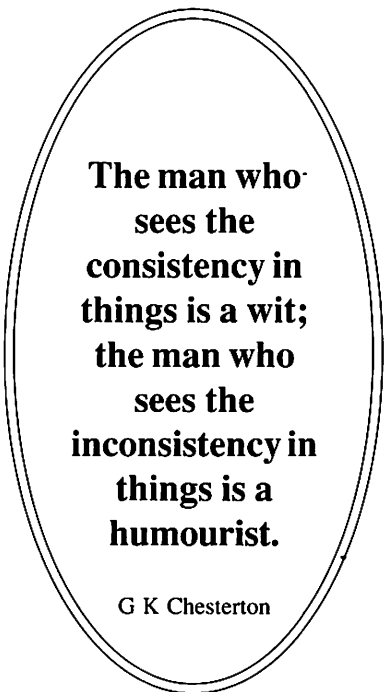
a useful discussion of the complementary and conflictual elements of the conservative and liberal canons. The failure of the 1830 insurrection led to a consolidation of the conservative movement, which sought to preserve those values which would make possible the restoration of sovereignty. The period of insurrections (1846-63) saw the dominance of political programmes over political philosophy. "First, Poland has to decide 'whether to be', and only later 'on what principles to be'." Burke's 'evolutionary conservatism' was a significant influence, both in rejecting reactionary ideas in recognising the necessity of change, and in accepting compromise with the political authorities and rejecting insurrection. This led to the idea after 1863 of tri-loyalism, that Poles could be loyal to their Austrian and Russian rulers as well as the Polish nation.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, conservatism suffered a severe decline, as it was challenged by nationalists, peasants and socialists. Only in Galicia, in Austrian Poland, were conservatives strong. They managed to obtain a high degree of autonomy for their province, and had a well developed programme combining the organic society with liberal economics. When Poland was united in 1919, the conservative policy of working from within the system to protect traditional values was deemed unpatriotic by many Poles and they were given little credit for providing the civil basis for unity.

Under communism, conservatism was naturally presented as a backward and reactionary force in Polish history. Nonetheless, there were some interesting academic debates about the nature of bourgeois ideas. With Polish glasnost, there was an explosion of ideas and movements on the Right, which the author places in four streams of thought: nationalist, christian democrat, liberal and conservative. Particular reference should be made to the ideas of Dzielski, Krol, Korwin-Mikke, and Krawczyk. The conservative reader will be both heartened by the number and vigour of groups on the Right, and disappointed at their inability to work together, much of which can be under-

stood by the conflicts of the past.

The final chapter examines glasnost as 'conservative revolution', meaning that Gorbachev sought change of a radical or revolutionary form, but conservative in that it was designed to protect the powers of the communist elite. Ludwikowski, for obvious reasons, finds this an unsatisfactory term. While Solidarity was socialist, the author briefly describes the contributions of the conservative and liberal tradition to resisting atheistic, collectivist and totalitarian communism. This final chapter is very disappointing. It provides a short comparison of Poland and the Soviet Union in what proved to be the short lived era of glasnost. Conservatives above all should be careful of being too carried away by contemporary events. The conclusion should have assessed how successful was Polish conservatism in preserving conservative values during the whole period of foreign rule (including communist rule). To what extent did conservatism help to protect the Polish characteristics of romanticism, individualism, democracy and religion? How successfully did these qualities resolve the conservative dilemma? Now conservatives must demonstrate that their principles can serve a new and different regime: an independent and united Poland.



**The man who
sees the
consistency in
things is a wit;
the man who
sees the
inconsistency in
things is a
humourist.**

G K Chesterton

No Chips on their Shoulders

George Chowdharay-Best

The Catholic Families, Mark Bence-Jones, Constable, 1992, £19.35.

This book, which has already been widely and favourably reviewed, is about eminent Catholic families in England and to some extent in Scotland. The word eminent seems appropriate, for at least one member of them (Thomas Weld, 1773-1837) actually reached the rank of Cardinal.

The book is not particularly political, and is written more from the point of view of a cultured man of the world and an historian of manners than from that of a sobersided academic historian. There is a freshness and a lightness of touch about it which has caused some of the author's books of the past to be viewed as containing too much froth and bubble, almost of a "fiddling while Rome burns" kind; and there were certainly quite a few burnings to be recorded in the author's last book on the Twilight of the Ascendancy in Ireland.

Thus although *The Catholic Families* has been generally well received (and a reprint has been called for owing to popular demand), one or two of the critics have struck a sourer note. Lord Dacre in particular, has complained that the book does not discuss ideas and is confined to persons and their genealogies — eminent persons at that, but those who look more closely will begin to realise that the glowing and sparkling surface also evinces a wealth of learning judiciously and discreetly displayed. It is well to remember that history is as much about people as about ideas and 'movements'.

The book covers the period from 1778 to the present. At the outset, Catholics were still being 'discriminated against', as we should say today. They could not legally buy or inherit land, exercise the functions of a Catholic priest or run a Catholic school. Nor

could they serve in the army. An Act of that year in theory changed all this, although in practice the earlier restrictions had of course, as in Ireland, been progressively circumvented. Nonetheless the Relief Act of 1778 and the stay of King George III and Queen Charlotte with a leading Catholic nobleman, Lord Petre, at Thorndon Hall in Essex in the same year, in some indefinable way changed the atmosphere and enabled Catholics to begin to take their place in public life again. And it was an important place. The Duke of Norfolk was and remains the premier Duke of England, his dukedom dating from 1483; and he also holds the earliest existing earldom, the second oldest being held by the Earl of Shrewsbury, another Catholic. Lord Stourton's peerage dated from 1448 and was the oldest surviving English barony created by letters patent.

Nine years later, in 1787, Stourton was one of the peers who formed a Catholic Committee to press for further relief from what were called the penal laws. The Lord Petre of the day, another member of the Committee, was a Freemason; and its tone generally was what is called Cisalpine: that is to say, its members 'emphasised their moral obligations to the state and were opposed to papal influences except in the matter of Catholic dogma'. They were even prepared to accept that English Catholic Bishops should be elected in England rather than be appointed directly by Rome and that the British Government should have a veto over their appointment. In a word, they were moderate.

This did not of course apply to all members of the Committee and supporters of its aims. Thomas Weld, for example, who was building a large

chapel at Lulworth, not discreetly incorporated in his house but free-standing, did not agree with the Committee and refused to join it. Ultimately however he and many others, including the Catholic Bishops who for legal reasons could not be called that but were known as Vicars Apostolic, signed a public declaration called the Protestation, renouncing *inter alia* the idea that the Pope could dispense Catholics from their oath of allegiance to the British Crown. After some further controversy the new Bill became law in 1791, allowing the Mass to be celebrated openly, Catholic churches to be built, Catholic barristers to practise at the Bar and so on.

The Act did nothing to enable Catholics to serve as officers in the armed Forces, but in practice their ability to do so depended upon whether their commanding officer insisted on their taking the prescribed oath against Popery. During the revolutionary Wars of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries these restrictions were less and less enforced in practice, as the late Sir John Biggs-Davison and I indicated in *The Cross of St. Patrick* (Kensal Press 1985), and as Mark Bence-Jones emphasises here. 'Wellington,' he writes, 'is said to have maintained that nearly half his officers in the Peninsula were Catholics.' Though this was an exaggeration, Catholicism was beginning to become fashionable, as the elder Francis Jerningham remarked in 1819. The eleventh Duke of Norfolk had become an Anglican; the twelfth Duke, who succeeded in 1815, remained a Catholic and took the lead in pressing for Catholic Emancipation.

He had a personal problem. As a Catholic he was unable to exercise his hereditary office of Earl Marshal. His Anglican brother acted as his deputy until in 1824 a special Bill was passed in the House of Lords enabling him to officiate regardless of religion. This Bill was strongly opposed by the King's brother, the then Duke of York; and it was not until 1829, after the Duke's death, that it became possible for the Catholic Emancipation Bill proper to become law. On 28 April of that year

the Duke of Norfolk, Lord Clifford and the new Lord Dormer took their seats in the House of Lords. Others, before long, joined them.

Catholics remain active in the House of Lords. 'And yet time' said Sir Ranulph Crewe in the Oxford Peerage case (1625) 'hath his revolution; there must be a period and an end to all temporal things, *finis rerum*, an end of names and dignities and whatsoever is terrene; and why not of De Vere? Where

is Bohun, where's Mowbray, where's Mortimer?'

A fellow peer was quoting this well-known passage within the last few years in the House of Lords, writes Bence-Jones, when Lord Mowbray, Segrave and Stourton, 'a genial and erudite figure who lost an eye in the war when serving in the Grenadiers' spoke up. 'Mowbray is here, and very well thank you'. The same could be said for most of the Catholic families.

both Christianity and modernism, knew full well, damnation is part of the belief in the soul's infinite value while Belsen represents the belief in its lack of value. Nor does a distrust for the masses begin in 1880, though as the volume contains no citations from Burke or De Tocqueville Carey may not know this. Oxford, that admirable Anglican ghetto, is perhaps not an ideal place to survey mankind with extensive view: if the professor abandoned beekeeping to visit a football match, or a demonstration, or even a school playground he might find Oxford definitely *not* worth a mass.

Likewise Carey's publications seem rather removed from the concerns of the imaginary mass. Were he to take his tone from the public libraries we should see not *Thackeray, Prodigal Genius* or *A Study of Dicken's Imagination* but rather a study of the imagination of Catherine Cookson or *Jeffrey Archer, Prodigal Genius*. Apart from a solitary reference to *Tit-Bits* there is no evidence that Carey has opened a penny dreadful or a silver fork novel, let alone *Viz* or *Hello*. His analysis of the intelligentsia's attitude also confuses opposing critiques of the lower middle classes (the giganity of Carlyle, the bourgeois bugbear of Marx) on account of their timidity and excessive respectability, with attacks on the brutality and violence of the lower classes; a confusion which he then transfers to the original authors.

Carey argues: "The intellectuals could not, of course, actually prevent the masses from attaining literacy. But they could prevent them from reading literature by making it too difficult for them to understand, and this is what they did." The motivation, in the language of Method actors, is unclear: why should these writers seek to limit alike their audience and incomes? Henry James, for example, constantly courted a mass audience which proved resistant to his charms. Those academics ever ready to patrol the red light district of the mass media in their gaudiest make-up would find this refusal to prostitute oneself hard to construct or even deconstruct.

In the typical manner of the school bully Carey avoids getting in the ring

Carey on Philistines

Brian John

The Intellectuals and the masses 1880-1939, John Carey, Faber and Faber 1992

Nothing, apart from religious belief, is more embarrassing in England than to be considered an intellectual. Some, tarred with either brush, adopt the abashed truculence of the sodomite; others, like small boys before the class bully, deflect threatened blows with a series of self-deprecating gags. From this it is natural to wobble from a consuming self-hatred into the desire to denounce erstwhile comrades to any available authority. This particular *trahison des clercs* has found its Quisling in John Carey, Merton professor of English at Oxford. As the Bishop of Durham's opinions have no substantial originality but gain a certain piquancy in the mouth of one paid to express their opposite, so the professor's view that, as there is no God, all literary judgements are meaningless has not prevented him from arraigning every week in what *The Sunday Times* considers *The Culture* the lax morals of intellectuals in his ever laxer prose. If they do not share the professor's commendable domestic bliss (one wife, two sons and hobby: bee keeping) the *Zeitgeist* helps them. Strangely no *Sunday Times* contributor can be found to laud this volume which has, however, found favour with the *Daily Mail*; Julie Burchill, finds it "an incredibly juicy read" while Adrian Wooldridge

considers it "intellectual baiting at its best," suggesting some Elizabethan sport curtailed by Cromwell. He has also the endorsement of the *Guardian's* Edward Pearce, he who watches the parade of politics with the smug, blinking malignity of a neutered tom.

The Intellectuals and the Masses consists of two unevenly matched parts, the first previously delivered as the T S Eliot memorial lectures at the University of Kent. If Old Possum's shade is not sufficiently marked by becoming posthumous lyricist to Andrew Lloyd-Weber this decision, roughly the equivalent of offering the Reith lectures to Ben Elton, should complete the task. Nor, judging from his bludgeoning attempts at satire, do we consider Carey ideal for the Henry, as opposed to Clive James memorial lecture. The arguments presented would not have led in the days of McCarthy, to their author being accused of premature anti-fascism. His contention is that Hitler was no aberration but the direct result of that distaste for democracy common among the great modernists. By some curious legerdemain Carey argues: "The 'mass' is, of course, a fiction" before attempting to link St Augustine's belief in "*a massa damnata*" with the Nazi death camps. Of course as Hitler, the great enemy of

with Waugh, Yeats or Eliot, electing instead to vent his spleen on writers who have never risen from cult to culture. George Gissing has always been found too miserable even for the admirers of Philip Larkin; Wyndham Lewis, far from being as he claims "the intellectual's intellectual", was a Saviour desperately short of apostles, while having read Lewis's ill-advised book in praise of Hitler, Carey seems quite unaware of his recantation, *The Hitler Cult*.

The essays on H.G. Wells and Arnold Bennett hold more interest. That on Wells, if much indebted to Bernard Bergonzi and suffering from the professor's apparent lack of knowledge of his final anguished palinode, *Mind at the End of its Tether*, is genuinely sensitive to an unjustly neglected author, though Carey tends fashionably to over-stress his pessimism, realising that his *Things to Come* have not arrived even if on things lost he is still an authority. At this point the book collapses into a bizarre panegyric to

Arnold Bennett. There is a good case for re-valuing Bennett who unfortunately has all the qualities of a great novelist except greatness. Few are better on the solid, even stolid qualities of the human condition: few have less of Cleopatra's air and fire. "Despite Margaret Drabble's forceful advocacy", he writes, apparently straight-faced "literary academics, syllabus-advisers and other official censors" are all against him. Not surprisingly when Bennett claims all authors labour only for "food, shelter, tailors, a woman, European travel". Dante? Proust? Solzhenitsyn? Even Carey is forced to admit Bennett's enthusiasms for Dostoevsky and Chekhov are rather at odds with his courting the lowbrows; indeed it was a fatal inability to decide whether he was gourmet or gourmand that has left so little of his massive oeuvre surviving. Presumably trying to establish his credentials as a new nineties man, Carey claims "Bennett appreciated that

for normal people parenthood is the most important thing that ever happens". He quoted Edwin Clayhanger watching a child on a swing awe-struck by "the 'miraculous' advent of a new human being, with character and volition of its own; unlike any other individuality in the universe".

Of course, this is twaddle. All children behave in the same manner on a garden swing and, if they did not, Bennett's leaden prose with its misuse of the word "miraculous" does nothing to convince one to the contrary. It is as false as Bennett's belief, as reported by Carey, that Art is not real, only the "offices of the deathbed and sickroom, where man is reduced to matter." One will concede that a sickbed is not necessarily the ideal spot for reading Flaubert. "The contempt for fiction is rational and manly" as Johnson puts it. Among those who have chosen to study the iambic pentameter rather than slop out bedpans it seems less rational and more bogus.

Conservative Quotations

"Conservative quotes" will be a feature of future issues and we would welcome readers' suggestions.

The extracts will include a series from such writers and thinkers as Edmund Burke, Dante, Chesterton, Oakeshott and de Tocqueville.

Rewriting the Record

Julian Lewis

Peace Movements — International Protest and World Politics since 1945, by April Carter, Longman, 1992, £26.00 hdbk, £9.99, pbk.

Whenever the Left fails at the ballot box, its friends in academia use a fall-back technique: if you cannot make history, you can at least rewrite it. This new study of 'Peace Movements' — the propaganda name for disarmament campaigns — falls squarely into this category. April Carter and I were college friends in the mid-1970s. That was when I first heard of her role as a former chairman of CND. If this had been mentioned in the book's note on the author, it would have given a better idea of her perspective; but her bibliographical essay gives the game away, just the same. No books hostile to the anti-nuclear cause are listed, though weighty ones exist, and a passing sentence dismisses 'polemical pamphlets by organizations set up to campaign against peace movements', without naming any nor indicating how to obtain them.

Exaggerations and inaccuracies, exposed at the time, continually resurface in this narrative. A turnout of '300,000-400,000' is wrongly claimed for the CND's largest London rally in 'December 1983, just before cruise deployment'. In reality, deployment began in November; the rally was in October; and the total present was shown by an aerial photograph survey to have been just under 100,000. The so-called 'Generals for Peace', whose intimate links with the Soviet-controlled World Peace Council were proven publicly in 1984, are blandly described as 'a select international group ... of former generals and admirals'. *The Times* is accused of criticising another pro-Soviet tool — the 'International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War' — 'without seriously documenting this claim'. The co-founder

of the IPPNW — Brezhnev's doctor, no less — is defended as having 'a reputation for personal independence'. This is careless as well as risible: it was *The Times* which published a detailed critique, revealing the man's role in the persecution of Andrei Sakharov, when the leaders of this unsavoury outfit were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize to a chorus of Western disapproval in 1985.

A similar gloss is applied to Labour's crushing defeat in the 1983 'Nuclear Election' — as it was dubbed by the CND. This is excused by reference to the activities of 'the Ministry of Defence, MI5, well-funded right-wing groups and a predominantly Conservative press'. These engaged in (unspecified) 'disinformation and character assassination', according to 'one of those involved'. And who, pray, was he? None other than a proven mole in Conservative Central Office, who spent his time there spying for Left-wing journalists and who played no part in the successful exposure of Leftists in the CND during the election campaign.

Despite this apologia, the author feels bound to concede that successive election defeats finally forced Labour to drop CND's policies, as 'Unilateralism had been damagingly equated with the left-wing of the Labour Party and was widely regarded as incompatible with winning an election.' Yet, there is no proper account of the arguments which prevailed over the CND so decisively in the battle for public support. On the contrary, episodes damaging to the anti-nuclear cause are excluded, in the hope, one suspects, that they will fade with time. Thus, no mention is made of Michael Randle and Patrick

Pottle — leading unilateralists both — who smuggled MI6 traitor George Blake back to the KGB after his escape from Wormwood Scrubs. The reader is informed, instead, that 'opposing the Pentagon without becoming apologists for the Kremlin required a difficult balancing act'. In contrast to such omissions, each irrelevant Appeal, each ineffective Declaration, each inconsequential Initiative for 'peace', is painstakingly recorded.

Does this matter? Was not public opposition to the CND as great at the end of the 1980s as at the beginning? Were not NATO's missile deployments vindicated by Soviet acceptance of the 'zero option' offer, which the unilateralists had denounced when Reagan proposed it? Is not our Trident deterrent moving safely towards completion?

We may give a positive answer to all these questions, but that is no reason for letting the academic Left snatch a bogus victory from the jaws of the CND's defeat. Today's history students may be tomorrow's decision-makers. They deserve better than this defective, selective and introspective account.

*We would like to
thank Andrew
McHallam for his
sterling work both as
typesetter and Deputy
Editor of the
Salisbury Review for
the last few years,
and for making the
Anniversary Issue
such a success.*

Mecca-nisation?

Stewart Deuchar

State-Funded Muslim Schools — The Case Against, Ray Honeyford, Majority Rights, BM Box 3515, London WC1N 3XX. 1992. £2.

If things continue on their present course it is likely that we will soon have state-funded Muslim schools on the same basis as our existing state-funded Anglican, Catholic and Jewish schools. On grounds of law, 'human rights' (as laid down in Protocol 1 of the European Convention), and fair play, the Muslims appear to have an unanswerable case. But Ray Honeyford, in this extremely brave and honest booklet, points out that the basic assumptions behind the compromise whereby the state runs schools in partnership with Christian and Jewish religious bodies, do not apply when it comes to Muslim schools. Islam is by its very nature incapable of any kind of long-term compromise.

Honeyford has done his homework and quotes many sources, mostly drawn from Muslim writers, spokesmen and scholars. He writes clearly and soberly and his arguments are strong. He acknowledges the strength of the Muslim case, and admits that there is much to admire in Muslim attitudes and moral principles. I would go further and say that our degenerate 'post-modern' civilisation stands no chance of survival in competition with the discipline and moral rectitude of Islam.

This book deserves to be read widely and taken extremely seriously while there is still time — though not very much. The Muslims, according to Honeyford, will never be satisfied with the sort of arrangement under which Christian and Jewish schools operate. Islam does not distinguish between the religious and the secular. It claims to be the sole and final arbiter in all matters of any kind — moral, ethical, legal, educational and everything else. For instance, this situation could create

insuperable difficulties with the National Curriculum.

Honeyford's suggestion is that we should politely explain to the Muslims that we regard Islam as basically incompatible with what we are trying to teach our children, but that, in order to preserve an element of fair play, we will enact that no more state-funded religious schools of any kind will be authorised. Meanwhile, one gathers, all the present Anglican, Catholic and Jewish schools would continue to enjoy their privileged status.

To carry through such a measure the government would need to be very determined and very sure of solid popular backing. This seems an unlikely scenario. It would help if some obviously unsuitable religious sect applied for state funding. This would force the government to lay down criteria which state-funded schools would have to meet — which it will have to do sooner or later anyway. But the Muslims would be left with an acute sense of grievance, and, more to the point, a cast-iron case. If they took it to the European Court and won, the government would effectively lose control of the whole education system.

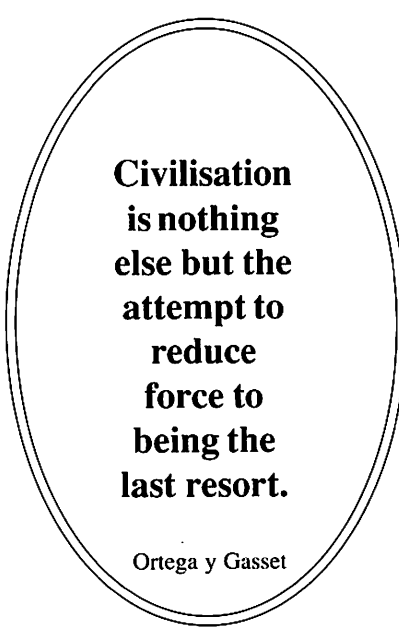
Already we hear of Jewish schools where half the timetable is devoted to Hebrew and Judaism. This makes no kind of sense from the point of view of the taxpayer. In Muslim schools it would be impossible to know what was going on. There would be endless conflict between the interests of the state and those of Islam.

If we are to continue to have state-funded compulsory education, then it has to make sense in itself; it must serve the purposes of the state, no more and no less. It makes no sense for the

state to be in the business of encouraging and indeed actively propagating religions which, whatever anybody may say, are mutually antagonistic. Northern Ireland should have taught us that. We have to think not only of the divisive effects of the avowedly religious schools, but also of the chaos created in the 'neutral' schools which are supposed to cater for the whole range of faiths simultaneously.

This madness goes back many years, and the longer it continues the more disastrous the results. Before compounding it further we should pause and think hard and long. The schools have a hard enough time trying to inculcate a modicum of learning and good manners, without being thrust into the front line of the religious battle.

The only possible answer is to have a secular curriculum and keep religion out of state schools altogether, as in the USA.



**Civilisation
is nothing
else but the
attempt to
reduce
force to
being the
last resort.**

Ortega y Gasset

Brave New World?

Andrew Hubback

In Search of a New World Order: The Future of US-European Relations, Henry Brandon (ed), The Brookings Institution Washington DC, 1992, £9.95.

The term 'New World' was coined by Secretary of State Baker and President Bush during the Gulf Conflict to describe a new cooperative arrangement between the US and the Soviet Union, working together through the UN to isolate and neutralise states like Iraq, who threatened to upset the placid post-Cold War World. The phrase quickly became a symbol for Yankee imperialism or utopian ideas of world government; but since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the concept is looking threadbare.

However, there is a new world order facing policy makers in the 1990's. US-European relations will be pivotal and together with US-Japanese relations may supplant US-Soviet rivalry as an arena of friction and mutual misunderstanding. The contributors to this volume represent the centre ground of Atlantic political thought: they include Lord Owen, the former Socialist Prime Minister Michel Rocard and Carter cabinet minister James Schlesinger. However, judging from these pages their combined experience of the Cold War is not helping them to come to grips with today's realities.

"There is not a diplomatic tradition which has not been swept away. You have a new world, new influences at work, new and unknown objects and dangers with which to cope." Disraeli's observation in 1871 epitomizes the situation today. Germany in the 21st century will be to the US what Germany was to the rest of Europe in the early 20th century, either a powerful ally or a difficult adversary.

The influence of German monetary policy is now the dominant fact of trans-Atlantic economic life. The

country is now free to translate its economic might into political and even military muscle. Germany has been among the most vocal advocates of a single EC foreign and defence policy; yet when faced with what it perceived to be a vital national interest in Croatia it was quick to take an independent line. The agonizing two years ago over whether German forces should go to the Gulf has been forgotten and it cannot be long before German troops begin playing a leading role in international peacekeeping missions. Germany's emergence as a super power, therefore, has serious implications for the US as well as for Europe.

The founding fathers of the EC wanted the institution to complement rather than compete with the Atlantic alliance. Jean Monnet stressed that a united Europe would collaborate with, rather than challenge us. The US had always been rather dismayed by the failure of moves to European integration in the past. Now, however, the US seems concerned that the EC is becoming a protectionist Fortress Europe as the 1992 Single Market nears completion. The contributors are unanimous that these fears are groundless, though they admit the failings in some aspects of trade policy, like agriculture. David Owen envisages a more pluralist approach to European cooperation, with the emphasis on common, rather than single, institutions and the degree and nature of participation a decision for national governments. Common European and defence policy should be based on voluntary cooperation between sovereign states to complement

existing institutions like NATO. Owen even predicts that "the much maligned hard currency unit could even reemerge as a more acceptable currency for Europeans travelling and doing business across national boundaries."

Russia in the 'new world order' is neglected, although US-Russian relations will surely be the predominant element of US-European relations in the future. Comment is confined to Kurt Biedenkopf's glum prediction that Ukrainian agricultural exports will destroy West European farms and Henry Brandon's speculation that Russia might become a US ally against the EC and Japan. Russia today has returned to its pre-1914 condition, with democratic and free market institutions grafted onto a decaying but still powerful military-bureaucratic complex. It may become to the United States in the 21st century what it was to European powers in the 19th: a competitor and only occasionally an ally. Russia's recognition of the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia pits it directly against EC and US policy; the recent declaration by the chairman of the Russian parliament's international relations committee that Serbian concentration camps in Bosnia are a 'myth' was described by the *Financial Times* as "symptomatic of moves to break away from an exclusively pro-Western orientation in Russian foreign policy."

In Search of a New World Order paints a rosy and complacent picture of the future of US-European relations. Recent events hardly bear this out. The contributors appear to be optimists rather than realists.

In Short

Europe, the Crunch. William Cash, Duckworth, £7.99.

William Cash's latest book will be particularly useful for those people who have only just become aware, especially since the ERM debacle, of the European calamity and the disastrous course on which our rulers seem so obstinately to be set. The text is divided into clear sections cogently exposing the lies we have been fed. It is not anti-European to be anti-Maastricht, for the treaty was mainly arranged by France whose President had failed to stop German reunification. The European court will not ensure that the Community does not become too centralised or intrusive. A common foreign policy is wrong in theory and practice. The ERM and the EMU are not good for jobs; they destroy them. Above all the implementation of Maastricht would destroy democracy.

We have been repeatedly told that Maastricht will bring power closer to the citizen. The truth is that the politicians who have arranged the European calamity have become tired of being accountable and prefer to decide policy among themselves behind closed doors. It has taken us hundreds of years to evolve our unique political system; several states in Europe have only recently become self-governing, let alone democratic. Why should we throw our inheritance away?

(MC)

Families in Dreamland: Challenging the new consensus for State Child Care. Patricia Morgan, The Social Affairs Unit, 1992.

A Europe wide bureaucracy has given new opportunities for unrepresentative minorities to impose their distorted visions on the rest of us. As

usual, past experience and present facts are ignored. Patricia Morgan explains how the European Commission, aided by our own Equal Opportunities commission is planning a radical transformation of European families. However, four out of five women actually prefer the traditional family with the father as the main breadwinner, in spite of the gender activists' efforts. The failure of the Swedish experiment is much more significant than that of Soviet Russia, for it was the first concerted effort to release women from child rearing and received sufficient funding to achieve this good had women asked for it. But most Swedish women would still prefer to stay at home while their children are young and, in spite of fierce indoctrination from the media, most people still express traditional sexual preferences. Three cheers for the subversive family! May it always resist and defeat the impositions of totalitarian authorities.

(MC)

When the Summer ended. Joanna Bogle and Cecylia Wolkowinska, Grace Wing Fowler Wright, 1992.

Those of us who have friends in the Polish community know that everyone in the 1939 generation has a story to tell, often tragic but always enthralling. Cecylia Wolkowinska has been persuaded to record her experiences as a young girl in wartime Poland, principally her work as a nurse in the Home Army during the Warsaw Rising. This book would be particularly useful for school libraries, providing information and insights about a relatively unknown episode. Only now has it become possible to build the new Poland for which Wolkowinska's generation so valiantly fought and died in

1944. (MC)

Wounded Eagle: Albania's fight for Survival, Marko Milovojevic IEDSS, 13-14, Golden Square, London W1R 3AG, 1992, £5.

Apart from the notoriety of its bizarre association with China, Albania has always been a 'far away country about which we know nothing'. Today, as it emerges from its Stalinist servitude, Milovojevic calls it Europe's Bangladesh. Mass hunger and the breakdown of law and order following the collapse of the old regime have made it heavily dependent on Western aid. However, social anarchy could lead to foreign donors pulling out of the country. Another dictatorship would surely follow. In addition, the destructive blood feud has returned threatening general civil war. The most powerful political force is pan-Albanian nationalism; its supporters want to tear down the 'Balkan Wall, dividing Albania proper from the Kosovo province. Albania, in spite of its parlous condition, might support an uprising of Kusova Albanians, while Greece and Bulgaria might encourage it, leading to another Balkan nightmare. The future is not entirely hopeless; for instance Albania is the world's third largest producer of chromium ore. Intelligent western help and the co-operation of Albanians living abroad — there are 80,000 living in Switzerland — could bring economic stability and civil order to the country.

(RJ)

Erratum

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