

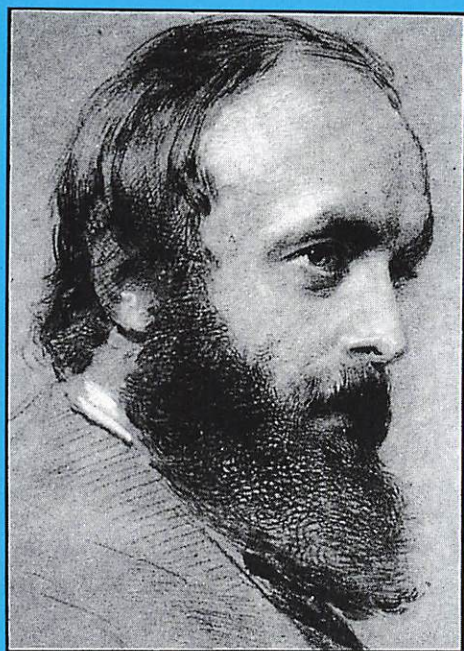
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The Third Marquess of Salisbury
1830 - 1903

Tapestries in Bratislava

Jessica Douglas-Home

Bosnia and Islam

Mervyn Hiskett

Report from Moscow

Juliet Pospelovsky

Comrade Oh Comrade

Ronald Lewis

The Party's Over

David Heald

Greens and Tories

Derrick Turner

The Salisbury Review

Editor Roger Scruton
Literary Editor Ian Crowther
Managing Editor Merrie Cave

Editorial address and Subscriptions
33, Canonbury Park South,
London, N1 2JW
Tel: 071 226 7791
Fax: 071 354 0383

The world is undergoing changes so vast and so rapid that only journalists pretend to understand them. No doubt a pattern will one day appear in the tumult, showing the collapse of communism, the rise of Islamic militancy, the breakdown of decency, and the flight from culture as currents in a single vortex. Such a pattern is revealed to us, as we look back to the Reformation or the Enlightenment, and perceive those events, so disorderly and catastrophic to those who lived in them, as smooth transitions to another age. For the moment, however, we can only cling to our fragments of order, and hope to save them from the tide.

The journalists have been harsh towards the Serbs, and rightly. But, as Mervyn Hiskett and Stanisa Vlahovic point out, there is both a long past and a deep present to the Balkan conflict, and the fault does not lie only with the cruel victors. If the Serbs behave outrageously in their pursuit of territory, it does not follow that their claims are unjust, or that their victims would not, given the power, behave as badly. Since the question of right is imponderable, we should ask instead how the conflict can be settled. And the answer is surely as it has always been: through the balance of power - the one proven source of peaceful coexistence between those who cannot or will not live as friends.

It is unlikely that such a balance can be achieved by sanctions or embargoes. For these merely deny arms and relief to the Muslims, who have no friends in the region, while allowing the Serbs to draw on their ancient ties with Greece and Russia so as to equip themselves for war. (It is not to be supposed that, in such a conflict, Greece and Russia would suddenly display an unaccustomed respect for international law.) And what does it serve to take food and medicines to the besieged civilians, when the result is to prolong their suffering and give comfort to those who caused it?

Our muddle-headed thinking about the Balkans stems from a reluctance to see that, when war breaks out, the human psyche switches to another mode. Actions become possible, even necessary, from which the peace-time conscience recoils. Those whose bellicose emotions are not yet aroused by a conflict are powerless to settle it, unless they

are able and willing to wield sovereign power. The United Nations does not wield such power. Those whom it 'authorises' to police the Balkan battlefield will therefore do nothing to bring peace to it, until they have themselves been drawn into the conflict, and switched to the mode of war.

The power of communism derived precisely from its ability to induce the psychic state of war in the absence of war, to cancel the forms and procedures of peaceful bargaining and to conscript its followers to a 'struggle' that embraces all mankind. Some parts of this process are described by Ronald Lewis, once a party member, whose feelings rebelled against communist intransigence and reassumed the natural course of compromise. Perhaps the greatest cause of civil strife in the former communist world consists in the fact that the ways of peace have been for generations closed to those who lived there. Law, contract and compromise were driven from public life, and could play no part in resolving the conflicts that smouldered beneath the crust. The universal 'struggle' to which the communist world was conscripted survives in the local tensions which it was unwilling and unable to resolve.

So must we despair of seeing a free and law-abiding order emerge from the ruins of communism? Juliet Pospelovsky paints a grim, but not entirely hopeless picture, of the instability, the mafia-dominated economy, and the incipient disorder of Yeltsin's Russia. Of course, Russia is the worst case: the only case, indeed, where scarcely a person alive has known or expected any form of government besides communism. Yet even here the visitor encounters decency and optimism among the young. The same experience greets the visitor to Slovakia, whose little corner of England is described by Jessica Douglas-Home. Even in these places controlled by the communist mafia, a younger generation is emerging, dedicated to European ideas of order. No symbol of that order is more vivid in the minds of those who work to establish it than the British Tory Party. But the vast changes have affected this institution too. Perhaps David Heald is more disaffected than it is strictly permissible for a Tory to be; but there is no doubt that his picture of a Conservative Party from which conservative values are disappearing, is not wholly off the mark.

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Conservative Journals:

Humanitas

Of the many exiles from Central Europe who settled during this century in North America, few have had greater intellectual influence than the political scientist Leo Strauss. Without Strauss, indeed, the connections between politics and culture would have been forgotten by departments of Political Science in American universities, and the kind of sentimental egalitarianism which is the principal weakness of the American intellectual would have entirely triumphed over serious scholarship. A master strategist, Strauss perceived that the way to seize political science away from the leftists is to present the subject as a genuine humanity, integrally connected to philosophy, literature and the life of the mind, and so to offer political science as a true education to those students who are hungry for meaning and impatient with statistics. It is largely through his students that Strauss's influence spread, and his impact on the universities in his adopted country was greater even than that of Leavis on the English grammar school culture.

The journal *Humanitas*, 'dedicated to the quaint assumption that scholarship is the pursuit of truth', has been published for six years as a newsletter, maintaining contact between the Straussians and their sympathisers. Now it is issued as a fully fledged scholarly journal, under the joint editorship of Claes G. Ryn, Professor of Politics at the Catholic University of America, and Joseph Baldacchino, President of the National Humanities

Institute, publishers of the journal. Its avowed purpose is to rise above the sterile clash of ideologies, and once again to re-affirm the values implicit in humane education, as this has been traditionally conceived. According to the editorial of its first issue, American life has entered a crisis, displaying 'a fondness for abstractions' in the intellectual sphere, and for scholastic intricacies that have no bearing on reality; an evasion of personal responsibility in the sphere of everyday life; a corrosion of religion into sentimental 'compassion', and of politics into the bureaucratic con-trick.

Contributors to *Humanitas* include the poet and professor of history, Peter Viereck, and Michael Weinstein, a well-known political scientist, along with the two editors themselves. The intention to support a vision of humane education as objective, impartial, and yet an indispensable part of the process whereby culture is maintained and passed on. Whether the contributors will succeed in making themselves heard above the deafening noise of American feminism, homosexual activism and assorted left-wing lunacy remains to be seen. But at least they will give courage to their many persecuted friends.

Humanitas is available from the National Humanities Institute, 214 Massachusetts Ave., N.E., Suite 470, Washington, D.C. 20002.

Islam and Bosnia

Mervyn Hiskett looks at the Bosnian President's declaration

Alija Izetbegovic, a Croat Muslim intellectual who is now President of Bosnia-Herzegovina, wrote his *Islamic Declaration* in 1970. This document, which appeared in Turkish, English and Serbo-Croat, seems to be little known in the West, though it has received passing mention in the British press from time to time. It is a long and ardent work that calls on Muslims to renew the practice of their faith in strict accordance with the Koran. The *Declaration* was not made fully public then but, in the words of the editor of the English edition, which appeared in Sarajevo in 1990:

It was illegally duplicated and circulated among Muslims to serve as an ideological road sign, a manual and a practical instruction for the Islamic propagandist – political and organisational work of adversaries of the secular, non-Islamic order.

The background to this ungrammatical statement is that Alija Izetbegovic and a number of other Bosnian Muslim intellectuals began at this time to organise a Muslim opposition to the secular Marxist state known as the “Young Muslims”. The result was that he and twelve other Muslim radicals were arrested by the Yugoslav authorities, charged with “associating for the purpose of hostile activity and jeopardising the constitutional order” and “acting from the standpoint of Islamic fundamentalism and Moslem nationalism”. The accused were convicted and sentenced to terms of imprisonment but were later released.

The trial has been criticised as “Stalinist and framed”. Yet there is much in the *Declaration*, to say nothing

of the glosses of the English editor, that leaves one with the distinct impression that it was seditious in intent. Whether this justified the author’s trial and imprisonment is another matter. Izetbegovic’s *Declaration* was written a few years before the emergence of the Ayatollah Khomeini. Nonetheless, his English editor speaks approvingly of

His fierce rejection of democratic pluralism, as well as his insistence on adherence to the strict letter of the Koran ... are reflected in Izetbegovic's Declaration

the “Khomeini-like and succinct message contained in the writing of Alija Izetbegovic”. My own impression is that the work owes much to the writings of Sayyid al-Qutb, leader of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, who was hanged by Nasser in 1966, for allegedly plotting the overthrow of the Egyptian government of the day. Sayyid al-Qutb was a prolific writer on Islamic revolution. His fierce rejection of democratic pluralism, of nationalism and of all secularist institutions, as well as his insistence on adherence to the strict letter of the Koran and his argument that Islam in its current condition has failed and is in need of complete renewal, are all reflected in *Izetbegovic's Declaration*.

Izetbegovic’s work is somewhat rambling, though this may be because of a

rather clumsy English translation. It speaks emotionally of Muslim groups “in collision with the mighty forces of the *Jahiliya* [ignorance, that is the West]”. It harks back nostalgically to the heyday of the Ottoman empire and deplores its decline: Turkey as an Islamic country ruled the world. Turkey as a plagiary of Europe is now a third-rate country. It denies the legitimacy of any human authority and avers that:

It is unthinkable that a Muslim should sacrifice himself for a king or ruler... or for the glory of any nation or party, because the strongest Islamic instinct recognises in this a kind of paganism and idolatry. A Muslim can die only in the name of Allah and for the glory of Islam... the gentlest and least aggressive aspect of Islam.

The *Declaration* constantly condemns Sufism, that is Islamic mysticism, a stance that links Izetbegovic, through the Muslim Brotherhood, to the Salafist movement of the nineteenth century. It also condemns modernist reformers in Islamic countries. These are “daddy’s sons”, schooled in Europe, from which they returned with a deep sense of their own inferiority towards the wealthy West and a personal superiority over the poverty-stricken and backward surroundings from which they spring. Such criticism of the western-educated elite is of course one of the main tenets of the later “Islamic fundamentalism” inspired by Khomeini.

Izetbegovic deplores the abolition of the Arabic alphabet by Turkish modernists and claims, not unreasonably, that “the new Turkish generation found itself with no spiritual prop, in a kind of spiritual vacuum”. He lauds the war against the British at Suez, the war for

the liberation of Algeria, that for the retention of Islam in Indonesia and the struggle to keep Pakistan Islamic. He insists that for Muslims there is only one possible way out: the formation and grouping of a new intelligentsia which thinks and feels Islam. This intelligentsia would then fly the flag of the Islamic order and, together with the Muslim masses, take action to bring about the Islamic idea.

Thus Izetbegovic appears to envisage the mobilisation of the Muslim masses by a revolutionary Islamic intelligentsia, a programme not unlike that advocated by the Tunisian Shaykh al-Ghannushi – himself a disciple of Sayyid al-Qutb – and his Islamic Tendency.

Consistently with the Islamic radical position, Izetbegovic emphasises that:

History has no instance of any truly Islamic movement which was not at the same time a political movement...
... One cannot believe in Islam and act, do business, enjoy one's leisure or rule in a non-Islamic way.

He thus puts a finger on the crux of the Islamic dilemma in the modern world – that Islam cannot be practised as an individual belief system, as Christianity may be, in a surrounding context of secularism and pluralism. Put more starkly, the Muslim must try constantly to set up an Islamic theocracy in order to remain a Muslim. Moreover, "Islam is not nationality. But it is the supranationality of this community [the world-wide Islamic community or *umma*]".

He is puritanical to a degree and would ban all forms of alcoholization of the people, public and secret prostitution, pornography of the spoken word, in pictures, on film and television, casinos, night clubs, dance halls and all other forms of entertainment incompatible with the moral tenets of Islam.

Sometimes he reflects more modern Islamic attitudes, as when urging that polygamy be curbed and divorce restricted. But any conviction this might carry is quickly dissipated by the sequel, an encomium on the status of women under a traditional Koranic dispensation, which departs from the

reality. He appears from time to time to be conciliatory, as when he renounces the imposition of Islam by "power" and argues that the Islamic state can only be set up through education and moral suasion. But he then appears to contradict this by advocating that the Islamic movement should and can start to take power as soon as it is morally and numerically strong enough not only to overturn the existing non-Islamic government but also to build a new Islamic one.

Clearly, Izetbegovic and his colleagues believed that the death of Tito and the imminent collapse of the Yugoslav union did create such an opportunity to take power. Despite some wooliness concerning ways and means,

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there stands a recent
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among Bosnia's
Muslims***

the kernel of Izetbegovic's thinking is clear.

First and foremost of these conclusions is certainly the incompatibility of Islam with non-Islamic systems. There can be neither peace nor coexistence between the Islamic religion and non-Islamic social and political institutions (my emphasis). And by claiming the right to order its own world itself, Islam obviously excludes the right or possibility of action on the part of any foreign ideology on that terrain. There is therefore no lay principle.

By this reference to "lay principle" Izetbegovic excludes all secular institutions from the territory of the Islamic state. There can be no pluralism. Regarding non-Muslims within such an Islamic state, Izetbegovic states that: "The non-Muslim minorities within an Islamic state, on condition that they are loyal, enjoy religious freedom and all protection." This, which excludes any concession to the secular, legal

and pluralist institutions of such non-Muslims, simply repeats the pattern of the old Ottoman *millet* system, where non-Muslims had the status of *dhimmis*, "protected people". And while Izetbegovic demands that non-Muslims living under an Islamic state shall be "loyal", he clearly does not extend that obligation to Muslims living under a secular state!

Behind Izetbegovic there stands a recent history of escalating militancy of the Islamic fundamentalist kind among Bosnia's Muslims, which can be profusely documented from Muslim sources. Suffice it here to quote from Kalim Siddiqui's well-known *Issues in the Islamic movement*:

But the Islamic Revolution in Iran and the leadership of Imam Khomeini have lit the fire of Islam by inspiring hundreds of Bosnian Muslims to return from abroad and preach Islam and, around 1985, pan-Islamic forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina were speculating that Yugoslavia might break up and were hoping to build their own Islamic state.

It has to be said in fairness that given the transcendental certainties upon which Islam is based, Izetbegovic's stance is inevitable. There is no point in blaming the man. It is more profitable to understand that if Muslims did not adopt such a posture, there would shortly be no true Islam – or so they undoubtedly believe. No Muslim worth his salt can contemplate such a possibility. That is the dilemma that faces the non-Islamic West. Yet some have apparently persuaded themselves, particularly in the United States, that Izetbegovic has recently repudiated his own *Declaration*. There is certainly no evidence for this in the version published in Sarajevo in 1990. On the contrary, the editor of this edition writes specifically that "The tenets highlighted in the *Islamic Declaration* have never been renounced by its author". This does not support such a belief. But even if a repudiation had been made, it remains understandable that the Orthodox Serbs and the Catholic Croats should regard it as one of expediency; and that they should be wary of trusting it.

When considering the Serbian reaction to all this, certain historical facts should be borne in mind which ought to modify the present, wholly condemnatory Western consensus towards the Serbs. This Orthodox Christian people lived under the enforced Islamic hegemony of the Ottoman Turkish empire from the fourteenth century to the end of the nineteenth century. It was not a happy experience. For the

... if the West was bamboozled into failing to recognise the fundamentalist threat in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Serbs, and for that matter the Croats, were not. They were well aware of the radical Islamic activity that had been going on there since before the break up of the Yugoslav union

Ottomans during their first expansion period practised a policy of forced population transfers known in Turkish as *surgun*. This took the form of clearing the land of its Christian populations and replacing them with Turkish Muslim peasants and nomads. The policy was implemented by ruthless massacres and the razing of villages. Cities and towns that resisted the Ottoman advance suffered the same massacres of Christian populations and their replacement by Muslim Turks, or sometimes Slav renegades to Islam. The Muslim populations of Sarajevo, Skopje and other Balkan cities originated in this way. *Surgun* continued on and off throughout the middle ages and only diminished with the slow decline of the Ottoman empire from the seventeenth century onwards. It is almost certainly *surgun*, not *Judenfrei* or any other term from the

Nazi extermination lexicon, that gives rise to "ethnic cleansing".

During the nineteenth century the Serbs and the Bulgars, inspired by the French Revolution and encouraged by the pan-Slavic policies of Russia, began to revolt against the Ottoman hegemony. The Turks took a cruel revenge. The well-known "Bulgarian Atrocities" of 1876 which caused Gladstone to thunder his denunciation of the "unspeakable Turk", were just one example of what happened constantly in the Balkan vilayets of the Turkish empire.

At the end of the first world war, Woodrow Wilson wisely recommended that "Serbia [be] accorded free and secure access to the sea", as the eleventh of his well-known "Fourteen Points". In the event this advice was overtaken by the creation of Yugoslavia. It was Yugoslavia, of which Serbia formed part, that gained this access.

During the second world war, the Germans formed the SS "Hanjar", a unit of Bosnian Muslims that used to terrorise the Serbs. The word, which was germanised as "Handscher", comes from Arabic *hanjara*, "to slit the throat". Whether it was given to these Muslims by their intended victims, or whether they adopted it boastfully for themselves, I do not know. However, since it is Arabic, I assume it arose from a Muslim source. The SS Hanjar are reputed to have massacred 700,000 Serbs. Evelyn Waugh, in his reports from Yugoslavia c. 1945, comments on the massacres at that time, of Serbs, gypsies and Jews: Partisan propaganda represents these atrocities as solely the work of Catholic Croats; these were not guiltless, but there is good reason to believe that Mahometans from Montenegro and Bosnia were principally responsible (*Salisbury Review*, September, 1992).

When the Western powers so foolishly recognised an independent Bosnian state, immediately before the present civil war broke out, this had the effect of forcing the Serbs back into the landlocked position in which they had been before the creation of the Yugoslav union. Their access to the sea was threatened by the imminent creation of the Islamic theocratic state of Bosnia.

In addition to this strategic threat from Islamic Bosnia, the creation of such a theocratic state also threatened a large number of ethnic Serbs who lived outside the old Serbian kingdom, in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Such Serbs formed 31.3 percent of the Bosnian population (the Catholic Croats formed 17.3 percent and were equally alarmed at the prospect of an Islamic Bosnia). Under the former Yugoslav state these Christian Serbs had lived cheek-by-jowl with the Muslims, sharing the same villages and governed by a common secular law. If Izetbegovic had had his way, these Serbs, as well as the Catholic Croats, would have been returned, little more than a century after having won their freedom from the Ottoman empire, to the status of

Indeed, the Western powers, did not understand the implications of what they were doing when they recognised Izetbegovic's Bosnia-Herzegovina

non-Muslim citizens of a theocratic Islamic state, that is they would once again have become *dhimmi*s. In view of the history I have outlined, this seems too much to ask of these people. Indeed, the Western powers did not understand the implications of what they were doing when they recognised Izetbegovic's Bosnia-Herzegovina. The real intentions of the Muslims were deliberately played down in an attempt to gain this recognition. Izetbegovic's editor comments, with remarkable frankness, that from the moment when the Democratic (sic!) Action Party (SDA) headed by A. Izetbegovic and led by his like-minded colleagues, won a convincing majority of Muslim votes at the first multi-party election in Bosnia-Herzegovina (in November, 1990), the real nature and meaning of the Islamic Declaration became blurred and extremely relativistic. Special care was taken

along these lines to divert the attention of the western audience which, as is well known, does not have much sympathy for Islamic radicalism. These endeavours appear to have been successful.

But if the West was bamboozled into failing to recognise the fundamentalist threat in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Serbs, and for that matter the Croats, were not. They were well aware of the

radical Islamic activity, described above, that had been going on there since before the break-up of the Yugoslav union. They were simply not prepared to forego the secular status which, communist or not, had been the gift of the Yugoslav state, and return to that of second-class citizens of an Islamic Republic. One can surely not blame them. The great English historian, Sir Robert Ensor, described

the Ottoman Turkish theocratic rule over the Balkans at the end of the nineteenth century as "hideous misgovernment." There is no reason to believe that that of present-day Islamic theocrats would be any better.

Mervyn Hiskett is a former Lecturer at the School of African and Oriental Studies.

The Hero and Leander Mortlake Tapestries in Bratislava

*Jessica Douglas-Home discovers a fine example
of English Art in Central Europe*

Most of the city of Bratislava is hideous. But penetrate the rough shell right into its heart, and an exquisite pearl can be found. The treasure that lies in the Slovak capital is the story of Hero and Leander composed in a sequence of six tapestries, the first as beautiful as the last. These large but delicate drapes, housed at present in the Birbach Palace, are not Slovak, Bohemian, Moravian or Hungarian. They were made on British soil by Flemish workers in the 17th Century, under the patronage of Charles I. Indeed they represent one of the highest points in the history of British art.

The idea of a national establishment for weaving tapestries came to King James I from his rival Henry IV of France. James studied the original contract between the French King and his master weavers and used it as a model to set up a similar project in England. But he departed from the French formula in two important particulars: the Mortlake factory was allowed to operate both the horizontal and the upright loom; it was also permitted to make every type of tapestry – thus setting the conditions for a less

restricted creative environment.

Then, in 1619 King James sent to Flanders for the best weavers. He also granted a generous subsidy of £2000 per annum to the new enterprise and chose a dedicated director called Sir Francis Crane. The intention was both to reproduce the old classical suites and to allow for new designs. Copies were first made from 16th Century artists' work; a little later cartoons were used from Van Dyke and from Rubens. The beauty of the designs equalled their technical perfection and the industry grew rapidly, becoming one of the most important weaving industries in the world, rivalled only by Gobelins.

Three years after its opening Francis Cleyn, a Mecklenberger painter born in Rostock and the man who was to design the Hero and Leander tapestries, arrived from employment in the Danish court, to join the Mortlake Factory as designer and chief weaver. King James arranged British citizenship for him, settled on him an annuity of £100 a year and built him a house in Mortlake. Although Cleyn became well known as an engraver and a painter in England and designed further tapestries known

as *The Horses*, it was the Hero and Leander cartoons, repeated at least ten times by the Mortlake Factory, which were to be his masterpiece; but it is only in Bratislava that you find the complete set of six pieces. The story is derived from Ovid's poem. A Greek youth from Abyess, Leander, falls in love with the beautiful priestess Hero, who, dedicated to the Goddess Venus, guards the eternal fire in the temple of Sestos on the Thracian coast of Hellespont. Leander and Hero have to conceal their love since Hero, consecrated to temple service, must live as a virgin until her death. Leander must swim across the Hellespont, hidden in the darkness, so as to enjoy his love. During a big storm, heedless of his sister Hermione's warnings, he rushes into the sea and is drowned. Hero, waiting for him all night, finds the dead body on the rocks at sunrise. In despair she jumps from her tower into the sea, so as to be with Leander forever.

To describe Cleyn's technique, draughtsmanship and colour selection in any one of the six tapestries, is to characterize them all. Take the first of the set whose configuration steels us

for the love-story ahead: the two figures dominating the foreground meet hand in hand on the steps of an ancient portico. Hero's yielding body submits to Leander's penetrating eye, to the onset of his love, and to his billowing blood red cloak which seems to signal imminent danger. But Hero, with her eyes downcast, also points with the index finger of her left hand to the cupid above, who divides them with his bow and arrow. Her feminine intuition appreciates the moment, and warns. The colours, including even the bright red cloak, are delicate and shimmering. Silver and gold silk is woven into the woollen yarn, into key passages – on the top of waves in a glistening sea, or where the light catches the braid of a belt – and are used with devastating effect to pierce our senses.

A warning, however, for those who encounter the tapestries for the first time. Prepared and unprepared alike can fall victim to a spell; its impact is immediate. It rests upon no special determination. It is unlikely to be the Greek legend itself – the story is quite simple and you can read almost anything you like into its bare bones. Nor can it be the sequence in which you first see the tapestries. The third hanging has equal significance to the fifth. Any one of the six demands a kind of allegiance to its ethereal spirit.

Maybe the spell is connected to the mystery surrounding the tapestry's early years. Although experts maintain that they were made in the Mortlake factory near London between 1630-1660, it is by no means clear how and when they reached Bratislava. No-one knew of their existence in the city until 1903 when they were found rolled up behind wallpaper in a room in the Primate's Palace – a palace built in 1779 for Archbishop Jozef Batthyany. No reference to their existence in Europe appears in any literature of the period. Of course legend and myth abound. The most enduring of them appears in the *Pressburger Zeitung* in 1904, which produces flimsy evidence for the belief that they once belonged to Cardinal Mazarin, passed into the hands of a merchant from Cologne called Jabach who sold them to Arch-

bishop Batthyany. However, the deputy Mayor of Bratislava, a scholar of the tapestries, who has been to England to research their origins, convinced me that this was a false assumption.

Whatever the case, after their discovery their beauty and their value were immediately recognised and a fierce dispute ensued over ownership. Three months previously, in August 1903, the Bratislava Municipal Council had bought the Primate's Palace for 120,000 crowns from the Archbishop's Residence in Estergom. But on hearing of the find, the Archbishop immediately put forward the case that the original contract of sale of the Palace had not included furnishings – so the tapestries were the property of the church. However, a Bratislava solicitor found an article which maintained that all items behind wallpapers are fixtures included in the sale, and not furnishings. Thus the Municipal Council won the proceedings and the tapestries remained in the city.

The tapestries were found in remarkably good condition but have been sent out for restoration several times this century. In 1924 they went to the Belmont workshops in Gogolo in Hungary. After 1945 they were twice restored in the tapestry and carpet workshops in Valasske Mezirici in Moravia and returned there again in 1986, where two – Hero meeting Leander and Hermione warning Leander of the oncoming storm – still remain today.

In 1988 Caroline Clarke, our most experienced textile specialist from the Conservation Centre at Hampton Court, was invited by the Czechoslovak National Gallery to visit the Valasske Mezirici workshops to give advice on the restoration in progress. She found their method of work different from British techniques but in no way inferior: the Moravian workshop purchased their high quality silk and wool from Poland. In addition, the British method of restoring tapestry is to stitch and weave through a linen backing, while the Moravian workshop sews direct into the fabric – a more intensive operation but one which also produces a high quality result. Both the Hampton Court and the Moravian

workshop now use chemical dyes since they fade less than a natural dye and the exact matching colour can be reproduced more accurately.

Restoration work on the Hero and Leander tapestries will be finished next June. This will coincide with the completion of extensive redecoration of the Primate's Palace thus enabling the complete sequence of all six tapestries to be seen in their original setting for the first time for thirty years.

Jessica Douglas-Home is Chairman of the Mihai Eminescu Trust.

*History is a
perceptor of
prudence, not
of principles.
The
principles of
true politics
are those of
morality
enlarged; and
I neither now
do, nor ever
will admit of
any other.*

Edmund Burke

KOSOVO'S DREAM OF "GREATER ALBANIA"

*Chandler Rosenberger describes his experiences
in southern Yugoslavia*

Kosovo, the southern region of Yugoslavia which is inhabited mainly by ethnic Albanians, offers a wide variety of police services for the business traveller or tourist. All the species of the Serb military want to know which one you are.

I had a brief tour of the Serb police state in Kosovo during my most recent visit to Yugoslavia. I had wanted to see how things were holding up since the fraudulent December elections gave the Serbian strongman, Slobodan Milosevic, a minority government dependent on the vicious Serbian Radical Party. I especially wanted to see whether the Kosovo Albanians had profited from their decision to boycott the elections. The boycott gave the 10% Serbian minority of the region free reign to install some of Serbia's most notorious 'ethnic cleansers' into the majesty of high office.

My unexpected run-in with the "law" proved instructive. Nothing else could have shown me why the December boycott had been a logical step for "Kosovar" politicians, or why they had rejected the Yugoslav states in favour of a dream, however unrealistic, of joining "Greater Albania".

A brief tour of the police state

A visitor doesn't need statistics to know that the Albanians of Kosovo have Europe's highest birth-rate. One just needs to try getting a seat on the 1930's steam train that runs from Nis to the province's capital, Pristina. I spent the first two hours of the ride balanced over the coupling between two jammed

passenger cars. Luckily I didn't have to hang from the rusting steel steps, a sheaf of dried flowers in one arm, as a few of the hardier Albanian babickas did. I also didn't have to worry about a ticket collector much less about any soldiers. I pulled my ski cap over my ears and tried to pretend to understand the jokes the gold-toothed Albanian men told. The camaraderie dissolved as the crowd thinned out and I was able to find a seat inside. There were fewer Albanians, more crew-cut young Serbs. I curled up in the corner with an English language version of one of Belgrade's opposition newspapers and tried not to let the print or political cartoons show.

A few minutes later the first species of Serbian soldier appeared. He was tall and lean in his green camouflage and brushed off affectionate greetings from his fellow Serbs. He pulled his red beret off his shaven head to reveal a tuft of hair on top and settled down for a snooze. I stuffed my magazine away and imitated him.

About an hour later another breed of the Serb military tapped me on the shoulder. He was as tall as the sleeping soldier but wore the navy blue jacket and friendlier expression of the local police.

"Your passport?", he asked. So began my four hour conversation, held in Slovako-Serbo-Croat, with the Serbian military.

What was I doing in Kosovo? Just visiting friends. Was I a journalist? No, just visiting, I said, knowing that my role as a "researcher" might sound suspicious and worried that I might not see anything if saddled with local guides.

"Who are you visiting?" he asked. I stumbled. I didn't actually have any contacts in Pristina except for the "Democratic League of Kosovo", a group of Albanians who had tried to declare an independent republic in June. I pulled out a fax from them and hoped to soften the blow by saying I was visiting an American working there.

The soldier smiled kindly and shook his head. "Sit down and wait here", he said. He left and returned with a fellow policeman who, apparently, had made the first sweep of the car and had missed me. They had a good laugh, then went through everything I had on me.

"What is this?" A copy of Holderlin's poems. "You read German?" Well, yes. Another kindly smile. "And these?" Six copies of the *East European Reporter*. "And this?" Oh, some phone numbers. "They are Albanian contacts?" "Um, yes." He shook his head again. "We will get off the train with you," he explained, "and then we will go to the police station".

"Well, you have the guns."

"No, no, it's not like that," he said.

To pass the time we chatted about the Serbian churches I hoped to see in Kosovo, about brands of cigarettes and women. When we arrived in Pristina my new friends led me to a waiting police car which took us to the local station. I waited with the officers until the local commander came in. He was accompanied by several specimens of a third species of soldier, dressed head to toe in the blue camouflage of the Yugoslav Army. "Bye!" the locals said, laughing.

The police commander wasn't interested in small talk, especially after he

found a fax describing his sweeps through the local Albanian community. But he was scrupulously polite. He opened my files carefully and laid each sheet of paper neatly down after looking it over. His colleagues from the army would then snap them up and pass them around, cackling.

"The Democratic League!" a soldier cried in surprise. "These people are fascists!"

"You have the phone number of the Albanian Minister of Defence?" the commander said coolly.

"Yes, I do," I said. The commander lay the sheet of Albanian contacts down neatly; a soldier, imported from Krajina, snapped it up, giggled and waved an admonishing finger at me.

"And who made these marks on your map?" he asked.

"One of your officers did," I said. "He was showing me where the Serbian churches are".

The commander asked what I was doing in Bratislava but didn't seem satisfied with my story about teaching some philosophy and occasionally writing a few articles. My "propagandist material" was all carefully recorded; they seemed as disturbed that I had books in German as that I had lists of contacts in Macedonia. All the paper was then packed up into the smaller of my two cases and we were off for our next stop.

"We will now go to meet the General of the Yugoslav Army in Kosovo!" the soldier from Krajina said. I tried to express my gratitude at the honour.

We got into another car and drove the now darkened streets. The fact that the accompanying officer had pulled out his handcuffs put a damper on the conversation.

I was led to a detention room where I sat down with two burly black men in T shirts. "You speak English?" one said. "Yes." "What are you in for?" he asked.

"I think they think I am some sort of spy," I said.

"It's crazy," he said. "They think that we are mercenaries."

Well, I thought in silence...

The commander broke up our conversation, which had moved on to mutual friends in Nigeria. I waited in the hall to meet the general.

The general looked much more like a philosophy professor than I do. He pulled a pack of filterless Drinas from under his worn orange sweater and we chatted while a large and humourless soldier went through my material again. The soldier played the role of the prosecution pointing out political cartoons portraying the Serbian military as children of Hitler. The general looked them over distractedly and sighed as he signed a report listing the material I had with me. He asked me not to distribute any of it in Kosovo.

"Well," he finally said, "it looks like we've been more trouble to you than you've been to us. Will you stay in the hotel?"

"Yes," I said. "It's just around the corner, isn't it?"

"Yes, yes, out the door and to the right. Goodnight." The prosecution looked disappointed.

A visitor doesn't need statistics to know that the Albanians of Kosovo have Europe's highest birth-rate

The Kosovars and "Greater Albania"

My first few hours were a useful introduction to the police state Serbia has built to prevent Kosovo from seceding and joining neighbouring Albania. Kosovo is perhaps Eastern Europe's most intractable "ethnic minority" problem. The ebbing of the Ottoman Empire at the turn of the century and the rise of the nations it had suppressed left Kosovo, largely populated by Albanians, washed up on the shores of the insurgent Serbian nation. Until 1981, Kosovo enjoyed a surprising amount of autonomy within Yugoslavia. While the demands of the modern bureaucratic state forced ethnic minorities in other parts of Central Europe to abandon their languages and cultures, Kosovo was granted autonomy and self-government under the Communist government of Marshal Tito.

The Serbian President Slobodan

Milosevic won the 1990 elections in Serbia in part because he had helped undermine such autonomous regions. His "anti-bureaucratic revolution" was in fact the culmination of a nationalist and statist programme. If Serbia was to assert itself in the former Yugoslavia, Serbia must guarantee the sovereignty of its own bureaucracy. That bureaucracy must speak a common language — Serbo-Croat. Throughout the 1980's the Serbian government closed schools teaching in Albanian and expelled Albanian professors from Pristina University. In 1989, the parliament of Kosovo was disbanded. The Albanian majority of Kosovo could only elect representatives to the Serbian and Yugoslav parliaments in Belgrade. In the former, they were naturally outvoted by Serbs, most of whom were of Milosevic's Socialist Party of Serbia.

The Kosovar response was to establish a 'civil society' outside the state. The Democratic League of Kosovo, the major Albanian political party, runs an underground school system, university and health-care system from a three-room building behind Pristina's football stadium. Its 25,000 teachers hold classes in living rooms and are paid poorly and irregularly from donations the Democratic League collects at home and abroad. Doctors make house calls and depend on donations of equipment from Tirana and abroad.

The morning after my meeting with the Yugoslav Army I dug out the fax from the Democratic League and called the number on the letterhead. After a few confused exchanges an English speaker came to the phone. I arranged to meet members of the League's presidency at 2 p.m.

"One last question," I said. "Excuse me, but is it safe to visit you?"

"Yes, of course," the voice on the other end said.

"I only ask," I said, "because I spent four hours last night with the local police..."

The phone line suddenly went dead. I called back and asked again for the English speaker.

"You cannot say everything over the phone," he said.

The football stadium lies just behind and below the Hotel Grand. I walked

down the concrete steps of the shopping mall that forms the hotel's base and quickly lost my bearings. To my right was the army headquarters where I'd spoken with the general the previous evening; in the light of day I could see a glass box of the sort I'd seen in East Berlin before 1989 and in Prague afterwards. Like the first and unlike the second it was occupied.

I walked passed a guarded army truck and wandered through another shopping mall across the street. At first I asked innocently for the football stadium, then, losing patience and dropping my guard, I asked openly for the Democratic League. Vague directions led me across barren mud flats around the stadium's rim, where a tatty carousel blared Michael Jackson for the benefit of its sole rider.

A small split-level house looked appropriately shabby. But when I asked the porter for the Democratic League, he led me to an even smaller pillbox at the back. Delegations streamed out past the "PEN Club of Kosovo" sign and huddled for quick debriefings before climbing into their muddy Yugos. I was ushered into one of the building's three rooms while members of the Democratic League's presidency were pulled out of a conference room to speak to me.

The Democratic League's presidency meets in a virtual permanent session to keep the underground school system going. "Sometimes the burden (of organization) is unbearable," Dr. Rexhep Ismajli, one of the League's presidents, said. But the explosive birth-rate of the Albanian population has made education the League's highest priority, he said, since a large uneducated generation would become the "paupers of Europe".

Ismajli said that the Democratic League must maintain its unofficial government to justify its decision to withdraw from Yugoslav society. The League had convinced the Kosovars to boycott the December 1992 elections, because it could neither endorse the Yugoslav state nor any of the parties also opposed to Milosevic. "The entire political climate in Serbia relied on xenophobia," he said, "in which the whole non-Serb population was un-

dervalued." The leader of the opposition, Vuk Draskovic, had arisen through the late 1980's by advocating a programme of hatred that paved the way for Milosevic. "His main political motto has always been Serbia is everywhere there is a Serbian grave." The Kosovars were suspicious of Draskovic's supposed conversion to pacifism and reconciliation in 1991. The League was more open to Milan Panic, the Serb-American businessman who challenged Milosevic for the Serbian presidency, but doubted he could fulfil his promises even if elected. Ismajli said that the Serbian establishment would have undermined him and branded him 'president of the evil minorities'.

The boycott had the unfortunate if predictable consequence of giving the Serb minority of Kosovo free rein to

"The entire political climate in Serbia relied on xenophobia, in which the whole non-Serb population was undervalued"

choose the province's government. They elected the leader of the Serbian Radical Party, Vojislav Seselj, and Zelko Raznjatovic, (better known as "Arkan") to the Serb parliament. Both run private armies out of Pristina's Hotel Grand. (Don't try going down the stairs to the hotel's two bottom floors – they are sealed off with plywood.) What in Bosnia has been a loose alliance between irregulars and the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) has consolidated into one in Kosovo.

Since the elections, a new state policy of "disarming the Albanians" has been enforced by both. Soldiers search houses for weapons and beat occupants who fail to turn over guns. Albanians who insist they have no weapons are often deported. Since January, more than a thousand homes have been raided, according to Skendar Kastrati, also a member of the Democratic League's presidency.

The policy of "disarming" is merely

a ruse, according to Liam McDowell, Albania editor of *The East European Reporter*. Whatever small arms Albanians might have would be no match for the combined forces of the private armies and the JNA depots. Since the JNA was organized in part as a local militia of 'partisans', it has a vast reserve scattered among village depots. Even if these were once meant to repel an invader, they are also especially well-placed to put down an internal insurrection. "Disarmament", McDowell said, is an excuse to terrorize and deport.

Hoping to spare themselves, Kosovar Albanians are now importing arms, Kastrati said, just to have something to give to the police when they come. "The dimensions of this terror are so large", he said, "that we wonder whether Serbia needs an open war to achieve its aims."

The terror is the latest Serb response to the Albanian minority's rejection of the Serb state. Long before the elections and their repercussions the Democratic League had given up on Yugoslavia. It is unabashedly separatist. In May 1992 the League organized unofficial elections to the parliament the Serbian government had abolished but which had operated "in exile". The parliament declared an independent "Republic of Kosovo" headed by President Ibrahim Rugova. The Kosovar writer Redzep Casja, league member, author and "Father of the Nation," has called for a 'Greater Albania' which would include Kosovo and the Albanian parts of Macedonia.

Any discussion of redrawing Central European borders inevitably begins somewhere in the tenth century. While such conversations may not have much bearing on the borders of the day, they are invaluable sketches of the mythical maps that motivate people.

My talk with Dr. Ismajli started with the division of the Roman Empire. The Illyrians, predecessors of the Albanians, were christianized from Rome in the first and second centuries A.D. The Illyrians were unwilling to accept the division of the Roman empire and its church, since the line between the Roman and Orthodox churches ran through their community. Instead, they

promulgated their own confession. It was quickly suppressed by both the Serbian and Greek orthodox churches.

Their religion having been weakened, the Illyrians converted easily to the Islam of Ottoman occupation. By the end of the 19th century, over 70 per cent of Illyrians had converted while the minority remained Orthodox or Roman Catholic. Albanian loyalty, however, lay with Illyrian blood rather than foreign creeds. "Bektashi", a moderate form of Sh'ite Islam, suited Albanians with Christian cousins more than other creeds. "The Albanians had to be tolerant," Ismajli said, "because they had to live in a community of more than one religion." When the London conference of 1912 offered Albanians their own state, an Eastern Orthodox priest was elected its first president. The motto of the time, Ismajli said, was "The religion of the Albanians is Albaniahood."

Since World war II, the culture uniting the Illyrian descendants had only prospered outside Albania proper. Enver Hoxha, the Communist dictator who ruled Albania, suppressed religion and banned its practice entirely in 1961. Bektashi sects flourished in Kosovo and Macedonia under the Yugoslav government of Tito partly because Tito retained the religion's traditional enemy, Serbian orthodoxy. But since the death of Tito and the collapse of Communism in Albania, the tables had turned. Albania allowed the freedom to practice a religion that had died out, while the Kosovars were struggling to keep from suffocating under renewed Serbian chauvinism. A Kosovo independent of Serbia and perhaps reunified with Albania could rescue from Pristina the culture necessary to revive Tirana.

The appeal of "Greater Albania" but some doubts.

After my talk with the Democratic League I spotted the last few species of the Serb military – its paramilitary – flocking into the Grand Hotel's lobby. A few fat old Serbs in shiny suits were making calls from the lobby telephone; a young man in black leather and a

crewman's cap stood guard and warned me off each time I tried to assert my position in the queue to dial out.

As I waited the lobby filled with his colleagues. They arrived in buses carrying small sports bags like some kind of athletic team. Waiters were called out of the restaurant to bring chairs to a meeting room downstairs. Men in identical blue down jackets stood guard at the hotel's exits and patrolled the bathrooms and gift shops.

The evening with the Yugoslav army had been reassuringly military and correct in comparison to my chat with

A Kosovo independent of Serbia and perhaps reunified with Albania could rescue from Pristina the culture necessary to revive Tirana

the dull-eyed guard in the hotel lobby as colleagues assembled for what looked like a strategy session between the two private armies. I decided I'd seen enough of the forms of Serbian police for one visit and felt cowardly compared to the Albanians I had met that afternoon. After all, they'd lived with these people for 12 years and no doubt knew better than I did that the uniformed soldiers were losing out to the gangs assembling around me.

I remembered what one of my first contacts, the friendly local policeman, had whispered to me before his commander had come in: "Look you should get out of here, they'll be at war here in a few days." I decided to take his advice as it became obvious which of the species I had seen would do the fighting. I had got off lightly by falling into the hands of men still restrained by their uniforms. The young recruits gathering in the hotel lobby didn't look like the sort to discuss brands of cigarettes or Serbian churches while they filled out forms. I found myself almost hoping that my Albanian friends

had the good luck to confront the official military before the more savage lords of the Kosovo jungle took matters into their own hands. And I could certainly see why the Kosovars might want to opt out of Yugoslavia altogether and join their Albanian cousins.

But had the 'Albanian religion of Albaniahood' survived the Cold War? The political lines that cut through 'historic' nations leave scars, the Albanian writer Boshkim Shehu later told me. Germany's futile search for a unifying spirit of "Germanness", he argued, ought to dispel the Kosovar illusions of Albanian unity. Kosovo has never been part of the Albanian state, worse, Albania's communist dictatorship, fearing the influence of Tito's more moderate policies, had sealed the border with Yugoslavia in 1948.

The end of the cold war has only aggravated the differences. "The Kosovars are suspicious of the West," Shehu said, "because the 'Western world' had come to them through the Yugoslav state. They have always relied on a more conservative tradition as a defence against that state." The medieval Albanian common law system, known as the Kanun, or "the Code," is admired in Kosovo's southern region while, in Albania, Hoxha's destruction of traditional life left Tirana more open to the West.

I didn't want to risk my notes on Kosovo to another police search. The entire Grand Hotel seemed to know that I planned to take a 7 p.m. train to Skopje, in the newly-independent Macedonia. So when my taxi driver heard I was to catch the train and offered to take me over a mountain pass himself, I accepted. He reassured me as we drove out over the snow-covered plain south of Pristina. "There", he pointed to an intersection, "that's where the police sit in the summer. But it's too cold for tonight!"

The driver Bali Zogaj said he had been a law professor at Pristina University before the Albanians had been purged from the faculties. His wife, he said, had been head of Kosovo's Post and Telegraph office. His daughter now studied in one of the Democratic League's living room schools. To them,

Tito had been a hero, he said. Now his Yugoslavia was no more than a mask for a paranoid police state.

The road soon lifted us away from the plain and twisted our trail into the tree-lined foothills. My thoughts slipped away from the city behind us, with its tolerant Kosovar intellectuals and the betrayal Belgrade had meted out to them. We crossed a stone bridge over the railway tracks that ran through the valley below; a moment later Zogaj joked that if the road had been a bit icier I might have caught my train after all. But as we rose higher the valley disappeared. The bare branches that had cross-hatched the far mountain face now fell over the steep but even slopes as one shadow floating in the evening's snow. The "Accursed Mountains" themselves were invisible behind their darkened outline. My fears about my notes, my passport and my visa dissolved. The tentacles of Serbian control, it seemed, could only stretch down telephone lines and railway

timetables. But we were rising into the realm of the Albanian common law code which had hovered over these ridges as régimes, even world wars, had come and gone.

In *Broken Aril*, the Albanian Ismail Kadare describes a trip up towards these mountains from the other side, from Tirana. A writer who has spent his career in the capital praising the mysterious grip of the Kanun over the rural northerners take his first trip into its jurisdiction on his honeymoon. "We are entering the shadow-land," he tells his bourgeois-born wife, "the place where the laws of death prevail over the laws of life."

The writer's naive faith in the nobility of 'The Code', with its tradition of revenge, is gradually but ruthlessly exposed. But the novel captures the mystery of the "Accursed Mountains" and the comfort, however cold, of predictable common law. By the time Zogaj and I saw the bright lights of the new Macedonian border my fear had

mostly faded. If Kadare's novel portrayed the law's calculation as cruel, could it be crueller than unpredictable violence? In Kosovo the 'laws of death' have moved from the mountains to the plains and can be found in the cool professional terror of the Yugoslav Army's rule over Pristina. Worse still, the hounds of the private armies lurk in the lobby of the Hotel Grand, waiting for their leashes to break. Even if traditional "Albaniahood" no longer exists I could understand its appeal to the Kosovars. I had felt safer edging along the immobile shadows of an unyielding law than wandering among the lawless.

Chandler Rosenberger is a fellow of the Institute of Current World Affairs.

The Party's Over

David Heald wonders why the Tory Party has abandoned conservatism

Why am I so estranged from the present Tory party? My answer is that it can barely claim to call itself a Conservative party at all, that it has nothing in common with the grand old party of Peel, Wellington and Lord Salisbury, that it no longer speaks for millions of natural conservatives (with a small 'c') like myself. The Tory party has lost its soul and its heart.

What has this congeries of city brokers, 'consultants', new university sociology graduates (Virginia Bottomley – surely she should be a *Labour* M.P.?), and 'safe' local Conservative Club bar

flies got in common with the party that opposed the exclusion of the Duke of York (James II), supported the Stuarts and later accepted the Hanoverians? Is this unappealing, 'classless' party with its almost total lack of classical scholars or red-faced naval Commanders in its ranks (dear old Bill Boakes would have been a natural Tory) fit to call itself the party of Church and State? How can this philistine (but not philistine in the endearing image of Jorrocks or the heroic mechanophobe Colonel Sibthorp) rabble now speak for those millions of electorally dispossessed who every four or five years literally (like

myself) *force* themselves into the polling booths simply to keep a loathed Labour party out?

The leader of the Tory party, John Major, seems to combine all the worst features of this *ersatz*, 'catch all' pseudo-Conservatism. Forever trumpeting his lowly upbringing in Balham and Worcester Park, mawkishly claiming credit for his meteoric rise as the underprivileged son of a trapeze artist, fashionably 'politically correct' in having been half educated at Rutlish Grammar and not Eton, there is something ineffably *fake* about him, down to the perpetual vacuous grin. What, after

all, has this man got to grin *about*? How can this empty chimera of a career politician and Whip's poodle who has climbed the greasy pole to the top via 'merchant banking' (a career about which he tells us mysteriously little) and the local council Mafia call himself a *conservative*? Has he done his utmost to defend British interests in Europe, does he fly the Union Jack outside his modest Huntingdon bungalow, does he shop at the corner shop instead of some vile American-owned 'mega-consumerama' in Basildon? Does glamorous Norma (now posing for glossy women's magazines) arrange flowers or bake home-made cakes for local W.I. coffee mornings?

John Major, like most of his party, looks and talks like a grey, semi-automated accountant. How can one be inspired by that flat, 'classless' twang, the total absence of wit, scholarship or self-irony in his speech? How can one respect or take seriously a person who seems in many ways a humanoid or android, a bloodless construct of Saatchi and Saatchi who tell him when to change his hairstyle or his tie to suit his image? What calculated vote-catching it is to pose as a 'Chelsea supporter' and Oval habitué (in the cheap seats, of course). How self-consciously 'populist'. How degrading.

When did one last hear a Tory M.P. in the Commons quote Cicero or Thucydides in the original Latin or Greek? Where are the genuine (not the fake Crichtley-like) eccentrics of yesteryear – Ernest Marples with his bicycle clips, Gerald Nabarro, Quintin Hogg ringing his bell, the splendid, purple-faced, *genuinely* Tory double-barrelled knights of the shires? Where are the Patrick Walls, the 'hangers and floggers' (who genuinely represented their constituents), now derided not only by the permissive left, but also by 'Tory' journalists and opinion-makers? Only a brave few (doomed never to be promoted to their own party front bench) like John Carlisle speak out against the smug, self-congratulatory 'caring' majority of the new, 'all things to all men' Tory party.

There seems to me to be barely a *single* issue on which the party truly represents its long-suffering voters.

Europe? Immigration? Women priests? Capital punishment? Educational standards? In almost every case the Tory party has lamentably sold the pass. The currency has been debauched, the small corner shopkeeper and businessman ruined, the army sold down the river, a Falklands War which should never have been allowed to happen exploited for electoral purposes by Mrs Thatcher, Chinese Communists cravenly appeased, Tibet conveniently forgotten, Soviet lies over Katyn tacitly (and openly) connived at. For all the bluster and mendacity over Maastricht, the Tory party has effectively (as will all too soon be horribly proved) signed away this country's

There seems to me to be barely a single issue on which the party truly represents its long-suffering voters. Europe? Immigration? Women priests? Capital punishment? Educational standards? In almost every case the Tory party has lamentably sold the pass

sovereignty on almost every front. I can think of hardly a single reason why one should have voted Tory in the last 40 years. The unions? Their power has been temporarily curbed, but for decades the Tories, Churchill most conspicuously, pandered to them. Inflation conquered? To a degree, but many people are now no better off in real terms. That monstrous, unnecessary white elephant, the Channel Tunnel, was a monument to the colossal vanity of Mrs Thatcher, built over the corpses of the groaning masses of the South-east, many of them natural conservatives. That fatuous, hideous carbuncle, the 'British Library' (which, it seems, may now never even open) is another

ghastly memorial to those benighted, 'monetarist' years.

When I look at and read about the people who are said to be my fellow Tory voters, I am almost induced to vote Labour. These are the disgusting, porcine, truly troglodytic Darrens, and Waynes, and Garys, and Darrells from the vile tundras of Billericay, Sheppey and Ongar, and their equally foul-mouthed consorts Sharon and Tracy. How nauseating it is to read Etonian journalists from mews in the Albany writing with drooling approval of the new 'Tory working class', the last taboo, the 'C2s' courted with such fawning intensity by Smith Square. Curiously, when a genuinely working-class journalist, Tony Parsons, dared to attack this noxious tribe, he was assailed on all sides by the pseudo-'working class', Hampstead frauds of the Bragg-Glenda Jackson-Bleasdale-Hattersley species. I can honestly say that I have more regard and affection for the old-style, blunt, patriotic, Labour trades unionists like the great Ernest Bevin, J.H. Thomas and Manny Shinwell than for the enervated, striped-shirted nonentities of the Tory party today, equipped with their personal organisers and desktop computers. The Church of England, ever more risible, is certainly no longer the 'Tory party at prayer', and the Tory party, if it prays at all, does so only at the Temple of Mammon.

In many ways, the Church of England and the Tory party resemble each other in their current leaders and their remoteness from their flock. Neither Carey nor Major seems to have the remotest sense of history or tradition, or any true belief in the fundamental tenets of their respective faiths. As a *Sunday Telegraph* leader put it: 'Mr Major does not seem to know what a Tory is; Dr Carey seems uninterested in the idea of a Church'. Both Carey and Major, with their bogus *personae* – 'classless', 'unaffected', 'sincere' – pretend to understand and speak for the 'ordinary' man on the Clapham omnibus, but are in reality as utterly indifferent to his visceral prejudices as the most effete and purblind pre-Revolutionary French aristocrat. What Peter Simple called 'the disgusting farce of

Parliamentary democracy' was manifested in the wholly unrepresentative Commons vote on the Maastricht Treaty, just as the General Synod's vote on the ordination of women can hardly be said to have reflected the views of the bulk of Church of England parishioners, male or female. Rudderless, staggering from one makeshift, 'compromise' policy to another, the Church of England (can it even be called that any more?) and the Tory Party, like two helpless drunks, reel their way to perdition.

I can anticipate my reader's irritated response to all this already: "What do you understand by conservatism? What party would you vote for? It's easy to criticise, why not form your *own* party?" My reply would be to hold up as a model a writer, often falsely claimed by the 'Left', whose opinions, prejudices and way of living and looking at the world sum up what I understand by true conservatism: George Orwell.

This Etonian, who wanted to belong to the working class, but could never overcome his prejudice that they 'smelt', seems too full of contradictions to be labelled a conservative, and, for all I know, he would berate me for so doing. To be berated by Orwell is preferable to being praised by all the Waughs, the Wilsons, the Bookers, the Johnsons who hog the 'opinion' columns of the 'conservative' media, and who pan or praise each other's works weekly in a carousel of mutual self-regard.

In almost every respect in which I understand the word, George Orwell was a conservative. He was so in his deep love of tradition, of the English character and past, warts and all. However much he may have railed at the Conservative party of his day – its humbug, muscle-bound resistance to change and snobbishness – his contempt for the parliamentary Labour party knew no bounds. All his life, he offended and angered those on the left – Gollancz, Zilliacus, and Bloomsbury Stalinists everywhere – by his steadfast refusal to toe any party line, and his 'betrayal' of the cause. When the left attacked 'Blimps', Orwell defended them. When they raged at 'colonialism'

and ridiculed the British Empire, Orwell reminded them that the working classes were often the most jingoistic of all, and that their material well-being depended on the 'exploited' colonies.

Orwell loved old and traditional things for their own sake – small village and corner shops (he ran one, not very successfully, in Wallington), cricket (while deploring the decline in sportsmanship), second hand bookshops (again, he worked in one). Orwell was something of a playful dissembler; thus, he pretended to hate Eton, while contemporaries declared that he never said a bad word about the school. He attacked the rarefied, snobbish world of boys' weeklies like the Magnet and the Gem, while harbouring a sentimental nostalgia for that world of crumpets by the fire, midnight feasts, endless cricket and japes. He always tended to defend the unfashionable, and loved to rescue neglected writers like Gissing. On the other hand, he perversely found fault with literary icons like Tolstoy and Dickens. He defended P.G. Wodehouse when most others were vilifying him for giving moral succour to the German propaganda machine, and debunked H.G. Wells for the very reason that most people praised him – his exaggerated faith in scientific progress.

Orwell was a traditionalist – in most respects he looked backwards, not uncritically, but with a deep respect for the past. On his deathbed he was received into the Church of England, as much because it was (then) the Church of *England* as for doctrinal reasons. Orwell had no faith in abstract 'progress'. He loved the English countryside and country crafts, and was never happier than when indulging in amateur carpentry or milking goats. He was no lover of the big city, its garish pleasures and degrading materialism. He could muse whimsically about the merits of putting milk in before or after the tea, pick a cricket eleven made up of famous literary figures and enthuse about the merits of Donald McGill's 'naughty' seaside postcards.

What Orwell would think of the

modern Tory (and Labour) parties one can only speculate. What he would think of the Church of England could be discussed for weeks. As a conservative with a very small 'c', I believe that if he were to return, however unwillingly, to this earth, he could not regard either with anything but bemused contempt.

David Heald is Lecturer in German at the University of Kent.

Sophist's Corner

Sir,

Would not United Nations Day make a more acceptable October bank holiday? The concept of Trafalgar Day seems to revive just the sort of patriotism and militarism that is tearing Yugoslavia apart.

Yours sincerely
David Birmingham

Letter in *The Independent*

Comrade, Oh Comrade

Ronald Lewis finds the Great Illusion Lives On

It used to be said that ex-members of the communist party constituted the largest party in Britain. Certainly, 'The Party' was generally understood (i.e. by political people) to be the Communist Party. Yet the CPGB never became significant in membership terms. Even at the high tide of the popularity of the Planned Economy, the General Election of 1945, only two Communist members landed at Westminster, William Gallacher and Phil Piratin, of the twenty-one candidates launched; the Party's most popular member, general secretary, Harry Pollitt, failing to win the Rhondda.

By contrast, across the channel at that time, the French Communist Party was the "First party of France" and had members in the government. In Italy too, the party was strong. In both countries, there had been a mass base from the beginning. In France, the equivalent of the Labour Party, on its affiliation to the Third International, simply changed its name. But in Britain the party was formed by the merging of the tiny, sectarian, 'revolutionary' groups – the British Socialist Party, the Communist Unity Group (a breakaway from the Socialist Labour Party), and the South Wales Communist Council. That was in July 1920. By the following January, it had admitted the Leeds Congress, the Shop Stewards Organisations, the Communist Labour Party, and the Worker's Socialist Federation. The left wing of the Independent Labour Party completed the process in the spring of 1921.

There was a genuine (if romantic) internationalism about its origins. Only 13 years before (1907), the International Socialist Congress in Stuttgart had resolved to use the crisis of a future war to bring about the downfall of

capitalism. Endorsed by the leaders of all Labour and Socialist Parties, and repeated at the Congresses of 1910 and 1912, it was abandoned at the trumpet's first sound in 1914, by all but the Bolshevik wing of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party. The founding groups had all opposed the war: "I am a member of the socialist army — God damn every other army," John MacLean, of the Communist Labour Party, had declared at his trial. They regarded the formation of the Third International as an important reaffirmation of "Workers of the World Unite".

The founding groups had all opposed the war: "I am a member of the socialist army — God damn every other army,"

Marx hated Russia and would have supported war against her. The Tsarist régime was regarded as a terrible despotism, along with the Ottoman Turks. Yet most of its victims lived to tell the tale. Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin and many others had all survived Tsarist imprisonment and exile. Many did so only to die at the hands of Stalin's police. But there was a problem about the Bolshevik seizure of power — reliance on a Communist victory in the West. Marxist Historical Materialism assumed progressive stages. Advanced capitalism, and the *bourgeois democratic revolution*, would be the precursor of socialism — via the *dictatorship of the proletariat*. Britain, France, and Germany were ready. They had surplus production that could have 'Marshall Aided' Russia. Russia's

very low level of industrialisation was a serious obstacle to socialist development.

When it became apparent that the socialist brotherhood of man was not going to sweep away the nation states of Capitalism, Lenin retreated from theology into the pragmatism of the *New Economic Policy*. After his death, a major schism emerged, personified by the rivalry between Stalin and Trotsky. The latter propounded the theory of the 'permanent revolution' and saw the fermentation of rebellion abroad as the first duty of the Soviet state. Stalin, on the other hand, argued that all the effort and suffering of the revolution, the civil war and the Western intervention, would be for nothing under that policy, and he advanced the theory of Single State Socialism. His victory ended revolutionary expansionism, for while Russian money aided many communist parties throughout the world, the goal was the advancement of the state interests of Russia, not the spread of communism. Indeed history is littered with the sacrifice of communist parties to Russia's interests.

Ironically, the subsequent descent of the Third International (Comintern) into becoming an adjunct of the Soviet State was an even worse betrayal of the Stuttgart principle than that of 1914; loyalty to one's country may be chauvinism, but loyalty to another's is treason. At the centre of the abysmal failure of the CPGB to become a significant political force was a very silly piece of theology: 'The proletariat being in power in Russia, everything done by the Soviet State is in the interests of the international working class'. And the twists and turns of the policy priorities of the Soviet Government (not all of which were unreasonable from the point of view of Russia's

interests) had the CPGB performing one somersault after another, and denied it the tactic of the *effective* infiltration so successfully practised in our time by the Socialist Worker's Party and Militant Tendency, who are not handicapped by being regarded as agents of a foreign power.

The most striking U-turn came in 1939, when Russia abandoned its pursuit of the collective security epitomised in Maxim Litvinoff's slogan, "Peace is Indivisible", and closed a deal with Hitler. In 1936, an armed rebellion began against the democratically elected government in Spain, supported by the intervention of Hitler and Mussolini and the non-intervention of the League of Nations which denied the government's right to buy arms. The Communists raised the banner of Anti-fascism and called for a United Front. The chant, "We want arms for Spain", regularly echoed in London streets until March 1939 when the Republican side was defeated. The Soviets, who had supplied arms to the Spanish Government, and had wanted to resist Hitler's seizure of Czechoslovakia, were seen as the good guys. The formation of the International Brigade had a heroic appeal. It was a climate that favoured the CPGB, and the party got as close as it would ever get to becoming a mass one, with thousands joining to fight fascism rather than to support communism.

Initially, the Party supported the war, but upon receipt of instructions from Georgi Dimitrov of the Comintern to undermine Britain's war effort, only three members of the ruling Committee remained firm. It was possible to defend the Russo-German pact on the grounds that the Russians were doing no more than the West had done at Munich – buying time. And that the consequential territory revisions had given them a more defensible frontier. But to say that the war against Germany was an imperialist one simply because the Russians had not joined in was grotesque. It was certainly too much for leader Harry Pollitt, who resigned.

He resumed his role as general secretary after Russia was invaded and, having supported the war from day one

had more credibility when he urged the policy of opening the "second front" than much of the rest of the party who had opposed Britain's solo efforts for 21 months. Pollitt (together with William Gallacher M.P. for West Fife) was the nearest thing to a practical politician in the party. Under his leadership and aided by victories in the East, and the establishment of Anglo-Soviet Friendship Societies at home with which many Tories were associated, the Party began to develop

You will only change one set of masters for another," said one of my grandfathers when I told him I was a communist.

a patina of respectability. Everything was subordinated to the cause of winning the war. On the industrial front the party was prominent in production councils; more output not more wages, was the cry. The perpetrators of any kind of industrial action were denounced as red fascists; whereas the communist worked harder, more intelligently and for longer hours. Piecework, long denounced, became socialist emulation.

I joined the Young Communist League at that time, 1942. At my first branch meeting after I had confessed (or boasted) that I had read *Das Kapital* and most of what were called the Marxist Classics, the secretary resigned and I was elected in his place. I had worked with a communist in Harold Macmillan's publishing house, who had introduced me to Marxist bookshops; I had also joined the Left Book Club. Within a few months I was appointed to be the organiser of the Surrey division of the League, and a member of the London District Committee.

The local party itself, which I attended as a fraternal delegate from the YCL, consisted of many professional people and businessmen. There were a lot of Jewish members, many of whom had fled the Nazis. The comrades were

generally 'well heeled'. In fact there were virtually no waged workers inside the YCL! Yet strange to tell, Ted Willis, who was at that time the YCL London District Secretary, accused me of only backing the revolution for a place, by working as a clerk and not joining the 'lads' on the factory floor, and called me petit bourgeois. I had a chuckle when he became Lord Willis of Chiselhurst.

The status/social class of the membership mocked the concept of the so-called class struggle as did the attitude of working people. On the whole the working-class is a great bulwark against quick-fix nostrums, and grand solutions. "You will only change one set of masters for another," said one of my grandfathers when I told him I was a communist. "And the 'jumped up' working man will be a bigger bastard than those who have been trained to rule." And the CP itself was riddled with class distinctions. Founder members, cadres, theoreticians, members of the International Brigade, comrades who had been to Utopia (the USSR), pre June 22nd '41 members (date Russia entered the war) etc. All were accorded great reverence. Their utterances about the "teachings" of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, liberally punctuated with the word 'dialectics' were religious. The comrades were helplessly in love with themselves. There is no greater conceit than the belief that you can change the world.

Informal relationships revealed that very few of us thought much of Russia, as a socialist society. None of us wanted to visit it much less live there! The great complaint of those days was that it had been a tragedy for Marxism that it should have been tried out in such a backward country. Nonetheless, it was important to pretend that the experiment was all right. If the 'masses' (we never talked of the people) found out that communism had failed in Russia they would never support it here. Today's experts on yesterday overstate the acceptance of Soviet myths. This was especially true of Spain. There were a lot of books published at the time which made it clear that the Republic was defeated as much by the conflicting sects within its own ranks

as by Franco. Orwell's 'Animal Farm', a most devastating satire on Russia, was written during the war. And the show trials in Russia were regarded as lethal cabinet reshuffles. I never met one party member who believed the generals' and politburo members' confessions to being imperialist spies. We all realised that Soviet Communism was rule by terror; and also evidence that the system was not secure.

Events also exposed the absurdity of the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat, another hallowed article of faith that no comrade of my close acquaintance really believed. But equality too was nonsense. In fact I still believe that its pursuit remains the false god, in whose name even more have been done to death than in that of the Prince of Peace. Equality is not a natural state. It must be imposed and maintained by the coercion of tyrants.

So what did we believe? I came to Communism via non-communists like G.D.H. Cole, Harold Laski and many many others, including a capitalist — the first Lord Leverhulme, who had declared in 1922, "That if the economy were properly organised there could be a 2 hour working day." We thought that leaving the economy to the chance of the market was primitive. The civilised and sophisticated way was the planned economy. But why communism and not Labour? We thought Labour would be too slow — we wanted it *now*. And also Scientific Socialism had a nice, almost erotic ring. We were nothing if not intellectual snobs. Laughable though it all was, the myth of the planned economy was no sillier than today's great illusion that house inflation is really wealth-creation. Releasing the wealth 'locked up' in the home, in reality means using it as a pledge at the pawnbrokers. And it has ended in the tears of the bubble economy.

Credulity was a condition then, as it is now in many respects, afflicting those who have had formal instruction but remain uneducated like today's chattering classes. They were catered for by such luminaries as the biochemist Professor J.B.S. Haldane, who actually insisted that the needs of Marxism required a new man! He (homo-

socialisticus) would be bred via artificial insemination, since bourgeois morality would prevent 'scientific' coupling. The prelate engineer, Dr Hewlet Johnson (the Red Dean of Canterbury), well known for *The Socialist Sixth of the World*, also wrote *Russia's Secret Weapon* which made absurd claims about the superiority of Russian science in the war effort. And there were the strange fellow travellers, the Webbs and George Bernard Shaw: the former, the apostles of 'gradualism' and thus the enemies of revolution; and GBS the great iconoclast and enemy of all churches. Their apologia for the tyranny of the Soviet state stood the truth of their own lives and beliefs on its head.

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The CPGB was always parasitic. Active members either joined other groups and sought leadership, or founded Front organisations. It was recognised that the chances of the British electorate ever voting a communist party into office were nil. I established a Youth Parliament, a fancy name for a debating group. But it was affiliation with the Labour Party that was sought — the concept of a Party within a Party. Strenuous efforts were made to accomplish this, and countered by the other side with the proscribed list.

The Labour Victory of 1945 was so unexpected, so overwhelming that it was difficult for believers in the planned economy not to be dizzy with success. With such a majority, we thought, we shall have the utopian International in no time. Even the 'revisionist' Labour leadership would have to act, denied the excuses of the previous Labour administrations of 1924 and '29. We young revolutionaries were also a little dismayed. Our life's work was over

before it had started. We were much more infatuated with the means than the end. But no sooner had the war ended, than the alliance with the Soviet Union broke up. Labour's Foreign Minister Ernest Bevin's declaration concerning the continuity of foreign policy had us all yelling 'sold down the river'. And we secretly rejoiced.

Once Russia had joined the war, interference with the functioning of the party by Moscow diminished. The only goals were maximum war effort, and campaigning for the early invasion of France (the second front). After the war this freedom from interference continued, and Harry Pollitt endeavoured to curb 'sectarianism' and create the image that would attract a mass membership. The Comintern went to the graveyard of History, being replaced by Communist Information (the Cominform). For those of us who regarded a Marxist Party as being the think-tank of the Labour Movement, and we hoped the new ruling class, things looked promising. All we had to do was to secure affiliation with the Labour Party, which we would then manipulate. For many, including me, the euphoria did not last long. As the allies went their separate ways, Russia's foreign policy needs became the determining factor in the CPGB's policy making machinery. The opposition of the trade union bosses to our affiliation was probably too strong anyway, but once the party resumed its slavish adherence to the Moscow party-line, faithfully conveyed by the party's theoretician, R. Palme-Dutte, all chance of the Party shedding its history as the agent of the Soviet Union vanished.

An early change of line was that concerning Palestine. The party's policy had been to create a State of Arab-Jewish Unity. Having served in the Middle East during the war, where I became interested in Arab developments, I strongly supported that policy. I sympathised with the declaration by the Secretary General of the Arab League, that it was not the brother semites of the Arab world who had persecuted the Jews, and for Europe to salve its conscience by authorising their colonization of Palestine would be unjust.

Without warning, the Soviet Union withdrew its veto on the Security Council and voted for the partition of Palestine and a separate authority for Jerusalem. The next day, the party's organ – the *Daily Worker* – addressed the issue as though the previous policy had not existed. I wrote two letters attacking the decision, edited bits of which were published in the paper (much to my delighted surprise).

Another matter which tied a very emotive ball and chain around the Party was the 'Soviet Wives' issue. Some fifteen Russian women who had married British embassy staff were denied exit visas to join their husbands in Britain. I was outraged. Naive though my convictions were, I firmly believed from my early teens, that the planned economy would liberate everybody by reducing 'socially necessary labour'. That any socialist government could consider it right to imprison its people was unbelievable. William Rust, editor of the *Daily Worker*, had a speaking engagement in my town shortly after this news broke. I went to the meeting and asked for his comments after his speech. He replied that when one was young love seemed very important, but later in life one realised there were more important considerations. "You hypocrite," I responded, "You got your Tamara out of Russia." I was summarily ejected; communist rallies did not afford question time. My question was regarded as disorder.

The party's attempts to justify this decision were sick. "Since the Soviet Union is at an advanced stage of development, its government has a duty to protect its citizens from exposure to the harsh condition of Britain's primitive socio-economic development. Why don't their husbands settle in the Soviet Union? It is a reactionary notion the wives follow their husbands." The only justification was a Machiavellian one, floated, I remember, by Kingsley Martin's *New Statesman* namely, to provoke the hostility of the West into adopting a clear role as National Enemy. It was another extension of the terror. Even long-established governments seem unable to function without the unifying presence of the external threat. And

from the vantage point of today, we can see how important the fear from abroad was in cementing the components of the state, as we witness the unravelling of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia

In the East, the New (People's) Democracies arose. It was clear to all of us that these administrations were being imposed. To some extent one could shrug one's shoulders. Many of the countries had no history of democracy, and in any case there was no example in history of an occupying power installing a government other than in its own image. And as for the division of Germany, many politicians thought it was a good thing, from Richard Crossman on the left to Bob Boothby on the right. But in Czechoslovakia, the country of Thomas

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Masaryk and Benes, where the communists had succeeded in winning the elections, the unlawful crushing of the opposition seemed to many of us criminal stupidity. It was impossible to believe that Stalin gave a damn for the fate of the western communist parties. And Yugoslavia, where Tito had an indigenous power-base, exposed Stalin's preference for puppets; there were news stories during the war suggesting that Stalin continued to favour Mihailovic after the allies had decided to switch to Tito, because he wanted client administrations that owed power to him (consistent with the halted Russian offensive at the gates of Warsaw during the Home Army uprising). Stalin rapidly became hostile to Tito and used the Cominform to isolate him. Georgi Dimitrov, then running Bulgaria, tried to support Tito, but a quick whiff of verbal grapeshot got him back in line.

When I came home from the RAF, I joined the Party, paid a month's subscriptions and went to a couple of meetings which were full of incredibly boring cant. I decided I had better

things to do than spend time at Marxist prayer meetings, and occupied my spare time during the next year writing a novel about the party. One day I bumped into the local party secretary, who had struck me as a 'decent chap'. I spoke freely of my disillusionment with the party's slavish attitude to the Soviet Union. Shortly afterwards I was astonished to receive a letter charging me with anti-Soviet activity and threatening to cancel my membership – astonished because technically I was no longer a member, since I had paid no subscription for over a year and attended no meetings.

Thinking it would be fun, I colluded with the process. The evidence was my conversation with the branch secretary, and my two letters to the *Daily Worker* criticising the party over Palestine. Amazed, I watched the antics of highly professionally qualified people playing the role of grand inquisitors. I realised then, that the 'Marxism' of Lenin and Stalin was a kind of psychopathological condition. It was a virus that crippled the powers of reason. Playing the game to the end, following my expulsion, I appealed; my appeal was conducted by a national official, Sid French, in a local pub. (He ended up forming a breakaway 'Real' Communist Party.) When he had dismissed my appeal without much ado, I revealed the status of my membership. "Consider yourself lucky we don't live in the Soviet Union. I would have you shot."

I still believed in the central control of the economy (i.e. 'Commanding Heights') and shortly afterwards became an active member of the Labour Party, becoming a borough and a county councillor, and standing for parliament in '55 and '59. I was still 'left wing', became National Organiser of a fringe group called Victory For Socialism, and wrote a pamphlet with others, *The Red Sixties* – an improbable prediction in Harold Macmillan's (never had it so good) Britain of the fifties!

Following Stalin's death things appeared to change. After Beria had been 'executed,' reshuffles could take place peacefully. Malenkov, Molotov and Khrushchev lost power but kept their heads. The twentieth congress formalised the changes, with

Khrushchev's famous speech. The 'new democracies' were ordered to make changes too. It almost looked as though something was going to be rescued from the 'great experiment' after all. Those of us on the left felt very encouraged. Poland under Gomulka seemed to be a pathfinder, reform seemed to us to be preferable to the 'roll back' policies of John Foster Dulles. Then law and order collapsed in Hungary. Ironically, despite its historical democratic culture, Czechoslovakia had to be pushed hard by Khrushchev into reform, but when it happened, it was too much for the likes of Walter Ulbricht of the DDR, and the Prague Spring was crushed. These events produced the final demise of communism in Western Europe. Euro-communism (ostensibly something distinct from Russia) never really took off, although the tactic -- pervasion -- has been successfully practised by the Socialist Worker's Party.

I retired from public life and active membership of the Labour Party in 1961. I had come to regard it as an organisation whose time had passed. It could only win office by becoming an alternative conservative party. The unions, whose child it was, were now merely protection racketeers. They were an obstacle to the high wage, high productivity economy I wanted to see. I had always been opposed to the closed shop including the BMA and the Law Society. My interest in Labour was temporarily restored when Barbara Castle tried to introduce the policy to curb the unions, called *In Place of Strife*. But when James Callaghan sabotaged that, I made my final break by voting Tory.

I never really became an Anti-Communist. I saw enough crimes committed in the name of anti-fascism to put me off negatives. I also think that while parts of the right have been worrying about Russia, the greatest subversion of Western liberal democracy has come from America, and in particular from the disciples of that Pied Piper of the Sixties, Herbert Marcuse. *His Eros and Civilisation* was the bible of the 'If it feels good do it' cult that has done so much to undermine the Judaeo-Christian commandments of morality, and led to

the rise of a Youth Culture. His infamous description of liberal democracy as *repressive tolerance* provided justification for the neo-fascist behaviour of the Socialist Worker's Party: disrupting meetings, practising character assassination, organising thought police -- 'gatekeepers' -- and generally seeking to produce disorder. Compared with today's left-wingers, the communist party that I was in consisted of Flopsy Bunnies.

It was the growth of the welfare state that provided the culture in which this virus has flourished. The extension of training requirements for the professionalisation of 'care' resulted in the creation of the Social Work professariat. There was no body of knowledge, and Marcuse's blend of Marxism and Freudianism filled a vacuum. These worthies now pontificate like Bishops. Their influence has spilled over into many other spheres; one even hears senior policemen speaking their language. They have been responsible for the greatest rush of book burning since the Nazis: by the public libraries. Their sponsorship of *political correctness*, regarded by many as a joke, is in fact positively sinister. It has crippled free discussion in many public services. Their success in imposing their adolescent vocabulary upon us exceeds anything the communists ever achieved with their famed 'agitprop'. 'Racism', 'sexism', 'homophobia' -- not to mention the unpronounceable M -- together with scores of others, were coined in American universities. Their use is now enforced in much of the public service by gatekeepers, and their perpetuation ensured by the 'radical's' stranglehold of the information chain provided by university, people-centred training colleges, and the media.

British Communism was the politics of the absurd. It never came anywhere near posing a threat to our democracy. It was a sectarian incestuous group, most of whose leaders had broken with the reality of working-class lives and mores. But the make-up of the working class has changed dramatically. Vast armies of 'white-collared' staff in the public service have been politicised, as the result of governments (of both par-

ties) seeking to control wage inflation by setting low norms for their staff. These workers have access to phones, copiers, faxes etc., and above all information. They have great power to undermine government policy and regularly do so. This power has been enshrined in legislation concerning 'rights'.

At the heart of the problem is the failure of the economy to match aspirations. The 'Radicals' of Militant Tendency and The Socialist Workers Party have mastered the clever Trotskyist tactic of *impossibilism*. They have us running around in circles. The annual pay round generates inflation. The indexing of benefits generates inflation. They demand increases in both, then complain about the consequences.

They demand less control and punishment of the criminal, then complain about the consequential increase in crime. And unlike the Communists of my youth, today's 'radicals' can enjoy the position of full-time professional revolutionaries, paid for by the state. Social workers, probation officers, and teachers can do it on salaries; the others on benefits or student grants.

They hope that the criminal will be the grave digger of capitalism. And, although we are still a law-abiding country in relative terms, the excessive tolerance we now display towards the persistent offender is demoralising the population. The growing number of young people who are unsocialised and psychopathic threatens the tranquillity which the state owes its citizens. The citizen's power to exact retribution has been nationalized; but only so as to squander his moral resources. In the last analysis, it is this destruction of capital in all its forms -- economic, social, moral and spiritual -- which is the abiding achievement of the left. When I joined the Communist party I would have vehemently and indignantly denied that its ideology could lead in such a direction. But now I see that it can lead nowhere else.

Ronald Lewis is a former Senior Probation Officer.

Pundits and Partisans

Stanisa Vlahovic challenges Norman Stone about war-time Yugoslavia

Professor Norman Stone -- although almost a half century late -- should be congratulated on demolishing the Titoist myth that the partisans nailed down 35 Axis divisions during the Second World War. It was known all along to some people, that the aura around Tito was an arrant lie by which a tyrant became a kind of deity in this country and in the entire West. Many undergraduates in the Slavonic Departments of our universities have earned their spurs on two Titoist myths: first that the partisans tied down 35 Axis divisions and second that they crushed the enemy who mounted "seven offensives" against Tito. A whole industry sprang up in Britain from this propaganda and a strong Titoist lobby still survives. Numerous PhD dissertations on Titoism were written and accepted under the auspices of the Supremo in Titology, Brigadier Sir Fitzroy Maclean. According to Professor Chalmers Johnson of Stanford University, this exaggerated promotion of Titoism in the West prompted Tito's marxist philosopher Veljko Vlahovic, my cousin, to chide American Titoists: "You spent more on research and propaganda about Yugoslavia than the country is worth in money terms..." The few people in this country and elsewhere who dissented from the brainwashing by the mass media, by politicians and by those academics who graduated in Titology, have been abused and vilified as "reactionaries, fascists, traitors and agents of imperialism..."

Among those honourable exceptions, I should like to mention only one; John Lessinski, the Congressman of Michigan, who on 23rd June 1944 denounced from the floor of the House of Representatives the lies of the USA Censorship Bureau and its Director Elmer Davis concerning Tito and his alleged "heroic deeds... when it took only one German parachute

battalion to put Tito to flight to Italy under the auspices of his British protectors..." Public Record Office (FO 371/44316). Parallel with the myth of 35 Nazi Divisions went the myth of Tito's strength of 26 divisions (total strength: 220,000) as reported by Brigadier Maclean to Churchill on 6th November 1943. Maclean wrote his blockbuster report after being only 18 or 20 days in Tito's H.Q. and with a knowledge of only four words of Serbo-Croat. When the infamous document reached the Southern Department of the Foreign Office, after reading it, L.P. Rose remarked, "... This is fantastic. How is it possible that MacLean's 30,000 partisans in Serbia, do not swoop on Mihailovic's army of a mere 15,000 and wipe him from the face of the earth?..." (FO 371/37615). The Head of the Department, Douglas Howard, minuted: "... Brigadier Maclean says that Tito has 26 divisions, which in comparison to our (divisions) are small, a mere 8,000 people. It is likely that this number of partisans is misleading." When William Deakin saw King Peter in December 1943 after the Teheran Conference, he told the King and his Prime Minister Dr. Purich that in July 1943, the total strength of Tito's partisans was about 25,000 fighters. Certainly up to October their number may have increased, possibly doubled or even trebled, but the figure of 220,000 must have been exaggerated. (Interview with Dr. Purich in Chicago in 1974, and an article by Dr. Vukcevic, in the Proceedings of the Nyegosh Historical Society, Volume 10, December 1962.)

Besides the six German divisions which Stone gives as pursuing partisans in the summer of 1943, one should mention the German Infantry Mountain Division commanded by General Benignus Dippold, and units of the Brandenburg and other German divisions which

attacked Mihailovic's Chetniks in Montenegro and took 5000 prisoners in the town of Kolas in May 1943. This fact was suppressed by SOE's Cairo officers in the Yugoslav section, notably James Klugmann and Basil Davidson. The statement that some German divisions consisted of "wheezing Dad's Army types dragging their beer bellies" is exaggerated. The Dad's Army type soldier would not last a day in that environment, let alone do battle with communist partisans. Professor Stone is also wrong on the "Bosnian SS division Handzar", which was a unit of higher morale than he implies.

Professor Stone completely omits the Hitler-Mussolini correspondence of February and May 1943 in which Hitler emphasized that Mihailovic was the greater threat to the Axis and therefore that his movement must be crushed first before pursuing the Partisans. Between March and May 1943, Tito enjoyed a badly needed respite because he was negotiating with the Germans against Mihailovic and against the allies, a Balkan offensive being under discussion at that time.

"Serbia was quite quiet during most of the war." This statement would not pass the test of historical evidence, for in 1941 there were two guerilla armies on Serb territory: Mihailovic's royalists, and Tito's communists. That year saw severe reprisals against the Serb population by the Germans. Kragujevac, Kraljevo, Valjevo are among many places where the Germans committed the greatest crimes of the war. Tito's communists were crushed in Serbia by the forces of the Serb civil administration, and by Mihailovic's detachments. Tito fled to Hitler's satellite: the Independent State of Croatia, where he found a much better environment. In 1942 and 1943, the Germans were continually chasing Mihailovic's forces. In 1944 Tito tried to

conquer Serbia but was defeated until October when he emerged from the combined baggage of Britain and the Soviet Union and rode in on their tanks to Belgrade.

Professor Stone's reference to the German Army Group "E" is mistaken: though this is a tricky subject which most historians have not explained. Before the British landing in Greece in October 1944, the Middle East command reached a secret agreement with the Germans in Greece who promised not to destroy the Greek harbours; in return British forces would refrain from attacking them on Greek territory. (See Miss E. Jackson's Notes in the F.O. Research Department paper: "Drama Agreement".) More than half of the "E" army Group retreated through Albania, Montenegro and Bosnia. The other part retreated through the Vardar Valley to Belgrade. The German forces came under the protection of the Soviet 'umbrella' on Yugoslav territory. This was because of the agreement between the Allies and Stalin in July 1944 (FO 371/44335) which assigned almost the entire air space of Yugoslavia to the USSR. Stalin made it quite clear that western fighters must not approach Soviet air space within a distance of 100 miles, and that bombers should keep a distance of 80 miles. (See my book *Selected Documents and Commentary on Anglo-Yugoslav Relations 1941-1948*.) Stalin did not drop a single bomb on the retreating German armies in Yugoslavia. He wanted to have a free hand in Central Europe by encouraging them to withdraw to North Western Yugoslavia and join German forces in Italy, thereby strengthening resistance to the Allied armies in Italy. General Maitland Wilson, the Middle East Commander exploded in November 1944 to Churchill:.... "Why are my hands tied; why am I not allowed to bomb those German columns which are concentrating in Sarajevo?" In three telegrams to Stalin in November and December 1944, the Prime Minister pleaded almost pathetically to Stalin for permission to bomb the retreating Germans. Stalin did not reply until the German retreat was complete. He did not even bomb the retreating Mihailovic forces. This was left to the Allied 'Balkan Air Force' from Bari (Italy) which

relentlessly machine gunned and bombed the retreating royalists. When the Allies suggested that Stalin should bomb Zagreb he refused, saying that it would be unwise to incur the odium of the Catholic Church.

I would like to comment on several other of Professor Stone's points which I believe to be untenable:

1. Stone is wrong to equate the puppet governments in Zagreb and Belgrade. The two were divided by an impassable abyss: Pavelic's government was a most loyal ally of Nazi Germany, but the Serb people with its administration were mortal enemies of the Reich. Stone should read Himmler's letter in his own handwriting to Dr. Harold Turner, diplomatic advisor to the Commanding General of the German Forces in Belgrade. To Himmler the only good Serbs were dead Serbs.
2. Vladimir Velebit is not the 'son of a Croatian General' who served in the Austro-Hungarian army. Dr. V. Velebit is the son of Cavalry General Ljubomir Velebit, a Serb from Krajina.
3. During 1942 and the beginning of 1943 the SOE in Cairo was unable to supply Mihailovic with arms and therefore persuaded him to buy them from the Italians, supplying him with money for this purpose. Eden was not aware of this until it was pointed out to him. The Foreign Secretary consulted Sir Alexander Cadogan as to whether he should inform the Prime Minister. Cadogan opined: "Not yet, at this stage" and the paper was filed away. While we know that Mihailovic was maligned officially as well as privately, he never, under communist torture, vilified or tarnished his former British ally.

In 1942 the Yugoslav Royal air force pilot, Captain Nedeljko Plecas was selected by the SOE for training in the Special Air Service in Cairo. After completing the course, he attended a briefing of SOE officers by Major Bennett who told him that they knew that there was some kind of contact between some Italian commands and Mihailovic subordinates, and that the SOE considered it beneficial at that time. Major Bennett gave him a letter

which was addressed to the Italian Military Governor of Montenegro, General Pirzio-Birolli. This letter was from the governor's son, a major on the general staff, at that time a British prisoner of war. All this must have been known to the Middle East Command. (*War Years 1941-1945*, N. Plecas, Kosovo Publish. Co, Columbus Ohio, 1983.)

4. The information which Professor Stone obtained from Dr. Mirko Valentic from the Zagreb History Institute concerning the proportion of Croats in Tito's Partisans from 1943-44 is made up and not true. The diaries of the late Dr. V. Dedijer are more reliable as is also the book by Veselin Djuretic: *The Allies and the Yugoslav Wartime Drama*. (Balkan Institute of the Serbian Academy, 2 vols 1985, 2nd edn. 1987.)

Professor Stone wrote the piece 'Pundits and Partisans' in order to show that it would be feasible to use force against the Serbs in Bosnia. I differ from Stone's philosophy, for he has been an ardent advocate of the fragmentation of Yugoslavia. The result of that policy is well known: civil and religious war, barbarism and bestialities. Would this have happened if Yugoslavia had not been dismantled? The map of Yugoslavia in 1941 is similar to that of today: six tin pot banana republics. Yugoslavia is like a leopard skin with many groups of people scattered by history over ten centuries. The people need a fair state and administration to cater for their lives, not the post-Tito ideologues and their repulsive nationalist ideologies. The German Mark has achieved what Hitler's panzers failed to achieve. The other EEC countries have followed Germany in the dismemberment of Yugoslavia. We are told that this was an excellent solution but new artificial nation states, and what are to a large extent artificial nationalities imposed by the West, will not bring peace in the area.

Stanisa Vlahovic fought with the royalists (Cetniks) during the war.

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WE ARE DESERTED BY OUR LEADERS

William Norton responds to R.J. Barrett's 'Escape from Tyranny' December 1992

One of the privileges of life within a civilised society is that one's views are subjected to open and intelligent criticism. It comes as no surprise to me, then, to discover that my essay against Proportional Representation, published in this journal in June 1992, has been objected to by a Mr R J Barrett ("Escape from Tyranny?", December 1992). Readers of *The Salisbury Review* will have their own opinions as to whether or not they live in a civilised society, but it is sufficient that Mr Barrett's eloquent indignation deserves the compliment of a reply.

The essence of my opposition to Proportional Representation is that it is an aggregationist doctrine. It holds an individual's opinions of no worth except as part of a large national conglomerated total abstracted from its local context. Yet while it is absurd to decide the government of the United Kingdom on the state of the pavements in Flyford Flavell, it makes perfect sense for an individual voter in Flyford Flavell to register a protest through the ballot box. Implicit in aggregationism is the view that political opinions are the only important distinction between people, and that these opinions are reducible to a total and simple correspondence with one or other political party. There are associated assumptions about the purpose of political activity (mainly progressivist). None of the usual arguments put forward for bringing in Proportional Representation can sustain a burst of clear thinking for any period of time. Beneath a miasma of misplaced sentiment, the advocates of

Proportional Representation seek to smuggle through an irrevocable change in both the nature of the United Kingdom and how it sees itself.

Mr Barrett disagrees and believes that only Proportional Representation can rescue the Westminster System from its tyrannical corruption. His underlying philosophy is that he dislikes Mr Major and opposes the Maastricht Treaty. This novel and original theory is buttressed by an emotive account of the current conduct of the Whip's Office.

The fact that the present Cabinet resembles the Keystone Cops is no reason for changing the constitution

Who could have failed to weep on reading of the plight of Mr Nicholas Winterton MP? Had I any tears to shed I would have shed them then.

Whose blood did not boil as Mr Barrett flayed the grey men of the modern world? They have made a desert and they call it wealth.

How can we describe the article? The word "Wrong" comes to mind.

We may divide the arguments presented in "Escape from Tyranny?" into two classes. The first relate to the conduct of Mr Major's ministry. In assessing the achievements of the present government since its startling re-election, a wide spectrum of opinions has been offered, ranging from the

unfavourable to the highly unfavourable. Possessing a sick sense of humour I have found the succession of disasters very funny. The fact that the present Cabinet resembles the Keystone Cops is no reason for changing the constitution. It is a reason for changing the Cabinet.

As part of his umbrage Mr Barrett objects to the Government's desire to retain power. Dear me. How shocking. That is the last thing anyone would have expected them to do. In a reckless and dictatorial break with all tradition and custom Conservative MPs have discovered that the Government would like their support. My heart bleeds for the poor lambs. We should all sympathise with these innocent, misled people, all of whom were forced to enter Parliament without any choice or any warning that Mr Major might suddenly wish to ratify the Maastricht Treaty.

Mr Barrett is entirely correct that the Government's tactics in the lobbies have been "stormtrooper-like". He is entirely correct to describe the Whips' activities as ugly and bullying. I will concede the martyrdom of Saint Nicholas Winterton. Although I do not entirely follow Mr Barrett's view that these matters are principally unacceptable because, unlike in Italy, they are not openly and publicly displayed, I am feeling expansive and shall concede this point too. I will even overlook the contradiction between the last point and Mr Barrett's disgust for the "brass nerve" of the Tory Party's admission that it exists to fight and win elections. All I ask is this: should the constitution of the United Kingdom be determined

by whether or not Mr Walter Sweeney MP was to be seen blubbing between the division bells?

Current political behaviour, however deplorable, does not in itself justify a move to Proportional Representation. If I have a motor car and whilst driving it knock down and kill a pedestrian, this does not justify confiscating all motor cars and replacing them with tricycles. The collapse in the standards of public life, and in Palaces besides that of Westminster, is caused by other factors than the electoral system.

Does Mr Barrett really believe a paper constitution can contain a dedicated gang of politicians bent on evading it? We have a clear example from across the Atlantic of how a politicised Supreme Court has re-interpreted the constitution of the United States in ways that a moment's thought would find repugnant to the Founding Fathers (not that this actually makes the changes repugnant in themselves). A new voting law will not give us more civilised governors. Only a political class which feels bound by higher standards of public duty can supply that.

It took an entire week to discover who had won Ireland's General Election because of the vagaries of the Single Transferrable Vote method

The second class of Mr Barrett's arguments comprise the supposed benefits of Proportional Representation. Unfortunately events have clearly moved against him since he wrote the article, for example the Republic of Ireland's interesting General Election. It took an entire week to discover who had won, because of the vagaries of the Single Transferrable Vote method. Perhaps he is a closet anarchist who simply wishes to prevent government altogether.

I do not believe that Mr Barrett has fully directed his mind to what he has advocated. He describes the Conserva-

tive and Labour Parties as monoliths enshrined within the Constitution. Has he heard of Asquith? Or Gladstone? The Liberal Party fell out of the frame many years ago, and deservedly. It has not yet deserved to get back in. The Westminster System is based upon a view of the United Kingdom as a collection of local communities each of which identifies itself with a particular representative from a political party. Why should anyone have a voice in the national community if they do not represent any communities on the ground? To win an election the politicians must physically go out and earn votes. However, as I say, it is always open to a country to reject this model and take up something more dynamic and progressive.

But I still fail to understand Mr Barrett's complaint that the Westminster System produces only two viable political traditions. What will happen under Proportional Representation? The effect will be to boost the number of MPs for a third party such as the Liberals, and power will revolve around forming coalitions with them. The Liberals are unlikely to form a coalition with a party offering policies diametrically opposed to their own, so this will encourage a sameness in the other two parties as they compete not for votes but for coalition. As a matter of long term practice under Proportional Representation there will only be one dominating party.

This outcome naturally "wastes" far more votes than the present system. Not that the wasted vote argument holds much water. Something is only wasted if it is not applied to its proper purpose. To describe a party's votes as wasted because its share of the MPs is below its share of the aggregate popular vote already presupposes that Proportional Representation ought to be the voting system.

As an aside I should also say that Mr Barrett accuses the Westminster System of being an oligarchy and not a democracy. Of course it is. By definition all parliaments are oligarchies. A most curious objection.

Apparently Proportional Representation will "open the way for new groupings of talented and independ-

ently-minded men and women". In my experience "talented" and "independently-minded" people are usually narcissistic and conformist liberals. One can see as much evidence of this as one needs in any university bar or students' union – herds of muddled thinkers preening themselves on their courageous rejection of Western culture. I seem to recall being told in November 1990 how lucky I was that the new Prime Minister was tremendously talented and independently-minded, and that he had "secured access to the political arena" from a background usually denied it.

It was, of course, a gloriously irrational and undemocratic phase of the House of Commons that allowed William Pitt the Younger to rise to power. A friend simply invited him to sit for a borough he owned. He would have been dead before he reached an equivalent ministerial position today, assuming any party would have selected him at all, but that is not a fault of the present voting system (although it may be an argument for the repeal of the Reform Act). We get the politicians we deserve. A country which is no longer able to exert itself to rise out of a post-industrial torpor will not bestow its favours upon a Pitt or a Castlereagh with his eye set firmly on a far horizon.

The exaltation of party over people can only occur when the leaders of a party are able to overcome any internal resistance. Either the dissidents are, frankly, second-raters, or they have no secure power base. Mr Barrett sympathises with Mr Nicholas Winterton. But Mr Winterton is still returned by the burghers of Macclesfield and cannot be purged. Under a Proportional System, with no local connections, there will be few local power bases. Once a dissident is expelled from the approved party list he is then faced with the burden of starting a new national party by himself. If there were sufficient and genuine public sentiment in his favour, then the dissident would not have been purged in the first place. Governments and political parties try to avoid being masochists.

There is something wrong with our politicians today and Mr Barrett is right to warn of tyranny. The word

“tyranny” is after all Greek and originally meant no more than rule by a single man, later acquiring the connotation that such rule was contrary to the citizenship of free men. Not that there were many free men. On a similar theme the Romans feared a *dominatio* unacceptable to the *dignitas* of the *nobile*. Is Mr Major such a tyrant? It seems ridiculous to say so, but the stories we hear of the Whips’ actions are not encouraging. No one has been put to death... yet. But the depressing part of the rigmarole is not whether the threats of Mr Major’s agents amount to *dominatio*, but the realisation that he cannot be exercising *dominatio* since none of his colleagues are *nobiles* or have any *dignitas* to be infringed. If Mr Sweeney really did burst into tears then I cannot help thinking that he deserved to be bullied.

If the standards of public duty are plummeting it is the place of true Tories to restore confidence in our society, and not to be the vanguard of the barbarian armies massing to storm the city

Maastricht and Proportional Representation are distractions from, and effects of, the real problem. We have to recall the religious councils of the earlier Byzantine emperors to discover a controversy of equal bitterness and mindless irrelevance. And why should the Mother of Parliaments entertain a scheme based on the total rejection of the values upon which it has rested for centuries?

We are living in a declining civilisation, poised on the brink of a virulent New Age. It is thoroughly in keeping with the Spirit of the Times to wreck the Westminster Parliament in a fit of pique against the present prime minister. If anything of worth is to be saved from the impending slough it will not be achieved by imitating fashion. Mr Barrett seems to recognise this in his railing against the mass standardization of pop culture. Surely the correct approach when faced by rotteness in public life is not to demolish our institutions but to make them work. If the old bonds of local community are decayed, it is the role of true Tories to renew them and not accelerate that decline. If the standards of public duty are plummeting it is the place of true Tories to restore confidence in our society, and not to be the vanguard of the barbarian armies massing to storm the city.

Is it not possible that restoring public confidence in the standard of public duty may have been the original inspiration behind the Citizen’s Charter?

This document has been much mocked and much maligned and predictably the bureaucrats are choking it. But however half-cock a birth it may have had, it deserves to be made the platform for a process of civic renewal. Similarly if an attitude towards Europe could only be patched up – and I suspect that the course of events has now left the argument as essentially one over means and not ends – a drive can be made to correct the aimless anxiety which has followed the ending of the Cold War, particularly if this can be achieved at the same time as the economy recovers. Mr Major is due some luck and I believe the rest of us would rather oppose our opponents than each other.

There are more fundamental issues upon which Mr Major will ultimately be judged, most obviously the economy. Yet a recovery will avail us nothing if the quality of life has evaporated, so someone will have to grasp this nettle sooner or later. The auguries are not propitious. In the months following the assassination of Julius Caesar (and I have no axe to grind in choosing this example) there was also a period of drift and mendacity. We can all endorse Cicero’s complaint in the *Eighth Philippic: deserti, deserti, inquam, sumus, patres conscipti, a principibus.*

We are deserted by our leaders.

William Norton is a trainee solicitor.

It is very easy to accuse a government of imperfection, It is very easy to arouse people to a contempt for their ancient observances; no-one has ever attempted this without succeeding. But to establish a better state of things in place of what he has destroyed — many a man has failed in his endeavours to do that.

Montaigne

Against Centralization

Hans-Hermann Hoppe sees opportunities in the present secessionist movements

With the collapse of communism all across Eastern Europe, secessionist movements are mushrooming. The Soviet Union no longer exists. Instead there are now more than a dozen independent states on its territory, and many of its more than one hundred different ethnic, religious or linguistic groups are striving to gain independence. Yugoslavia has dissolved into various national components. Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia and Bosnia now exist as independent states. The Czechs and the Slovaks have split and formed independent countries. Moreover, there are Germans in Poland, Hungarians in Slovakia, Hungarians, Macedonians and Albanians in Serbia, Germans and Hungarians in Romania, and Turks and Macedonians in Bulgaria, who all desire independence. The events of Eastern Europe have also given new strength to secessionist movements in Western Europe: to the Scots and Irish in Great Britain, the Basques and Catalonians in Spain, the Flemish in Belgium and the South Tyrolians and the Lega Nord in Italy.

From a global perspective, however, mankind has moved closer than ever to the establishment of a ONE WORLD government. Even before the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the US had attained hegemonical status over Western Europe (most notably over West Germany) and the Pacific rim countries (most notably over Japan) – as indicated by the presence of US troops and military bases, the NATO and SEATO pacts, by the role of the US dollar as the ultimate international reserve currency and the US Federal Reserve System as the “lender” or “liquidity provider” of last resort for the entire Western banking system, as well as by institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF)

and the World Bank. Moreover, under US hegemony the political integration of Western Europe has advanced steadily. With the establishment of a European Central Bank and a European Currency Unit (ECU), the European Community will be complete before the turn of the century. In the absence of the Soviet Empire and its military threat, the US has emerged as the world’s sole and undisputed military superpower.

A look at history reveals yet another perspective. At the beginning of this millennium, Europe consisted of thousands of independent territorial units. Now, only a few dozen such units remain. Certainly, decentralising forces also existed. There was the progressive disintegration of the Ottoman Empire from the 16th century until after World War I with the establishment of modern Turkey. The Habsburg Empire was gradually dismembered from the time of its greatest expansion under Charles V until it disappeared in 1918 and modern Austria was founded. However, the overriding tendency was in the opposite direction. For instance, during the second half of the 17th century, Germany consisted of some 234 counties, 51 free cities, and 1500 independent knightly manors. By the early 19th century, the number had fallen below 50, and by 1871 unification had been achieved. The scenario in Italy was similar. Even the small states have a history of expansion and centralisation. Switzerland began in 1291 as a confederation of three independent cantonal states. By 1848 it was a single – federal – state with some two dozen cantonal provinces.

II

How should one interpret these phe-

nomena? According to the orthodox view, centralisation is generally a ‘good’ and progressive movement, whereas disintegration and secession, even if sometimes unavoidable, represent an anachronism. It is assumed that larger political units and ultimately a single world government imply wider markets and hence increased wealth. As evidence of this, it is pointed out that economic prosperity has increased dramatically with increased centralisation.

However, rather than reflecting the truth, this orthodox view shows us how history is typically written by its victors. Correlation or temporal coincidence do not prove causation. In fact, the relationship between economic prosperity and centralisation is very different from — indeed, almost the opposite of — what orthodoxy alleges.

Political integration (centralisation) and economic (market) integration are two completely different phenomena. Political integration involves the territorial expansion of a government’s power of taxation and property regulation (expropriation).

Economic integration is the extension of the interpersonal and interregional division of labour and market participation.

In principle, in taxing and regulating (expropriating) private property owners and market income earners, all governments are counter-productive. They *reduce* market participation and the formation of economic wealth. Once the existence of a government has been assumed, however, no direct relationship between territorial size and economic integration exists. Switzerland and Albania are both small countries, but Switzerland exhibits a high degree of economic integration, whereas Albania does not. Both the US and the former Soviet Union are large.

Yet while there is much division of labour and market participation in the US, in the Soviet Union, where there is virtually no private capital ownership, there is hardly any economic integration. Centralisation, then, can go hand in hand with economic progress as well as with retrogression. Progress results whenever a less taxing and regulating government expands its territory at the expense of a more expropriative one. If the reverse occurs, centralisation implies economic disintegration and retrogression.

Yet a highly important indirect relationship between size and economic integration exists. A central government ruling over large-scale territories – much less a single world government – cannot come into existence *ab ovo*. Instead, all institutions with the power to tax and regulate the owners of private property must start out small. Smallness contributes to moderation, however. A small government has many close competitors, and if it taxes and regulates its own subjects visibly more than these competitors do, it is bound to suffer from emigration and a corresponding loss of future revenue. Consider a single household, or a village, as an independent territory, for instance. Could a father do to his son, or a mayor to his village, what the government of the Soviet Union did to its subjects (i.e., deny them any right to private capital ownership) or what governments all across Western Europe and the US do to their citizens (i.e., expropriate up to 50% of their productive output)? Obviously not. There would either be an immediate revolt and the government would be overthrown, or emigration to another nearby household or village would ensue.

Contrary to orthodoxy, then, it is because Europe at the beginning possessed a highly decentralised power structure composed of countless independent political units, which explains the origin of capitalism – the expansion of market participation and of economic growth – in the Western World. It is not by accident that capitalism first flourished under conditions of extreme political decentralisation: in the northern Italian city states, in southern Germany, and in the seces-

sionist Low Countries.

The competition among small governments for taxable subjects brings them into conflict with each other. As a result of interstate conflicts, historically drawn out over the course of centuries, a few states succeed in expanding their territories, while more others are eliminated or incorporated. Which states win in this process of eliminative competition and which ones lose depends on many factors. But in the long run, the decisive factor in determining the outcome is the relative amount of economic resources at a government's disposal. In taxing and regulating, governments do not positively contribute to the creation of economic wealth. Instead, they parasitically draw on existing wealth. However, they can influence the amount of the existing wealth negatively. Other things being equal, the lower the tax and regulation burden imposed by a government on its domestic economy, the larger its population tends to grow (for internal reasons as well as due to immigration gains), and the larger the amount of domestically produced wealth on which it can draw in its conflicts with neighbouring competitors. For this reason centralisation is frequently progressive. States which tax and regulate their domestic economies little – liberal states – tend to defeat, and expand their territories at the expense of, non-liberal ones. This accounts for the outbreak of the 'industrial revolution' in centralised England and France. It explains why in the course of the 19th century Western Europe came to dominate the rest of the world (rather than the other way around), and why this colonialism was generally progressive. Furthermore, it explains the rise of the US to the rank of superpower in the course of the 20th century.

However, the further the process of more liberal governments defeating less liberal ones proceeds – i.e., the larger the territories, the fewer and more distant the remaining competitors and the more costly accordingly international migration – the lower a government's incentive to continue in its domestic liberalism will be. As one approaches the limit of a one-world state, all possibilities of voting with

one's feet against a government disappear. Wherever one goes, the same tax and regulation structure applies. Thus relieved of the problem of emigration, a fundamental checkrein on the expansion of governmental power is gone. This explains the course of the 20th century: With World War I, and even more so with World War II, the US government attained hegemony over Western Europe and became heir to its vast colonial empires. A decisive step in the direction of global unification was thus taken. A *pax Americana* was established. And indeed, throughout the entire period the US, Western Europe and most of the rest of the world have suffered from a steady and dramatic growth of government power, taxation and regulatory expropriation.

III

What then is the role of secession?

Initially, secession is nothing more than a shifting of control over the nationalised wealth from a larger, central government to a smaller, regional one. Whether or not this will lead to more or less economic integration and prosperity depends on the new regional government's policies. However, the sole fact of secession has an immediate positive impact on production, for one of the most important reasons for secession is typically the belief on the part of the secessionists that they and their territory are being exploited by others. The Slovenes felt, and rightly so, that they were being robbed systematically by the Serbs and the Serbian-dominated central Yugoslavian government; and the Baltics resented the fact that they had to pay tribute to the Russians and the Russian-dominated government of the Soviet Union. By virtue of secession, hegemonic domestic relations are replaced by contractual – mutually beneficial – foreign relations. Instead of forced integration there is voluntary separation. Forced integration, illustrated by such measures as bussing, rent controls, anti-discrimination laws and, as will be explained shortly, 'free immigration', invariably creates tension, hatred and conflict. In contrast, voluntary separation leads to social harmony and peace. Under forced integration any mistake

can be blamed on a foreign group or culture and all success claimed as one's own, and hence there is little or no reason for any culture to learn from another. Under a régime of "separate but equal", one must face up to the reality not only of cultural diversity but in particular also of visibly distinct ranks of cultural advancement. If a secessionist people wishes to improve or maintain its relative position vis-à-vis a competing one, nothing but discriminative learning will help. It must imitate, assimilate, and if possible, improve upon the skills, traits, practices and rules characteristic of more advanced cultures, and it must avoid those characteristic of lesser advanced societies. Rather than promoting a downward levelling of cultures as under forced integration, secession stimulates a co-operative process of cultural selection and advancement.

Moreover, although everything else depends on the new regional government's domestic policies and no direct relationship between size and economic integration exists, there is an important indirect connection. Just as political centralisation ultimately tends to promote economic disintegration, so secession tends to advance integration and economic development. First, secession always involves the breaking away of a smaller from a larger population and is thus a vote against the principle of democracy and majoritarian ownership in favour of private, decentralised property. More importantly, secession always involves increased opportunities for interregional migration, and a secessionist government is immediately confronted with the spectre of emigration. In order to avoid the loss of its most productive subjects, it is under increased pressure to adopt comparatively liberal domestic policies by allowing more private property and imposing a lower tax and regulation burden than its neighbours. Ultimately, with as many territories as separate households, villages or towns, the opportunities for economically motivated emigration would be maximised, and government power over a domestic economy minimised.

Specifically, the smaller the country, the greater will be the pressure to opt for free trade rather than protectionism.

All government interference with foreign trade forcibly limits the range of mutually beneficial interterritorial exchanges and thus leads to relative impoverishment, at home as well as abroad. But the smaller a territory and its internal markets, the more dramatic this effect will be. A country the size of Russia, for instance, might attain comparatively high standards of living even if it renounced all foreign trade, provided it possessed an unrestricted internal capital and consumer goods market. In contrast, if predominantly Serbian cities or counties seceded from surrounding Croatia, and if they pursued the same protectionism, this would likely spell disaster. Consider a single household as the conceivably smallest secessionist unit. By engaging in unrestricted free trade, even the smallest territory can be fully integrated into the world market and partake of every advantage of the division of labour; its owners may well become the wealthiest people on earth. The existence of a single wealthy individual anywhere is living proof of this. On the other hand, if the same household owners decided to forego all interterritorial trade, abject poverty or death would result. Accordingly, the smaller a territory and its internal markets, the more likely it is that it will opt for free trade.

IV

Secessionism, and the growth of separatist and regionalist movements in Eastern and Western Europe represent not an anachronism, but must be regarded instead as potentially the most progressive historical forces, especially in light of the fact that with the fall of the Soviet Union we have moved closer than ever to the establishment of a "new world order". Secession increases ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural diversity, while in the course of centuries of centralisation hundreds of distinct cultures were stamped out. It will end the forced integration brought about as a result of centralisation, and rather than stimulating social strife and cultural nivellation, it will promote the peaceful, co-operative competition of different, territorially separate cultures. In particular, it eliminates the

immigration problem increasingly plaguing the countries of Western Europe as well as the US. Presently, whenever the central government permits immigration, it allows foreigners to proceed – literally on government owned roads – to any of its residents' doorsteps, regardless of whether or not these residents desire such proximity to foreigners. "Free immigration" is thus to a large extent forced integration. Secession solves this problem by letting smaller territories each have their own admission standards and determine independently with whom they will associate on their own territory and with whom they prefer to cooperate from a distance. Lastly, secession promotes economic integration and development. The process of centralisation has resulted in the formation of an international, US-dominated government cartel of managed migration, trade, and fiat money, ever more invasive and burdensome governments, globalised welfare-warfare statism and economic stagnation or even declining standards of living. Secession, if it is extensive enough, could change all this. A Europe consisting of hundreds of distinct countries, regions and cantons, of thousands of independent free cities such as the present-day "oddities" of Monaco, San Marino and Andorra, with the resulting greatly increased opportunities for economically motivated migration, would be one of small liberal governments economically integrated through free trade and an international commodity money such as gold. It would be a Europe of unparalleled economic growth and unheard of prosperity.

Hans-Hermann Hoppe is Professor in the Economics Department in the University of Nevada at Las Vegas.



First in an Occasional Series

Patricia Lanca

Letter From Lisbon

A year ago Portugal presided for the first time over the European community; the political class was enthusiastically pro-Maastricht and gave whole hearted support to what has come to be known as 'the oasis theory'. This held that Portugal, with the highest growth and lowest unemployment and crime rates in Europe, was an oasis of peace and prosperity in the surrounding desert. An uninterrupted inflow of EC social funds would guarantee the continuance of this enviable state of affairs.

Today the 'oasis theory' is shattered. Even Prime Minister Anibal Cavaco Silva has felt obliged to admit that the world recession will not spare this small open economy. It is now confessed that the growth rate in 1992 was under 2% and will probably be negative this year. Maladroit financial management and indiscreet ministerial speeches have depleted Portugal's gold reserves by hundreds of millions of dollars in vain-glorious efforts to bolster an over-valued escudo. Farmers, unable to compete with imports, are convinced that the Common Agricultural Policy will quite simply liquidate Portuguese agriculture. In industry bankruptcies and lay-offs are beginning to crescendo. Corruption may not approach Italian proportions but constant Press revelation of financial scandals at ministerial level are discrediting the ruling party as never before. An under-secretary of State at the Ministry of Health and a former Governor of Macau are at present on trial on corruption charges and investigations are proceeding in connection with various high officials including the former

head of the Institute responsible for distributing European funds. An incipient and wearing institutional quarrel between the majority PSD (Social Democratic Party) government and the 'Socialist' President of the Republic is, for the first time in two consecutive majority mandates, causing talk of a presidential dissolution of Parliament and legislative elections before the PSD term expires in 1995. Nobody mentions Maastricht any more.

Not only is economic policy in disarray. The Cavaco government, scarcely hiding its sympathies for the communist MPLA and FRELIMO, staked everything on successfully sponsoring peace agreements for its former African territories. Instead Angola is being destroyed by renewed civil war while in Mozambique negotiations seem never-ending.

Nor is the treatment of social questions any more encouraging: a dozen deaths in the haemodialysis department of the main Evora hospital owing to excessive aluminium in the water supply; a score of Aids deaths among sufferers from haemophilia owing to contaminated imported blood as well as several hundred cases of HIV infection from the same cause. These are but two alarming examples of negligence in the state health sector, with the government showing no sign of accepting responsibility. In education, said from Cavaco's earliest days to be the 'priority of priorities', all the evidence points to increasing shambles. The present Minister has managed the record achievement of uniting communist and anti-communist teachers' unions, students, parents, the

universities and everyone else against him. Not even at the height of the revolutionary period in 1974-5, was the university atmosphere so troubled: at a Higher Education Congress in Lisbon in mid April the Minister's speech was interrupted by a group of male students in the audience who demonstrated to aghast officials their opposition to university fees by turning round and exposing their bare bottoms, painted with slogans.

Unexamined lives

However, Portugal certainly remains an oasis in one respect: the continuing significance in its political and cultural life of an orthodox, unreconstructed, neo-stalinist communist party. Nineteen years after the overthrow of the dictatorship the PCP has, of course, nothing like the hegemony it briefly enjoyed in 1974-5 and is now in a somewhat similar position to that of the French or Italian communists twenty years after World War II. (But then, of course, 'actually existing socialism' had not yet collapsed!) The PCP counts on a steady 10-12% of the electorate who return an important group of deputies to Parliament and enable the communists to control a large number of town and city councils in the Lisbon area and the southern 'agrarian reform' district of the Alentejo. Lisbon's socialist mayor was elected on a joint Socialist-Communist ticket and proposes the same alliance in this year's local elections in December. That the PCP should survive the crash of communism's centre can be explained to some extent by the illiteracy of the overwhelming majority

of its mainly elderly electorate to whom the words Polonia, Bulgaria or Romania might as well be female christian names. And TV does not help much unless you have a reasonable vocabulary and some geography.

Manifestly, this is no explanation for the still surviving influence of communism and marxism among intellectuals, the media and the chattering classes. In these milieux it is more respectable to be a card-carrying PCP member than to be 'anti-communistas primarios'. To be firmly and vocally anti-communist and anti-marxist is to be thought irremediably archaic and to betray a nostalgia for Salazar's dictatorship. And this, despite innumerable documentaries on television and reports in the Press as well as the growing number of defectors from the party itself. Agonizing re-appraisals are, of course, frequently published in the quality Press signed by well known Left Socialists seeking to find common ground with recent dissidents in some new path forward for the Left.

However, what is characteristic of most of these writings is their extraordinary vacuity. Seldom do they display the kind of intellectual level to be found, say, among New Left Review

supporters in the heady post-Hungarian days of the 1950's in Britain. Indeed analytical capacity and historical acumen are here notable for their absence. There is little self-criticism among Portuguese recent ex-communists or evidence of any desire to make reparation for past errors among those who persist. This surrealist stance does not seem to be taken amiss by others. One glaring but by no means exceptional example is the case of Jose Saramago, today perhaps Portugal's best known and best selling 'serious' writer. Only a few years ago this personage could be seen on Saturday mornings flogging the party newspaper in the street in Lisbon's University City. Shortly after the Revolution he was in charge of Portugal's most important daily, the *Diario de Noticias*, where he became notorious for his ruthless sackings of non-communist journalists. Saramago remains in the party. He is much translated and his articles and interviews are to be found almost weekly in the Press. He both receives literary prizes and is received in the presidential palace and when his recent book 'The Gospel according to Jesus Christ' failed to be short listed for a

literary prize by an Under Secretary of State for Culture, protests were widespread and officialdom accused of persecuting him.

Now it may be that Saramago, despite his deplorable politics, is a great writer, though there are many who do not share this view. And no doubt there is a good case for separating art from the political views of the artist. However, what is difficult to accept is the almost universal reluctance to question such individuals about the moral authority they invariably assume. Saramago and others like him frequently appear on television but everybody is extremely careful not to ask awkward questions. Perhaps all this discretion has something to do with the fact that in Portugal there are quite a number of public figures with a murky recent past. Even in the government itself there are at least two important ministers who were active, violent and maoist in the period 1974-5, and whose conversions to bourgeois life have never been satisfactorily explained.

Patricia Lanca is a writer and a former Deputy of the Portuguese Parliament

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Of Pan — and Platitudes

Derrick Turner finds Greens and Tories share some common ground

Environmentalism and conservatism have an uneasy relationship. There is something about each that the other doesn't like. Some environmentalists believe, so it seems, that conservatives are engaged in a dark conspiracy with 'big business' to depopulate the Third World, deforest the Amazon Basin, deform 'Utopian' native cultures and generally defenestrate the whole delicate ecosystem (for financial gain). Conservatives are attacked for hunting 'cuddly' foxes, for defending the 'free market' and for upholding the 'value-system' of the West above all others (this last, especially laughable proposition, surely tinged with bathos for true believing conservatives such as the readers of *The Salisbury Review*).

This distrust is reciprocated by conservatives, who despise careless scholarship, the intemperate language and the vaguely hippie antecedents of the environmentalist movement. (It could be argued that the judgement of anybody who thought that Bob Dylan was a good singer cannot be trusted!) It is certainly true that too many environmentalists subscribe to a sort of 'package-deal' ideology, whereby 'environmental concern' is considered simply as part of a whole range of other oven-ready beliefs, such as 'anti-racism' and internationalism, rightly considered nauseating by most conservatives. For many conservatives, the environmentalist lobby is also tainted irremediably by its traditional connections with state socialism. Just as former Communists in the U.S.A. became 'neo-cons', so former Communists in Europe turned to the budding Greens as time, and fashion, turned against them. There is also a well-grounded conservative fear that all these grandiose schemes will

necessitate yet further a rapine of the Western milch-cow.

Environmentalists have scored some notable victories culminating in the recent 'Earth Summit' in Rio de Janeiro, a strange mixture of religious devotion, realpolitik and media circus. Earnest German schoolmarm, cynical Third World politicians, jaded hacks from the world press, former beatniks in suits fresh from Hampstead, bewildered indigenous tribesmen, hard-headed businessmen, prostitutes, grim-jawed policemen off duty from the death squads, self-publicists from Tinseltown, neo-pagans, 'liberation' theologians, technicians, middle-class voteseeking Western politicians, all of them jumbled up together, making pious protestations in a multitude of languages — but the very fact that they were all together in one place, shows how environmentalism has gained the moral high ground. (This, while conservatism has become associated, in the simplistic far left mind, with gas-chambers and Senator McCarthy.) This relative success of the environmentalists has further embittered unreconstructed conservatives, who instinctively feel that anything so successful and vulgar as 'Earth Summits', has to have something wrong about it.

This is not, however, the whole story. Some environmentalist societies like the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, are innately conservative (and ultimately practical, because they concentrate on immediate, local problems about which something can actually be done); at least some environmentalists are beginning to realise that not everything about Western culture is necessarily bad (and that most famous environmentalists are Westerners themselves). About a year-and-a-half ago, an English

organisation called Common Ground made an excellent television documentary, entitled 'The Green Man', highlighting the inextricable links between the truly native Western religions and the ecological values that Hampstead has just discovered. 'The Green Man' was a well constructed meandering through the highways and byways of English (as opposed to 'world') history, showing the subliminal power of the eponymous symbol over the centuries, and how, even today, an inchoate paganism still informs and guides the mainstream of Western (or at least of British) life. Gerald Durrell, David Bellamy, David Attenborough and, to a lesser extent, Jonathan Porritt are simply heirs to the great tradition of nature-deification espoused by such differing English icons as Wordsworth, Tennyson, Vaughan Williams, William Cobbett, Richard Jefferies, Henry Williamson, D. H. Lawrence and Francis Bacon, among others. Some conservative ideas are reaching the mainstream of environmentalism and there is a new mood of realism, for some environmentalists realise that an accommodation must be made for industrial activity, a few even muttering the heresy that Third World nations are exacerbating the problem(s) by not initiating proper birth-control programmes.

The advocates of 'sustainable development' are gaining ground, putting to flight the prehistoric notion that unlimited amounts of Western aid are the only solution. There is a refreshingly 'reactionary', Luddite element in the Green *Gleichschaltung*, which stirs the blood and awakens sepia-tone memories of those halcyon days before the 'dark, satanic mills' were built. I regret that there is this

estrangement between conservatism and environmentalism. Exaggerated though environmentalist theory may be, however objectionable its spokesmen, there is a central kernel of truth in what they say – that the world is direly threatened by industry and, even more pertinently, by uncontrolled human breeding. I think that there is a need for a ‘synthesis’ of genuine ecological consciousness and proper conservatism. The ‘green’ movement is lopsided, underdeveloped in the right side, like a bodybuilder with one dumbbell. It needs co-ordination and philosophical depth. Without these things, it will never consolidate its recent gains, but will continue to be treated with suspicion by ordinary people, which would be a great misfortune. It may be that we, relatively erudite and pragmatic, can provide at least some of what is needed. To the denunciatory polemics, we can bring the precision of an Emerson:

The history of man is a series of conspiracies to win from nature some advantage without paying for it.

Or the sagacity of a Juvenal:

Never does nature say one thing and wisdom another.

Sentimental environmentalists would be wiser for knowing Bacon’s

Nature is commanded by obeying her.

Ignorance of the simplest of natural laws, about the realities of, say, race, power, or human nature, is one of the great weaknesses of the environmentalist movement, as it was of Marxism. No farmer, for example, has any illusions about the integral cruelty of nature, nor many real philosophers about the essential baseness of human nature.

And a little bit of old-time religion, albeit of the pantheist sort, wouldn’t hurt them at all. With Goethe, they could reflect that “Nature is the living, breathing garment of God”. Or with the forgotten Hedges, who once said:

Sympathy with nature is a part of the good man’s religion.

Emerson thought that we should accommodate ourselves to the great wheel of the seasons, the ponderous, yet fleeting, march of the year, the savage, yet inspiring, grand logic of the cosmos (although it is hard to imagine this whiskered Unitarian capering around a Maypole!):

Throb thine with Nature’s throbbing breast,
And all is clear from east to west...

Lots of other Dead White European Males have had even more valuable things to say. The now obscure Binney antedated bottle-banks when he noticed how

Nature is the most thrifty thing in the world; she never wastes any thing; she undergoes change, but there’s no annihilation – the essence remains.

***The ‘green’
movement is lopsided,
underdeveloped in the
right side, like a
bodybuilder with one
dumbbell***

The environmentalist movement would benefit greatly if somebody were to draw attention to the environmentalist credentials of many of the most important Westerners of the past. Apart from those mentioned above, a longish list might be drawn up of other ‘culture-bearers’ who would have sympathised with Green aspirations. Such a list would surely include people like Yeats, Constable, Elgar, London, Hardy, Fabre, Seton, Darwin, Ruskin, Hemingway and Nietzsche. Current sensibilities, derived from the vapid abstractions of ‘liberalism’, would preclude many of these, because of their real, or supposed ‘nationalist’, ‘authoritarian’, even ‘racist’ tendencies. None of these would have held any brief for the sentimentality which says that all foxes must be protected, that all human life is sacred (no matter how presently or formerly unproductive, no matter how botched), that ‘world peace’ or ‘social justice’

are attainable. They were true environmentalists, people close enough to the heart of things to know that nature is more than those appealing seal cubs, more than Laura Ashley cottage interiors, more than just a sort of huge, benevolent playground with all the sharp edges sanded down. Nature, they would have accepted, is just as much about puff adders, black widow spiders, cultural differences (or ‘racism’), war, famine and plague. Nature, they would have assumed, is not incompatible with self-reliance, dressing smartly, or a sense of national separateness.

No matter how unfashionable some of these people’s beliefs may seem now, their eloquence is particularly relevant. The environment is more than oleaginous cliché, more, even, than statistics about the ozone layer. ‘The Lark Ascending’ is as valid an environmentalist statement as the Greenpeace newsletter. Lacsén’s eloquent Darwinism (in London’s *The Sea Wolf*) is as ‘true’ as, and far more edifying than, the latest ooziings about the supposed wonderfulness of Amerindians. The irreducible quality about people like London, Juvenal and Bacon serves to expose the abysmal lack of sensibility of most Greens; to add just a hint of this irreducibility to the dry triteness of environmentalism would give it some glamour, some profundity, and some toughness. Save the whale, save the benighted Indians of the Mato Grosso, relieve distress in the Third World, yes, by all means; but also try to save the sanguinary sense of place, of poesy, of wonder at the wilderness that is disappearing. Unite the mutually complementary traditions of realism and moralism, and underpin them with the empirical facts of the matter, insofar as they can be ascertained, and the consciousness-raising campaign will be easily won. The protection of our sorely-pressed environment is too valuable a matter to be party-political; and the underlying logic of nature is too virile to be fully understood by people who are shocked by everything natural.

Derrick Turner works in the advertising industry.

SEA-CHANGE

Tristan Jones' voyage to Damascus

By the early '60s I'd been at sea pretty well since my 14th birthday, first before the war, as boy-deckie in a sailing-barge, then in the R.N. (lower deck) and from 1952 onwards, in what landspeople call "yachts", but what we always called "small craft"; I was deck-hand, then mate, and then skipper. By 1959 I had my own craft, which I lived aboard and sailed in between yacht-delivery trips and any other work I might find. CRESSWELL was a converted wooden RNLI lifeboat, built in 1909; I'd bought her for £350.

Politically, like most British "mate-lots" of my generation on destroyers' messdecks, I'd picked up, by osmosis *Labourite-Socialism*. In retrospect, what political ideas I had probably stemmed much more from 19th-century Working Men's Clubs than from Marx. After my medical discharge from the Service I'd practically forgotten politics, because of the daily struggle to stay self-sufficient, free and at sea.

Then, while in Sète, in Southern France, through the sailing grapevine, I'd arranged by telegram (no fax machines in those days) a contract to deliver, starting three months later, a 40-foot ketch from Gibraltar to Brazil. My intention was to sail slowly down the Spanish coast, in order to find a berth in Gib for my boat while I was away from her (*slowly*: berths in Gib were charged for, unlike in Spanish harbours).

I'd started to cast off the lines from Sète jetty when the young Englishman appeared. It was towards dusk (always minions of the moon, we sailors) and I was anxious to get well clear of the French coast before dark. I was alone and it was before the time of automatic steering gears. 'The weather signs were

good, but the prospect of being at the helm for hours was gloomy. I'd worked hard all day re-rigging the mast. I would sail out clear until the small hours, then when dawn broke I'd snatch a few hours of sleep with my boat drifting.

"Where are you sailing?" I hadn't heard my own language for weeks. I looked up. He was English – no doubt about that. One of the bulldog breed, I knew as soon as I saw his face. He wore a large khaki travelling coat and had a small rucksack slung over his shoulder. Around his neck hung two camera cases.

"Spain... Barcelona..." Departure time is not for idle chatter.

"Can I come along?" He was in his early twenties, short, stubby, and looked clean and healthy enough. It was before the spread of illegal drugs made such "pier-head" enlistments inadvisable. It would be much better to sail CRESSWELL direct to Barcelona without stopping and drifting for sleep. It was autumn; there was always the threat of a sudden mistral wind blowing up. "Ever sailed?" I asked.

"In a dinghy once or twice".

I'd heard that one at least a hundred times from would-be crew.

"Cook?"

"Well... yep".

"Okay, chuck your bag aboard. You can share the helm after I show you the ropes".

The young man introduced himself as John. He was not talkative, and I liked that. By dusk John was showing himself to be a handy fast-learner. By midnight he was on the helm, with orders to stay on compass course, and to wake me should anything at all turn up; if the wind should increase, or if he saw any light.

An hour before dawn, after John

woke me with a cooked breakfast, we were well on the way to becoming, not friends, but something even better in a small-craft at sea: *used to avoiding one another*.

Despite lack of any real wind, we managed to potter into Barcelona the following evening. Then there were no yacht marinas; we berthed wherever there was a convenient space. I chose to go alongside the city jetty close by the model of Columbus' '*Santa Maria*', near to the harbour-end of the Ramblas De Las Flores. Under the docklamps glare we were inspected by two Guardia Civiles, in grey uniforms and shiny black leather hats, rifles slung over their shoulders. Both looked uninterested enough.

I'd asked John for his passport, and with both his and mine in hand addressed the policemen. My Spanish by then was quite good. "Buenos noches, Senores. Quiremos entre Espana y iremos al restaurante" ("Good evening, we wish to enter Spain and go to a restaurant").

The elder of the two Guardia Civil shook his head. "Es muy tarde" (It's too late...).

I switched on my lean look. "Tenemos hambre, Senores!" (We're hungry").

The senior Guardia Civil wafted his free hand in the direction of the dock-gate. "Off you go ashore. Get your passports stamped at the gate-office tomorrow morning!"

"Muchas gracias Senor!" As I landed on the jetty I handed John back his passport, and, to the Guardia Civiles' polite "Muy buenos appetitos", we headed for the gate.

The first thing John did when we came to the wide Ramblas De Las Flores was search among the news vendors' stalls for a London "Times"

newspaper. It took quite a while, but he finally sighted one and bought it. It was a week old, but he only wanted the crossword puzzle, he said. I was accustomed to oddballs among sailing crews, so did not object to our delay.

The little cafe we finally entered was dirty but cheap, not far from the dock-gates. It seemed to be full of poorly-dressed deaf mutes sitting and gazing blankly. We were the only diners. The only expressions to be seen, were of plain old suffering, except for the fat café-owner. His look somehow managed to combine both suffering and avarice. As we ate, one lottery vendor, one beggar after another, approached our table, the old, the young, the lame, the blind. They were all shushed away by the cafe-owner. When we had eaten and as we finished our wine John laid his "Times" out on the table and set to work on the crossword.

While he was thus occupied, I stared into my tobacco-smoke. The café-owner was absent, a young woman, clean, but dressed in black rags, approached, a baby held close to her. I'd been around the ports of the world, and I'd learned to ignore the more egregious frauds who chose to beg. But this gaunt woman had that look in her eyes that comes only from real starvation. She could have been twenty or thirty, or even forty; there comes a time of such worn despair that age means nothing. As she held her palm out over our table, John, who was bent frowning over his puzzle gestured her away with one hand. At the same time I delved in my pocket and dragged out a tattered note — it could

not have been more than ten pesetas, and offered it to the young woman, who dropped to her knees and kissed my hand.

Although I'm from Wales, I've never liked public displays of emotion. I beckoned the young mother to stand. She did so, and, murmuring "Dios te bendigo Señor!" she turned to leave the café.

My companion did not look up from his crossword puzzle; his voice was low and cold and flat: "You know that kind of thing will block the revolution".

I must have thought he was joking. It didn't strike home then, but I must have replied: "Well... a kid to feed..."

And that was the end of that, and as we walked back to the boat to the night calls of the *serenos* (night-watchmen) it didn't mean much, nor did it for quite a long time.

One of a yacht-captain's jobs is to see that all frontier routines are carried out properly. In these days this is made easier by computers; in the old days it was a pain in the neck, usually a traipse from one office to another with bundles of forms, and with no English-speaker within miles.

I awoke early next day to find my crewman missing. I dashed ashore and searched around the empty docks for a while; there was no sign of John. I dare not report that to the gate-office; I would probably be arrested for aiding an illegal entrant. I didn't know if the Guardia Civiles of the previous night had reported CRESSWELL's arrival or not. If they had I'd be arrested because my crew was missing; if they

had not, and John was apprehended ashore, and told the police he'd arrived in CRESSWELL, I'd be arrested. Whichever way, I'd wind up in a cell.

There's an old sailors' saw: "When *in danger or in doubt, hoist the sail and head off out*". I quietly slipped my docklines and, by daylight, was a mile down the sea-channel out of Barcelona, headed for Majorca. There were no computers, and it would take ages for an alarm to reach Majorca, if one was raised by the Spanish dock police.

As I headed for the offing, as one tends to, I thought of the recent events, and remembered that when my crew had handed me his passport the evening before, I'd caught a peep of his name. It didn't mean much to me then, but I never forget a name. His was *Philby*.

It took me another two years to discover that John Philby had been a working cameraman on Fleet Street. I still don't know if he showed his passport formally to enter Spain, nor if the Guardia Civil found his name of interest. I wonder if in fact I smuggled Kim Philby's son (I saw a picture of the temporary crewman later; there's no doubt that's who it was) into Franco's Spain?

Whether I did or not, that one remark in that dirty little café had swung my compass needle right around. From the moment John Philby spoke then, I've never believed in pie-in-the-sky.

Tristan Jones runs a project for the disabled in Thailand (see page 30).

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Eastern Bizarre

Juliet Pospelovsky describes the challenge of daily life in Moscow

“Welcome to our Russian market”, said a proud President Yeltsin after signing a trade agreement on his much publicised visit to India. It is remarkable that a once rigidly state-controlled country does now resemble a bustling eastern bazaar on every square and subway of its capital, only a short time after the capitalization of its economy. But how real is this apparent change?

Despite its President’s optimism and its many natural resources, Russia is not finding it easy to transfer to a market economy: foreign debts, including the \$80 billion inherited from the former Soviet Union, are not being serviced; industrial production is in decline as companies run out of money to buy equipment and parts; the central bank has been pumping roubles into the economy with cheap credits to industry; Russian firms have not been using this extra cash to pay off debts, but have been buying up dollars on Moscow’s Foreign Currency Exchange, which only drives the rouble lower; the firms, as a result, are devoting a greater proportion of their budgets to purchasing dollars so that the process is self-stimulating.

It is no wonder that hyper-inflation ran at 2,600 per cent in 1992, and an attempt to get it under control in the New Year failed almost immediately as fuel prices skyrocketed in February (thus raising retail prices by about 40 per cent). This came as a shock to citizens of the former Soviet Union who, in the past, did not have to cope with Western style inflation, because prices were controlled, which is not to say that inflation did not exist, but rather that it took the form of shortages and long queues.

After prices were freed in January 1992, most of the queues disappeared and so did the “rouble overhang” – the huge savings hoarded by people who could find nothing to spend them on – as it was used to absorb an initial period of 240 per cent inflation. In response, the government maintained a tight control of the money supply, so much so that there was even a shortage of roubles last spring and, by the summer, inflation had fallen to below ten per cent. Other forces, principally firms receiving credits and wages being increased, pushed it up again in the autumn and it continued to spiral into 1993.

The President, meanwhile, embroiled in a constitutional battle with the parliament, even after the 25 April referendum, is still walking a tight rope; not wanting to upset his supporters but reluctant to shield the people and upset his reform programme. Many of his policies have already been overridden, as the parliament whittles away Yeltsin’s powers and dismembers his economic reforms. Price controls have been put on and taken off, and the consumer has no idea how far his salary will go, from one day to the next. In the first two months of my visit, eggs rose from 59 roubles to 160 roubles. If you join any queue in any grocery store, you will immediately be pounced on by the person behind you asking “po chom?” (how much). Budgets are so tight that shops will slice a loaf of bread and sell you a quarter.

State subsidies must be removed to encourage firms to produce efficiently, but if these are lifted without giving workers a wage that reflects the cost of their labour – then a huge poverty gap is created as workers struggle to afford the goods that they have created. Since

much of the state protection hid firms’ inefficiency, once the subsidies were removed, many of the companies were either forced to close or struggled to survive.

The AZLK autoplant, the producer of “Moskviches”, provides a good example of the problem. This factory came to a standstill twice when the industrial plant that produces all its engines, Ufim, ran out of money to buy components. The products of both the engine plant and the assembly line had become of such poor quality that each new Moskvich had the reputation of a semi-finished product that required repairs of a further ten years of loving care in order to raise it to the standard of a used ten year old car. Thus no independent investor was willing to sink money into it. Instead of looking for an investor, the engine plant asked the government to transfer 14 billion roubles to cover its cash-flow problem, claiming that because of hyper-inflation, the firm could not cope with the period between delivery and payment. In fact Moskvich pays for the engines with completed automobiles, so inflation has nothing to do with it. It has been alleged that Ufim are demanding the money to draw attention to the plight of factories. In reality only a fraction of these requested billions will go to subsidize the production of the engines. The rest will finance the assembly lines of the industrial complex, most of which produce military hardware such as jet fighter planes – now no use to anyone. The question remains whether the leadership in Moscow sends the cheque or faces up to making the entire population of the industrial towns unemployed.

The pensioners and those on a fixed

income are most affected by the inflation. "My pension used to be 75 roubles a month and I could buy what I needed," said sixty-nine year old Lena. "Now I receive 4,600 roubles and cannot afford two kilos of sausage." The streets are now full of beggars, mostly old. I saw a woman standing outside GUM, the ex-state department store, now a luxury shopping mall with branches of Christian Dior and similar names, in minus 20 temperatures, wearing only a cotton dress. I should add that this is not common, as even the poor manage to dress for the cold.

There were many reports of pensioners not receiving their increases. Having been so used to collecting a small amount of roubles for years, many did not question their situation and struggled to exist on a pittance. The only way they managed to survive was from handouts from neighbours; Russians are very generous and will always give money to people in the street.

How are the professional middle classes managing? When a "good" monthly salary was 9,000 roubles a month, a kilo of meat cost anywhere from 300 to 800 roubles (depending where you bought it); oranges 400 a kilo; butter 1,000 a kilo. Most peoples' expenditures far exceeded their incomes; hence the only solution was to do without. The standard of living is still very low for the average Muscovite whose weight, according to a survey of 1,500 citizens, has decreased by five kilos since prices were set free.

Nevertheless, there is no impression of evident poverty on the main streets of the city centre. A new class of moneyed businessmen, together with their foreign cars, is a common sight. Porsches, Lincolns and Cadillacs dodge the potholes of the wide, windswept roads along with the rusty Ladas and Volgas. But even the metro-users, the vast majority of city dwellers, who cannot afford to own a car, are noticeably better dressed than five years ago. Well coiffured women, swathed in fur coats, have long suede high-heeled boots (replacing the red vinyl Soviet booties or the fur galoshes now only worn by street cleaners) over bright Lycra leggings (no more baggy wool snowpants) or thin nylon tights

accompanying short nylon skirts. Men sport "shapkas" (hats) in seal, fox sable or rabbit as they always have; but some of these now have an ostentatious fuzzy tail at the back. Teenagers imitate western youth in high-top trainers, colourful ski-hats, and purple or green down-filled jackets, mostly carried by hand by the new commercial men and women (*kommersanti*) on the plane from China. Everybody wants to be as glamorous as possible, to the extent that bundled up foreigners in mountain climbing boots, Goretex jackets and thermals are astonished by how impractically the natives dress.

If you look hard, you can buy almost anything in the capital, though not in the provinces. Many people still come from as far away as Sevastopol to shop. Unfortunately the most sought after goods are imported. To acquire the Chinese padded jackets, people must

Yet despite the hardships and the instability, capitalism is becoming entrenched in everyday life while a small section of society feels the benefits

endure a two week journey, bargaining in a foreign language and all the risks involved bringing imports into the country (not least the hassle at the Chinese-CIS border or with the Tashkent and Sheremetov airport mafias, each of whom demands a cut) before they can sell them in the Moscow streets and markets. It is openly acknowledged that the coat traders must hire "special" trucks at a huge premium, which will not, unlike a privately owned lorry, be stopped at the border. However, despite having to finance the journey and to pay bribes, the *kommersanti* still claim an 80 per cent profit.

Central Moscow is full of foreign products in "*tolka valuta*" (hard currency only) shops or the new kiosks

resembling metal shipping containers which line every street. These too are run by the mostly young businessmen, who no doubt are as familiar with the roundabout methods of wheeling and dealing as their associates, the coat dealers. The largest cluster of kiosks found at the New Arbat, stocks the oddest assortment of products: cigarettes, liqueurs, Barbie dolls, Tampax, leather jackets and even sex aids. As the goods are Western, the profits are potentially very high and sufficient to pay off the relevant mafia. Even the neighbouring souvenir salesmen on one of the 2,500 tiny tables of the Old Arbat were alleged to have paid their landlords, the Solntsevskaya mafia, over \$20 a month and up to \$50 if they had antiques to sell. The 100 or so kiosks there paid \$100 and the rate in the New Arbat was and is, of course, higher. As inflation takes hold these "rents" will increase; though at the moment, the kiosk and stall owners on the Old Arbat are suffering a new setback having been forcibly moved out during a spot of "street cleaning" for an indefinite period of time.

Some people are glad to see them go. It is frustrating for shoppers to see all the neatly packaged products, some for the first time, and not be able to afford anything. The result is a strong nationalist-cum-socialist backlash. The kiosks are covered in graffiti saying "*Doloi Spekulantam*" (Down with Speculators) or *Doloi Bando Yeltsina* (Down with Yeltsin's gang), and demonstrators outside the State Historical Museum are constantly waving placards saying "Russia is our motherland -- it is not for sale" and "Prices to match wages". Many ordinary citizens yearn for the past.

Yet despite the hardships and the instability, capitalism is becoming entrenched in everyday life while a small section of society feels the benefits. For this reason, public opinion is divided and even when tested in the recent referendum revealed Yeltsin's main support to be concentrated in the cities. The result, however, is positive because, when faced with the prospect of losing their new freedoms and opportunities, 70 per cent of Moscow voters and a majority of the rest put

aside their reservations and backed their President.

It is a pity that he does not also have the mandate to oust his opponents in the Congress, who have already got away with too much this year. The Supreme Soviet was threatening to pass legislation to derail the only real economic reform in place – privatisation. It was also refusing to pass the much-needed bankruptcy law, without which restructuring is impossible, and planning to hand the control of enterprises over to worker's collectives, making the privatisation vouchers, already distributed to Russians, worthless. Without the referendum showdown, there is no doubt that these opponents would have continued dismantling reform unchecked. At least Yeltsin can now take advantage of his popularity and attempt to get rid of the old-thinkers as he should have done after the failed August 91 coup. But asking a Congress to vote itself out of existence and establishing his two chamber federal parliament will not be an easy task. Yeltsin has only a limited chance of breaking out of a deadlock.

Many people are counting on him to act and feel passionately about the new democracy. "At least, now, the people who have the talent will be paid what they deserve instead of losing out to those carrying communist party membership cards", said Stepan, a 42 year old engineer. Others are just as enthusiastic, but pessimistic that any real improvement will occur. "While the old guard still hold positions of power in every stratum of society, there will not be any real change," said Vitali, a chess master. "We'll have to wait until they die."

But Russia is the wild frontier of capitalism and market values are becoming the norm even at the grass roots. Russians use resourceful methods to deal with inflation: they are growing and eating more vegetables; taking second jobs; converting their roubles in to goods of all kinds and selling household belongings. Housewives and grandmothers go down to the metro and line up shoulder to shoulder selling homemade mittens and socks, preserves and potholders; as well as chocolate, alcohol, sausage and

even such essentials as a litre of milk or a loaf of bread. It is a sad sight to see some 200 or so people doing this when, in some cases, the enterprise will only gain them a rouble or two. But at least they are learning the rules of demand and supply, unwittingly creating all hour convenience stores and thus becoming able to mark up the prices.

However, in the desire to make money fast, people will stop creating and producing goods and services, speculating instead on foreign imports. That trend is already having dire consequences for the economy.

Unfortunately the country is being flooded with Western products (87,000 tonnes of Snickers Bars in one day is not uncommon) when similar goods could be produced here. Mars Bars and other chocolate bars are sold at every kiosk and even in state groceries shops and delicatessens when there is acceptable Russian chocolate, though in short supply. It is regrettable that so many foreign imports are luxury items when

the country is being flooded with Western products (87,000 tonnes of Snickers Bars in one day is not uncommon) when similar goods could be produced here

medicine, tools, and spare parts are needed urgently.

Basic household items like detergents, shampoos and soaps are all of very poor quality, if available at all. Expensive foreign products such as Omo are making inroads into the market and others are bound to follow. Free trade and foreign investment are desirable, and should stimulate comparable Russian ventures, but they could destroy local initiatives unless the West intervenes with practical help. At least the demand for basic foodstuffs should be provided locally. In the northern suburb where I live, I cannot be sure of getting milk or eggs, but can depend on

finding imported fruit liqueurs and cigarettes.

In February, the government applied a 20 per cent value-added tax to most imported goods and new excise tariffs, ranging from 10 to 90 percent on imported cars, alcohol, cigarettes and jewellery. The excise tariffs on luxuries makes sense – there is no reason why a packet of Marlboro should be cheaper here than in the West. But the taxes are a wanton attempt to protect local producers, and will probably have no effect, since private enterprise is still in its infancy and cannot compete. Essential items such as soap and shampoo will become even more inaccessible to ordinary people.

Western help is already providing practical solutions to the shortage of necessities. Bread queues are still very long; and the bread itself is sometimes unobtainable and not particularly fresh. It is ironic that experts from England – home of mass-produced, pre-packaged sliced breads – have come to a Russian bakers, Moscow Bread, to teach them baking skills when, before the revolution, yeast cookery was heavily featured in traditional cuisine. Seventy years of a planned economy has made such projects necessary.

The new bread training centre, specialising in management and distribution, is the result of an EC tender worth \$847,000 and is just the sort of project that is most beneficial. If the West cares about promoting democracy, it cannot just give money, but must also bring expertise and equipment.

In the atmosphere of a free society, there are already signs of a flourishing artistic life that is attracting financial reward. It is now possible to find handicrafts amongst the churned out souvenirs in the pedestrianized Old Arbat and the other tourist centres, that travellers visiting in communist times never saw. Prices for individually hand-painted items, signed by a master, are now reaching Western levels.

I spoke with the director of an art school holding an exhibition of some of the leading contemporary painters. He admitted that artists were finding it difficult without their state payments which were received regularly, however

mediocre their work, as long as they endorsed party politics. But he was optimistic about promoting and selling their work. "One painted table was sold for \$60,000," he boasted, before adding that he himself thought this a ridiculous price. However he was looking forward to exhibitions planned in Germany and other countries and had clearly grasped the importance of publicity.

Other cultural enterprises are struggling even more. Russia's most famous establishment, the Bolshoi Theatre, is about to close for at least two years for emergency repairs; the underground river over which it is built has been eroding its foundations and causing structural problems for years. The theatre declared itself in financial crisis, when its principle benefactor, the state, ran short of funds, despite a decree by Yeltsin guaranteeing the funding it has always enjoyed. However the theatre stands a much better chance of surviving without the state, as this apparently large injection of government cash was never in the past enough to solve the subsidence problem. With private enterprise, this theatre, could enjoy even greater prosperity and acclaim, attracting students to its ballet school from around the world and drawing tourists to Moscow. If tickets were sold at real prices (not the vastly undervalued price printed on each ticket) they would not be bought up by speculators, who sell them at a vast profit to tourists, and the theatre would not lose its profit to the middlemen.

The end of 1992 saw the privatisation of the first of many state-owned enterprises when the "Bolshevik Biscuit Factory" was auctioned off to ordinary citizens (including many of the factory's employees). Despite turmoil at the Congress of People's Deputies, cabinet reshuffles and the ousting of Prime Minister Gaidar, mastermind of the privatisation scheme, the government is pledged to continue these reforms. For the scheme to be successful, the industries and factories need to be in good shape, producing and making a profit. The current climate of hyperinflation could easily hamper it.

Under the privatization scheme

everybody was given a 10,000 rouble voucher, which they could use to invest in any one of the firms being auctioned off. Everyone is considering what to do with their voucher and the question was even posed by characters in a popular soap, *The Little Things of Life*. Some people's needs were more urgent (but only an estimated 1.5 per cent of the population), and they cashed them in by the New Year, unable to await potential future profits. Many pensioners sold them to a firm offering a monthly income of 1,000 roubles, and were angry to find that they had to queue for three solid days to be paid only 850. The firm they claimed was deliberately discouraging them from collecting their payment. Other voucher

"At least I knew then that, if I had behaved in a certain way, I'd have a three room flat in a few year's time"

owners, too advanced in years to invest, were more pragmatic, submitting a bid to buy a crematorium, saying it was the only way they could be sure of securing themselves a decent funeral – the traditional savings goal of the Russian aged.

Many simply do not have confidence in the value of the vouchers, while others rate them too highly. Countless advertisements have appeared in the classified sections of newspapers from people seeking to trade a foreign car for a voucher, sometimes two. One man who claimed to have five vouchers in his possession, even offered a "negotiable number of vouchers".

Although almost everybody has their privatization voucher, they cannot spend it. Only 18 percent of all enterprises, about 35 per cent of small businesses, and about 30 large government firms had sold shares on auction by the beginning of February and most of these were outside Moscow – well behind the government's schedule. The slow pace of privatization, according to one radical democrat Georgy Zadonsky, was causing the voucher to

fall in value. Participants in the market, however, blamed the voucher's decline to 4,000 roubles on speculators putting their money into hard currency. A likely explanation since, after the dollar stabilised in December 1992, the voucher rose to a high of 8,700 roubles.

One 20 year old voucher salesman, Dima Nicholevich, told me that his ability to buy and sell these "depends very much on the confidence people have in Yeltsin – if he goes they are worthless. There is a long history of uprising in our country and people think that he could go at any time."

Despite his profitable endeavours, Dima was very nostalgic for life in the communist era. "At least I knew then that, if I had behaved in a certain way, I'd have a three room flat in a few year's time and, by the time I was forty, a dacha in the country," he explained. "At least under communism, there was certainty".

The "certainty" that is so often recalled by Moscovites nostalgic for communism is because they knew how to play the system in the old days, not that they necessarily preferred it. Now they must learn the lessons of the free market and once they discover its benefits, they will thrive. Some companies have already adapted; others are struggling because market reforms are not as advanced as they would like.

Tur-Trans, a Minsk factory, gave Duke, a Russian company, the exclusive rights to market its products in Russia. With the disintegration of the Soviet republics, Tur-Trans could not pay its suppliers in Russia from their base in Byelo-Russia, for it was not possible to transfer currency. Duke started importing trailers from Tur-Trans to be sold as kiosks. In December 1992, in desperation, Tur-Trans called the Duke director and asked him to pay their bills in Russia, a total of 5.5 million roubles and promised to supply 10 trailers in a month's time in return. Since then Duke has opened a separate account in its bank in Moscow, to which it pays for trailers in roubles, which the Minsk company uses to pay bills in Russia. Duke was interested in selling a model with collapsible sides, but the trailer firm in

Minsk could not make them without hydraulic jacks and these were only produced by one firm in Russia in Stupino. The jack firm did not want roubles or trailers, so Duke negotiated to barter something else in return for jacks, which they sent to Minsk to get their trailers.

At the end of 1992, two Moscow trucker drivers were tired of watching their salaries decline in value and decided to open an auto painting garage. After calculating all the costs and writing a business plan, they then approached a bank for a loan, but found that they could not get credit. The reason was that in times of hyperinflation, it is impossible to assess whether new enterprises will succeed and to calculate the correct level of interest.

Providing there is some stability, banks may find it easier to give loans, but this will require a bankruptcy law, allowing money-losing businesses and even state-owned enterprises to be liquidated and creditors' rights to be protected. It is too late, however, for one of the Moscow truck drivers, who is emigrating this summer. Lack of a bankruptcy law has been a major stumbling block in restructuring industries and setting up a competitive market envi-

ronment. It also blocks foreign investment. The reality, however, could mean many closures and therefore unemployment.

Natalya Livshits, chief adviser of the Arbitration court, said in February that at least "30 per cent of all firms are insolvent today." A number of firms are, apparently poised to file as soon as a law does come into effect.

So far the government's reform package has had enough support to see it through. Back in the early winter, when Yeltsin's authority was questioned at the Congress of People's Deputies, all kinds of people rallied to support him, from miners to members of the poorly paid intelligentsia. At a theatrical production, the head of the actor's union, Mikhail Ulyanov, rose to address the audience with an impassioned plea to support the President. His speech delayed the performance for half an hour. Once again Yeltsin is under fire – the miners, his government, the Ukraine and Western leaders have pledged their support for reforms, but is it enough? As I walked the streets after Yeltsin's announcement of a 25 April referendum, I overheard the conversations of the old women shoppers (the people who had once supported him), determined to get him out because a loaf of

bread costs so much. The public needed simple economic explanations; the cost of a loaf of bread may be the price of a lost democracy.

And, even now, after the referendum's vote of confidence, Yeltsin has only been granted a short reprieve – for now the people expect him to do something despite the fact that they've tied his hands. The question is how long the people will endure. They have coped with the hyper-inflation, but now they are also facing unemployment and perhaps worse until the situation improves. Life is not grinding to a halt yet. Jobs are advertised; infra-structure continues to be built (a new metro station has just been opened); landscaping work is undertaken even in minus 15 temperatures; buildings everywhere are being restored; buses run to schedule; people turn up for work (even the TV repairman came on time) or find other ways of making a rouble. People are rather more stoical than given credit for and they will muddle through – of that I am sure.

Juliet Pospelovsky is a journalist working in Moscow.

Notes on Reviewers

D.L.W. Ashhton is a retired teacher.

Merrie Cave is our Managing Editor.

Peter Curran is an artist and supply teacher.

C.N. Gilmore is a reviewer of science fiction.

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

A.W. Purdue is a Lecturer at the Open University.

Helen Szamuely is a writer and translator.

Editorial

In a famous — for many people, notorious — speech, Enoch Powell conjured a vision of England's future in the wake of mass immigration, and alluded to Macaulay's Roman, confronting the ruin of his city and seeing the Tiber 'foaming with much blood'. It was not merely deficient education that led the chattering classes to misunderstand this speech; a guilty conscience was also at work, in prompting our politicians and opinion makers to blame popular resentment on the person who dared to acknowledge it, rather than on themselves, who were its principal cause. For the situation of our country in 1968 was not dissimilar from our situation today, as we stumble blindly into the net of Europe. Vast changes had been foisted on the British people not merely without their consent, but without even troubling to ask for it. And had they been asked, the British people would certainly have objected to immigration on the scale that had occurred — not because they are 'racist' (a slander put about by such sanctimonious busybodies as the Commission for Racial Equality), but because they are conscious that they live on a small island, whose freedoms have been dearly fought for, and whose genial way of life depends upon a long-standing trust between neighbours.

But was Mr Powell right in foreseeing the collapse of the British consensus and the rise of ethnic conflict? Have we not weathered the small-scale disruption, and emerged as a 'multicultural society', in which Britons of all races and creeds are equal members? Such, I think, would be the view of politicians and opinion makers today — at least, it would be the view that they express in public, having observed in Mr Powell's own case the enormous price that must be paid for saying anything else. But is it, I wonder, the view that they entertain in private, or in the one place where truth may be safely harboured, which is the citadel of the human heart?

No-one could think that the situation is as drastic as Mr Powell was taken to prophesy. Admittedly, there have been race-riots of a kind, in Brixton, Bristol

and elsewhere. Admittedly, there are inner city areas where old people, supposing they are unfortunate enough to be white, go in constant fear of mugging or worse. Admittedly, a disproportionate number of the inmates in our prisons are black, and the preponderance of black teenagers in an inner city school is likely to go hand in hand with unruly or violent behaviour. But well-meaning liberals have an explanation for these facts: namely white racism, against which the minorities use the only weapon that is allowed to them, the weapon of violent protest. In any case, all these troubles occur in those working-class districts which educated people seldom visit, and where they would certainly never think of sending their children to school. So what is all the fuss about?

Even people of impeccable liberal opinions were disturbed, however, when a left-wing author, whose anti-British sentiments had endeared him to educated opinion throughout the land, suddenly found himself the subject of death threats from British Muslims. This valuable experience forced the truth upon many who had sought to deny it. It enabled them to see that immigrant minorities do not necessarily accept the validity of our law, or the moral duty to obey it.

The fact is that British society is founded on a remarkable consensus, and this consensus, which is the true source of all our freedoms and privileges, arises from our trust in the law. No local loyalty, no religious enthusiasm, no family attachment, takes precedence, for us, over the law. If we dislike the law we do not disobey it; we strive to change it, through parliament and the courts. This habit of obedience defines the British way of life, and generates the sense of fair play which, for the older generation, has always been second nature. And maybe the time will come when we can no longer assume that this habit is universal. When a significant minority despises the law, the majority will soon do likewise: for who wants to be taken for a ride? When law collapses, the luxury of liberal opinions is at an end.

Of course, the case of Salman Rushdie

is a special one, from which we ought not to generalise. Nor, indeed, is it easy to do so, when the charge of 'racist' is flung at anyone who dares. When Ray Honeyford first wrote in *The Salisbury Review* about the problems of 'multicultural education' (problems evident to every teacher in the situation in which Mr Honeyford found himself), he was forced to resign from his post as Headmaster. Anybody who suggests that the Brixton riots might have been caused by a certain cavalier attitude, not to say contempt towards the law among the rioters, will be instantly ostracised by well-meaning people, especially if they secretly agree with him. As a result of this censorship it is impossible to know what the situation really is in Britain today: certainly impossible to know whether Mr Powell's prophecy is on the way to fulfilment. But we applaud his courage in making it.

It is also difficult to know how we should respond to our situation, even if we could be sure what it is. Mr Powell's language is rich in allusion. It is also, his critics say, riddled with illusion. And the judgement is not entirely unfair. His style owes more to Macaulay, Acton and Housman than to the discourse of modern politics. His vision of England, conjured from pastoral poetry and anecdotes of Empire, is one that younger people can hardly understand, let alone share. Even his name, redolent of the old-testament culture of our forebears, sounds strangely in the ears of modern youth. And Mr Powell is, no doubt aware of this. His most passionate invocations of our way of life are at once inspired and valedictory. He exhorts us to save our inheritance, in a style that implies that we come too late to do so. Maybe this is no bad thing. Maybe it is right to remember the greatness of our country and its culture, even when we can no longer inspire our children to resurrect it. But maybe it is also right to lower our sights a little, to cease to lament the unobtainable, and to aim for some new consensus. One thing is certain, however. Consensus can emerge only where discussion is free. And without Enoch Powell the discussion would never have occurred.

Letters

Sir

Two articles in the December issue of *The Salisbury Review*, 'The Pursuit of Truth', by John Marks, and 'Senses and Censorship', by Anthony Flew, draw on the same text, a book entitled *Race, Intelligence and Biase in Academe*, by Roger Pearson to make defamatory claims about me. They allege that at some unspecified time I urged the then East German authorities to suppress the views of a psychologist or geneticist whose publications supported the so-called "hereditarian" position on the origins of intelligence. They further claim that, as a result of my urging, the individual concerned was persecuted by the Stasi. I wish to make it categorically clear that the allegation that I have at any time or in any way urged either the suppression of such publication or the persecution of its author is entirely false, and the assertion made by Mr Pearson on which Dr Marks and Professor Flew's claims are based is without foundation. As the claim that I might even countenance such action is personally and professionally both damaging and offensive, I must insist that *The Salisbury Review* publish this emphatic denial with as much prominence as was given to the original articles.

Professor Steven Rose, Milton Keynes.

Sir,

The articles of Christina Sommers (Militant feminism) and Bruce Charlton (Health fascism) together with past articles by Ray Honeyford (Anti-racism) all demonstrate that proportional representation is not alone in allowing undue weight to unrepresentative minority views, and that even in first-past-the-post systems such as our own this is causing serious distortions to democracy.

First-past-the-post systems usually settle down into two competing major groups whose electoral support nationally only differs by a small percent-

age, reducing in marginals to below one percent. This gives any single interest group an opening to power and influence way beyond the merits of their case.

Sooner or later to gain their support, a government of the day, faced with a close election or a by-election, will agree that there may be a problem, and directly or indirectly give the group money. This is immediately put into use producing evidence that more resources are needed.

Meanwhile ordinary citizens, horrified to see their rights eroded by unelected gauleiters, their businesses shut down by impossible regulations, and their taxes continually raised to feed these growing cancers, are helpless to change matters. The normal democratic processes do not apply as all parties are paying the same blackmail: neither individually nor collectively are politicians willing to face the risk of being labelled "sexist", "racist", or "uncaring".

Secret voting in Parliament as advocated by your correspondent Gordon Line would help for new issues such as Muslim schools, but to rid us of the burdens already in place something more is needed.

One possible answer might be to modify Craven and Marston's suggestion of Voluntary Taxation to allow citizens to cap – or abolish entirely – the proportion of their taxes handed over to such bodies.

Gordon E. Haines, Woodbridge, Suffolk.

Sir,

To sceptics the idea of England, Anglicanism and the monarchy (Editorial March 1993) appear as quaint, if not as risible, as a cuckoo-clock. Thrown up by historical accident as a mutant, nevertheless, the idea of England is as admired abroad as it is loved by the English. Ideas, other than genetical mutants, moreover, are capable

of transformation by bold imagination. If the dark ages are already upon us we shall need to construct a vision of an advanced country at peace, as a cell for the survival of civilisation.

The real problem is Christianity itself, for three reasons. Firstly, human consciousness, in its very physiology, is constructed by adaptation to its social and cultural environment. Secondly, at its roots, Christianity, based on the teachings of an apocalyptic rebel peasant, is illiterate, antinomian and proletarian; contemporary radicalism and the 'cosmic religiosity' of liberation theology are therefore irrefutable. Thirdly, the particular paroxysms of English Christianity, as well as the loss of meaning, may be seen as consequences of the misguided translation of Scripture and ritual into the vernacular.

German Catholicism continued as a cohesive force in Nazi Germany, as the home of intellectuals, as well as the mass of the humblest of people; the secret lay in an aura of mystery and incomprehensibility of ritual as necessary attributes of the transcendent; this cohesion has now been lost. Judaism, driven into an intellectual ghetto, has retained Hebrew by error rather than design as the language of religious discourse and ritual. In contrast, the English translated symbols of high and evolving aspiration into the language of rationalism and utilitarianism, muted by the piety of the dominant class.

If the idea of England is to capture the minds and hearts of the best of the people, in England and elsewhere, then the nature of transcendence and purpose must be redefined, preferably without loss of cultural substance. The task, by its awesome complexity, would establish a conservative elite of the future.

Gertrude Walton, Winchester

Sir,

One expects the contributors to the *Salisbury Review* to defend our life and institutions. So it was with some surprise that I read Stewart Deuchar's conclusion in his review of Ray Honeyford's *State Funded Muslim Schools: The case against* (March 1993). Deuchar stated that the only possible answer to the Muslim claims for government support for their own schools is to have a secular curriculum and keep religion out of state schools altogether, as in the USA.'

On the contrary, the only answer is that this is our country, that English schools will provide an English education for English children, and that the Muslims are foreigners and should conform to our ways, or be politely but firmly told that there are as many aeroplanes out of the country as the ones that brought them to it.

The example of the USA, as in other spheres, shows us what we should avoid. Christianity was cut out of the school curriculum because of differences among the churches, but it was expected that home and church would fill the gap. This policy worked for a while, but the eventual result is that a secular curriculum is not just religiously neutral but inculcates a definite Secularism. In this country we had worked out an agreed syllabus for Religious Education with an option for withdrawal for those who objected. Then came the influx of Hindus and Muslims; our own secularists took the opportunity to abolish Religious Education and substituted a secularist Religious Studies, a menu of religion sampling for children to taste, accept or reject as they pleased. The result has been that they have been deliberately 'multifaithed' out of being Christian just as they have been 'multicultural' out of being English.

After 20 years of retreat, a Conservative administration is at last making an effort to restore English history, literature and Christianity to our schools. What is needed from the *Salisbury Review* is whole-hearted support for its aims, not a further surrender to alien influences.

R.T. Allen, Loughborough Leics.

Sir

There is much to agree with in Ray Honeyford's booklet on State-Funded Muslim Schools and in Stewart Deuchar's review of it in your March issue. On the subject of Catholic schools, however, they both go badly awry.

I am wary of challenging either author on matters of historical fact but I cannot accept that Catholic schools have been accommodated within, or in partnership with, the state system because they made a formal separation between the religious and the secular curriculum. In 1988 the Catholic Bishops stated: '... RE is not one subject among many but the foundation of the entire educational process... It should provide the context for, and substantially shape, the school curriculum' and in 1989: 'There should be no formal division between the religious and the secular [in the curriculum].' According to Cardinal Hume: if RE does not have that place, 'then one must doubt the justification for a separate provision of Catholic schools in our society.' For Catholics, therefore, RE is not an optional extra and there can be no compromise on that – I suppose Muslims would say the same.

What made the historical accommodation possible for three centuries (and what would have been impossible for Islam) was a shared tradition of natural law, deriving from divines like Hooker, which meant that in moral issues there was not much difference between Catholic and Protestant. A little careful ring-fencing took place within the curriculum – Latin was studied up to the point where it was not Classical but Catholic – but without any sacrifice of principle, and the system rubbed along comfortably enough.

Ken Connelly, Harrow.

Sir,

I congratulate you upon the publication of Mr. John Tavener's article entitled,

'The Sacred in Art' (March, 1993).

It was most interesting to read of Mr. Tavener's interpretation of the present state of affairs within the various fields of human outlook and thought. Few of today's generation are willing, or indeed able, to recognise the extent to which Western civilization and culture has collapsed into a 'technological, profane, ego-based, atheistic and psychological' myre that offers no place for inspiration, tradition or religious adherence.

Surely the time must come when the cultural desert of Western society will be swept away by a tidal wave of brave men and women like Mr. Tavener, who have the spiritual strength to continue their quest for true meaning and understanding in the face of extreme adversity. The distributors of the 'straight-jacket' who so dominate our society cannot have many days left to them.

Ian McIntyre, Old Kilpatrick

Sir,

Congratulations to Clive Dunwich for spelling it out that Trade Unions have nothing to do with Socialism. I have wondered for some time at the public acceptance of the myth that they are part of "this great movement of ours". Ample evidence to the contrary is in the public domain, particularly Barbara Castle's plaintive riposte to Jack Jones' stance on incomes. "But Jack, incomes policy is socialism."

I hope Mr Dunwich's article will increase the small number of people who see no inconsistency in my own attitude: I expect I was the only person who attended both the GCHQ march and the tenth Anniversary Dinner of your excellent publication.

Bill Todd, Leeds.

Reviews

And what happened afterwards?

Helen Szamuely

The Road to Post Communism 1992, Geoffrey A Hosking, Jonathan Aves, Peters J.S. Duncan, Pinter Publishers, HB — £35.00; Pbk — £12.99

Nations and Politics in the Soviet Successor States, Ian Bremmer and Ray Taras (ed), Cambridge University Press, HB — £55.00; Pbk — £17.95

In recent years the demise of the nation state has been predicted more often and more confidently than the revival of the Liberal Party and of the British film industry. Alas for human hopes — we know which of the three is flourishing. The results of the Yugoslav experiment in supranationalism have been so horrific that the need for films like *Silence of the Lambs* or *Bad Lieutenant* becomes questionable. Why not read the reports from Bosnia instead? That the former Soviet Union appears to us to be dissolving in a more peaceful fashion is because the real problems have arisen in those successor states which the Western media find hard to reach. The events in Georgia, Azerbaijan and Tajikistan have been quite as bloody and depressing as those in Bosnia.

What conclusions are we to draw from the chaos, bloodshed, inefficiency and authoritarianism that have in various ways succeeded the seemingly stable oppression of the Soviet system? The authors and editors of *The Road to Post Communism* and *Nations and Politics in the Soviet Successor States* wisely prefer to analyse instead of drawing anything but the most tentative of conclusions. Perhaps Sovietologists have at last learnt their lesson: predict nothing about Russia or the Soviet Union, for by the time your book is published, your predictions are likely to have been proved wrong. Perhaps these are unusual Sovietologists. Certainly the main thrust of Ian

Bremmer's and Ray Taras' volume is that students of the Soviet Union have made a grievous mistake in neglecting the problems of nationality. They have no doubt that it was this intellectually unfashionable force that finally destroyed the Soviet empire. Its unpredictable course has not been run yet. Those politicians and political writers who insist that nationalism is dead or dying in Western Europe should stop and think about these reviving nationalities in the former Soviet Empire.

Analysis in this large tome is necessarily patchy. For some reason neither Taras nor Bremmer refer back to the Habsburg Empire that had a similar complicated pattern of dominant and subordinate nationalities and a similar uneasy, often hostile cohabitation of widely differing races, cultures and religions. Both the empires were blown apart when the central unifying idea, of the Habsburg dynasty in the one case and the Soviet state in the other, became weak and lost allure.

The most interesting essay in the collection is John Dunlop's on Russia and Russian nationalism. This is a difficult and understudied subject. There has been a confusion in the minds of other nationals, outsiders and the Russians themselves between Russia and Soviet nationalism. The dissident Russian nationalists, Solzhenitsyn being the best known of them, questioned this assumption, pointing out that Russian culture and the Russian

people have suffered in the Soviet would-be melting pot as much as any other. Many now accept that Russia has benefited from the shedding of its empire. The "nation-builders" feel that the time has come to turn inward to build a strong democratic Russia, unencumbered by what used to be known as the "periphery". And yet, siren voices sing of the old empire, Tsarist and Soviet, of Russian might, and of the present woeful circumstances. Most people in the country are too busy surviving from day to day to become involved in these arguments. The worry is that as the economic and social life of the country becomes more fragmented and unsatisfactory, Yeltsin or some other leader may decide to distract the population with a foreign adventure.

Other essays in the book cover the various new states. They are informative and well judged. There is even a section on nations that do not have states: the fantastic kaleidoscope on the Volga, in the north Caucasus and in Siberia. Many of these nations are small and their claims and anxieties may not appear significant to us. But surely we ignore the Tatars, the Chechens and many others at our peril.

The final essay by Ray Taras tends to lower the general intellectual level of the book. He cannot resist charts, diagrams, equations, etc. When will political scientists learn that human behaviour cannot be described by a mathematical formula?

The Road to Post-Communism is both more limited and more detailed. It eschews a national approach, and, indeed, finds it unproductive. Instead, it looks at the emerging political culture through a detailed study of the movements that arose during *perestroika* and have developed in the new states. There are altogether three essays on Russian movements, one on Georgia and one on Estonia as well as three general essays. They are all detailed, some giving day by day accounts of how the movements arose, flourished and often died. This is a mine of useful information for potential thesis writers but not a book to read right through. Its

idiosyncratic transliteration system alone prevents that. El'tsin as the name of the Russian president remains an unnecessary irritant.

Hosking, Aves and Duncan do draw some cautious conclusions. They are not cheerful. Neither are the many accounts in Bremmer's and Taras' book. It is clear, as Stephen Jones points out in his essay on Georgia, that, unlike the authoritarian regimes of, for instance, Spain and Portugal, the Soviet system has blighted political life to such an extent that democracy may be a long time coming. It is not the task of either book to go into the whys and wherefores of Western misunderstand-

ings and, in fact, it is possible that by expecting too much, the authors of these two books have become far too pessimistic. But the reader is once again faced with the shortcomings of Sovietologists and political scientists in general. Not only have they (with some exceptions) ignored nationalism and national forces, but they have continued to neglect the force of ideologies. They either could not or would not perceive the different consequences of totalitarianism and ordinary tyranny, however nasty. They (and we) ought to have been better prepared for the former Soviet Union's long travail to political health.

God Save America

Merrie Cave

America's British Culture: Russell Kirk, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, New Jersey and London. \$24.95, pb \$18.95.

The Disuniting of America: Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., W.W. Norton and Company (400 Fifth Avenue, New York N.Y. 10110), \$15.95.

"What then is this American, this new man?", asked St John Crèvecoeur. The Founding Fathers who were practical men aware of original sin, realized they could not create New Men, only the same old ones in a different environment. Their endeavours produced the most successful and wealthy society of modern times, unlike the mythical paradise still promised by followers of Lenin, Marcuse, Benn *et al.*

Both these books address the same problem: the threat to American institutions and culture from multiculturalism, which started as a genuine attempt to modify the Euro-centric emphasis but is now an anti-European wrecking movement conducted by malevolent and misguided pedagogues in schools and colleges. With many western countries facing continued immigration from the Third World, the resolution of this challenge is probably the most important facing the

Western world. How can the legitimate needs of minorities be satisfied peacefully without sacrificing the indigenous culture and the concept of "the single nation"?

Russell Kirk has been one of the most important influences in the revival of American conservatism since the fifties. He also belongs to an almost extinct species on both sides of the Atlantic – an independent man of letters. He selects four elements through which the British mind and experience have shaped America: the language and literature, the common law, representative government and customs.

English did not become a world language by accident and it was not chance alone that enabled English speaking people to populate distant parts of the globe. With its huge vocabulary English is a superb vehicle of exact expression. It proved also to be a swift and accurate means of communication in

business. The influence that the King James Bible exercised on the thought and language of the English speaking people cannot be overestimated. Immigrant children in America were required to forego their old country ways, to learn the English and American classics and to recite the speeches of Lincoln and Washington. The Pilgrim's Progress was the most common book, after the Bible, in farmhouses throughout the land. In the nineteenth century American authors began to be read in Britain, thus helping to reinforce the bond between British and American culture.

Blackstone's Commentaries, which sold more copies in America than Britain, supplied the rebel colonists with arguments relevant to their quarrel with the Crown in Parliament. Most American lawyers lacked formal education so the Commentaries were the means through which they acquired

knowledge of common law, natural law, and equity. By the 1820's the common law had prevailed in the US despite Jefferson's infatuation with France and his dislike of American lawyers' conservative habits and Madison had wisely refused Jeremy Bentham's offer to draw up a complete legal code for the US. According to Dicey an understanding of the rule of law is peculiar to England and those countries which like the US have inherited English traditions. Euro-Federalists should note that this concept is completely different from the European (Napoleonic) tradition.

Americans succeeded in their experiment with national representative government in contrast to the abysmal failures in Europe and Latin America, for the settlers had conducted their own representative governments for a century and a half before the break with the British crown. Many of them also understood the evolution of Parliament from the thirteenth to the eighteenth century. Kirk sees the sentimental attachment to the office of President as a vestige of kingship, protecting Americans' rights and interests.

De Tocqueville recognised and admired the habits and beliefs which gave solidity and continuity to American development. "It is their mores, then, that make the Americans of the United States, alone among Americans, capable of maintaining the rule of democracy and it is mores that make them orderly and prosperous". Courage in adversity and willingness to sacrifice the present for a future good were outstanding features of the Americans, whose hard life and sturdy individualism nourished a shrewd practical intelligence. These qualities helped to establish commerce, and a base for the American industrial revolution.

Kirk's detractors might claim that, as a conservative, the traditions he cherishes have gone for ever. Arthur Schlesinger Jr, the eminent historian comes from the East coast liberal establishment which shared and encouraged the protest against the Anglo-centric culture. Schlesinger's spirited defence of the Anglo-American heritage therefore, is highly significant.

The "ethnic upsurge now sweeping much of the world threatens to become a counter revolution against the theory of America as one people." Multiculturalism has been devised by "romantic ideologues and unscrupulous hucksters whose claim to speak for their minorities is thoughtlessly accepted by the media."

The roots of this phenomenon started in the nineteenth century. As the flow of non-Anglo immigrants increased so did resentment among the White Anglo-Saxon protestants (WASPS). Nativist organizations like the Supreme Order of the Star Spangled Banner started, but Wasps generally were ashamed to endorse prejudice and the movements tended to fizzle out. Zangwill's play *The Melting Pot* was acclaimed by American audiences, but the philosopher Horace Kallen argued at the time (1915), that this concept of assimilation was a fallacy: "Men can change their clothes, but they cannot change their grandfathers"... Kallen thought ethnic diversity enriched American civilization but did not say how cultural pluralism could be successfully encouraged without weakening the single society. Blacks were not even mentioned. It was Gunnar Myrdal, a Swede, who wrote the classic work on Racism in America (1944), *The American Dilemma*: Great ideals had been pronounced for all Americans but in practice they only applied to Whites. Ironically, as Myrdal observed the American creed was the means through which the Blacks, acquired their rights. Schlesinger praises historians' efforts to recognise the achievements of other groups in American society, especially the Blacks but deplores the tendency to use history as a weapon for ethnic pressure groups. The cult of Afro-centricity which teaches children that Africa is the mother of Western civilization, that Egypt was a black country and the real source of science and philosophy he finds particularly dangerous. The Afro-centric movement reached its nadir of foolishness in the New York State education report (1989), one of whose authors, Lionel Jeffries, described Europeans as cold destructive "ice people", and Africans as warm superior

"sun people".

Euro-centric education did not harm the great black Americans. William du Bois dismissed his African connection: "I sit with Shakespeare and he winces not". Today distinguished black academics like Walter Williams and Thomas Sowell do not complain of cultural oppression. If the Klan, Schlesinger remarks, wanted to devise a curriculum to disable Negroes, nothing would be more effective than Afro-centrism.

Schlesinger rejects bilingualism – already there are notices in Spanish in Washington. It encourages "self-ghettoization and a "type of apartheid that will generate animosities with others". Perceptive Hispanic leaders already recognise this danger. He also denounces the call for a constitutional amendment to make English the official language of the US. Statutory enforcement would only increase racial discrimination and resentment. His robust defence of Europe's legacy to the world is lucidly and cogently expressed: "There remains, however a crucial difference between the Western tradition and the others. The crimes of the West provoked great movements to end slavery, to raise the status of women, to abolish torture, to defend freedom of enquiry and expression". If the wreckers win, Theodore Roosevelt's worst nightmare of a tangle of squabbling nationalities would be realized. Schlesinger stops short of describing what this might mean in practice: Hispanic states, Black southern states and White states... Sixty years ago, Jose y Gasset wrote that American civilization could not long survive any catastrophe to European Society. Today the converse is true, and this is why the recent antics of the multicultural wreckers over the Columbus quincentennial have been so depressing. Calling Columbus a mass murderer epitomises the self-hatred present in the weak minded intelligentsia of both our countries, who strive so earnestly to poison the minds of the young. Schlesinger asks: "Are we now to belittle unum and glorify pluribus? Will the centre hold or will the melting pot yield to the tower of Babel?" Upon the outcome to this question the future of the civilized world may depend.

Race and Sex: Freedom or Coercion?

Ray Honeyford

Forbidden Grounds: The Case Against Employment Discrimination Laws, Richard A. Epstein, Harvard University Press, 1992.

Thomas Sowell has said of this book, "It should be one of the landmark books of our time". Its author is a professor of law at the University of Chicago; and he has written the most scholarly and comprehensive — and convincing — attack on the accepted wisdom of anti-discrimination law. The author's thesis is simple and categorical: all anti-discrimination law is both tyrannical and counterproductive, and should give way to the older and much more effective and acceptable common law approach. All anti-discrimination law is a violation of the principle of freedom of contract, which allows all persons to do business with whomsoever they choose, for good or bad reasons, or for no reasons at all. He spells out the disastrous social, economic and political consequences of America's abandonment of one of the basic principles espoused by its founding fathers. The Civil Rights Act 1964, heralded as the precursor of a more open, a more egalitarian social order was, in reality, fundamentally flawed. Its weaknesses have been ruthlessly exploited by judicial activism, political self-interest and bureaucratic empire building. The hopes of its liberal instigators and supporters are now in ruins. I have never seen the law of unintended consequences so clearly demonstrated. High-minded state intentions have, in practice, intensified inter-group conflict, severely limited freedom of choice, undermined the concept of individual merit, initiated inefficient employment practices, and actually increased levels of discrimination — against white males, who also happen to be citizens. By seeking

to impose tolerance the state has, *inter alia*, helped to create an American black underclass filled with resentment, and whose social pathology defies description. The Equal Opportunity laws have distorted natural relationships between the sexes, and encouraged in women a set of expectations which cannot be fulfilled, and which contradict all we know about biological realities. Moreover, by seeking to coerce society into denying the inevitability of prejudice, the state has been instrumental in generating one of the ugliest developments in American intellectual history — the cult of Political Correctness. Only the bravest academics, such as the author of this book, are prepared to challenge the thought police who currently stalk the campus.

Professor Epstein tackles not only race and sex anti-discrimination theory and practice, but also government interference in age and disability factors in employment decisions. He demonstrates quite devastatingly that the free and open market place is a far more effective way of being fair to everyone — including blacks and women — than the present pernicious attempts to intimidate everyone into loving their neighbour. The legal, economic, philosophical and statistical scaffolding supporting state intervention is rigorously examined and effectively demolished. By examining specific legal cases and the behaviour of the interested quangos the author shows that the original notion of civil rights — to contract, to own property, to make wills, to give evidence, to sue and to be sued — has been perverted into the notion that government must

function, not to protect the individual citizen, but to favour only certain classes of persons. What began as a brave attempt at rooting out the Jim Crow laws — a perfect example of unwise state intervention — and allowing the freedom of the market place to all citizens has been transformed into a form of tyranny with immense potential for creating, not only rightful resentment, but serious civil disorder. Moreover, the anti-discrimination statutes exact a considerable economic cost, they depress industrial efficiency, and cost jobs. This book has much significance for this country. We are, in this context, a mirror image of the U.S.A. We, too, have Race Relations and Equal Opportunities Acts. We, too, have corresponding and coercive bureaucracies. And we, too, have support for these things from all political parties. Indeed, there is a sense in which Sections 1, 5(2)d, 35 and 37 of our own Race Relations Act constitute a more radical attack on the concept of the equality of all under the law than does the notorious Title VII of the American statute. Whilst the Civil Rights Act was, at least in intent, a colour-blind attempt to ensure equal treatment, our own legislation makes no bones about the desirability of discriminating against white citizens, where inequality of statistical outcome can be demonstrated or where same-race provision is deemed to be what the minorities want. The Americans may have gone further down the road to racial quotas — in direct violation of Congressional reassurances — but we too are effectively aiming at quotas. The race relations bureaucrats prefer the euphemism "numerical targets", but no one who has read the Commission for Racial Equality's Code of Practice in Employment, and its Principles of (sic) Practice for Contract Compliance can any longer doubt what the ultimate objective is. The fact that a particular policy is strictly unlawful does not, over time, prevent its eventual success — that is one hard lesson we ought to be learning from the Americans.

We can also learn from Professor Epstein's critical look at the paraphernalia employed by the race and sex activists. The C.R.E. and the Equal

Opportunities Commission, for instance, both presume to dictate the attributes necessary to do a particular job. They insist that they know better than the employer. The fact that employers have been successful in placing round pegs in round holes for many years is considered to be irrelevant. All criteria must be "job-relevant" and only the bureaucrats know what this entails. Experience, tradition and instinct – all have to be dispensed with, since they cannot be readily reduced to the sort of written criteria on which the state officials insist. The result is that employers now have to invest in costly and time-consuming policies whose only real function is to escape condemnation by the quangos, and possible legal liability.

Similarly the notion of "diversity" now functions not as a source of increased choice, but as a device for justifying race-and sex-conscious hiring. Again "unconscious racism/sexism" is a catch all which sidetracks the need to supply evidence, and leaves its victims helpless. How can you defend yourself against a charge of whose origins you are, by definition, unaware? Professor Epstein makes clear his contempt for the people who exploit this outrageous device: "In all too many cases honourable people are at-

tacked as racist or sexist when the charges often apply with far greater truth to the persons who make these charges than to the persons about whom they are made"(p 503).

"Stereotyping", perhaps the favourite weapon in the anti-discrimination armoury, also earns the author's withering criticism. There are good, just as there are bad, and misleading stereotypes; but the race and sex lobbies only ever use the term in a pejorative sense. For instance, if I am introduced to a bank manager, I am entitled, in the absence of contradictory evidence, to make certain generalisations about him – that he is honourable, law-abiding, thrifty and commercially well informed. If this were not the case, then our banks could be run by crooks. Moreover, if we outlaw stereotyping, then we can confidently predict the collapse of the insurance industry, since its commercial viability depends almost entirely upon the ability of actuaries to make predictions by generalising about the behaviour of specified groups. In the same way I am properly entitled to make certain generalisations about ethnic groups in relation to their economic and educational performance and their propensity for certain types of crime – and I am entitled to do so, not because of prejudice, but

on the basis of incontrovertible and readily available evidence. Minority groups should try to create for themselves good, rather than bad, public reputations. Some groups understand this much better than others -- and the unfortunate ones are not helped by those who pervert the meaning of stereotyping.

This book will cause uproar in the race and sex bureaucracies. Its author's broadly libertarian standpoint, and his cogent and sustained defence of freedom of contract and of association threaten the existence of such bodies as The Commission for Racial Equality and The Equal Opportunities Commission. But it will cheer many of us who believe that freedom is a better guarantee of proper human relationships than state coercion. It is ironical that this splendid book arrives just as the Home Secretary is considering a second attempt by the C.R.E. to get its powers greatly increased. Previous Home Secretaries have resisted the C.R.E.'s blandishments, but ominously the retiring chairman of the C.R.E. has said he is confident that Kenneth Clarke will agree to the C.R.E.'s requests this time. Can someone persuade the Home Secretary to read this book before he makes his decision?

On Being British

A W Purdue

An Historian in the Twentieth Century, Max Beloff. Yale, 1992

Britons, Forging the Nation 1707-1837, Linda Colley. Yale, 1992, £19.95

The English, Geoffrey Elton. Blackwell, 1992, £19.99. **Myths of the English**, edited by Roy Porter. Polity Press, 1992, £39.50.

Loyalty is not exclusive nor is identity unambiguous. Most of us combine our association with the small platoons of town, village and county with a wider patriotism. We can also feel both

English, Scottish or Welsh and British.

But are the twin parts of our dual-nationality of the same order? Are the British, as Geoffrey Elton suggests, "a nationality but not a nation, a gathering

but not a people"? Was the concept of the British and of Great Britain only a phase, during which an imperial people forged, against common enemies and in the euphoria of common triumphs,

a unity which is now passing away as we inscribe English, Scottish, Welsh or Northern Irish on our humiliating EC passports?

In *An Historian in the Twentieth Century*, Max Beloff writes, inter alia, of "The Uniqueness of Britain" while Linda Colley in *Britons* describes the making of a British state in the hundred and thirty years after the Act of Union. It is, however, with the English that Elton is concerned in his ambitious and successful interpretative synthesis of a millenium of English history, and it is the so-called myths of the English that the volume edited by Roy Porter investigates. Like a microcosm of a historian's bookshelf, books on British and English history jostle each other, overlap and deny neat classification.

Britain became a recognised political entity only in 1707. Linda Colley establishes just how a sense of British identity emerged in the eighteenth century. That the ancient animosity between English and Scots took much of the century to erode is not surprising. What is more remarkable is the strength and durability of the unity that was taken for granted by the beginning of the reign of Queen Victoria.

If many Scots resented the diminution of Scottish independence consequent upon the Act of Union, Scotsmen were seen in England as queuing up to enjoy the benefits of union at the expense of Englishmen. George III's claim that he rejoiced in the name of Briton is often taken as an affirmation that he was not a German but his choice of "Briton" rather than "Englishman" was not popular with the majority of his subjects and was seen as a sign of the pernicious influence of Lord Bute. Colley demonstrates how significant the anti-Scottish element in John Wilkes's opposition to the government was. Wilkes saw himself as an English patriot opposing the incursions of venal and toadying Scotsmen who did not share the ideals of free born Englishmen.

What forged a sense of Britishness was a common Protestantism, a series of wars against France, commercial success and the acquisition of an empire. By the late eighteenth century,

the English, Scottish, Welsh and Anglo-Irish aristocracies had become a unified elite,

Scottish regiments had become an important part of the British Army, while the empire that emerged from the wars with France depended much on Britons who were not English for its administration and exploitation. Support for Britain in its wars was far from the prerogative of southern Englishmen: Scots were to the fore in their support of the government in the American War of Independence while in interesting appendix to *Britons* reveals that Argyll (followed by Northumberland) was the county which provided the greatest number of volunteers in 1804. Linda Colley argues that a salient element in this forging of a British state was played by the monarchy.

She has written an important and a refreshing book which emphasises unity rather than divisions and concentrates upon the majority who were loyal rather than the minority who dissented. That British patriotism went hand in hand with self-interest need not surprise us. A British as opposed to an English or Scottish patriotism could not, at first, appeal to visceral loyalties and had to be founded upon the opportunities and advantages that Britain offered. Britain had by the early eighteenth century become more than the sum of such interests and was, in the words Colley borrows from Benedict Anderson, "an imagined political community".

All nations must be such, for any community outside the parochial exists with the aid of imagination, an imagination which binds us to others we can never meet and to places we will never live in and which is stimulated by common achievements, traditions, myths, enemies and heroes. It is surely far from astonishing that history, myth and tradition are interwoven in any national self-image, much as they are in that of any family. Precisely because of a greater awareness of the past and and of the reinforcement tradition gives to the present, modern societies have become more selfconscious of their identities and the

rituals and beliefs that enhance them. In *The Invention of Tradition* (edited by Terence Ranger and Eric Hobsbawm), published some ten years ago, the nineteenth century origins of the tartan image of Scotland, the bardic and tall-hatted version of the Welsh past and the refurbishment of the rituals of the British Monarchy were unveiled. Such "invented traditions" belong to a particular category, the embroidering or fabrication of the past. *Myths of the English*, edited by Roy Porter, attempts to follow in that tradition but demonstrates both that essays do not necessarily make a book and that every attitude or ritual does not constitute a myth. Some of the essays are illuminating, for instance David Cannadine on Gilbert and Sullivan and Clive Emsley on The English Bobby, but the book lacks unity, and these essays mix uneasily with an anguished feminist deconstruction of Mother Goose and an essay on the tramp. Nor, indeed, are most of the "myths" specifically English, for Roy Porter's introduction, like many of the essays, makes no distinction between England and Britain, while Mother Goose seems as much *La mère l'oye* as authentically English. Despite the editor's disavowal, there does seem to be a degree of English self-flagellation in this exercise and a perverse selectivity; to compare the English celebration of Wellington with the French reverence for Napoleon can produce one contrast of national self-images; but if we replaced Wellington with Nelson we should get a very different picture. There also seems to be a reluctance to engage with myths of the left, the odd historical underpinnings of Chartism, for instance, or the wider myth that trades unionist history is about working class unity. Perhaps it is the deconstructing historian, who, finding fact mixed with fancy, rushes to the conclusion that all is fancy, who is more naive than the simple patriot.

The creation of a British rather than an English identity was certainly rapid, aimed at producing an amalgam of older nations which continue to exist. But was it forged, as in the furnace, or invented or was it just a forgery? Linda

Colley is ambivalent about this and at one stage writes of an "invented" nation suggesting an alternative category of non-invented nations. England and Scotland may be older entities but neither can claim an ethnically or culturally homogeneous history and only such can surely claim to be non-invented in Colley's sense. "Invented" is a very unsatisfactory term to describe the process of nation making in modern history. There was certainly a high degree of purposefulness and self-consciousness in the process by which the USA welded together its immigrants, in the late nineteenth century and turned them into, at least hyphenated, Americans. In his essay on "The Idea of France", Max Beloff touches upon Eugen Weber's work, which describes the making of Frenchmen out of peasants by the institutions of the French state, (primarily the army and the education system), during the same period. But all the communities to which loyalty is given had at some time to be constructed and developed.

However, whatever its origins, the future of Britain is a matter for debate. Much of Britain's strength lay in exceptional economic success, in wars against common enemies and in the empire. In the post war world the unity and confidence of the British has declined. The superficial result of this is a resurgent expression of Scottish and Welsh identity; but what is more significant, if less remarked, is a return to rather negative Englishness.

England was there all the time. Geoffrey Elton in *The English* takes as his subject the entire history of England from Saxon times, and demonstrating that it is still possible for the specialist in one period, in his case Tudor England, to be abreast of the research and the debates in many others. The emphasis is upon politics, administration and ideas, yet what emerges is a portrait of the characteristics of a people which developed under the aegis of a centralised monarchy and the administration and law it provided: "Thus the ultimate truth of the English people's existence lay in that mixture of order enforced by authority with freedom exercised under authority which was not

to be found anywhere else".

Such a linear development, Elton argues, ended with the transformation of government and society in the Britain of the nineteenth century in which, "...while the crown became a symbol under which the new democracy could shelter, the law became a weapon for winning whatever new theory and new people's power asked to see put through". The rage for reform has continued to erase much of what made England unique but are a post-British English preparing to restate their Englishness again?

Of all the nations the English had to adapt the least in order to become British. Max Beloff puts it rather harshly when he writes that, "If what is distinctive about Britain is the continuity of its institutions... it is the English elements that provide it". Geoffrey Elton concludes his study of the long continuity of the English and English institutions by pointing out that:

...of all the peoples involved the English (not the British) may turn out to be the most indifferent to the ending of an era. Of course it was quite agreeable to dominate so large a part of the globe, and the ruling order, which supplied the managers of those distant regions — governor, councillors and district commissioners — does miss the glory and the profit. But even among them the first generation of the post imperial age has already forgotten India and Africa and the Caribbean (except as teams that play superior cricket), and for the generality of the people the empire never signified anything truly vital in their lives. They lived on in their towns and shires, before and during and after their imperial phase.

The heyday of British unity was in the late Victorian and the Edwardian periods. The economic importance of coal, steel, shipbuilding and heavy engineering gave weight to Scotland and Wales as they did to the north of England; the similarities between such industrial centres as Glasgow and Liverpool, Cardiff and Newcastle seemed greater than their differences; the labour movement was quintessentially British; English politicians thought it natural to

represent Scottish or Welsh constituencies; while the empire was, as ever, a British rather than an English enterprise. The loss of empire has affected Scotland sorely but other trends have diminished its importance within Britain. The decline of the old industrial, manufacturing base has hit Scotland harder than England; Scottish nationalists dream of a Scotland in Europe while the geographic facts of the EEC's golden triangle negate their aspirations; and the erosion of the traditional English working classes leaves Scotland high and dry with the domination of Scottish politics by an anachronistic survivor of Britishness, the Labour Party. As for Wales, Cardiff and its environs are drawn ever more firmly into the economy of southern England while the Welsh language movement threatens to turn much of the rest of Wales into a curiosity.

England had, perhaps, always a lesser investment in Britain than the rest of the island and could return with equanimity to Englishness. It would however be a negative sort of Englishness which didn't want to be troubled. Britain has stood for much besides the empire and economic success and the union has been greater than its components. To lose our British identity and reconcile the ancient national identities of the British Isles to a parochial existence within a protectionist and corporatist federal Europe would be to betray the individualism and tolerance of variety that first forged Britons in the wars of the eighteenth century.

Dead or Alive?

C. N. Gilmore

Artificial Life: The quest for a new creation by Stephen Levy, Cape £16.99 pp 391

The concepts of artificial life and artificial intelligence are closely allied, not least in the minds of those who work with both. There's a belief among them that once new life-forms can be created, they will evolve intelligence, if not by themselves, at least with a little guidance. Since the terms are fraught with semantic clutter, it's worth standing back a moment; to which end I propose to delete the word 'artificial' in favour of 'simulated'.

I note that the concept of 'simulated intelligence' arouses as much hostility as ever; intelligence ought not to be susceptible of convincing simulation, and you, Gentle Reader, would never allow a machine to pass the Turing Test. Anyone who did that would be *ipso facto* a mental or emotional cripple, unfit to administer the test on our behalf. 'Simulated life', by contrast, presents no such problems. A computer programme which mimics the behaviour of some simple creature so well that the responses of one can be inferred from those of the other presents no ontological threat. Not only is it not intelligent, it is not aware. Even though its behaviour is not immediately predictable, it is nonetheless deterministic. There is no ghost in this machine, making choices, suffering the consequences of error; for simulated life inhabits a simulated world – a world without suffering.

The analogy with Descartes's conclusion that beasts, being without souls, are mere automata, is obvious and has often been noted. It is worth remarking that in Descartes's own time his conclusion was used to justify the most barbarous cruelty to animals, including skinning cats alive to maximise the

quality of the pelts. We feel ourselves to be on firmer ground with the fauna of the cathode tube; they certainly appear to struggle among themselves for the necessities of life and the right to breed, but it is always possible to pinpoint the aspects of the programme which give rise to this or that behaviour. We can know them as we cannot know a cat, and must be said, none of them approach a cat in complexity – yet.

Similar logic is applied to evidence of intelligence on the part of machines. They have for many years been able to perform complex mathematical operations at blinding speed, operate machine tools with delicacy and precision, play grandmaster chess and translate between human tongues (sometimes with hilarious howlers). These effects, which could be adduced as evidence for the existence of human intelligence were it ever brought into question, are not regarded as evidence of 'true' intelligence (i.e., our kind) when displayed by machines; machines have no conception of how the maths are applied, what the tools are making or why a game of chess is worth winning; their errors afford them neither shame nor mirth, for there is nothing inside, considering the consequences of failure. They live in a world without fear.

It may be fanciful to conclude that although they are our creations, they are as yet unfallen, and do not partake of our sin and its consequences – in which connection it may be significant that the liveliest of all are some of the computer viruses, conceived in sin if anything was, and the object of universal fear and hatred. Whether that be the

case or no, it's a lot less fanciful to suppose that admission to our brotherhood will be contingent on their suffering some version of the Fall (in which Man, having fulfilled the role of Creator, will next be cast as Serpent). Fear and suffering are so integral to the human condition that we can admit no affinity with creatures that have no experience of them. A leech, recoiling from a glowing cigarette, is nearer to us than the most sophisticated CAD/CAM program yet devised – even those programs which we classify as SMART and EXPERT. It is not therefore surprising that writers who have considered the implications of self-aware programs (Stanislaw Lem, Terrel Miedaner) tend to do so in terms of the anguish they would experience, not least from the reflection that they lay at the mercy of the likes of us.

This book charts in some detail the history of lifelike computer constructs, and the ever more difficult question of their ontological status. The concept of *emergence* appears early and recurs constantly, for it is a feature of these programmes that they and their virtual worlds depend on rather simple ground-rules but possess the capacity to evolve, by mutation and recombination, into structures of considerable complexity with behaviour to match. Most interestingly of all, the behaviour comes increasingly to resemble that of specific organisms familiar to biologists. Occam's razor suggests that the laws governing organic and virtual entities are similar.

An early example, called 'boids', flocked together and evaded obstacles much as birds do, but they were not 'imitating' flocking; they were flocking

in their own way, which may or may not be the same way as organic birds, but is certainly analogous thereto. A later species was set up to experience as closely as possible the world of the sage grouse. It rapidly evinced the behaviour of 'lek formation', a lek being an area chosen for courtship and display. The model assumed that the leks were chosen by the females, which was the opinion of most ornithologists. Then the experiment was re-run, under the minority assumption that the males chose the sites; the results failed to match observed behaviour. Levy notes that 'the male-dominance pattern of lek-formation was *convincingly refuted*' (my italics). In other words, the model was accepted as a close enough surrogate for the grouse to be used to test theories about them.

This is not to say that the virtual grouse lived in the same way as the organic ones; organic grouse possess many aspects that were irrelevant to the problem, and therefore excluded from the model. But emergent, as opposed to pre-programmed, behaviour is already overlapping that of the simplest animals; nor is it still confined to the computer screen. Autonomous robots, carrying their own power plants,

have been designed for the exploration of Mars. They will have an unpredictable environment to cope with, but each generation is doing it better.

So are they already alive? The question seems absurd; life consists of organic molecules suspended in aqueous solutions, not pixels winking on and off across a cathode ray tube. Yet this is a statement of prejudice only; the analogy of programme/chip/peripherals to spirit/brain/body holds good to such a surprising level of recursion that workers in the field have coined the term 'carbaquists' for those who maintain that life is a function of a particular chemistry rather than level of organisation. As the discourse proceeds, the term 'alive' becomes synonymous with 'possessed of Free Will'.

And here we reach the nub of the problem. The level of organisation attainable has advanced at the breakneck pace typical of computer science, but there is no unequivocally pre-defined level beyond which it will be generally agreed that animation has occurred, nor does it seem probable that such a breakthrough will appear in the near future, whatever else may be achieved. The trouble is twofold. Virtual creatures belong to a new recension, so for

them there is no pre-determined link in the Great Chain of Being such as we could assign to a new species of beetle. Worse still, they lack all mystery. Their programs can be examined in whatever detail is necessary to allow a mechanistic explanation for their every action, and though the arguments against animation will appear ever more subject to special pleading, they will never be wholly refutable – for such has always been the experience when freedom of the human will has been debated.

Which brings us back to Descartes, and his younger contemporary, Milton, who expressed the general confusion thus:

Others apart sat on a hill retired,
In thoughts more elevate, and reasoned
high
Of Providence, Foreknowledge, Will
and Fate --
Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge
absolute —
And found no end, in wandering mazes
lost.

Let us hope we acquit ourselves rather better than the Devils in Milton's Hell.

We welcome offers to review books but would be grateful if reviewers would consult us before putting pen to paper so as avoid unnecessary effort on everyone's part.

A Kingdom or a Hearse?

D. L. W. Ashton

The People's Prince, edited by Betty Luks, Veritas, PO Box 42, Cranbrook, Western Australia, 6321, 1992.

The Australian Heritage Society is to be congratulated for this unique collection of important speeches on architecture, medicine, ecology and literature, made over the past decade by the Heir to the Throne. Most appropriately pride in our shared British inheritance runs through them all.

Fielding the accusation that he suffers from "a quaint nostalgia for a picturesque, irrelevant past", with his usual humour, Prince Charles offers practicable proposals to meet a number of current problems along with erudite comments on the spiritual malaise of our times. He is neither jejune nor pontifical, but it is easy to see why some sections of the "news" media have thus misrepresented, when they have not suppressed altogether, his thoughtful contributions to national discussion. As Disraeli remarked in vindicating the English constitution, the reverence for antiquity which originates in a profound understanding of human nature is often ridiculed by conceited and superficial minds.

For any public figure, the risk in commenting on an increasing variety of controversial issues lies in augmenting the sum total of dissenting minorities, without thereby consolidating majority support. However, these are not the position papers of a prospective presidential candidate for a future republic of Britain or Europe, but less ephemeral reflections on cultural trends and environmental aesthetics that reach beyond the hustings so as to define the quality of life in the States of which the author has been trained to become the Head.

There may well be a few still unfortunately influential persons in the educational establishment who will feel uncomfortable at Prince Charles's

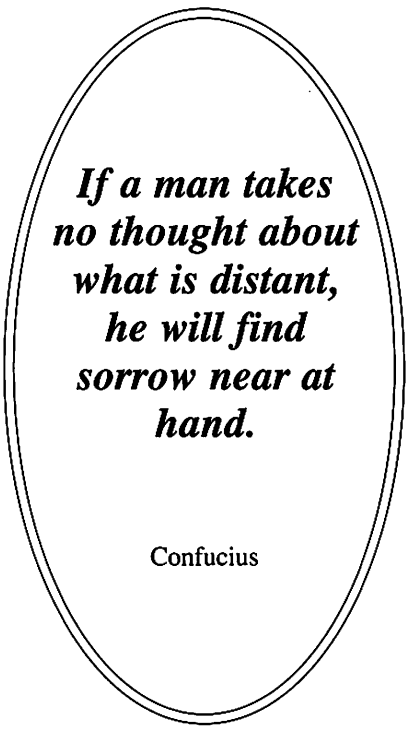
suggestion that education is not about social engineering but about the transmission of values, knowledge and skills from one generation to the next. As one of many English teachers who have tried to "uphold standards amidst the general spread of mediocrity" in face of the "hostility and indifference of some of the pupils", I am quite sure that most classroom practitioners would agree with his sentiments and appreciate in particular, his enthusiastic comprehension of the genius of Shakespeare. A clean, uncomplicated patriotism animates his recommendations on familiarising children with masterpieces of English literature (including the King James Bible) and teaching other languages of our continent.

A further illustration of the Prince's well-informed concern emerges in an address to the Royal College of Psychiatrists. He has given unobtrusive support to the charity SANE which has been working hard to improve the treatment of schizophrenics. By contrast, presumably in accordance with a policy never to speak positively, or even politely about the Prince of Wales, the Murdoch tabloid *The Sun* has allowed its regular republican ink-squirt to suggest that our future King might himself be insane and prevented only by "mummy's millions" from joining other madmen on the streets of London!

A major theme of these speeches is the link between cultural roots and the stability of civilisation. The Prince points to the lessons of Soviet decomposition, the long suffering of the Kurds, and the anxiety of many of us in western Europe to prevent our "national identities" from being "subsumed in some characterless, grey, multinational bureaucracy". He

wonders why property developers should see a great city like London as merely a financial staging post between New York and Tokyo, insisting that our rediscovered sense of human scale and the value of the natural world should bear upon the design of new towns. Drawing attention to global population projections, he urges the encouragement in the so-called Third World of "naturally entrepreneurial" individuals, "short of usury" supported by security of land tenure and access to sources of credit in order to avert, "the frightening scenario of millions of people on the move, literally in search of survival, leading to entirely new threats to global security".

In a vigorous foreward on the evils of the modern world, Sir Walter Crocker pays tribute to the candour and courage of His Royal Highness. We might consider too the old Roman observation that the foremost art of a prince is to endure hostility. In time the scurrility and misrepresentation that have accompanied the latest republican fever will empty into self-condemnation, and the many good ideas in these refreshing pages may reach a people who desperately seek a call for regeneration.



*If a man takes
no thought about
what is distant,
he will find
sorrow near at
hand.*

Confucius

The British Petroleum Portrait Award

Peter Curran

During the mid seventies I was introduced to identical twin sisters. During subsequent meetings I could not help but confuse their Christian names. However, after six months of their acquaintance, they grew, in my perception, apart, and became distinct individuals. At the time, despite my preoccupation with landscape painting, I was making tonal studies of Rembrandt paintings from books and realised the complexity of the human face; speech, emotion and the notion of a 'psyche' contribute to that internal sense which to a greater or lesser degree dictates our outward guise.

In certain 'arty' circles, opinion had deemed the practice of portraiture in oils (or drawing) outmoded as a result of the introduction of photography. I have never agreed with this; however one must be fair to the photographic medium. The camera has provided marvellous documentary footage of the history of the twentieth century, valuable archive material for the historian – Goebbels as orator for example! And yet a photographer, with the best equipment in the world and the right studio lighting centred on a crusty old gent, could not possibly summon forth that majestic light which illuminates Rembrandt's complex internal drama as manifest in his late self-portraits. A camera is not capable of oscillations in its perception of the human subject; it cannot, as painting can, track the revelation of 'personality' through friendship and conversation. The accomplished portrait painter is beyond that mere 'mimesis' of which Plato spoke, and each era deserves a talented record of its individuals, whether a portrait bust of Socrates or the society ladies of

the Edwardian era as depicted by Sargent.

Thanks to the wisdom of commerce, and not the straight-jacket rigours of Arts Council 'trash on tour' policies, the John Player Tobacco Company, in conjunction with the National Portrait Gallery, started an annual exhibition and award scheme in 1980 to encourage young portraitists in England. It has now been taken over by the BP group and has become a cardinal event in the London art calendar. Each year, fifty exhibits are selected from an ever growing number of entrants, encouraging talent which hitherto would have largely been neglected.

This year (1992) the standard, as usual, is excellent and much variety of composition is evident. Ironically one does not always find this in 'abstract' exhibitions. Inspirations from the techniques of Flemish masters such as Van Eyck pervade the self portrait by Brian McLaughlin (25) which displays high technical achievement. A mixture of mood and temperament is in evidence on the rather frivolous side in 'My brother mine-clearing in Kuwait' by Nicholas Botting (29) which for some strange reason has a pantomime air instead of one of fear and trepidation.

'Publican of the Rising Sun', by Christopher Green (24), is very Beryl Cookish, whilst the rather large 'Barmy days, the artist with friends', by Paul Lake (32) depicts, in a bland 'photo-realist' manner, some men on a park bench in Surrey and captures the flavour of an Eric Sykes and Hattie Jacques sit-com.

The selection of works is hardly confined to the conventional (centralised sitter) boardroom format and Martin

Churchill's (33) 'Slaughtermen at work' is an interesting composition in its own right. Lucy Willis (37), the winner of this year's first prize of £10,000, uses the theme of prisoners around a table compositionally hinting at the 'Last Supper' of Leonardo. The prison is in the rural setting of Shepton Mallet and in this composition Rastalocks and tattoos abound. The Viennese architect, Adolf Loos, associated tattoos with the potential for murder. What would he say about dreadlocks?

A play on offset symmetry as a compositional device is used to great effect by Sadie Lee (25) in 'Erect', which depicts two militant young ladies, arms entwined and stretched across the centre of the composition staring out at the viewer with a reluctant, cold gaze. Miss Lee's work also appears in an exhibition of Lesbian art currently running at the 'Worx' gallery near Kings Cross station, and is the largest of its kind so far. The profundity of nakedness and the uncertainty of pregnancy are combined in 'Self portrait at five months pregnant' by Helen Tipper (27). A slight aura of Freudian (Lucian) 'angst' is evident in this work, though of a more provincial flavour.

Rich with subtleties, and for me the most accomplished works in this exhibition, are Alec Chanda's, 'Minnie with Max', and Brendan Kelley's 'The Doorway'. Chanda's theme is that of decrepitude and depicts an old person in a wheelchair with her dog in a patio. The viewer is invited to look down and across as from a ladder into the composition; on the left is a room with a dishevelled bed and to the right a garden perspective. The paint application

is extremely subtle and atmospheric, but not impressionist. The air is meta-physical and tinged with a solemn pessimism; not unlike Frank Auerbach's work, but in flat paint-layers. However, as one stands back the canvas reveals more of the creased bedclothes, to catch a celestially charged glint of sunlight following the impress on the sheets of a reclining body. For a thirty year old this is mature and intriguing work, and well deserves the second prize. However I feel he needs a little more of those, as Chesterton would have it, 'hard black outlines of reality'.

Brendan Kelley at twenty two, and still at the Slade School, shows a surprising maturity. 'The Doorway' is, like Alec Chanda's work, quite large and, like Chanda, Kelley uses such a scale very well. In fact neither painting would work if smaller. Kelley depicts, in a more academic and pragmatic technique, the tension between two people who have either argued, or whose dialogue has been interrupted by us, the viewers. A young girl, and I presume her father, inhabit perhaps the upper floor of a London suburban house. The girl is situated in the bottom left-hand corner of a room looking out, pensive and somewhat troubled in her expression. Between the room and the staircase beyond is an open doorway, wide and squarish, facilitating an

interesting compositional device within the rectangle of the canvas. On the right-hand side of the doorway stands a man, rather stoical and subdued. The charged atmosphere of this work is that of a drama, as if a young Chekhov had taken to the brush. What would normally be a bland subject, reveals an odd and compelling combination of technical mastery and a sense of mystery. One is haunted by what their conversation might have been. Sickert pointed out that one can have talent in one's twenties, but not necessarily at fifty; but if Kelley continues with consistency, he will be a master in old age.

The last painting I mention is 'Black Power' by Lyndon Volney (28). Volney's painting is an oversized self-portrait with a large, cloudy depiction of Mike Tyson, the boxer in the background. The effect as a whole is not unlike those giants in a Wagnerian opera set against troubled, Wotan infested skies. It competes with the large marble portrait bust of Nelson in the basement on the way to the 'gents'.

I must give full marks to all concerned with this annual event. I am certain that in two hundred years the obvious talent shown here will provide a better and more interesting account of the life and times of this last decade of the twentieth century in England, and that the dismal and pretentious rubbish of the 'art scene', Kline, Serra

et al will be forgotten.

But for those who still feel that the camera and 'concept art' have the edge over skill and penetration, here are some words from a dead, christianised, white European male: Petrarch, *Le familiari* xxiii, 19, 78-94:

He who imitates must have a care that what he writes be similar, not identical (with his model) and that the similarity should not be of the kind that obtains between a portrait and a sitter, where the artist earns the more praise the greater the likeness, but rather of the kind that obtains between a son and his father. Here, though there may often be a great difference between their individual features, a certain shadow and, as our painters call it, 'air' perceptible above all in face and eyes produces that similarity that reminds us of the father as soon as we see the son, even though if the matter were put to measurement all parts would be found to be different; some hidden quality there has power. So we too should take care that when one thing is like, many should be unlike, and that what is like many should be hidden so as to be grasped only by the mind's silent enquiry, intelligible rather than describable. We should therefore make use of another man's inner quality and tone, but avoid his words. For the one kind of similarity is hidden and the other protrudes; the one creates poets, the other apes.

The lame man who keeps the right road outstrips the runner who takes a wrong one. It is obvious that the more active and swift the latter is the further he will go astray.

Francis Bacon

In Short

The Church, Pilgrim of Centuries, Thomas Molnar, Eerdmans Fowler Wright Bks, Gracewing House, 2 Southern Avenue, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 6QF, £9.50.

The relationship in the past between church and state, while always uneasy and marked by frequent conflicts about their respective spheres of influence, was nevertheless based on a fundamental acknowledgement by each of the other's importance and indispensability: the church as guide of the soul and morals, the state as guardian of the common good. Throne and altar were united in their belief that society could not survive without a certain moral code and discipline. But with the ascendancy in modern times of civil society, and of its liberal-pluralist credo, the church could no longer count on a mostly favourable, let alone sacral, sociocultural milieu, leaving it "politically in an unanchored position". Instead of reacting to the steady relativization and hedonization of the political *bonum commune*, by seeking to meet from its 'sacred deposit' of doctrine and morals modern society's need of spiritual authority, the Roman Catholic Church -- most especially in the wake of the Second Vatican Council -- has in effect succumbed to the man-centredness which inspires and shapes our age. As a result, it has become one pressure group among many competing on the secular plane of the lowest common moral denominator. A privatized church in a pluralist civil society, though tolerated, must as the price of this tolerance de-emphasize its core teaching and stress rather its ecumenical character: its 'openness to the world'.

Thomas Molnar's diagnosis of the Catholic Church's present status, is

pungently argued and elaborated upon in a book made all the more provocative by its rejection of the conventional modern view that triumphant civil society is an unqualified good. (IC)

Post-liberalism, Studies in political thought, John Gray, Routledge, 1993, £35.00

Unlike Thomas Molnar's jaundiced view of liberal civil society, John Gray's is wholly affirmative, in that he sees it as the only form of society compatible with the post-modern condition of value pluralism; which is the "historical fate" of modern Western man, whose loss would entail the loss of civilization itself. Moral complexity and ambiguity, insists Gray against communitarians of all persuasions, are integral to our modern identity. He therefore celebrates the variety of forms of human life, and the individual freedom to choose among them, which are the characteristic features of a liberal régime. Gray appears as the typical liberal apologist, which he is not. For it is precisely because he esteems liberal practice that he eschews liberal ideology. The former is threatened, he argues, as much by "modernist fundamentalisms" as by "atavistic ideologies". For example: insofar as liberal theory absolutizes human autonomy, denying any intrinsic (as opposed to instrumental) value to collective goods, it is the enemy of liberal practice, since autonomous choice in any meaningful or valuable sense presupposes a rich public culture. Gray, at various points in this collection of his essays published over the last ten years is sensitive -- in a way fundamentalist liberal thinkers are not -- to the insight that "what has value (in the human

world) is the form of life -- even if, paradoxically, it is an individualist form of life." (IC)

A Tale of Two Europes, Lord Beloff, Institute for European Defence and Strategic Studies. 1993. £5.

Lord Beloff highlights the subsidiarity issue as a particularly glaring example of how the British public has been misled by its leaders about the Maastricht treaty. The subsidiarity provisions will neither limit the power of the European Commission in the affairs of an European community member or prevent moves to a full union. The Anglo-American understanding of federalism is quite different from the continental interpretation. A full political union and not a federation is being created and there will be no protection; the European Court will certainly not take on the role of the US Supreme Court and adjudicate between federal and state rights. The collapse of the E.R.M., the civil war in Yugoslavia and massive immigration into Western Europe has laid bare the utter failure of the 'Monnet model' of European Union. This should now be scrapped in favour of a larger but looser Concert of Europe which would include Eastern European states. In addition the role of America and Russia in Europe must be properly established to ensure the survival of European civilization. "The little Europe of the community is an irrelevance or often an obstacle. It is time that Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman, de Gasperi and Adenauer joined Charlemagne in the tomb at Aachen."

(MC)

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