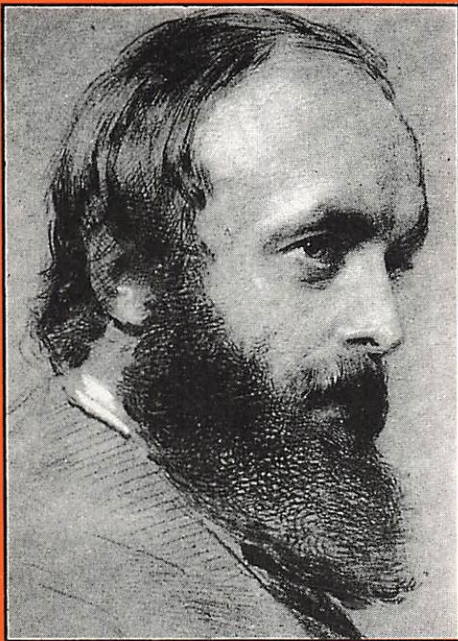


September 1995
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The Salisbury Review

The quarterly magazine of conservative thought



The Third Marquess of Salisbury
1830 - 1903

- Socialist Medicine**
Theodore Dalrymple
- Cannabis and the Mind**
David Copestake
- Mercy Killing Gone Astray**
Moritz Nestor
- A Visit to Egypt**
Shusha Guppy
- The Tories' Moral Dilemma**
Richard Body
- Edspeak in Haringey**
Ray Honeyford

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Conservative Journal

Right Now!

Readers should not be misled by the street-fighting title of *Right Now!*, a journal founded by young conservatives alarmed by the drift of the Conservative Party to the left, and entrusted to the editorship of Derek Turner. Published quarterly, the journal aims to give a voice to traditional Tory voters alienated by the present leadership, to campaign against European union, political correctness, and the break-up of the United Kingdom, and to advocate traditional conservative values — law and order, national identity, and real education being among them. Covering political and cultural matters, it has much in common with the *Salisbury Review*, although with a more activist agenda. Each issue contains an interview with a leading conservative figure — whether Member of Parliament, intellectual light or journalist. And longer articles cover the giants of the past, with Samuel Johnson featuring in issue Number 7 of April 1995.

It is a striking fact that such a journal, designed to appeal to the people who have entrusted their country to successive Conservative governments, should not have been thought of before. Indeed, it may be a sign of the difficulties now faced by the Tory Party, that its ordinary supporters have started to think, and to search

for the philosophical principles which will enable them to think clearly and to some effect. In any case, let us hope that *Right Now!* achieves the audience for which it is seeking, and enables them to have some impact on the party which has disappointed them.

The emphasis throughout is on the poetic aspect of conservatism — the vision summarised in Purcell's 'Fairest Isle' and in the art and literature of nineteenth century England. And while the Tory Party has, in recent years, based its philosophy largely in economic reform and private enterprise, it is clear that it has run the risk thereby not only of appearing gross and philistine, but also of alienating its more traditional supporters. There is no doubt that it will lose its ability to govern if it loses contact with their sweeter and more soothing vision of our country. And perhaps *Right Now!*, with its rich allusions to our national culture, will do something to awaken the ruling party to the thought that conservatism means conserving things — and conserving the nation before everything else.

Right Now! is available from PO Box No. 3561, London E1 5LU, price £5 for an annual subscription of four issues.

The Salisbury Review

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The attempt by Tony Blair to rid the Labour Party of its socialist image should be closely studied by conservatives. For it is a sign that we have awoken ordinary voters to the untenability of the socialist idea. People now realize that the 'politics of compassion' has a price, and it is a price that they are not prepared to pay. It does not follow, however, that the Labour Party, once in power, will continue to present a genial conservative facade. It is now apparent that the politics of compassion benefits not the ordinary voter, but the state apparatchiks who pretend to speak for him. As Ray Honeyford makes clear, the socialist establishment is alive and kicking in the state educational system, and well-known parasites like Robin Richardson and Chris Mullard continue to prosper, as they mouth their phoney lamentations over the fate of the poor, the downtrodden and the oppressed. It is such people whose agenda will advance when the Labour Party is in power, and not the naive middle class voters who put them there. And the socialist apparatchiks will have the advantage, as Sir Richard Body points out, of a new political system — a system based not on duty but on open-ended rights, in which the motivating force is unbridled selfishness, and from which the only long-term beneficiaries are the bureaucrats who control the machine.

Such was the system successfully introduced into Egypt by Gamal Abdul Nasser, whose socialist experiment is described here by Shusha Guppy. The tragedy of Africa is familiar to our readers. (See Vol. 12, no. 2.) But we should not forget the especially tragic history of its North-Eastern corner, where great civilisations have lived side by side for millennia, and which even today produces art, literature and leadership that would be the envy of its southern neighbours, were they capable of envying anything but power.

We have repeated the experiment of our African number, and devoted several articles and an editorial to a single issue — this time medical ethics, which raises so many

of the decisive questions of our age only, as a rule, to find them brushed aside by the expediencies of medical practice. As Moritz Nestor argues, the philosophy of compassion, used to justify 'euthanasia' or 'the right to die' (both interesting terms of Newspeak), quickly becomes the philosophy of self-interest and crime. And there is no doubt that, as medicine advances in this direction, so does human life become cheaper, and our reluctance to extinguish it less.

The same ethos of liberation which, according to Dr Nestor, animates the movement for euthanasia, has inspired the defenders of cannabis, who owe their formation to the transgressive postures of the sixties. Yet, as David Copestake warns us, there is every reason to believe that cannabis is highly dangerous, not only to the individual, but also to the social fabric from which he successfully removes himself, into the dreamy and vegetating heartlessness which is the perfect outward expression of the socialist animal fulfilled. As Theodore Dalrymple points out, the National Health Service is the perfect preserve for such animals, who are not only produced by it, but who produce it too. It is in the labyrinthine corridors of the NHS, Labour's greatest achievement, that the socialist ideals are most nearly realized.

What, in all this selfish confusion, brings hope to a conservative? We cannot return to the world or the attitudes of John Buchan (described here by George Chowdharay-Best). Moreover, the community which we wish to defend is dissolving into the atomised and machine-worshipping society described by Christopher Arkell. Nevertheless, all is not lost. Others too are unhappy with the course of history, and would welcome a collective urge to change it. The first step towards improvement is to acquire a consciousness of the need for it. If the *Salisbury Review* serves a purpose in our troubled times, it is precisely because it tries to make this consciousness available to its readers.

Socialist Medicine

Theodore Dalrymple finds alarming evidence in the British Medical Journal

In a recent edition of the *British Medical Journal*, an organ which in its non-scientific sections is impeccably politically correct, there was published a not untypical item with the following headline:

INEQUALITIES CAUSE REPRODUCTIVE DEATHS

There followed an international comparison of maternal mortality rates.

In Zaire, the item stated, a woman has a 1 in 16 lifetime risk of dying of the complications of pregnancy and childbirth, while in Italy the figure is 1 in 17,361.

This is certainly a startling difference, though anyone who has been to Zaire will not be entirely surprised to learn of it. But in what sense can the difference in the maternal mortality rate between Italy and Zaire be said to be *caused* by inequality? Are we to understand by this that if only Italy could become more like Zaire, the women of the latter country would, in some mysterious way, benefit and stop dying in childbirth? Surely, inequality in this instance just *is* the difference, it does not cause it. For if it were itself the *cause* of all the maternal deaths in Zaire, it would be a matter of indifference as to whether Italy became more like Zaire, or Zaire more like Italy.

The *British Medical Journal*, the most prestigious and widely read of all the British Medical Association's publications, seems to be in the grip of an obsession about inequality. Scarcely a week goes by when it does not return to the question, which it considers not only on a national but on an international scale. For example, in the two weeks preceding the issue in which inequalities between Italy and Zaire conspired to kill Zairean women, there were editorials about health and do-

mestic economic policy, and on the relationship between structural adjustment programmes in so-called Third World countries and health, or rather ill-health. The drift of these editorials is monotonously statist. The state should tax the rich and use the money to provide services for the poor; in similar fashion, the rich countries should provide aid for poor countries.

Inequalities between social classes and between countries are taken as signs of injustice in themselves. Although the

The British Medical Journal, the most prestigious and widely read of all the British Medical Association's publications, seems to be in the grip of an obsession about inequality

health of every social class has improved in absolute terms in Britain during the past two decades, inequalities between the classes have increased. For example, the infant mortality rate in the lowest social class is now twice what it is in the highest. A few years ago, the ratio was lower, although absolute levels were higher: thus — according to *BMJ-thought* — our society has become more unjust. Since the differentials in the infant mortality rate have increased at a time when income differentials have also increased, there is only one way forward: to tax and tax again.

Although one might suppose that sympathy for the less fortunate members of society is the motive which lies

behind this constant carping on inequalities, I suspect (though I cannot definitely prove) that it is actually dislike for the more fortunate members of society which drives it. I say this for a number of reasons.

First, I believe that the desire to harm others, and to deprive them of their pleasures, is a far stronger political motive than love of the weak and the desire to do them some service. If a puritan is someone who fears that someone, somewhere, is happy, a socialist is someone who fears that someone, somewhere, is prosperous, and resolves to correct this unnatural situation.

Second, only certain inequalities in health are regarded as symptoms of injustice, not all of them. The difference in the life expectancies of women and men (very nearly as great as that between labourers and company directors) arouses no calls for remedial action, such as the persecution of women by taxes or other measures against them. It would be regarded as bad taste to suggest as an explanation of the superior life expectancy of women that they live easier lives than men, whom they parasitize, and for whose shortened life expectancy they are therefore responsible.

The fact that, across the social classes, illegitimate children have twice the infant mortality rate of legitimate children, does not stimulate the *BMJ* to flights of rhetoric, but on the contrary, to something approaching silence. This, I suspect, is because the remedy would be to discourage illegitimacy, to do which is not only politically incorrect in itself, but might actually result in a reduced tax bill, inasmuch as the discouragement might take the form of a refusal to give tax concessions to unmarried mothers.

Third, the *BMJ* refuses to consider the possibilities either that the distribution of income (within quite wide limits) in a society might not be a question of justice or injustice at all but only one of economic convenience, or that increasing inequality, far from being a sign of increasing injustice, might actually be its reverse: the sign of a more just society, in which those who make the greatest economic contribution are now keeping a larger proportion of the income they generate. In the absence of the consideration of such possibilities, and in the presence of the automatic assumption that increasing inequality must mean increasing social injustice, it is fair to assume that the *BMJ* is implicitly arguing for complete and radical economic equality as the only just social arrangement. Society will be just, on this view, when the chairman of British Gas is paid the same as the alcoholic hobo, and works only for the sheer, intrinsic, Kantian joy of delivering gas to the British masses.

Now if inequalities are in themselves important, and symptoms of such a terrible injustice that many millions of people must be forcibly deprived of their income to in order to rectify it, then it is reasonable to assume that it is a matter of indifference as to whether the death rates of the lower classes approach those of the upper classes or *vice versa*. The cause of social justice would be as far advanced by the deaths of the rich as by the survival of the poor, if equality were in itself a worthwhile goal. A situation in which the infant mortality rate of the highest class was reduced to 1 per thousand live births, and that of lowest social class to 3 per thousand, could be presented, on the *BMJ*'s argument, as an increase in social injustice, inasmuch as the ratio between the rates had increased to 3 from its present 2 (6 and 12 per thousand). In other words, either welfare does not entail justice, or justice does not entail welfare. Certainly, justice — if it consists of equality — does not entail saving as many lives as possible.

It may come as something of a surprise to many to learn that the mouthpiece of the British medical profession is one of the last unreconstructed pro-

ponents of welfare spending as the panacea to society's ills. After all, is the medical profession not supposed by tradition to be deeply conservative?

It is, if by conservative is meant dislike of change to the *status quo*,

It may come as something of a surprise to many to learn that the mouthpiece of the British medical profession is one of the last unreconstructed proponents of welfare spending as the panacea to society's ills

whatever the *status quo* may happen to be at any given time. The profession didn't want the NHS, but having got it and having lived with it for a number of years (and prospered by it), it now doesn't want any radical or fundamental change to it, but rather (if possible) its expansion. Nor does the profession want to recognise that social and economic conditions have changed profoundly since Beveridge produced his report. Therefore the same argument must be produced to justify the huge and ever-larger expenditures on the system, as if nothing much had changed in the meantime: namely, that Britain is a country of terrible social injustice, threatened by mass poverty, which can only be addressed through redistributionist policies channelled through state welfare bureaucracies.

In fact, in circumstances in which a very high percentage of the population could afford — considering its other expenditures — to make provision for its own health care by means of private insurance and so forth, the justification for unlimited health care paid for out of general taxation resides in the undoubted fact that, if left to itself, a very high proportion of the population

would fail to make such a provision, so utterly infantilised has it become, and so used to regarding its personal income as mere pocket money, to be spent on videos and other entertainments. Since no civilised society could contemplate watching people die of appendicitis merely because they had failed to insure against it, and had no savings to pay for the necessary operation, it has become necessary for the state to stand *in loco parentis*.

Thus, in present economic circumstances at least, the justification for a national health service as it was originally organised (and the reforms instituted by the present government have not fundamentally altered matters) is based on a profound — and now quite possibly justified — paternalist mistrust of the British people. The same attitude of mistrust is evident in the obsessive campaign of the *BMJ* against smoking: if people are free to choose, they choose foolishly, and therefore it is better not to give them the choice, but rather to coerce their wisdom. Yet:

If men are to wait for liberty until they become wise and good in slavery, they may indeed wait for ever.

Theodore Dalrymple is a practising doctor.

There are people who strictly deprive themselves of each and every eatable, drinkable and smokeable which has in any way acquired a shady reputation ... How strange it is. It is like paying out your whole fortune for a cow that has gone dry.

Mark Twain

Cannabis and the Mind

David Copestake shows how the dangers of this drug have been grossly underestimated

Cannabis use in the West has become a major epidemic, a massive human experiment which is probably one of the largest ever observed in Western Society. Associated with this has been a large promotional campaign that has minimised the adverse effects of the drug. Some members of the medical profession have backed this campaign and quite often there has been a serious denial by doctors and mental health professionals that cannabis is harmful. Educationalists too have been saying that cannabis is not very harmful and that young people must be taught how to use drugs more safely, rather than not to use them at all.

There are people who stand to gain wealth and power if cannabis were legally available. Stockmarket speculators, some tobacco companies and related organisations are known to be investing large amounts of money in the legalization campaigns now spreading into Britain. Criminals too would like cannabis use legalised, for they prefer to move into legitimate business to avoid money-laundering. Promoting drugs to destabilise a country is a standard tactic for fringe political groups. We therefore have the situation where businesses (including pharmaceutical companies), cartels and political groups combine with liberal intellectuals (who usually want to legalise their own use) in arguing the case for cannabis. The media (with few exceptions) support the pro-cannabis lobby, and seem compelled to romanticise the drug. This can only partly be explained by the search for newsworthy copy.

Legalisers confine their remarks to 'physical' health and often say that, since cannabis does not actually kill

many people, it is safe to use. However, proper health is a combination of physical, mental, intellectual, social, emotional and spiritual factors. The University of Mississippi has collected over 10,500 scientific papers on cannabis, none of which gives it a clean bill of health. This evidence is studiously ignored by the pro-pot activists. Here, in brief, are some of the scientific facts about the adverse effects of cannabis given briefly in *Marijuana '84*, ed. D J Harvey, IRL Press, Oxford, (1985), p.750:

- 1 It retards learning;
- 2 it adversely affects the reproductive system and production of sex hormones;
- 3 it has the capacity adversely to affect every organ in the body, and can also affect individual cells;
- 4 its constituents are stored in fat cells and the brain contains a high proportion of fat;
- 5 it adversely affects lung functions;
- 6 it interferes with psychomotor functions and heart functions;
- 7 it contains 50-70% more carcinogenic compounds than a tobacco cigarette;
- 8 it adversely affects memory;
- 9 it decreases motivation; and
- 10 it interferes with the immune system.

These are serious effects, of which the general public is largely unaware, due to the popular myth that cannabis is harmless.

One important factor to remember is that the cannabis plant produces different forms of the drug varying in potency and effect. These are contained in the flowering tops, in the resin secreted by the tops and in the complex mixtures of leaves, stalk and seeds. Each of these is given a variety

of names in different parts of the world. The potency of the drug varies enormously, depending not only on which part of the plant is used, but also on where it is grown. The effect of the smoked resin can be up to eight times as strong as that of a mixture of leaves and stalk, and a recent introduction known as skunk or neddler weed is thirty-fifty times stronger than the marijuana leaves smoked in the 1960's.

Cannabis is a crude drug containing over 400 chemicals, more than 60 of these being known as cannabinoids. The most widely known and powerful psychoactive constituent is delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC for short). Under optimum conditions, approximately 30% of the THC and other cannabinoids present in a marijuana cigarette will survive the smoking process. Approximately 80% of this will be absorbed by the body, and of this, less than 10% may cross the blood-brain barrier. This may not sound very much, but THC is very powerful compared with a drug like alcohol.

Some responses to cannabis are 'acute' ones such as psychosis and panic attacks, and may be short lived. These need to be distinguished from long-term effects which may persist long after consumption. These are partly due to the accumulation of cannabinoids in body fat for long periods, and to the dysfunction of parts of the brain. Here lies one of the main reasons why cannabis should not be legalised, namely, that it takes such a long time for the drug to clear from the body (as compared, for instance, with alcohol). Cannabinoids are fat soluble, and when the drug is in the fat, it takes time to re-emerge. If the concentration in the fat is high, then so, by the process of equilibrium, is the

concentration in the blood, and consequently in the brain, even though fat itself has a poor blood supply. (A single dose of cannabis in humans takes as much as thirty days to be excreted, with a half-life in tissues of about seven days).

Cannabis also dissolves in cell membranes. This causes physical properties in the membranes to change, so altering their functional state. Affected membranes in the brain will therefore alter the functional properties of nerve cells — a fact which explains the indirect effect of cannabis on the brain. It is not only cannabinoid receptors (nerve receptors that receive naturally occurring cannabinoid-like chemicals in the body) that are affected, but the receptors of other neurotransmitters as well. The drug is then able to affect *all* functions of the brain.

Mental Effects of Cannabis

Many mental effects of cannabis are due to dysfunction of the prefrontal lobes in the brain.

Thinking

Psychologists have noted the loss of the ability for abstraction, with a drift towards a more concrete way of thinking. There is also a loss of the ability for critical examination, the cannabis user being unable to analyse why mistakes arise and correct them.

Attention

Cannabis users cannot establish a correct focus of attention. They do not listen to other people's point of view, and interests in life gradually deteriorate. They live in an isolated world without being aware of it.

Memory

Short-term and long-term memory are each affected. Many things are forgotten and there are lapses of concentration. When cannabis users look back, their past will be embedded in a fog, and in this foggy world, they do not notice that time passes, and are not aware of interpersonal relations. However, they have a delusive feeling of freedom.

Due to the long-term storage of THC in the fat, the use of cannabis more often than every six weeks for two

years will cause these aberrations in mental function.

Creativity and insight

The big claim for cannabis is that it gives heightened creativity, awareness and insight into 'reality'. Creativity is not an easy thing to measure effectively, but tests on musicians have shown that cannabis does not improve

There are people who stand to gain wealth and power if cannabis were legally available.

Stockmarket speculators, some tobacco companies and related organisations are known to be investing large amounts of money in the legalization campaigns now spreading into Britain

musical ability. The drug may be able to release repressed ideas, but as it also reduces work drive, the ideas are rarely followed through or put into practice. Many ideas generated by drugs are of the same sort of quality as ideas that come into our heads just as we drop off to sleep — apparently brilliant at the time, but stupidly banal when viewed in the grey light of morning! As for the claim that cannabis opens the door to 'reality', may we ask what 'reality' cannabis users have discovered? They can only mean a subjective feeling: certainly not a new physical reality, for no great works on theoretical physics have been produced by the cannabis culture; nor a spiritual reality, for no great saints or religious thinkers have emerged from it. Religions that use cannabis as a spiritual aid are not advanced ones. Some Hindus may have regarded Bhang (a cannabis drink) as

'the Heavenly-guide', 'the poor Man's Heaven' and so forth; but the higher exponents of Hinduism regard such experiences as impure and following the 'wrong path'. To regard cannabis as a divinity, as some primitive people have done, is certainly not an advanced theology. Buddhism is against the use of drugs, and the Fifth Precept says, 'I undertake to train myself to abstain from mind-confusing drink and drugs'. Christianity has had no use for hallucinogenic drugs, except for a fringe group of American Indians who eat the cactus *Lophophoria williamsii* (which contains mescaline) in their rituals.

A summary of the clinical results of cannabis use was given some years ago by L.J. West in *Ann. Intem.Med.*, 73, 45. He wrote:

There are a great many young people, including some of the brightest and some of the best, who have been using marijuana now more or less regularly for three or four years. Addiction or even habituation is denied. The smoking is said to be simply for pleasure. Untoward effects are usually, although not always, denied. But the experienced clinician observes in many of these individuals personality changes that seem to grow subtly over long periods of time: diminished drive, lessened ambition, decreased motivation, apathy, shortened attention span, distractibility, poor judgement, impaired communication skills, loss of effectiveness, introversion, magical thinking, derealization and depersonalization, diminished capacity to carry out complex tasks or prepare realistically for the future, a peculiar fragmentation in the flow of thought, habit deterioration and progressive loss of insight.

This hardly sounds like enhanced creativity!

Cannabis psychosis

There is now international consensus on the existence of an acute condition known as cannabis psychosis. This usually develops after a prolonged period of heavy and regular use, but some individuals have become psychotic after a single cannabis experience. This disorder affects only a selective minority of users, suggesting there are intervening factors present other than the drug itself. In a paper for the Interna-

tional Cannabis Research Society, *ICRS Abstracts* 1991, S.P. Montgomery summarised the following evidence.

- 1 Cannabis can induce psychosis in persons without a history of psychotic illness.
- 2 It can also exacerbate psychotic symptoms in persons with pre-existing psychiatric illness (even in very small doses).
- 3 The type and intensity of psychotic symptoms following cannabis use, as well as their duration, vary among individuals.
- 4 Cannabis psychosis is not always a transient event, because the psychotic symptoms can persist for weeks, months or even years.
- 5 There may also be symptoms of aggressiveness, destructiveness, and combativeness which are not often seen in persons with psychotic illness.

Schizophrenia

Schizophrenics with an otherwise well-controlled illness run the risk of relapse if they should absorb even moderate amounts of cannabis. A Canadian study conducted by J.C. Negrete and colleagues, in *Psychological Medicine*, 16, 515-520 (1986), investigated the use of cannabis amongst 137 schizophrenics in treatment. They offered three major explanations for their findings:-

- 1 Cannabis causes an actual exacerbation of schizophrenic symptoms, due to its disorganizing effects on psychic function.
- 2 Cannabis causes a toxic psychosis which blends with the schizophrenic symptomatology and makes it appear more pronounced.
- 3 Cannabis neutralizes the therapeutic action of antipsychotic medication.

As schizophrenia is a severe mental disorder affecting a high proportion of the population, the dangers of cannabis involvement cannot be over emphasized. Schizophrenic patients themselves should be alerted to the possible untoward interaction between their illness and cannabis, and the medical profession should be made more aware of this danger.

Motivation

The effect of cannabis on motivation has been well recorded, and the name *amotivational syndrome* given to it. Loosely defined, this syndrome includes a loss of interest, apathy, diminished academic performance, lethargy, social neglect and reduced drive. There is much evidence that cannabis was a major factor in the rise of the 'drop-outs' in Britain, for this drug creates the moods and feelings which make it possible to opt out of society and takes away the desire for work. 'Drop-outs' arose as drugs became popular in the 1960's and before there was widespread unemployment. The legalizers deny that there is any such thing as the *amotivational syndrome*, saying this is just an example of youthful alienation or pre-existing personality traits. However, careful observers note such evidence as the following, recorded by J.H. Kaplan in *Annals of the New York Academy of Science*, 191, 264, (1971), who had medical experience with American forces during the Vietnam war. He discovered that men using marijuana had their functioning severely impaired, and showed characteristics of passive behaviour: irresponsibility, lack of ambition, obstinacy, procrastination and a desire to be left alone. Such individuals manifested irritability, poor concentration, low frustration tolerance, impaired verbal communication, loss of complex goals, and subtle withdrawal from activities requiring sustained effort. Kaplan found that soldiers who used marijuana could hardly function as effective military personnel.

Moral decay

In the 1950's Donald Johnson published a book called *Indian Hemp, a Social Menace*. It was a good book, but every reference to it is scornful. The only reason seems to be that the author took a moral stand, disapproving of the moral decadence caused by drugs such as cannabis. As a Christian worker among drug abusers for many years, I have been deeply concerned at the moral decay that I have observed. I have seen beatniks and hippies living in self-imposed filth and squalor — yet

while smoking pot, they imagine they live in a palace. Cannabis brings about a decline in intellect, character and personality. Few people care about character today, and that is why they see no harm in cannabis. But we ignore this factor at our peril. Civilization will perish when character has disappeared. Drugs are perhaps the fastest way to destroy character and personality; they are the *Achilles heel* of modern civilization.

Social decay

In the *Wootton Report* (Cannabis: Report by the Advisory Committee on Drug Dependence, HMSO, 1968, P.74), a report which was often cited by cannabis legalizers, Sir Aubrey Lewis gave a review of the international literature. He wrote:

Observers with long experience concur in the opinion that continued excessive use of cannabis over a period of years leads to moral and social decay; countries from which such reports come are South Africa, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Syria, Turkey, Astrakan and India... The degradation that most writers report is apparent in several ways. [The cannabis user] is irritable and impulsive, or inert and dreamy; he neglects himself grossly and is incapable of sustained effort; he may become a beggar or a vagrant taking no responsibility for his family; he may practise homosexual or other sexual abnormalities or become impotent; he may be hypochondriacal or apathetic. His unkempt and prematurely aged appearance, inflamed eyes, tremor, and malnutrition are said to make up a fairly characteristic picture.

Gabrile G. Nahas in his book, *Marijuana — Deceptive Weed*, Raven Press, New York, 1973, p.20, suggested that hashish addiction played a major role in the decline of Arab civilization. He wrote:

The decline of this brilliant Moslem civilization cannot be attributed to a single cause but to many of the interacting factors which tend to erode man's creative energy and blunt the full exercise of his power. Among these, abuse of *Cannabis*, the deceptive weed, with its promise of instant heaven on earth, cannot be excluded. This possibility might be one of the reasons why concerned physicians and responsible leaders from Arab countries have fought,

during the past fifty years, to eradicate the use of hashish from a land once known as 'the fertile crescent', which is now stagnant and destitute. It has been until now the ever-losing battle of a few courageous men attempting to turn an overwhelming tide.

The Central Narcotics Intelligence Bureau of the Egyptian Government has tried to combat the use of hashish, and in its Annual Report 1944, quoted by R.S. Ropp, *Drugs and the Mind*, London, 1958, p.100, said:

...the prepared product of the *Cannabis sativa* plant, while having very limited medicinal use, is capable of profoundly disturbing the brain cells and of inducing acts of violence, even murder; it is in fact a thoroughly vicious and dangerous thing of no value whatever to humanity and deserving of nothing but the odium and contempt of civilised people.

In Egypt, Dr M.I. Soueif, a leading psychiatrist, was requested by President Nasser to study cannabis addiction in about 1959. In his work, cited

by N. Egl, *Mankind Quarterly*, 16, pt. 2, 83-92, (1975), he found that hashish usage was a main cause of Egyptian 'lethargy' and low levels of drive and ambition. He discovered that 'Those with a higher level of education — and/or intelligence — show the largest amount of deterioration, illiterates almost no deterioration, and semi-illiterates in between.'

Furthermore, in the late 1960's, India, the United Arab Republic, Mexico and Ghana appealed to the Western World to help them stamp out the use of cannabis. This fact has rarely been publicised. These countries *know* its long-term social effects, and it would be the height of irresponsibility for Western governments to adopt short-sighted measures and relax the laws against cannabis. Our governments need to support these other countries in combatting a social menace with which they are all too familiar.

An alarming aspect of cannabis use

is that the adverse mental effects do not seem to be recognised by the majority of users, who are apt to say that cannabis use is a private affair, and that the law should not interfere in such private matters. However, a society has the right to use the law to preserve its own existence. A society is a living organism, depending on the common morality of individuals, as its uniting and preserving force. An attempt to put private behaviour outside the law will lead to a weakening of society and a disregard for the law. I believe that we should therefore maintain legal sanctions against the drug, and follow the Swedish example in taking firmer action to suppress the cannabis habit.

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Mercy Killing Gone Astray

Moritz Nestor shows this is the wrong way to help the dying

In the mass media and popular scientific literature there is now much loose talk of 'helping the dying', 'the right to die', 'euthanasia', or 'mercy killing'. By this is usually meant so-called 'active shortening of a person's life', in other words, the deliberate killing of the patient. Countries with democratic constitutions have always regarded this as the crime of taking another's life. According to British law, killing a patient constitutes premeditated murder even when the patient desires it. This is because nobody can effectively make somebody kill him: 'No person may aid, abet, counsel or procure the suicide of

another, or an attempt by another to commit suicide.' In German criminal law the bar on the pretext of consent set out in Paragraph 216 of the Penal Code renders active and direct assistance towards death an indictable offence even when it takes place with the express and earnest entreaty of the dying. Thus man's natural and inalienable right to his life and personal integrity are respected. This follows also from the fundamental laws in Article 2 Paragraph 2 of the German Federal Constitution which guarantee every man's right to his life. There are no circumstances in which a person's wish not to live any longer can be interpreted as

laying on anybody else an obligation to kill him. Moreover, wishing not to live any more and wanting to be killed are not the same thing.

Since the British Habeas Corpus Act and the first constitutions of the modern world, this right to life has become the basis of self-determination and dignity, and the essence of the fundamental and human rights clauses of our democratic states based on the rule of law. The permanent representatives of national and international medical bodies all support it. With extremely few exceptions (e.g. exposure of infants in ancient Sparta) none of the world religions and great civilizations

which we know about from their histories — Egyptian, Persian, Babylonian, Judaic, Ancient Chinese (Buddhism), Japanese (Confucian), Indian (Hindu), Roman, Greek, Christian to name only a few — permitted or now permit the killing of invalids or ‘worthless lives’. In the Germanic lands, exposing or otherwise killing old people in times of war, hunger or cold disappeared with the coming of Christianity.

Popular belief has it that the euthanasia debate first became a widespread issue with the emergence of National Socialism. Hitler, however, was not the inventor of ‘euthanasia’. It was an international movement of the Twentieth Century. There have always been individuals who toyed with the idea, such as Bacon or Morus, but they had no following. Only towards the end of the Nineteenth Century and into the Twentieth did a worldwide movement emerge capable of mobilizing large sections of society or even whole countries, like Hitler’s Germany. ‘Eugenic Societies’, societies ‘for voluntary euthanasia’ or for ‘humane dying’ appeared rapidly. Essentially intellectual, they had their roots in social Darwinism. Their ideologies preached that the strong should kill the weak, not help them, otherwise everybody might go under. The Nazis wanted to heal the ‘body of the people’ by eliminating those ‘unworthy of life’. In the same way, according to Lenin, Russian soil was to be ‘cleansed’ of ‘bourgeois’ and ‘vermin’ in the Bolshevik ‘Concentration Camps’ (the Gulags).

For Darwin, love of one’s neighbour was more important than natural selection, but some of his followers thought that the laws of selection outweighed love of one’s neighbour. They popularized the slogan ‘Struggle for Existence’. Ernst Haeckel, and more particularly Galton, applied evolutionary theory in the sphere of social politics. At the turn of the century this ideology of ‘racial improvement’ began to be called ‘Eugenics’. Since, according to Galton, gifts were hereditary, we ourselves ought to be taking control of the processes of evolution. By preventing the ‘worse elements’ from breeding and at the same time

encouraging the ‘better’ elements the whole race was to be improved.

It was one of the basic ideas of social Darwinism that the evolution of man’s own species was outside his control. Thus too many ‘idle mouths’ would survive. Man should take selection in hand. The first item on the agenda was ‘The People’ or ‘The Race’, but soon attention turned towards the individual. The words ‘selection’ and ‘elimination’ dropped out and the talk was of ‘the right to die’, which was the title of a book by the German Jost in 1895. It was the German biologist Haeckel who conceived this idea of ‘mercy killing’ just as it has come down to us: a man has the right, or possibly even the duty, to put an end to the torment of fellow human beings when grave illness makes life unbearable or when they themselves plead for ‘release’.

There are no circumstances in which a person’s wish not to live any longer can be interpreted as laying on anybody else an obligation to kill him. Moreover, wishing not to live any more and wanting to be killed are not the same thing

Neo-Malthusianism — so named after its founder, an English clergyman — soon joined forces with social Darwinism. It held that because the poor reproduce themselves faster than the rich, population growth is always greater than the increase in production, so the result is ever more poverty and crime. These two intellectual movements worked in tandem from time to time during the whole of the Twentieth Century.

They soon became a movement over a broad front. The Galton Laboratory of National Eugenics was founded in

London in 1907. The British Eugenics Education Society followed in 1908. The Eugenics Record Office was set up in the USA in 1910 and the Eugenic movement managed to exert a powerful influence on US immigration policy. In Germany, Plötz, the father of Germanic racial hygiene, suggested that at every birth a panel of doctors should decide whether a child should have the right to live or not. Plötz founded the *Gesellschaft für Rassenhygiene* (Society for Racial Hygiene) in 1905.

In 1908 the Society for Mental Hygiene was founded in Connecticut, USA. This was the starting signal for a wider movement which propounded psycho-hygiene. The cry was for the sterilization and castration of the mentally sick, and in many countries also of alcoholics and social misfits, in Germany even of criminals. In Germany in 1922 the jurist Binding and the psychiatrist Hoche, with their paper entitled ‘Licence to put an end to valueless lives’ provided the Nazis with the ideological pretext for their mass ‘euthanasia’ of tens of thousands of the medically ill. According to Binding, the costs of keeping alive patients beyond a reasonable point were too high. For such people death would be a ‘release’, and for the state it would be a lightening of the burden. Man was the ‘free born sovereign of his own destiny’. At least the patient himself should be made to see the ending of a ‘worthless life’ or one with ‘negative value’ as a ‘release’.

Hitler’s personal doctor expressed himself as follows: ‘The underlying principle is the notion of giving a helping hand to the person who is unable to help himself and who is condemned to a life of agony.’ In 1922, when Binding and Hoche publicized their ideas, and Hitler’s Chancellorship was still a long way off, a proposal for legalization of euthanasia was brought forward in the German parliament, but was thrown out. In 1935 the American Doctor Carrel in his book ‘Man the Unknown’ proposed that criminals and the mentally ill should be put to death with ‘suitable gases’. In the same year, 1935, the Euthanasia Society was founded in England to

promote 'voluntary euthanasia' for the terminally ill. In 1936 a proposal in this sense was rejected in the British parliament. In 1938 the American Society for Euthanasia and the Society for Voluntary Euthanasia (Connecticut) were founded. In 1939 Hitler became the first person to take action; he gave the orders for mass killing. Thus we trace the story of how 'racial hygiene' changed into 'voluntary' or, as it is now called, 'self-determined', dying.

1945 did not in fact see the end of the movement for euthanasia. At the Nuremberg Trial of the Doctors, Hitler's personal doctor expressed the almost ghoulish idea that, 'If one considers this question of euthanasia openly and takes pains to understand the basis of it from both sides, then in my opinion even in the future a way will be found for putting it into practice.' Recent events in Holland suggest that this prophecy was only too close to the mark.

Further attempts to legalize euthanasia were made in the British parliament in 1969, 1975, and 1985. 'The Incurable Patient's Bill' of 1975, however, avoided the term 'euthanasia', which had been discredited by the Nazis, and instead spoke of the patient's 'right to be delivered from incurable suffering'. In Germany the first voices began to be raised as early as the Fifties. In 1962 the paediatrician Catel, who had been an advocate for euthanasia before 1945, proposed a 'restricted euthanasia' as a properly understood 'pain reduction' procedure. However, these voices still find few echoes, since the memory of the Nazi era is still vivid. After the Second World War the euthanasia movement adapted to the mood of the times. The defeat of the Nazis had been conclusive. 'Putting an end to worthless lives' gave way to the 'right to die'. The leaders of the movement came from the ranks of the left, the left-liberals, and later the Greens.

Better standards of living after World War II enticed people to set more store by material goods and social standing than by for instance the responsible task of setting up a family. Then, fol-

lowing the changes in the sixties came a massive decline in the status of the family. These two social movements together constituted a situation in which the idea of mercy killing could take hold. The values structure of our democracies was shattered under the impact of the culture revolution — an overall decline of morality. Under the influence of the sixties generation it became the norm to call for not only the freeing of the workers from capitalism, and the children from their parents and for the lifting of sexual taboos and for abortion on demand, but also for the legalization of 'euthanasia'. All fundamental values went the same way as the family; not only obligations towards oneself and society in general but even the law itself were denounced as 'repression'.

Total individual autonomy without social obligations was seen as the ideal to be pursued — a freedom always to do whatever one wanted at a given moment, regardless of the pressures of necessity. In a society living according to these ideals of 'freedom' the old, the weak and the sufferers are under continual pressure not to become burdens on society. The more the meaning of life is seen as consisting in the unrestricted satisfaction of immediate desire, the more the individual is likely to feel that at a certain predetermined moment, when through age or illness he will be unable to find any enjoyment, life no longer corresponds with the ideal of unrestricted gratification and becomes meaningless. At that point he will 'volunteer of his own free will' to take the up-to-date option — his 'right to die' at the moment when his life seems to him to have become worthless. And indeed how vulnerable the ill, the old and the weak are to such sentiments! With constant talk about 'mercy killing' people become used to the idea that 'in certain circumstances' killing is humane.

The result is the break-up of the previous consensus. To an increasing extent every individual comes to feel under the obligation to consider at what point he might become a burden on society, and just when it would be appropriate for him to claim his 'right

to die'. This so-called 'right to die' undeniably implies an obligation to choose for oneself the point at which life becomes no longer worthwhile. Under the Nazis a *Gremium Dritte* (Third Committee) decided who was 'worthy of life'. According to the ideology of euthanasia, everyone should decide 'for himself' when his own life becomes 'unworthy'. How easy it is to influence man's conception of his own best interests, especially in a society in which people feel obliged to conform to the accepted norms of public opinion! When choosing one's own death is held up as a model of freedom, then impressionable people are likely to think that they would be showing themselves to be 'progressive' if they 'voluntarily' declared an 'interest' in ending their lives on the grounds of unworthiness. The pressure in this kind of situation is strong, complex and subtle. It could arise from the feeling of becoming a burden on the social environment, or no longer in sound health and therefore 'unworthy', or from open hostility in the case of a cripple. This amounts to 'indirect eugenics' or 'fascism against the individual'. The 'creature unworthy of life' is a product both of post-modernism with its imperative for instant gratification, and of national socialism; they both kill it off. In its place, in order to placate the public conscience, they praise euthanasia as 'the beautiful death'. The murderer, according to this new interpretation of human kindness, is justified as a 'liberator'.

But with this 'mercy killing', mankind is on a slippery slope. The starting point is the ideal that doctors should out of pity have the right to 'help' a sufferer on his way out when he pleads for it of his own free will. (Who could dispute a man's right of self-determination?) It would, however, not be right if only those who were able to demand it freely should be 'released' from their agony, while those who were unable, or no longer able, to do so should be left to lie in agony. If people have a 'right to die' then it is surely inhumane if the doctor refuses to 'help' them — in other words refuses to kill them! It then becomes humane and a

moral obligation to kill, which will have to be enshrined in law.

The Dutch, who are held up as good examples of the legalization of mercy killing, have not found a way round this logical impasse. The official government Rimmelink Report of 1991 on the practice of euthanasia in Holland proves this point. The report is based on countrywide data, obtained in strict anonymity from physicians, under the governmental assurance of freedom from prosecution. All participants were guaranteed that the data would not be communicated to the legal authorities. To the cynically worded question whether they had ever in their lives ended a patient's life without his or her explicit request, the targeted doctors answered as follows:

27% had killed at least one patient unsolicited.

32% regarded such a possibility as 'conceivable'.

A mere 42% of the doctors questioned would never kill a patient without his or her explicit request.

But the fact remains that even these doctors would indeed kill! The true face of so-called 'self-determined death' clearly rears its ugly head in these statistics!

The slippery slope is also evident in the figures for euthanasia. For the year 1990/91, according to the Report, there were 2,300 cases (out of 129,000 total deaths). Under the heading 'euthanasia' the Report understands the giving of a poison to the patient by the doctor on request. But the Report cites a further 3,159 cases in which on the patient's request and with the intention on the doctor's part of causing death, the patient was given an overdose of morphine. These cases, however, were not categorized as euthanasia, but as 'normal medical treatment'. A further thousand patients are listed in the Report as having been given a fatal preparation without having requested it. These cases, again, were not categorized as euthanasia but instead described as suitably gauged acts of human kindness in extreme necessity at the time of death! The motives for these killings without demand (multiple reasons were also possible) give a

clear indication of the scale and nature of this 'slippery slope':

In 17% of cases the doctor claimed it was the 'patient's wish', without in truth having asked the patient.

In 30% suffering and pain were given as the reason.

In 31% 'poor quality of life'.

In 60% 'no prospect of improvement'.

In 39% 'treatment would be pointless'.

In 32% 'unbearable suffering of the relatives'.

In 1% 'economic grounds' e.g. shortage of beds.

The Report lists a further 4,941 patients to whom the doctors administered fatal doses of morphine unasked with the intention of causing death.

According to statements by the Royal Dutch Medical Association KNMG, which sets the standards, unsolicited euthanasia is clearly forbidden. Yet the Report categorizes these killings as 'normal medical practice'. According to the Report, 8,750 life-prolonging treatments were discontinued without the entreaty of the patients and with the intention of causing death on the part of the doctor. The Report enumerates these cases, yet categorizes them also as 'normal medical practice'!

Altogether there were more than 19,000 killings in a single year, of which the Dutch government recognizes a mere 2,300 as 'euthanasia'. The Rimmelink Report regards more than 17,000 of these killings as simply not euthanasia cases. The Dutch have already pulled off a similar statistical conjuring trick in the matter of drugs. They only count as 'drug-related deaths' cases where a needle is actually found sticking in the addict's arm — which comes out as an incredibly low figure. The Report says nothing specific about euthanasia of the newborn, nor of psychiatric patients. But we learn from it that in something like half of all cases of premature births, and of handicapped children, lifesaving measures were either not given or discontinued. No one will ever be able to uncover just how much wrongdoing has taken place in this area. This re-

awakens uncomfortable memories from the not too distant past. From a fear of loss of international standing the Dutch government naturally rejects the charge of wanting to legalize killing.

In the years following the '68 upheavals the Dutch developed an unbridled euthanasia practice throughout the country by means of a campaign of deliberate law-breaking. Nobody knows just how many deaths were caused by it. Revealingly, it was precisely the medical profession with the help of the media, the government and the judiciary, which launched the campaign. By 1990 more and more doctors had killed patients. One or two were punished — the numbers dwindled year by year, as did the severity of the sentences. More and more doctors were found not guilty on the grounds that they were dealing with an 'emergency situation'. More were simply not prosecuted.

On 1st November 1990 the General Board of the KNMG and the Ministry of Justice agreed upon a 'notification procedure', whereby a doctor has to submit a written report when he has killed a patient. If the report appears to fulfil the requirements laid down for 'performing euthanasia or assisting in suicide' no charges are filed against him. Since this date even fewer prosecutions have been made, whereas the number of killings has continued to rise. In 1991 it emerged that more than 50% of the doctors who had engaged in killings had ascribed the deaths to 'natural causes'. Already we are getting the first acquittals in cases involving the killing of psychiatric patients in good health.

In 1993 the Dutch parliament passed the Euthanasia Law which had long been contested and loathed by doctors all over Europe. Articles 293 and 294 of the Dutch Penal Code, however, forbid the ending of a patient's life on his request as well as assisted suicide. These articles remain unchanged. Instead, under the new law, the 'notification procedure', introduced in 1990, was incorporated into the already established 'Burial Act'. The lawmakers thus created the absurd situation whereby everybody in the

country except the doctors was forbidden to kill. The law does not say which patients a doctor 'may' kill. It only prescribes how a doctor should report the killing in order to avoid being punished. The law takes no account of the fact that assisted suicide and the unsolicited killing of patients have long been legally accepted as 'normal medical practice'. The Royal Dutch Medical Association sets out clearly what 'euthanasia' is and who may be killed. It even favours 'life-ending measures' in cases of coma, mentally handicapped old people, severely deformed newly-born, and the psychologically disturbed.

It is the state which ensures that in compliance with the law killing is only carried out in the 'right' cases. A doctor calls in the official certifying doctor after the patient has been killed. The certifying doctor examines the body externally only. Then he makes up his mind whether it was a case of 'requested death', 'assisted suicide' or a case in which a doctor has 'actively shortened the life of a patient without the latter's explicit request'. He receives a report from the patient's doctor, which he 'verifies'. This report comprises an account of the course of the illness, a declaration that it was the patient's wish that the doctor should kill him, or, ominously, an explanation of 'the reason why there was no evidence of the patient's explicit request'. The report also says which colleagues the doctor has consulted, who did the killing and how, and who witnessed it.

Thus a new era begins in which human life is no longer inviolate. Anybody who thinks about his aged parents, about his family or other beloved dependents, or about his own situation in the case of illness or old age, becomes aware of the hidden life-and-death procedure concealed in the alien word 'euthanasia'. What now, when it is no longer the case that according to natural law a man has no right to kill deliberately? Is it not shocking that today young and middle aged people should find it normal to debate whether people who are getting old, or are chronically ill, or in other ways de-

pendent on others should be allowed to live or not? Human kindness and rationality have brought about a situation in the medical sphere whereby life-prolonging measures are waived in cases of irreversible coma, and whereby in cases of terminal illness carefully judged pain-killing measures can prevent unnecessary suffering. It is wrong to allow considerations of ideology or of cost/benefit to upset this benign situation and actively to end life.

The Dutch Euthanasia Law tramples on inalienable fundamental human rights under the rule of law. The person killed is only externally examined by the certifying doctor. The evidence (report, questionnaire, certificates, letters etc.) is prepared by the patient's doctor and 'verified' by the certifying doctor only after the patient is dead! The certifying doctor passes the documents to the coroner who, on the basis of this evidence alone, decides whether a prosecution should take place. If the case seems to him to have been correctly reported, he decides not to initiate a prosecution. This follows when a doctor 'proves' that there is clear evidence of a voluntary request on the part of the patient, that there were 'no acceptable alternatives left' and that in this 'emergency' the only way the doctor could help the patient was by killing him. At the point in time when the patient's doctor calls in the certifying doctor the only reliable witness — the patient himself — is no longer alive. The doctor can write anything he likes in his report. This is intolerable in a country governed by the rule of law. The Rammelink Report reveals that in 65-75% of cases of killing the doctor simply wrote 'death from natural causes'. In practice the numbers of cases actually reported were 197 in 1987, down to 180 in 1988, 340 in 1989 and up to 1320 in 1992. What price the rule of law? Ethics should be based on Aristotle's political principles: either we should forbid all killing or we should have a free-for-all. An obligation to report after the event is not going to make people kill only when it is 'right' to do so. This bypasses the legal safeguards protecting

human life. The intention of the criminal law regarding illegal killing is primarily to maintain the safety of the living, but the Dutch government cannot prevent a killing from taking place. It is a green light — kill first, then report. The paper says only what you write on it; the witness is dead.

And what will happen if this unhappy debate about 'euthanasia' as against 'killing' is pushed even further? (In May 1995, the Northern Territory of Australia went a step further and now not only, like Holland, sanctions, but has legalized voluntary euthanasia.) The Zurich philosopher Leist recently proposed to a body of doctors that the single criterion in answer to the question whether an individual should be allowed to live is that of joy or lack of it. And what if the same arguments conceal something less conspicuous, something 'more humane' or something which can simply be defined as 'emergency' or 'help'? What if costs become the clinching arguments? The computer industry has already seized its opportunity and developed a programme in America which reckons whether a patient will outlive ninety days of treatment. If not, then a black coffin with a white cross in it appears on screen. And what if both arguments come together in an unholy alliance? Mankind has declared the right to be respected in his person and in his life as the inalienable precondition for everything else in the human condition.

The Austrian philosopher and theologian, Johannes Messner, in his exposition of Christian Natural Law ethics, has laid down that a man's moral existence is an inherently inconclusive process and can therefore never be deliberately terminated. 'So euthanasia is morally wrong', he said as he started his period of British exile in 1938. Fleeing from National Socialism he knew only too well what happens when human life is no longer held to be inviolate.

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John Buchan

George Chowdhary-Best looks at his other career in politics

John Buchan, first Lord Tweedsmuir (1875-1940) is described by the *Dictionary of National Biography* as 'author and Governor-General of Canada'. Little is said in the entry about his time as Conservative Member of Parliament for the Scottish Universities (1927-35) or his political activities and thought generally. This article is an attempt to fill the gap. Of course there are biographies, the most impressive of which is by Janet Adam Smith first published in 1965 and reprinted in paperback twenty years later. But perhaps it would be useful for the *Salisbury Review* reader to be reminded more briefly of the basic facts.

John Buchan was a Scot. That is not to say that he was not also English, for 'English' was in his day rather a broad term, which encompassed persons belonging loosely to the whole of the United Kingdom, who would today be described merely as 'British'. He is, it is true, mainly known as a novelist and writer of thrillers. Films of those thrillers, such as *Greenmantle* and *The Thirty-nine Steps*, are still occasionally shown, and the adventures of one of his heroes, Richard Hannay, have even been extended, rather in the manner of Sherlock Holmes. But the man behind the books remains little known. Even Janet Adam Smith, in the preface she wrote for the 1985 reprint of her book, confessed that in some ways he remained, to her, an enigma. Indeed, his characters — not just Hannay, but Arbuthnot, Leithen, and Roylance — are in a measure more real to the mind's eye than the man. For his *aficionados* (of whom I am one) they are, as it were, invisible friends whom one can summon up in times of stress.

Like his heroes, Buchan was not a

very enthusiastic political partisan. At Oxford he had described himself as a 'weak-kneed Conservative'. Leopold Amery told Buchan's wife in 1910 that 'John *must* stand for Parliament', adding the significant rider that 'he must belong to one side or the other'. The attractions of Liberalism to a Scot, in the absence of a fully-developed Scottish Nationalist Party, were considerable. In the first place, Liberals dominated Scotland politically as, in a sense, intellectually speaking, they still do. Nonetheless his father, the Reverend John Buchan, never afraid of being in a minority, had been a Unionist; and his son had developed a dislike for the self-righteousness of some Liberals. He objected to 'the constant assertion that you are better and more tender-hearted than your neighbours', and the almost ritual denunciation of landlords, when financiers were, to Buchan's eye, much more dangerous. One such character, in his story 'A Lucid Interval', he described as having the face of an 'elderly and pious bookmaker'. However, many of Buchan's friends were Liberal, his wife's father had been a Liberal M.P., and when he began to seek the suffrages of Selkirk and Peebles one local paper carried the headline: 'Is the Candidate a Liberal?' He was, after all, in favour of the Lloyd George/Churchill plans of 1909-10 for old age pensions, health and unemployment insurance; of curtailing the powers of the House of Lords; and of women's suffrage, having written a pamphlet for the Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise Association called 'A Loyal Outcome of the Conservative Faith'. He was, even, a free-trader at a time when most Conservatives favoured Protection. Was Buchan in *any* way a

Conservative?

He was certainly an Imperialist in the sense that he thought the British Empire a good rather than a bad thing. But so were many Liberals like Grey and Haldane. The only distinctively Tory aspect of his Conservatism was support for official Unionism in Ulster. In Imperial politics generally he had drawn away from Milner: he no longer supported the idea of a great imperial federation and was attracted more towards the notion of a free association of independent states. Lionel Curtis and the Round Table group were not for him. Nevertheless, he could see no virtue in the idea of splitting up the United Kingdom itself, incorporating as it then did the whole of Ireland.

The chapter on the Conservative Party in Scotland in *Conservative Century* (1994), describes Buchan, along with Lord Boothby and the Duchess of Atholl, as a 'maverick' and as a 'romantic Scottish nationalist'. The only evidence for his being a Scottish nationalist in a political sense is a speech in a parliamentary debate in November 1932 in which, as Christopher Harview was at pains to point out in the *Scottish Historical Review*, he denied that he was even a Home Ruler. The point was that even were there a Scottish parliament, there would be complaints that the Highlands were under-represented. 'However much you may subdivide representative institutions, you will always be met at every stage by the complaint of minorities', he declared in this speech. By then of course there really was a National Party of Scotland, containing within its ranks such romantic figures as the novelist Compton Mackenzie. Buchan, however, was not one

of their number. He certainly thought that there was a 'cultural force' behind Scottish nationalism — namely, the desire that Scotland should not lose her historic personality. But to imagine that a cultural revival would gush from the establishment of a separate legislature was like 'digging a well without making an inquiry into the presence of water-bearing strata'. There was plenty of room for reforms of the machinery of government which fell short of the creation of an expensive and unnecessary legislature. The practical steps which Buchan then advocated, which included the creation of properly staffed Scottish Departments of State in Edinburgh under a properly empowered Secretary of State for Scotland, were duly achieved by 1939.

From 1911 to 1914 Buchan nursed his Border constituency assiduously, at some cost to his health. Curiously enough, it was indigestion, no doubt exacerbated by the irregular meals associated with campaigning, that led to his writing the first of his 'chockers' as he called them, as a form of relaxation. *The Power-House*, first published in 1913, was followed by *Thirty-nine Steps*, *Greenmantle*, and *Mr. Standfast*, all written during the war. After it Buchan found he had developed a distaste for politics and gave up the constituency in November 1918. He was asked to stand again, for Peeblesshire in 1920 and for Central Glasgow in 1922 when Bonar Law resigned. He refused on grounds of health. But when he was asked to stand for the Scottish Universities in 1927, he accepted at once. At that time, until they were abolished by the Labour Government in 1948, there were twelve University MPs: Oxford and Cambridge had two each, London one, the other English universities two, Scotland three, Wales and Northern Ireland one each. Successive Conservative administrations since 1951 have failed to restore any of these seats.

Buchan was naturally pleased to learn of his substantial majority, though aware that by then his own celebrity as an author must have played a part. 'I think a great many people must have voted for me as they would have voted

for Harry Lauder', he wrote to one friend. His view of himself as a politician was set out in two articles which he wrote in 1929. In the first of these, he began by saying that he disliked the word 'Conservatism', which seemed to him to connote a duty of preserving, almost at any cost; an 'antagonism to rational change'. He preferred to be called a Tory, which originally meant an Irish robber, 'since even a bandit seems to me to have a more hopeful attitude to life than he who cherishes relics which should long ago have been buried or burned'. If 'Conservatism' had to be used, it should stand for a school which did not under-rate authority and tradition, and 'which believes that to break with the past is to break with the future'. Respect for tradition was important because it could save people from the 'barren intellectualism' of assuming that schemes of progress which are formally perfect can be implemented fully in the face of a human society which cannot be fully rationalized. The problem in all politics was 'how to give to actual human beings the chance of a worthy life'.

The second of his 1929 articles was concerned with international affairs. As noted, even before 1914 Buchan had rejected the notion of imperial federation, just as today he would no doubt be rejecting the notion of a European super-state. On the other hand, whilst against 'sentimental internationalism', he was in favour of piecing together machinery to give effect 'to that community of interests between nations which is not an ideal but a sober fact'. In the particular case of the British Empire a new theory had been devised. Equal partnership with the Dominions in the Great War had led inexorably, by 1926, to 'a new kind of Imperial unity based upon the completest liberty of the constituent parts'.

Recent criticism of Buchan's imperial thinking has centred, inevitably, on race. Perhaps the most authoritative appraisal is by Juanita Kruse, who in *John Buchan and the Idea of Empire* (1989) traces what is perceived as his change of view pre- and post-1914-18. She argues that before 1914 his view of subject peoples exhibited in-

herent contradictions. On the one hand they were expected and encouraged to retain their customs, beliefs, and traditional loyalties, whilst on the other they were expected to operate within a Western framework of law and culture. Nonetheless a certain consistency in Buchan's attitudes can be perceived. The notion of 'putting manhood into an effete people', as he put it in the *Scottish Review* (11 April 1907) was applied at home as well as abroad. It was not a particularly racist attitude; it was just that he noticed differences and did not pretend they did not exist, as the politically correct try to force us to do today. However, it is true that politically at least his attitude changed; for example in a 1927 article in *The Graphic* he wrote that whilst at the turn of the century the idea of India as a sovereign state would have been inconceivable, 'to the new theory of Empire, race and colour are irrelevant. Self-government is the ideal for every unit.'

It was, Kruse argues, experience of German racial arrogance during the First World War which wrought this change in Buchan. 'If you read history as the triumph of red-haired men, some one else with equal justice will read it as a triumph of the black-haired, and the two follies will balance each other'. Nonetheless, mainly for historical reasons, Britons were fitter than some others to govern an Empire. They had an ability, Buchan thought, to retain a characteristic sanity and moderation in all circumstances. 'It was our freedom from melodrama, our steady nerves which convinced me that we could build up the world anew and embody in it the best of the old', he wrote in his self-portrait *Memory-hold-the-Door*, published posthumously.

Kruse concedes that Buchan was not politically anti-Semitic. Indeed, he worked with Zionists like Chaim Weizmann between the wars, and as far back as 1906 deplored the 'Judenhetze' (Jew-baiting), which, he said, 'was dormant in all northern nations'. Most of the 'thoughtlessly racist nomenclature' of his fiction stems from his characters, not from himself. There was nothing 'politically correct' about Buchan. In 1934, as reported in

the *Jewish Chronicle*, golden book certificates were presented to him and others at a meeting at Shoreditch Town Hall, where he was present as Chairman of the Palestine Parliamentary Committee, on behalf of the Jewish National Fund. By the Balfour Declaration of 1917, said Buchan, and by their acceptance of the Palestine Mandate from the League of Nations, the British had pledged themselves to make Palestine a national homeland for the Jewish people, who 'today were suffering the cruellest persecution in their history'. Andrew Lownie in his excellent *John Buchan: Presbyterian Cavalier*, Constable, 1995, p.197, points out that when the Nazis published their hit-list of British figures who might be imprisoned in a German occupation, Buchan was singled out for his 'pro-Jewish activity'.

Towards the end of his life, Kruse argues, most notably expressed in the novel *Sick Hearth River*, Buchan's attitudes altered even more. In a speech to the Canadian Club at Halifax, Nova Scotia (June 1937), he made the point that 'the strongest peoples have always been a mixture of races'; and in his travels about Canada as Governor-General he expressed great respect for

Canadian half-breeds, whom he found 'upstanding, straightforward folk, who look you frankly in the face and have excellent manners'. 'It was not enough', he had written in *Prince of the Captivity* (1933), 'to pity humanity'; it was necessary 'to love it'. In *Sick Hearth River* (1940), written as Buchan himself was travelling the last stages of his life's journey, the heroic, Sir Edward Leithen, dour and courageous lawyer and politician, sacrifices his life for a small tribe of dying Hare Indians. In a way, the novel is an allegory. Kruse argues that Leithen was not dying for 'the British Empire'; or 'Western civilization'. Yet, in a sense, he was, for the Empire was, as Buchan saw it, built on such self-sacrifice, as was Western civilization. Kipling expressed it in 'The Pro-Consuls', dedicated to Milner, with whom Buchan had worked in South Africa:

They must cheapen self to find
Ends uncheapened by mankind.
Multi-authored and monumental, *Conservative Century* is curiously ambiguous about Buchan. As noted, the Scottish chapter treats him as a maverick, noting with something approaching contempt the formation of a John Buchan Club in 1990 by Sir Teddy

Taylor, the late Sir Nicholas Fairbairn, and others. On the other hand, earlier in the book John Barnes and Richard Cockett note the part he played in the development of an Educational Institute in 1928 and its replacement by the Bonar Law College at Ashridge in 1930. He was, too, an active force in advocating the creation of a Research Department separate from Conservative Central Office, a proposal which ultimately bore fruit after the 1929 general election. In 1930 he was instrumental in creating the Federation of University Conservative and Unionist Associations, and throughout his life remained very much in many ways an 'establishment' figure, drafting many a speech for King George V and being on good terms with his younger son. The latter wrote to him on 5 July 1939 in words which might well apply both to Buchan and himself, given the later reputations of both men as alleged appeasers and anti-Semites:

Hitler does not want to believe that we are in earnest, even when we say so.

George Chowdhary-Best is on the staff of the *Oxford English Dictionary*

The Rehabilitation of Caliban

Ralph Berry believes that Caliban is a man for our times

The rehabilitation of Caliban continues. In it, the stage catches at a symbolic figure, a focus for what is happening in the Western world today. The changing attitudes to Caliban stand cypher for an evolving debate about the upper layers of established Western civilization, and the social elements that challenge it. Caliban, in this debate, appears in an ever more favourable light.

The twentieth-century history of

Caliban is a sustained movement to bring him within the ambit of civilized society. To the Victorians, he was a figure of loathing and repulsion, a monster against whom society's resource was exclusion. Benson used regularly to play Caliban hanging upside-down from the branches of a tree, gibbering. That would not be possible today; and the modern attitude begins to edge into view with Beerbohm Tree's highly sympathetic portrayal (1904),

ending with the famous tableau of Caliban alone on his island peering after the departing Milanese and Neapolitans. More recent Calibans have been grotesque, unlikeable, repellent. But all start from the premise that Caliban has a case, which must be given a hearing, and that some prospect of his readmission into society must be entertained. For actors and the general audience, extreme penalties for attempted rape and conspiracy

to murder are not to be imposed.

A strategic technicality is the assignment of the speech

Abhorred slave,
Which any print of goodness will not
take

(*The Tempest*, 1.2.353-54)

to Prospero or Miranda. Editors used until modern times to assign this speech to Prospero, overriding the Folio. They did this on the grounds that the speech was out of character for the passive, feminine Miranda, and much more in keeping with Prospero. The reasoned conservatism of today's editors does not incline them to amend the Folio without good cause; and they are much more ready to see in this energetic speech another side to Miranda, rather than a fault of transmission. She is her father's daughter, after all. On stage, my impression is that directors also prefer to assign the speech to Miranda. This decision sketches in the beginnings of a relationship between Miranda and Caliban, in which she has tried to teach him; it hints at a plea on behalf of Caliban's later behaviour, presenting the core of the attempted rape as amorous rather than a revenge upon Prospero. Thus the contingent nature of evil is suggested, and the worst aspect of Caliban is softened if not condoned.

The identity of the contemporary Caliban on stage is what now concerns us. I can see two categories. The first is colonial, or historical: on this reading, Caliban must fit in to the history of the white man and the ethnic groups who have contested his imperial expansion. This is easily done on stage. Peter Hall (National Theatre, 1974) gave his Caliban, Denis Quilley, a Mohican look. Ron Daniels' RSC revival (1983) gave Bob Peck the suggestion of a Rastafarian haircut. Jonathan Miller's notable Mermaid production of 1970 presented both Caliban and Ariel as blacks in a colonial island shortly before Independence: Caliban was the detribalized, dispossessed field hand, Ariel the clever house boy sure to do well in the administration after independence. These castings illustrate an assumption of the 1960s and 1970s, that one could easily read *The Tempest* in terms

of colonialism, as a parable for the times. But this reading is less popular today. I suspect that directors have become bored with Caliban as a victim of colonial oppression. Nothing frightens a director so much as the imputation of cliché or stereotype. It is true that Jonathan Miller retained the dual black casting for his Old Vic revival of 1988. Even so, the colonial framework is a constriction of the play that may have outlived its usefulness.

The alternative category is anthropoid. In this, Caliban escapes from the allusion to history. Indeed, a director such as Peter Brook, who formally repudiates history as a context for his productions and has never directed a Shakespeare history play, can scarcely do other than turn away from direct reference. It is easy, vulgar, and therefore disgusting. Caliban as some kind of outcast from the human race, who is nonetheless not without an appealing aspect, is a more inviting prospect.

The 'anthropoid' category — which is large, loose, and convenient — has easy relations with pop culture. There are numerous generic models to which Caliban can be linked, openly or subliminally. The films of Spielberg and Lucas specialize in creatures that are non-human, but have an easily-grasped human identity. Again, gorillas have re-asserted their hold over the human imagination. (*Gorillas in the Mist*.) This is an enduring theme, as Alec Clunes's ape-like Caliban in Peter Brook's production (Stratford-upon-Avon, 1957) showed. In this pop-cultural hinterland is Tarzan, and the circle of Kipling's Mowgli. Common to all these models is the sympathetic partisanship of the animal or non-human world. On the ultra-grotesque side, *The Elephant Man* has lodged its message: 'I am a human being.' This message structures the deformities and alien qualities of Caliban. Generally, the anthropoid Caliban will put forth an appeal that may border upon charm. And this quality is retained with those Calibans who are not anthropoid but fully human. Declan Donellan, whose cheek-by-jowl Caliban was entirely human, insisted that Caliban 'is very

attractive and consequently very dangerous.'

Caliban, in brief, is the outsider who can generate some sympathy and regard in the audience. The apotheosis of the contemporary Caliban may well have been reached in an agency photograph that went around the world in October 1988. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II visited the National Theatre, to see Sir Peter Hall's production of *The Tempest*, and there met the actors. In the photograph, Caliban (Tony Haygarth) is being introduced to the Queen. He is naked save for a sumo wrestler's loincloth combined with a most noble codpiece of arresting dimensions; and he is dark stained. There are no grotesque distortions to his face. He has clearly retained for the occasion the rough and manly charm that distinguished his performance. Caliban, one might say, has been received into society at the highest level. His sins are symbolically forgiven.

I have been describing a stage phenomenon, as it is linked to the outside world of ideas and values. There is some lexical evidence that catches the same drift. 'Caliban' is the name that is recognized in the dictionaries; and the *Oxford English Dictionary* contains the unmistakable flavour of the nineteenth-century Caliban, with (after the derivation) 'thence applied to a man of degraded bestial nature'. The citations include George Eliot: 'Grandcourt held that the Jamaica negro was a beastly sort of baptist Caliban' (*Daniel Deronda* [1876] iv.xxix). *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (1961) offers 'a person or thing that is or is felt to be [note the qualification] slavish, brutal, monstrous, or deformed.' But the *Random House* (2nd edition, 1987) offers only 'the ugly, beastlike slave of Prospero in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*,' which is distinctly milder. In the same vein is *Chambers 20th Century Dictionary* (1983), which has only 'a man of beastly nature, from the monster of that name in Shakespeare's *Tempest*'. The current meaning is beginning to cast off its original moorings. The concentrated essence of loathing, so plain in the Eliot citation,

to keep warm; he's an old man, and the island's climate sometimes suggests England. But that would make him a greedy ravisher of the earth's energy supplies, a self-indulgent consumer of fuel. The Caliban/Prospero opposition takes on a new dimension, that of conservationist versus exploiter.

The Twentieth Century has its own agendas, and tries very hard to discover these agendas, in algebraic or vestigial form, in the works of Shakespeare. There is often something of value in these contemporary discoveries: we read into Shakespeare our own concerns, and learn with extraordinary frequency that Shakespeare has anticipated us. What goes wrong is the

special pleading in these latter-day revelations of Shakespeare's complicity with our times. There is a high-minded silliness in the determination to degrade Prospero, and raise up Caliban, that is at odds with the basic nature of *The Tempest*. The moving parts of Shakespeare can be pushed only so far beyond their natural functioning. One comes back to Shakespeare's own formulation. The dramatis personae in the Folio, which is presumed to reflect Shakespeare's intentions, refers to Caliban as 'a *salvage [savage] and deformed Slave*.' It is not easy to sentimentalize that description.

The Stratford conference, finally,

spent a little time speculating on the post-*Tempest* future of Caliban. What does he do? Stay on the island, or go off to link up with the rest of humanity? I will add my speculation. Caliban, I say, stayed on the island, and developed it according to his own set of values. He gave it over to up-market tourism, with emphasis on marine protection and landscape conservation. And he did not disdain for his island some offshore banking.

Ralph Berry's latest book is *Shakespeare in Performance: Castings and Metamorphoses*, Macmillan 1993.

Edspeak in Haringey

Ray Honeyford finds the children of Haringey still drowning in dogma

A central purpose of this government's educational reforms has been to inject a degree of realism and relevance into a state system plagued by fashion and dogma. Obsessions with equality of outcome in all their class, race and gender manifestations could, it has been assumed, become things of the past. Schools — all schools — would re-discover their central purpose: the pursuit of excellence. And there is little doubt that there has been a significant shift in the mind-set of many formerly failing LEA's and schools.

But the battle is by no means won, as my recent experience vividly illustrates. The occasion was a conference staged by the Education Services department of Haringey council. It is scarcely necessary to go beyond its title to suspect that Haringey is stuck in politically correct aspic: "Success in the City: Education for democracy, equality, justice and peace". And de-

spite the worthy organisers' attempts to generate a jolly, optimistic atmosphere, there lurked that peculiar mixture of utopianism and chip-on-shoulder resentment which betrays the mentality of the Left.

Having the correct credentials with regard to race, gender and class was as ever a central concern. Of the twenty seven listed events, four appeared to have some connection with pupil achievement. The seminars, workshops and swap shops included: Equality Assurance in Schools, Multicultural Teaching, Alternative Ways of Knowing — Learning and Teaching Strategies to Promote Equality, Early Years (by a former official of the Commission for Racial Equality), the Works of Tagore in Primary Schools, and Tackling Homophobic Attitudes. There were displays from a number of schools, and from thirteen community language schools and various ethnic groups — all of the latter, it seems, funded by the

council. There were a number of radical publishers displaying their goods, with titles like *Rasta Resistance*, *Education Towards Racial Equality*, *Reconstructing the Black Image*, and *Changing Classroom Culture: Anti-Racism, Politics and Schools*. Outside exhibitors included the anti-racist campaigning group the Runnymede Trust, Learning without Fear, the Marxist Institute for Race Relations (which is still peddling the disgraceful *How Racism Came to Britain*), and Carnival in the Curriculum. A certain dignity was lent to the occasion by a stall from the Council for Legal Education and one or two posters from leading banks.

Friday evening set the scene. The Chief Education Officer sang the praises of "synergy", and pointed to the "richness, the joys and the achievements of the inner city". There were a number of musical items, including an excellent contribution from a brass

ensemble, an African-style drumming band, and a choir which sang a negro spiritual, "Sweet Chariot", and the theme song of the A.N.C. There was some concession to Englishness when a delightful recorder group played "Summer is Icumen In". The prizes for exhibiting schools were presented by Bernie Grant MP, and a presentation followed, to mark Haringey Race Equality Council's campaign to "Kick Racism out of Football".

The conference proper opened on Saturday morning with an address from Pauline Green MEP, leader of the Labour group in the European Parliament, and vice-president of the Socialist International. She spoke passionately of the gargantuan economic and technological changes at work in the world, and the need for huge regional organisations, such as the EU, in order to tackle the problems involved. The death of the nation state seems assured, whilst the spectre of world government hovers in the wings. Then we had Robin Richardson, former multicultural adviser to Berkshire, and now director of the Runnymede Trust. He was greatly exercised by the fact that, of the 1917 local councillors in London, one had described himself as "Aryan" in a recent poll. He referred to the "great days of ILEA", attacked the media for referring to "We British" in their reports about VE day, and sneered at the Queen and the royal family. Bev Burchell, former chief education officer, complained about poor people, blacks and women with children being "marginalised", castigated the government for "ten years of attack on inner city schools", said she disapproved of tests and league tables — but was honest enough to admit there is "some very poor practice in our schools".

Then came the highlight of the conference — an address by a white-haired American, who had been a leading educationist in New York city, Mr Seymour Fliegel. Mr Fliegel is a quietly spoken man with a twinkle in his eye. And he spoke with great insight and good humour of how he had pioneered work in some of East Harlem's worst schools, and successfully trans-

formed them. His clear and practical vision of how inner city schools should be run would have delighted the heart of Mrs Sheppard. He spoke of the importance of a diversity of schools, of how small is beautiful, and was adamant that his team held firmly to the belief that, "If we did not improve academic performance, then we had failed". He also stressed the key problem of getting rid of bad teachers, and of how the unions in the USA, as here, pursue a baleful policy of "Our member right or wrong". I received the distinct impression at this point that Mr Fliegel had wandered into the wrong conference — or was he there to give the occasion a semblance of ideological balance?

The whole of her speech was characterised by the bitterness and inner rage of a militant ideologue. What, I wondered, had her self-indulgent ranting got to do with educating children and young people?

However, we were back in the dogmatic wilderness for the afternoon session. This was dominated by an extraordinary tirade from one Aydin Mehmet Ali, described as a "community educationalist" and currently working as an education officer with another LEA. Miss Ali began her address in Turkish, her mother tongue, in order to stress her conviction that "black and bilingual people" share a common oppression. Despite her official position she said she felt able to speak "free of all restraints". "I have", she boasted, "been a saboteur in the system, and I am not afraid of saying that". She spoke of her activist past in the heady days of student turbulence in the 60's, when all the taboos were

abolished, all the institutions challenged, and the ruling class scared into submission. But she deplored the current absence of collectivist ardour. Her rhetoric was peppered with words such as: scapegoat, cultural genocide, oppression, marginalising. And she spoke glowingly of street battles, uprisings, and of sacrifice. "We are", she asserted, "in the forefront of the struggle". She placed her hope of the socialist nirvana in "networking" amongst those who shared her view of things, and was excited by the possibility of using the Internet for this purpose. The whole of her speech was characterised by the bitterness and inner rage of a militant ideologue. What, I wondered, had her self-indulgent ranting got to do with educating children and young people? And how could such a person be given an official, publicly-funded platform to spout such blatant ideological bombast? What would have happened to any educational official who dared to express views rooted in the opposite end of the political spectrum?

The final guest speaker was Professor Chris Mullard, formerly of the London Institute of Education, and now "Adviser to the Senate, University of Amsterdam". His windy, sociological abstractions set my teeth on edge. He spoke of the necessity for a "total world analysis", deplored our current lack of vision, declared his belief in a "non-racist, non-sexist and non-classist society", and felt we "Might begin to point towards the new directions we might be able to explore". I have to confess that, at that point, I fled, desperate for fresh air and sanity.

Now this conference was an important event. It was located in a prestigious setting, Alexandra Palace. It must have cost a great deal of money. It was very well organised, thanks to the ever-courteous Rehana Minhas, and attracted delegates and guest from as far afield as Plymouth, Strathclyde, Paris and New York. I spotted too a bevy of advisers from Bradford. Here, clearly, was an LEA anxious to display its wares to the world. What are we to make of its efforts?

It was clear from the teachers and advisers I spoke to that there are many sensible and hard-working professionals in Haringey's schools. This was also manifest in some of the pupil work on display, despite the politically correct slant displayed in many of the efforts. However, if the blatant ideological bias apparent in most of the speeches, and in the topics chosen for discussion, are an indication of the institutional atmosphere in Haringey, then I would fear for the career prospects of the formal teacher who believes in a didactic approach, who approves of competition and strives for academic achievement.

The government is foolish if it thinks that recent reforms can make any real impact on this sort of local authority. It

would have a far better chance of success if every school were grant-maintained — as Mr Blair's outbreak of educational common sense appears to imply. Moreover, Haringey's stress on ethnic minority identity and cultural separateness appears to be an attempt to create, not a melting pot community, but a tossed salad of cultural diversity — a model which has had disastrous effects in the USA, and which has provoked a powerful Republican backlash. Perhaps most worrying of all is the issue of how "success" was being defined. The government, and the public, are insistent that what matters are results. Just how well are the pupils learning and achieving in impartial, objective terms? At no point in the conference was this mentioned.

The up-beat, almost euphoric tone will, in retrospect, appear to be nothing more nor less than a publicity stunt, if it fails to raise standards in the schools. Despite the undoubted limitations of league tables, perhaps Haringey LEA needs to be reminded of the uncomfortable fact that, according to performance indicators published in *The Daily Telegraph* in 1992, out of 108 listed LEA's, Haringey came 94th; in 1993, out of 115 LEA's its position was 104th, and in 1994 100th. If it can be persuaded to ditch its ideological baggage, then it might improve its position.

Ray Honeyford was a major contributor to the Daily Telegraph Schools Guide.

Re-considering the Fifties

Francis Knox wonders whether our economic problems can be traced to that decade

During the 1950s, many in Britain became convinced that national economic performance was substantially worse than in comparable countries, especially the USA and continental Western Europe. The point was usually illustrated by "league tables" showing growth of total national output or output per head of population, or per worker. Up to the middle of the decade, there was scope for debate about how far the rapid growth of West Germany was due to greater wartime destruction, or how far the higher standard of living and for a time better economic performance, especially the strong balance of payments, of the USA was due to its comparatively undamaged industry. But by the end of the decade it was evident that there were longer-term influences. During the US Presiden-

tial election campaign of 1959-60 and after, very similar ideas of lagging economic performance became widespread in America, prompted by comparisons with Western Europe and with Japan, whose very rapid growth can be said to have started by about 1959.

One result of the widespread conviction of (relative) economic failure was electoral. After winning in October 1959 with an increased majority, the Conservatives in Britain were defeated by a small margin in October 1964 and a much larger one in March 1966. In the USA Eisenhower had been elected for a second term of office by an overwhelming majority in 1956. His successor, Nixon, lost to J.F.K. in November 1960. In both countries a very significant factor was the claim of the newcomers that they could break free from a decade or more of failure in

economic policy. The main theme of the Labour Party's 1964 General Election campaign was the "thirteen wasted years" of Conservative economic rule — one of the most successful, as well as one of the most mendacious, propaganda campaigns of all time. In the 1960 Presidential campaign in the US, "Kennedy had staked his fortunes on his pledge 'to get the country moving again' — when there was no real evidence that the country believed it was standing still, no overwhelming demand for new movement...."

Naturally, personalities were also involved, and may have coloured popular perceptions of success and prospects in the economic field. Eisenhower was the oldest US President ever to have held office; Kennedy, when he was elected, was the youngest. Harold Macmillan, then aged 69, had to re-

sign as Prime Minister in October 1963, and was succeeded by the 61 year old Lord Home. Macmillan's two predecessors as Prime Minister, Winston Churchill and Anthony Eden were aged or in poor health.

None of the Conservative Prime Ministers of 1951-1964 laid any claim to economic expertise. Lord Home used to joke that he had to use matchsticks to understand the Budget. All three were associated in the public mind with wartime and pre-war events, and Eisenhower was of course mainly thought of as a military commander. All seemed to glory in being old-fashioned, Macmillan cultivating an Edwardian style in both speech and dress.

The political challengers were youthful and heavily imbued with economic and other kinds of expertise. If one phrase is associated in the public mind with Harold Wilson's government of 1964-1970, it is "the white heat of the technological revolution", though it is inconceivable that anyone would now use the phrase other than ironically. Wilson, aged 48 when he became Prime Minister, was a professional economist, at a time when the number of these was much smaller than in later years. Before the war he lectured in economics at two Oxford colleges, was head of the economics and statistics department of the Ministry of Fuel and Power during the war, and became President of the Board of Trade, the youngest ever, in the Attlee government of 1945-1951. His predecessor as leader of the Labour Party, Hugh Gaitskell, whose sudden death in January 1963 led to Wilson becoming leader, was an even more academic economist, having spent most of his thirties teaching at University College, London.

The Democrats in the USA and the Labour Party in Britain promised immediate measures to improve economic performance and speed up growth. Both promised higher government spending, though a tax cut (to stave off the recession which many believed to be imminent in the USA in 1960) also figured prominently in Kennedy's campaign. He and the Democratic leaders in Congress, which had retained a Democratic majority during the seven

Eisenhower years, announced that if they won they would raise government spending in three fields: Federal aid to schools and colleges; area (urban) re-development; and medical care for the elderly, and would raise the minimum wage.

The Labour manifesto, entitled *The New Britain* began:

Until 60 years ago when the Labour Party was founded, the ending of economic privilege, the abolition of poverty in the midst of plenty and the creation of real equality of opportunity were inspiring but remote ideals. They have now become immediate targets of political action. Britain can achieve them — provided that it resolutely wills three things: the mobilization of its resources within a national plan; the maintenance of a wise balance between community and individual expenditure; and the education of all its citizens in the responsibilities of a scientific age, not merely a small section of them.

Since 1951, however, these opportunities of the scientific revolution have been disastrously wasted - largely because of the Conservative determination since they took office to end the purposive planning of the post-war Labour government and to replace it with an economic free-for-all. As a result, successive Conservative governments have been unable to get the economy moving steadily forward. Every jerk of expansion has ground to a full stop as the Government jams on the brakes in a desperate attempt to combat inflation and rising prices.

That is why, while other countries have made giant strides forward, our progress in the past 12 years has been so fitful. So sharp has the contrast become that only 18 months ago a Tory government, driven by economic failure, lost its nerve and prepared to accept humiliating terms for entry into the European Common Market — in the vain hope that closer contact with a dynamic Europe would give a boost to our wilting economy.

Even the Conservatives in their manifesto, after a basically accurate account of the economic success of their years in power, felt compelled to promise better things, by accepting the 4 per cent national economic growth target which had been promulgated by the newly formed NEDC (National Economic Development Council) in 1962, and enshrined in a more dogmatic form in Labour's National Plan cover-

ing the years 1964 to 1969. Their Manifesto said:

In 13 years of Conservative government the living standards of the British people have improved by more than in the whole of the previous half-century. The working population is up by 2 million and over 98 per cent are in jobs. Rising incomes and lower taxes have made possible a spectacular increase in spending on the essentials, the comforts and what was once regarded as the luxuries of life. We do not claim that these benefits are the gift of Government. What we do claim is that the Government has created conditions in which individuals by enterprise and thrift have gained these benefits for themselves and the country. These are the conditions we shall maintain...

We shall give first priority to our policy for economic growth, so that Britain's national wealth can expand by a steady 4 per cent a year. We recognise that this involves a high level of imports, and we are prepared to draw on our reserves, while our exports, both visible and invisible achieve a balance with them. Our aim is an economy in which earnings rise in step with productivity and do not outpace it. An effective and fair incomes policy is crucial to the achievement of sustained growth without inflation. We shall take a further initiative to secure wider acceptance and effective implementation of such a policy. In addition, a downward pressure on prices will be increasingly exerted by Conservative measures to stimulate industrial competition.

The diagnosis set out in these two extracts, despite their very different emphases, is the one generally accepted, at the time and since. It is that every time a British government expanded demand between 1951 and 1964 (up to 1951, the economy was subject to comprehensive controls — prices, wages, allocation of raw materials etc), it ran into one or both of two obstacles: inflation and balance of payments. This caused it to "slam on the brakes", resulting in lost output and investment. This "Stop-Go" would without doubt be the definition of the main economic problem of the time by an informed student, and many would add that it constituted the main problem of the British economy up to the present.

Four books were of enormous importance in bringing about a massive shift

in opinion in Britain on national economic performance and how it could be improved. They were Andrew Shonfield, *British Economic Policy since the War, 1958*; Michael Shanks, *The Stagnant Society, 1961*; Norman Macrae, *Sunshades in October 1963*; and Samuel Brittan, *The Treasury under the Tories 1951-1964*. The last was published in a revised and expanded edition as *Steering the Economy* in 1969 and 1971. All four books should be closely studied by anyone who wants to understand changing economic policy in Britain.

The opening paragraph of Shonfield's book reads:

The slow rate of growth in our national wealth is the prime cause of many of our troubles in this country — spiritual, social as well as economic. In the 1950's the discrepancy between Britain's pace of advance and that of other countries has become glaring. The central reason for our failure to grow rich more quickly is the low level of investment at home, which always turns out to be the first victim of economy cuts in the succession of balance of payments crises. In order to emerge from our present penury we must face radical changes of a political rather than a economic character. The balance of profit and loss in a number of accepted institutions — the sterling area, the City of London, investment in the Commonwealth — must be scrutinized, and there is an urgent need for reform of trade union practices.

The impetus to Shank's book, he tells us in the Introduction, was a visit to Bulgaria in 1959, where, though noting the dullness and uniformity, he was impressed by the commitment to raising output through the National Plan:

Life in Bulgaria as in other Communist states, is dominated by the concept of the Plan. All aspects of life have to be dovetailed in to it. And yet in this very uniformity, in this disciplining of society to the attainment of particular social and economic goals, there is something decent, honest and inspiring. Whatever else it lacks, this society contains within itself a sense of purpose. This, vis-à-vis the West, is its great strength.

While taking issue with Shonfield on two points — the pros and cons of the City of London, and of overseas investment — Shanks agreed that there is a

need for a big expansion of general and technical education, of state-sponsored research and development, and a need also to join the Common Market.

Norman Macrae's book is sub-titled "An analysis of the main mistakes of British economic policy since the *mid 1950s*" [italics added]. He argued that until 1953, deflating total demand was the correct policy, as the British economy was still suffering from the after-effects of controls, especially shortages of raw materials. But by 1955 excess demand had disappeared.

Of the four books, the one which probably had the greatest long-term impact was Samuel Brittan's — among other things, it appeared in the reading lists of several university courses in macro-economics and other subjects. Although a large part of the book consists of factual detail about the Treasury, the budget, the control of public spending and so on, and though the policy conclusions are hedged round with more qualifications than the other three books, the main conclusion is that, with better machinery of government and a re-ordering of economic priorities (giving growth higher priority over price stability and the balance of payments) economic growth could have been achieved in Britain.

As the following chapters show, politicians and civil servants have interacted to produce a much less sensible policy than either group would have produced if left to itself.

The precise way of arriving at this conclusion and its implications for future policy are perhaps not 100 per cent clear, but examples of policy mistakes cited include March 1955, when Chancellor 'Rab' Butler "made a serious blunder by handing out £135m of tax reliefs" in anticipation of a general election in May. By July, restrictive measures, including a rise in minimum hire purchase deposits and cuts in nationalised industry spending, had to be introduced, and a second Budget in October took back most of the tax relief. In 1959, another election year, the Budget took ninepence off the standard rate of income tax and tax cuts totalling £360m were made. Brittan commented:

The real error of the 1959 budget is

surely not that it gave away too much, but that it came too late...If it had been introduced the previous year, it would have alleviated or even stopped the 1958 recession altogether and led to a much smoother advance of production. The balance of payments arguments themselves told in favour of an earlier stimulus...

Developments in the next few years are dealt with under such sub headings as "The traumas of 1960" and "An unfortunate Budget" — in 1962:

There is no need to dwell on the fact that the Budget judgement proved a gross blunder. So far from foreseeing the unemployment that was to come, the Chancellor in his budget speech actually worried that total spending 'would make too great a call on our resources'.

However, in the last two years of the Conservative Government, according to Brittan, "Some chinks of light" were evident as the government adopted a more interventionist policy, and government spending increased, with the aim of faster economic growth:

In the course of 1963-1964, the centre of gravity of policy began to shift slightly away from the Treasury. More and more ministries approved schemes for the modernisation of Britain — there were the Robbins Report on Higher Education, the plans for the North East, Scotland and the South East; and although the Buchanan Report on urban traffic never really became a government policy, it did influence the whole climate of policy discussion. Quite a number of other worthwhile reforms were introduced in the last year of the 1959-1964 Parliament. Industrial Training Boards were set up, much more generous grants were provided for training in the high unemployment areas, 'Little Neddies' were set up for individual industries and new agencies were formed to promote industrial building.

Brittan's view, shared in varying degrees by the other three authors, and the great majority of writers on the British economy since the Second World War — that government policy was the main cause of instability, and that "Stop-Go" was the cause of poor British economic performance — was apparently confirmed in a lengthy (442-page) study by J.C.R. Dow of the National Institute of Economic and Social Research, *The Management of the British Economy 1945-1960*. which concludes:

The analysis ... suggests that the fluctuations in the growth of demand in the years 1952-1960 were due in large part to fluctuations in policy and that to tackle the underlying causes of poor economic growth

there seems a logical case for the organised, mutual discussion by private firms and public corporations of their plans for expansion. The result could be to persuade the main body of firms that faster growth was possible, and to enable some sort of collective decision to be taken as to the rate of growth.

Taking a more cautious academic view than the other authors, Dow recognises the vital point:

The belief that economic growth in this country could be faster rests almost entirely on the fact that during the last decade it has been about twice as fast in the other main European countries; *and in five years time the facts may look very different* [italics added]. My own belief is that faster growth will prove possible and that the institution of planning procedures will have made an important difference.

In five years time, by the end of the 1960s, the facts did indeed look very different, but very few commentators appreciated it, and most have not yet done so. That the growth of West Germany, France and Italy during the 1950s was exceptional and could not possibly be sustained was spelled out in Charles Kindleberger's *Europe's Postwar Growth — the Role of Labour Supply*, published in 1960. By the early 1970s these countries, and by the late 1970s Japan, had slowed down to about the 2½ per cent annual growth rate which characterised Britain between 1951 and 1964.

We now can see with hindsight that the fluctuations in total demand, hence in investment, employment and so on, which attracted so much attention in the 1950s were mere blips in steady upward progress, compared with the economic cataclysms which have appeared at frequent intervals since 1965. We can, or at any rate should, also see that cyclical fluctuations, whether caused by forecasting errors, impending elections, or any other reason, are quite insignificant compared with the fairly steady worsening in unemployment *and* inflation which has taken place since the middle 1960s, and which has affected nearly all the devel-

oped countries. The unprecedented postwar unemployment of 750,000 for three months during the very severe winter of 1962-63, which was probably the most important factor in the Labour victory of October 1964 (my recollection is that, contrary to recent opinion, the Profumo sex-and-spy scandal of 1963 was not taken very seriously in the country at large), may be compared with unemployment which never fell below 1 million after 1976, which topped 3 million in the first half of the 1980s, and which is probably not much below that today, if allowance is made for the 500,000 (probably largely useless) training schemes.

We need to take a further intellectual leap. Not only were the 1950s nothing like as bad as they have been painted as regards economic progress and policy, but the contrast between 1951-1964 and the fairly steady worsening in inflation and unemployment since then provides what is probably the most important clue to analysing and remedying economic policy. The experience of those years shows not only that full employment (say, 2 per cent unemployment for Britain, and 4 per cent for the USA, because of its different method of producing the figures, based on a sample of the whole population rather than those claiming benefit) is possible, and also that it is possible *without inflation*. Given various problems with the inflation statistics, especially the probable under-estimation of quality improvements, 2 per cent a year inflation can be regarded as close to complete price stability. This was achieved in five years between 1951 and 1964, but in only one of the thirty years since (1994).

The reasons for the deterioration obviously need detailed and far-reaching investigation, empirical and theoretical. Much the most likely explanation, in my view, is the steady and massive expansion of state spending, from between one-third and 40 per cent of GDP in the 1950s to around half today. A large part of this increase, especially in public spending on education, training, research and development, can be traced directly to those who were foremost in criticising the 1950s economy, and who were

convinced that they knew how to run things better.

Francis Knox is an economist. His book *Public Spending: Reversing the Spiral* will be published in October.

Sophist's Corner

Dear Malcolm...

I think you are the right man for this new job ...cunning, adaptable, smart as a fox sniffing in the night... Scottishness, Jewishness, intelligence and membership of the Faculty of Advocates are all qualities which bestow a certain detachment from the English Tory Establishment and its mutton-headed row of idols: Crown, Police, Sovereignty, Union Jack and the rest of them. You have chosen to be a Tory, so you have to incline before these idols. But you will always know, before the others, when one of these idols has outlived its functions and needs to be junked... What I hope you realise is that the Eurosceptics are basically correct. They think that further advance towards political union will endanger Britain's traditional way of doing things and subvert British institutions. Dead right! This is precisely why political union ("Federalism") is such a good idea... Something has to give — and Britain is already giving way. The closer we fall into the gravitational field of this European planet, the more bits of venerable junk are sucked off and vanish into space... Your job as Foreign Secretary, a hard one, is to let this benign process happen slowly, discreetly.... And next time the Home Office comes and tells the Foreign Office what to do about visitors and visas, throw them into the street.

Open letter to Mr Rifkind, from Neal Ascherson, *Independent on Sunday*, 9.7.95.

The Tories' Moral Dilemma

Richard Body urges the Tories to put their country first

In a modern society, the business of politics is to allocate rights and duties as between the state and the citizen. As this implies a bond, if not a contract between the two, the citizens can scarcely comprehend the nature of the relationship, unless they have a clear perception of the State to which they owe a duty or from which they can seek their rights.

Since the Maastricht Treaty was ratified, the British people have a new state, and therefore a new kind of political obligation. An article of the treaty decrees the British people to be "citizens of the European Union". The far-reaching consequences of this new status for everyone in Britain has yet to be digested. It also represents a significant change for the British people as they have hitherto been not citizens (a republican term) but subjects of the Queen. Until we entered the European Economic Community in 1973 the business of politics was to allocate rights and duties between the Queen, in whose name everything by the state was done, and her subjects. The British people may remain subjects of the Queen, but they are undeniably, and perhaps irreversibly, citizens of the European Union. There can be no concept of a citizenship without a corresponding state. As the EU has now supra-national institutions which have the power to make treaties, to impose taxation as well as to pass and judicially interpret laws that its citizens must obey, it has the essential features of a state. Indeed, about half our laws now originate in Brussels. That is a massive transfer of the politicians' business.

One's state is not necessarily the same as one's country. Nevertheless a country that surrenders the sovereign

powers of governing its people must inevitably be less worthy of regard. The bond between the two is frayed, and the people are compelled to look elsewhere for the allocation of rights and duties. They can no longer feel towards their country in the same way.

Lord Acton's aphorism about the corrupting effect of power is often quoted; but the great Tory historian should also be remembered for something else. "Patriotism", he said, "is to politics, what faith is to religion". If the vicar who loses his faith should resign his living, so equally there should be no seat in the House of Commons for those who do not love their country.

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For several decades there has scarcely been a hint of any love of our country in the speeches and writings of many of our politicians. Is patriotism to be a dirty word, too close to nationalism (aggressiveness), jingoism (boastfulness) or even xenophobia (hatefulness) to be politically correct? Yet surely it is possible to love one's own children

without hating everyone else's? To love the town or village where we live is not to hate all the others. Love, after all, leads us to do things happily and willingly for others. Loving one's own home prompts a desire to look after it, keep it in repair and save up to make improvements. Loving one's neighbourhood extends that desire, but is less self-centred, for the benefits are now shared with others. So loving one's country becomes even less self-centred, and therefore ought to be applauded all the more.

Why, then, is patriotism discounted? Two reasons come to mind. For some thirty years Conservative politicians have been trying to convince a sceptical nation that they should be Europeans, not racially or geographically, which they have always been, but civically and politically. The task has been difficult; and it would have been doubly so had Britain herself not been belittled. We can hear their voices: "Britain is too small to be alone", "England has lost her empire and has yet to find another role" or "the British people must pool their sovereignty". Power is elixir to the Cabinet minister; without it he is nothing; and if the country and its institutions seem to him to be diminished, he himself becomes a lesser being. But once sitting in the Council of Ministers, he decrees how 350 million people shall behave.

The other reason is that for half a century politicians have been arguing about rights; and in the process ever more rights have been conferred not just upon the British people but upon almost everyone in the Western democracies. Indeed, nearly all political debate has been about rights, and usually rights for sectional interests against the rest of society. To turn back the

pages of Hansard is to see visible proof of this. The old balance between rights and duties has long since vanished.

This clamour for rights against society can be of infinite length. No matter how many rights can be devised for one section of the nation, it will always be feasible to conjure up some more. Britain's membership of the European Union fits in neatly with this quest: there is money in the till, mostly from the pockets of other nations; there are twenty Commissioners in Brussels to comply with Parkinson's Law, who will never admit to being *functus officio* and above all, we perceive no duty to moderate our demands.

Here we come to the nub of the issue. Because we love our home and family we conceive a sense of duty which limits our demands — the more we take, the more the rest of the family has to give up. Likewise in our neighbourhood: we throw down our litter and someone nearby will pick it up, and when we succeed in securing more street-lighting, the cost will be borne by our fellow council tax payers. If we have any regard for the people who live around us, our self-centred demands for rights are toned down, although perhaps not so much as if our families were immediately concerned.

Then comes the third circle in which we claim our rights — our country. Now we may be more eager to press our demands. What we take from our country has to be given by millions whom we will never know or see or feel any obligation towards. But among the British people there used to be a pronounced sense of duty that sublimated the selfishness underlying these demands.

A faint echo of this past was published at the end of 1994. An elderly lady in her nineties left nearly all her fortune of £2 millions to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to reduce the National Debt. The latter stands at some £250 billions, so why did she offer this drop in the ocean? In her younger days, testators frequently made such bequests. Converted into today's money terms, her gift was less than many in the past. What she and others recorded in their wills confirms the obvious explanation: it was out of a

sense of duty to a country loved. It is a little difficult to imagine even such Europhiles as Sir Edward Heath or Mr Hugh Dykes leaving all their wealth to the Commissioner in Brussels in charge of the budget.

If we can perceive three circles of relationship in which some form of love is possible — family, neighbourhood and country — we may consider a fourth, a union of many countries in which ours is inevitably in a minority of one. In a word, can patriotism be extended to the European Union? Common sense suggests that any affection for a multinational union will be weaker than that towards one's own country, as the feeling for one's own country may be weaker than that towards one's neighbourhood. Hence any sense of duty will also be correspondingly less.

The political and moral consequences are likely to be extremely dangerous. As the European Union acquires ever more power to regulate our lives by legislation, taxation or monetary policy, the balance between rights and duties will be tilted ever more in favour of rights and against duties. And as the demand for rights to be enforced by law or granted out of taxation are infinite, the political process will be a never-ending fight between national and sectional interests. To show how divisive, debilitating and even disorderly this battleground will become, let us make a contrast. Liechtenstein is one of the many very small countries in the world which makes its own laws and levies its own taxation, for her people are sovereign and self-governing. Before the country became a tax haven and the population doubled, there were 12,000 living there. They were homogeneous; one Liechtensteiner thought, behaved, worshipped and spent his money in much the same way as the others. A sense of duty between the 12,000, born of neighbourliness and common interest, was so evident that few laws were necessary and the government so minimal that taxation itself was also minimal. That, of course was why the finance houses moved in.

The more homogeneous the country, the fewer the laws required to govern

its people; and the less the taxation necessary to maintain those to whom the majority offer no voluntary support. If Liechtenstein used to be at one end of the spectrum of homogeneity, the European Union is at the other; and as more countries join, with ever more national interests to reconcile, the need will arise for yet further laws. The ensuing debates and negotiations as to how these conflicts are to be resolved will raise the cry for rights, but never a cry for duties.

What kind of society will we be creating, as the sense of duty becomes submerged beneath the stampede for rights? We cannot escape the moral arguments about Europe's future. If a sense of duty is born of patriotism, a demand for rights by one nation against another must lead to nationalism, and perhaps to xenophobia too.

More than that, the quest for rights, unmatched by duties, leads to an ever more self-centred attitude. Where does it end? A law of diminishing returns is likely to apply. No doubt, the first rights enjoyed by a liberated slave give much happiness; but coming to a modern Western democracy he may marvel at the host of rights that are successfully claimed; and as he looks around he will see unbounded discontent. This discontent fosters yet more demands for yet more rights, unaccompanied by any sense of duty. Our liberated slave will also wonder at the legion of pressure groups and single issue campaigners, inventing fresh rights to be gained. Just as there can be no end to the pursuit of rights, so there is no limit to the egotism and self-centredness that the pursuit will engender. We see the moral consequences already: thieving from one's fellow men and women, hideous and omnipresent violence, the rise of drug addiction, the breakdown of marriages, the ever-growing number of children abused, neglected or taken into care, and, perhaps most evident of all, the petty dishonesties now generally condoned yet once condemned. These trends, all symptoms of society's disease, have come upon us in the very same half century as the pursuit of rights against society. The trend will continue, and we must therefore sink

ever lower in the state of social disease.

That the continued pursuit of rights against society leads to forms of anti-social behaviour is now seen to be obvious. There are always some members of society who have persuaded themselves that, since the rest of society has not accorded them their rights, they are entitled to retaliate. To be more successful as the party of law and order the Conservatives need to face up to this imbalance of rights and duties.

But how can the Conservative party reinforce a sense of duty without recognising the three circles of human relationships, and the insignificance of a purported fourth in the form of the European Union? Long before Tom Paine's *Rights of Man*, a notable difference between the Right and the Left used to be the emphasis placed upon rights and duties. The Right sought to put duties first; the Left, rights. For the last five decades of British politics, however, the Conservative and Labour parties have been in lively competition to please the electorate with sectional rights against society, and the social and moral outcome is now plain for all to see.

For the Conservative party to tilt the balance back, so that rights and duties match each other, will be impossible unless it recognises a simple truth of human nature. The love humans have for one another is bounded by only three circles, and realistically no others can be added. To add to family, neighbourhood and country, some spurious unity, an artefact of politicians, an amorphous mass of multilingual, multicultural, multifathed, and multi-

everything, which happens by accidents of history to occupy half a continent, is to ask of human nature what it cannot give. No sense of duty can really exist among so many millions. In every battle rights will overcome duties; and the fight for national rights

For the last five decades of British politics, however, the Conservative and Labour parties have been in lively competition to please the electorate with sectional rights against society, and the social and moral outcome is now plain for all to see

will be ever more bitter.

The Conservatives should call to mind those words of Lord Acton. If he was right in saying love of country is to politics what faith is to religion, then the party of Disraeli and Churchill ought to think afresh about Britain's relationship with her neighbours. The British people cannot love what they do not know, and who now knows the nature of our country? Is she, post-Maastricht, to be to the European Union what Texas is to the United States? With half their laws now made in Brussels, the British people can scarcely

be called sovereign or self-governing, unlike many erstwhile colonial peoples who have gained that status.

Conservatives might ask themselves whether a nation, having lost the power to make its own laws and its freedom to govern itself, can also retain its self respect. It used to be said that a colonial people can have no self-esteem, and without that quality its aspirations would always be primitive. To love your country when it is subjugated to others is a tall order. For the British people to become patriotic when their country is merged with many others must be a logical, let alone sentimental, impossibility.

Yet in the present context, to rekindle patriotism will be highly dangerous. The attempt to do so in a federal union, will lead to nationalism, as all history confirms. Numerous such unions have been broken up just as colonial empires have been liquidated; and in both cases the same force of patriotism has been the catalyst.

Thus the Conservative party, if it is to be true to its past, has a dilemma to resolve. It can inspire the British people with a love of country, but to do this we must acquire another relationship with western Europe. The alternative — the one chosen unwittingly by Conservatives — is to pursue our nationalistic rights in "an ever closer union", in which the age-old battle between rights and duties will be lost by the dutiful.

Sir Richard Body is the Member of Parliament for Holland with Boston.

Notes on Reviewers

Merrie Cave is our Managing Editor.

Barbara Day is Secretary of the Jan Hus Foundation.

Peter Coleman's latest book is *Memoirs of a Slow Learner*.

Elizabeth Endycott is a teacher and writer on African affairs

John Leake is a research student at Boston University.

Gerald Russello is a freelance writer in the United States.

Helen Szamuely is a writer and translator.

Martin Tyrrell is an independent researcher and writer

Derek Turner is Editor of *Right Now!*

Geoffrey Vaughan is a research student at Keble College, Oxford.

Beatus Vir

Christopher Arkeel muses on the essence of happiness in the twentieth century

The pursuit of happiness — a police car chasing a drunk driver over a red light.

As a definition of the human condition in our post-Nietzschean godless universe, this lacks Aristotelean finality, at least from the point of view of the driver. Happiness, for Aristotle, is the 'final end', final in that it does not make sense to ask 'why aim at happiness?' Happiness is the ultimate answer to all practical questions of conduct, and is therefore the framework within which ethics sets the rules of conduct in civil societies. The policeman's pursuit of the drunk is, alas, not an end in itself, but merely one in a sequence of actions which lends, in the words of Dryden, to:

Fury, frantic indignation,
Depth of pain, and height of passion.
Dryden was describing the feelings of a lover dispossessed of his "fair, disdainful dame". The loss of a driving licence and a tripling of next year's insurance bill are her exact current equivalents, and the chief events on which the late twentieth century common man lavishes his most unbridled emotions.

For the policeman, the definition lacks grandeur. Aristotle said that happiness is an activity of the soul in accordance with virtue. Virtues are dispositions which give the greatest degree of success, and are of two kinds — practical and intellectual — corresponding to our two modes of rational activity. In short, the virtuous man pursues happiness by pursuing good, and his attainment of happiness consists in his performance of good deeds and his execution of just actions. Now, the capture of someone who has passed a red traffic light after drinking a double brandy is a rather poor result from two and a half millennia of Greek ethics and Judaeo-Christian

precepts, and it is doubtful that even the arresting officer will still be suffused with classical virtue after three months of paperwork sweep his just action into that Temple of Minerva we call a magistrate's court.

Yet, petty and provisional though it be, this definition of the pursuit of happiness contains the one ingredient that virtually all twentieth century civilised humans have, so far, agreed to be the quintessence of beatitude — the motor car. Little black numbers by Versace are strictly for the girls (give or take a few gender-benders at Heaven or Madame JoJo's). A blonde in a little black number by Versace is strictly for the boys (or their fathers at Annabel's). But a little black number by Volkswagen is for all the family — boy racer, girl power-dresser, mum blocked in at the Sainsbury's car-park, and dad clamped on a double-yellow line outside his mistress's serviced apartment. Bought, contract-leased or stolen, tax deductible or PAYE code crucifying, the car is the chief embodiment of the only triumph that contemporary civilised humanity will ever experience personally — the triumph of style over substance.

If a sceptical non-modernist from Mars examined a traffic-jam, he would see rows of more or less identical metal boxes on wheels, each capable of speeds at least fifteen times faster than their occupants. He would observe that these boxes are stationary for many minutes at a time; even in motion, he would notice them overtaken by passers-by on foot. He, being sceptical, would ask himself why the creatures in the boxes do not get out and walk. In reply, he would be told that the car-drivers are pursuing happiness by being free to move wherever they wish whenever they desire. He would be told about the glory of the open road and the pleasure of impressing a

potential mating partner with the speed and power — the prowess, even — of the machine throbbing beneath the driver's thighs. Yes, he would think; the triumph of style over substance, indeed.

Being a non-modernist Martian he would wonder how it came about that a species which, a mere twenty five hundred years ago, had sought its true happiness in the pursuit of virtue, could now devote its utmost passions to carving up its members at roundabouts. He might look up the sacred books that the species had once held dear:

Happy art thou, O Israel;
Who is like unto thee, a people saved by
the Lord,

The shield of thy help,
And that is the sword of thy excellency!
And thine enemies shall submit them
selves unto thee;
And thou shalt tread upon their high
places.

(Deuteronomy 33 v.29)

A people righteously doing down their foes? Understandable happiness, there.

When our sons shall be as plants grown
up in their youth;
And our daughters as cornerstones hewn
after the fashion of a palace;
When our garners are full, affording all
manner of store;
And our sheep bring forth thousands
and ten thousands on our fields,
When there is no breaking in, and no
going forth,
And no outcry in our streets;
Happy is the people that is in such a
case;
Yea, happy is the people, whose God is
the Lord".

(Psalm 144 v.12-15)

Or, as Alexander Pope put it — "Peace and plenty tell a Stuart [or a Windsor, or a Major] reign".

Yes, agrees the non-modernist Martian; a nation at peace with itself is surely happy, though he's puzzled by the fury with which the humans stuck on the M4 on a Friday night are yelling

to each other to go forth and multiply.

It is easy to laugh at people having fun. Aubrey Beardsley mocked the Perfect Wagnerites, rows of identically fat and frock-coated clubmen and their matching wives hunched in rapt stupor as Tristan and Isolde pursued their happiness through twenty successive "mauvais quarts d'heure". Aldous Huxley delighted to sneer at the working-class children he saw from his first-class railway compartment, playing foolish games in their suburban back yards. Easy, and unattractive. So owning and driving a car is not to be ridiculed; but the act of pursuing happiness in doing so is open to close questioning.

Motoring is the largest item of average American family post-tax expenditure after housing, food and medical costs. In 1990, total American per capita expenditure on items of personal consumption was \$13,051, of which \$1,898 was spent on housing, \$1,773 on food, meals and beverages (excluding alcohol), \$1,928 on medical matters, and \$1,621 on petrol and other vehicle expenses. (Stanley Lebergott, *Pursuing Happiness; American Consumers in the Twentieth Century*, 1993; appendix A). In Britain, the proportion of vehicle expenditure to total expenditure is higher, since medical charges are still largely paid from national tax revenues. Few economists dispute that car ownership is the most sensitive measure of the existence of a consumer society, and the term 'consumer society' is virtually synonymous with 'consumer democracy'. Thus the car symbolises the union between the classical liberal economies of Adam Smith, and the political libertarianism of the American Declaration of Independence of 1776. That very year Smith published his *Enquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. In Book IV, Chapter viii, he wrote:

Consumption is the sole end and purpose of all production: and the interest of the producer ought to be attended to, only so far as it may be necessary for promoting that of the consumer.

In 1938, Los Angeles ordered its entire tramway system to be ripped out and replaced by freeways because people were buying so many cars that the existing roads were choked. It was the

largest urban rail system in the world at the time, and was still profitable for its owner, Pacific Electric.

An editorial in the Los Angeles Times celebrated the opening of the first freeways by echoing the founding document of America's existence:

Our forefathers in their immortal independence creed set forth the pursuit of happiness as an inalienable right of mankind. How can we pursue happiness by any swifter and surer means... than by the use of the automobile?

It is for the economic historian to show how and why the car became this century's chief consumer good. This is an interesting topic, but a secondary one, since each age and society has its dominant fetish. According to Lévi-Strauss, wild honey has an attraction for Indians... tantamount to a passion... Before setting off to gather honey, the Ashluslay bleed themselves above their eyes in order to increase their luck... In Argentina too, the greatest diversion and keenest pleasure enjoyed by the rural peon is that of honey-gathering. For a spoonful of honey he is ready to work for an entire day... and often endanger his life.

(*From Honey to Ashes*, 1973, 2:53).

But, as Stanley Lebergott comments on this passage:

What tribesman from Staten Island... ever bled himself for a pound of honey? Or worked all day for it?

(*Consuming Passions*, p.13).

The American consumer, and his imitators round the world, pursue a different realisation of happiness now — a metal box on wheels. Only the sceptical non-modernist can offer an explanation for this pursuit, because only he can offer an account of the change in objects for which humans have pursued happiness these last 2500 years, unbiased by the progressive views of assorted Whigs, Liberals and socialists.

Such an account might run something like this. Ancient, literate societies, like the Jews, who believed that the world was created by God, considered happiness as nearness to God. The two earlier quotations from the Old Testament are typical of many that conjoin happiness or blessedness with Godliness. Indeed, the Psalms have little else as their subject.

Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord,
That delighteth greatly in his commandments,

His seed shall be mighty upon earth.
(Psalm 112 v.1-2)

This sense of happiness was taken over virtually unaltered by the early Christians, though it was subtly modified. The first epistle general of Peter shows how.

If ye are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are ye; because the Spirit of glory and the Spirit of God resteth upon you. For let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil-doer, or as a meddler in other men's matters, but if a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name.

(1. Peter 4 v.14-16)

Happiness is still nearness to God, but Christ is the sole means of effecting it. And the notion of suffering for the sake of that nearness has been introduced. This is a concept entirely alien to the Old Testament Jews. God allowed Job to be tormented in order to prove to Satan that Job would still keep faith with the Lord of Israel. The Christian glories in his suffering, because, by doing so, he imitates Christ's reconciliation of man with God. Suffering and happiness thus become personal, spiritual experiences — intimations of divinity, perhaps — rather than conditions which evince the superior righteousness of one civilisation over all others. Whether this shift of emphasis is evidence of St. Paul's re-making of Christ in his own image, or whether it is implicit in the teleology of Christ's life is a matter for biblical scholars to argue; and the quotation from St. Peter is deliberately chosen to avoid this debate.

The foremost classical influence on Christianity's notion of happiness is Aristotle, though it took until the first European revival of learning in the thirteenth century to reach fruition. Its locus classicus is the *Summa Theologiae* of St. Thomas Aquinas:

There is a twofold happiness or fulfilment of creatures with minds: a happiness which they can achieve by their own natural powers (which, in man's case, Aristotle identified with the fullest contemplation possible in this life of the highest object of human knowledge, God); and a happiness which we look forward to in a future life of seeing God as he is, and which transcends the nature of any created mood.

(Tr. J. McDermott, 1989 p.101)

This passage demonstrated Aquinas's extraordinary ability to read God into Aristotle's most severe abstract qualities. Aristotle had written of "virtue" being pleasant,

because it is honourable and good; [a wise man's] happiness is one regular whole; the fairest good is justice; health the best; the sweetest far to taste of what we love; all these qualities belong to the best energies, in which... happiness consists.

(*Ethics*, tr. J. Gillies, n.d. p. 171)

Aquinas has not so much Christianised, as deified, Aristotle's virtue, and in doing so, has merged the sacrificial happiness of being near to God with the prime discipline to which a classically learned man must submit himself. In a sentence that twentieth-century pursuers of happiness can no longer make sense of, Aquinas concludes:

Man's ultimate happiness consists in his highest activity, exercising his mind, and if created minds can't see God then either men will never be happy or their happiness must lie elsewhere than in God.

(p. 26)

The difficulty within this argument was discovered during the second revival of learning in Europe, which we know as the Renaissance. The happiness of knowing God by imitating Christ was replaced by the pursuit of God through a knowledge of his creation. As long as knowledge remained the achievement of the disciplined, virtuous, Christianised Aristotelians — in other words, the few — the replacement of God by man (with his things) as the ultimate source of human happiness could be disguised. 'Gloria in excelsis Deo' could even be tagged onto the imprimatur of a mid-sixteenth century edition of Lucretius' *De Rerum Naturae*. But when knowledge leaked out of the colleges and cloisters, through the printing presses, and into courts and market places, man's elbows became ever more deeply embedded in God's ribs, shoving him further and further from the human centre of his creation. The happiness of knowing God became the happiness of knowing about man.

By the Eighteenth Century, therefore, it was a commonplace that "the proper study of mankind is man", and that the pursuit of human happiness

was a purely human achievement potentially within anyone's grasp. In this respect, the American Declaration of Independence is no more than an encapsulation of the mood of the times.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

But this final version conceals the quasi-religious colouring of the American rebels' thought, shown more clearly in Jefferson's original draft:

We hold these truths to be sacred and undeniable; that all men are created equal and independent, that from that equal creation they derive rights inherent and inalienable, among which are the preservation of life, and liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Jefferson's sacredness lies in the truths themselves. He mentions no creator, for his new religion is utterly secular, without the least gesture towards the then fashionable Deism which was inserted into the published text. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the draft Declaration is a religious text, for it offers humanity an account framed as a teleological passage from creation to paradise — from equality of birth to the pursuit of happiness. All human life is there, and one need look nowhere else.

All human life? Yes, as long as human life is, at its highest, political. 'Equal', 'independent', 'rights', 'liberty', have no spiritual meaning whatsoever. Neither Aquinas, nor St. Peter, nor the Psalmist could have made sense of them.

All political human life, then? Yes, as long as it is democratic. Genesis showed man having

dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

(Ch. 1 v. 28)

The concept of an 'equal creation' could never have occurred to the Old Testament theologians who believed in the creation of the world by God, since the very act of creation can only be understood in terms of a hierarchy of authority.

But if all human life, for Jefferson, was politically democratic, its purpose was, finally, the pursuit of happiness.

The conventions of eighteenth century rhetoric were still classically derived, and the most admired way of bringing a peroration to a climax was with three balanced phrases, the last being the most important (see Walker, *Rhetorical Grammar*, 1785, pp 78 et seq.). The placing of the phrase 'the pursuit of happiness' is therefore no accident. It is the summum bonum of the Jeffersonian universe, and it is placed, unlike the Christian paradise, within the politically democratic reach of all, here and now, on earth.

It is time to cut a long story short. To get back to the police car chasing the drunk driver across the red light, all we need is a standard measure of happiness (Bentham's 'felicific' quotient, or the dismal science of economics) and a Nietzsche who comes, like Antony, to bury God, not to praise him. The French Revolutionists and Marx are mere detailers of the politically democratic paradise — wooden clogs or workers' shoes — and Lenin, Stalin and Hitler its undertakers. If the drunk is driving a Golf, his happiness may well be increased by the knowledge that the Volkswagen — the People's Car — was Hitler's gift of happiness to his labouring masses. The Führer could grow quite poetic on the subject:

The Volkswagen... is the car of the future. One had only to see the way in which these Volkswagen, roaring up the Obersalzberg, overtook and skipped like mountain goats round my Mercedes, to be tremendously impressed. After the war... [it] will become the car par excellence for the whole of Europe.

(Hitler's *Table Talk* p. 546)

When the Nazi Labour Front took over production of the Volkswagen from Dr. Porsche in 1938, many tens of thousands of Germans were persuaded to save up for the purchase price (990 Reichmarks) at the rate of 5 marks a week on instalment plans. Not one car was delivered to any of these hopefuls.

The pursuit of happiness does have its little pitfalls, eh? But, as we'll no doubt say to God, come Judgement Day: "It's a fair cop, Guv".

Have a nice day!

Christopher Arkell is the Editor of the *London Miscellany*.

The Battle for English

John Marks asks if we are mad to leave out grammar and spelling

The major division in British education concerns the extent to which schools and school curricula have become politicised, explicitly or implicitly, in recent years. Many people were surprised that 'Allo, 'Allo and other television soaps should be seriously proposed as part of a GCSE English Literature course. And they were equally surprised when the government's attempts to tighten up on spelling — in the tests for 7 year olds and in the GCSE for 16 years olds — met with so much opposition from the education establishment. They shouldn't have been. The teaching of English has become the main ideological battleground in Britain for those who want to politicise education in a left wing direction. English is to the school curriculum today what sociology was in the universities and polytechnics in the attempted Marxist takeover of higher education in the 1960s. The key difference is that sociology was taken by relatively few students, whereas English is compulsory for all our children.

Far-fetched? A fantasy? A slur on conscientious teachers?

The far Right are using spelling, grammar, standard English and great literature as totems for their political views. (*Times Educational Supplement*, 14/6/91)

English Literature departments are "part of the ideological apparatus of the capitalist state". (*Daily Telegraph*, 20/6/91)

The traditional teaching of Shakespeare in schools is "arse-achingly boring". (*The Guardian*, 25/4/91).

The first comes from John Richmond, joint leader of the North London Language Consortium and co-author of

the £21 million Language in the National Curriculum Project which the government has refused to publish. The second statement is by Terry Eagleton, Professor-elect of English at the University of Oxford, during his keynote address *The enemy within: English studies and the future of the humanities* to a conference on *The Future of English* at Ruskin College on June 15/16, 1991, attended by over

English is to the school curriculum today what sociology was in the universities and polytechnics in the attempted Marxist takeover of higher education in the 1960s

400 teachers and lecturers. Describing himself as a believer in "human emancipation through the socialist transformation of society" and a "barbarian within the citadel", Eagleton asserted that:

English has emerged as a form of class struggle.

English and the humanities were in crisis because of contradictions in advanced capitalist society.

Bourgeois society believes in reason, freedom, truth and justice but stands for oppression and domination. For all their high-falutin talk about God and the family, they've got their fingers in the till.

Eagleton also gave a similar keynote

address to the 1991 Annual Conference of the National Association for the Teaching of English (NATE) which was later reprinted in the NATE journal. Prince Charles' speech in April, 1991 on Shakespeare's place in our schools provoked the third statement from Terry Furlong, Chairman of the NATE and a director of a consortium which was then devising National Curriculum tests in English for 14 year olds. Speaking at Ruskin on *New English 1950-1990*, Furlong said that new developments like GCSE and the National Curriculum, required people "to man the barricades — to get inside groups and turn the whole thing round" through the London Association for the Teach of English, NATE, English Centres, and advisers. The focus was on changing the language; teaching about power; media education; and, later, on multicultural/anti-racist reaching through organisations like ALTARF (All London Teachers Against Racism and Fascism). Many at the conference saw their priorities as "empowering the kids" by downgrading great literature, breaking the stranglehold of A-levels and subverting the National Curriculum. Ken Jones, formerly a Trotskyist activist from the Socialist Teachers Alliance on the executive of the NUT and now a lecturer at the London University Institute of Education, advocated "constructive engagement" so as to "convert the Government's principles into a critique of present social arrangements". Substituting such a political agenda for the teaching of English is surely contrary to the political balance clauses of the 1986 Education Act. And, ac-

cording to Jones, the London Institute, the largest teacher training organisation in the country, should play a central role in this subversive process acting through the national network of local authority Advisory teachers and the heads of English departments.

Contrast these sentiments with the experience of an enthusiastic young London primary teacher who resigned after being told that “teaching spelling is against the ethos of the school”. Or with the views I recently heard two school governors express on the teaching of English. The first stressed the need to correct spelling, while recognising that many pupils found it difficult, and the importance of paying much more attention to the teaching of grammar. At an earlier meeting he had spoken approvingly of the teaching of Chaucer, not only for the storylines but also for showing how the English language had developed from Chaucer’s day to our own. The second advocated the use of grammar textbooks which he had found so useful in his own education. He couldn’t understand how a proper understanding of the English language, which plays such a central part in English culture and education, was now so neglected in British schools. The irony is that neither fit the right wing white middle class stereotypes of the Ruskin conference. Both are Labour Party governors from ethnic minorities, one Afro-Caribbean and one Asian.

Now let us consider quotations from two new books emerging from the London University Institute of Education, the biggest teacher training institution in the country. The first book’s authors, according to one sympathetic reviewer, subscribe “to one version or another of the real books approach if only in that they consider code-learning as something that can happen incidentally in the course of worthwhile reading enterprises.”

The quotation reads:

Within a psycho-semiotic framework the shared reading lesson is viewed as an ideological construct where events are played out.

This means, we are told, that:

children need to learn to position them-

selves in three interlocking contexts. which are then described in even more stupefying language.

It is good to know that children need to learn something. But surely what they should be learning, as early as they can, are the basics of phonics — the letters, their sounds and frequent patterns of combination — so that they can go on to real books as soon as possible. Meanwhile thousands of children across the country are unnecessarily failing to learn to read. A recent survey in the London Borough of Brent found that 45% of 11 year olds had a reading age of nine or less and were thus seriously handicapped at the start of their secondary schooling. This disaster follows the appointment, some years ago, of an English adviser who campaigned hard for the ‘real books’ or ‘whole language’ approach to the teaching of reading and backed proposals to cease using standardised tests of reading, without which the fall in standards would not have been visible. That adviser was the same Terry Furlong who later became Chairman of NATE.

The co-author of the second book is the same Ken Jones, mentioned above. Together with colleagues at the London Institute, he has just published *English and the National Curriculum* which describes itself as concerned with the “politics of race and class and gender” and “with English teaching as one part of an emancipatory and combative politics.” The book claims that John Major’s speech on education in July 1992:

signalled the end of a period in which educationalists could expect, almost unchallenged, to use their influence within the system to neutralise the demands of the right.

The same book describes the traditional canon of English Literature as the:

hegemonic apparatus of a white colonising class fraction.

It goes on:

English, as hegemonic design has traditionally disposed it, is where the white middle-class auditions members of other cultural groups for parts in *its* cultural scene.

It is against this background that, earlier this year, Professor Michael

Dummett of Oxford deplores being “presented with a mass of scripts by would-be graduates who cannot write decent English. All but a very few make manifold gross mistakes of grammar and spelling.”

And it is against this background that the government is about to revise the National Curriculum for English so that it more accurately reflects the proper concerns of most parents and, in due course, of pupils too.

The current disarray about the teaching of English put me in mind of these lines from *Hamlet*:

Hamlet: Why was he sent into England?

First Clown: Why, because he was mad; he shall recover his wits there; or if he do not, ’tis no great matter there.

Hamlet: Why?

First Clown: ’Twill not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

There is a real contradiction here, more fundamental than those perceived by Terry Eagleton and his followers, most of whom have benefited from the traditional education in English they would now withhold from the next generation.

If we refuse to give young people the basic tools of language, are we not permanently stultifying their minds? Competence in the use of grammatically sound English is a prerequisite for clear, accurate thought and effective communication. And if we deny them access to the riches of English literature and our cultural heritage, we are cutting them off from many experiences of great value which may otherwise be unavailable to many pupils, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Deliberately denying such opportunities to the young is an act of barbarism. We may thus create a generation with legitimate chips on their shoulders, since they will lack what they need in order to think for themselves.

John Marks is Director of The Education Research Trust.

A visit to Egypt

Shusha Guppy describes the problems of Egypt's colonial and socialist legacy

Much has been written about the huge difficulty of dismantling Socialism in Eastern Europe, and hauling the region out of the morass of stagnation and decay. But we seldom ponder the plight of Third World countries with similar regimes, whose problems are compounded by underdevelopment and overpopulation, and more gravely an absence of any liberal tradition — or what we might call “democratic memory”.

Until after the Second World War, countries such as Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary were in the mainstream of European civilisation, their capitals were industrial and cultural centres on a par with Vienna and Paris. Throughout the Cold War period their peoples never forgot their European heritage — what life was like “before” and could be “after”. Not so in the Third World Socialist countries, where “before” was some form of colonialism, and “after” a one-party dictatorship, similar to the Eastern European model.

Egypt is the Arab world's largest and most advanced country. Since Nasser's death in 1969 it has been trying to extricate itself from the straight-jacket of Nasserism: a species of hybrid socialism modelled on Czechoslovakia, complete with centralised economy, secret police, censorship and the gagging of dissidents. Sadat started the process of liberalisation which President Mubarak has continued, but it has proved slow and often intractable, generating new problems, of which the most debilitating is the resurgence of “Islamic” fundamentalism.

I recently went to Egypt to give a couple of lectures in Cairo and Alexandria sponsored by The British Council, (incidentally, one of Britain's great institutions which has not yet been destroyed by denigration, cynicism and economic strangulation, and which

renders a global service through excellent English teaching and cultural exchanges). I had been there once before briefly — in 1981, to interview Queen Farah after the Shah's death for *The Telegraph Magazine* — and this time I decided to stay a few extra days and see something of Cairo.

On arrival at night, Cairo seemed conjured out of the desert like a vast fairy-land: millions of multicoloured lights flashing from publicity signs and tall buildings, through palms and acacia trees, the Nile meandering through it like liquid aquamarine. In the morning the magic kingdom had vanished, and been replaced by a dun-coloured urban sprawl of 16 million people surrounded by desert, choked with traffic and crowds, over which hung a quivering pall of pollution. As in most Third-World cities modern tall buildings, old houses and slums mingled in various stages of decay, as if demolishers had just been or were about to arrive.

An Egyptian friend, Ahmed, a university English lecturer, offered to guide me, and we drove through the commercial city centre to Mediaeval Cairo, where some great Islamic buildings from 8th to 18th Century are clustered around the Al Azhar Mosque — the religious centre of the country — and the old Bazaar. Pilgrims from all over Egypt come here to worship at the various mosques, especially those adjoining the Shrines of Saida Zeinab, the Prophet Mohammad's granddaughter, and of her brother Hussein. You could hardly approach the Saints' tombs for the density of crowds, praying and wailing and supplicating while their babies howled and their children milled around.

The area is a maze of narrow dusty lanes, where shanty dwellings cover the ground as well as the rooftops, and

putrid garbage-tips and collapsing shacks harbour a teeming population. Sixty per cent of Egypt's 54 million people is under fifteen; the Government is doing its best to encourage family planning, and has succeeded in reducing a staggering 4% annual increase to 2.8, which is still explosive. Yet at the World Population Conference in Cairo last September the fundamentalists opposed the resolution, (which even Iran signed, arguing rightly that there is no prohibition in Islam against birth-control). It occurred to me that the combination of deep piety and abject poverty provides a very fertile soil for all sorts of demagoguery, including Fundamentalism.

“The fundamentalists's aim is to undermine the Government, and whatever its policy, they oppose it”, said Ahmed. For example a few months ago NCC television showed a documentary about female circumcision — one of the most barbaric customs still practised in Southern Egypt. Following popular outcry, the Mufti of Cairo (the chief religious authority) declared it a “tribal African custom” alien to Islam, and the Parliament introduced a bill making it illegal. Then the head of Al-Azhar Mosque, traditionally the highest orthodox authority, “found” a *hadith* (prophetic tradition which together with the Holy Q'uran form the basis of the *Sharia* — Islamic Law) that allowed the operation, and the Government backed down.

Yet fundamentalism is so far only a security threat in Egypt — shooting a few tourists and trying to kill Mahfouz, the country's only Nobel Prize winner. It is not a political force, as in Algeria. Some Egyptians blame the woes of the country, including fundamentalism, on Nasserism and its legacy: large-scale nationalisation, false full-employment, price-control, and massive Government

subsidies for unviable projects: "Nasser fixed the rents in the 50's, and they are still the same — say £5 a month for a residential flat. There are too many vested interests preventing change", explained my friend. "A film-star or a top Civil Servant paying £5 a month for his vast flat in a modern building is not keen to change the law and allow land-owners to charge higher rents; as a result the concept of maintenance does not exist. Landlords can't afford repairs, and they let their beautiful 19th Century villas crumble so that they can build a new block in its place and charge their new tenants more."

As in Eastern Europe, Nasser's full-employment policy meant artificial job-creation and low salaries: "They pretend to pay us and we pretend to work", as the Eastern Europeans used to say. In 1991 the IMF stepped in with funds for reform and development, subject to economic liberalisation. But so far only a few hotels and small companies have been privatised, and 80% of people are still employed by the State. The Government is introducing Social Security and Pension schemes to encourage people to work in the private sector, but people don't trust employers, who can always get around the law by greasing a few palms. Salaries are low — £40 per month for a qualified teacher — and to make ends meet most people have several "jobs", supplementing their State salaries with private work. Similarly subsidies and price-control have been lifted from most commodities except bread, but before markets can adjust, such measures exacerbate the plight of the poor.

As elsewhere in the Third World, corruption is endemic, on small and large scales. It is bred of poverty and lack of freedom of expression. Yet with economic liberalisation has come a modicum of political freedom. Some old parties, like the Wafd, which effectively campaigned against British rule after World War I, have been resurrected, and other parties have cropped up, including a tiny Communist party. But since the revolution of 1952 which brought Nasser to power, his National Democratic Party has ruled the country. "If you want to get anywhere in public life, you have to join it", a

journalist told me. "To be fair the Government is trying to comply with American insistence on democracy, without losing its grip on power. People have become used to one-party rule — they know that the General Elections are rigged, that democracy is a sham, so they just do what they can within the system".

But Nasser has his defenders too, especially among the intelligentsia. Sonallah Ibrahim, one of Egypt's best known novelists who was jailed as a dissident by Nasser for two years, explains: "Nasser wanted to do something for the people. He first asked the Americans for funds to build the Aswan Dam, and they refused, forcing him to turn to the Russians. Similarly when Israel sided with the British and the French and attacked Egypt during the Suez war, he started to build up the army, buying weapons from Eastern Bloc countries, notably Czechoslovakia. So they influenced his social policies too."

But was the Dam such a good idea after all? Some ecologists believe not: the annual floods that covered the land along the Nile were rich in minerals and organic matter. Now these are held by the Dam, and chemical fertilisers have to be used instead, which are expensive and less efficient.

"Nasser saw himself as the Leader of the whole Arab world", says Mursi Saad El-Din, veteran journalist, friend of Sadat and Editor of *Egypt Today*, "Sadat was less ambitious — he wanted to be just Egyptian. He made peace with Israel to concentrate on development and construction at home".

It cost him his life. Even today many Egyptians are opposed to peace unless Israel gives up the Occupied Territories. While they favour a comprehensive peace for the region, most Egyptian intellectuals with whom I spoke did not believe in the Peace Treaty between Israel and the PLO as it stands: "It gives nothing to the Palestinians", they said, "It is as if I occupied your house for years, then said now we can get along, because I'm going to let you clean the corridors yourself!". Muhammad Heikal, the doyen of Egyptian journalists, and Nasser's closest friend and adviser throughout his reign, explained: "It is a treaty imposed by a nuclear power over

its non-nuclear neighbours. It does not address the real issues of refugees, borders, settlements, and above all Jerusalem. It cannot work".

I pointed out that some Israelis also oppose the peace treaty on the grounds that "it gives nothing" to them and too much to the Arabs. Yet if peace were truly achieved, resources could be diverted from military expenditure to development, for the benefit of all peoples in the region. "American aid is contingent on the Arabs accepting a peace treaty imposed on them by force. The two billion dollars Egypt receives — Israel has four million people and receives 3 billion — comes under the heading 'Mid-East Peace' in the American budget. Now similar sums will be given to Jordan and perhaps Syria. But that will not solve the human problems," Heikal maintained. An industrialist put the blame partly on the PLO for the present situation: "For years they refused to compromise and said 'NO' to everything, now they have been forced to say 'YES' to nothing. No one is fooled, and it won't work unless Israel gives a little".

I asked a beautiful Palestinian girl, dressed in what seemed an expensive designer outfit, whose family settled in Egypt after the 1967 War, what she thought of the situation. "If the PLO fails to establish an independent Palestine, then I'd go along with Hamas". What would happen to her prosperity, her prestigious university job, her Parisian elegance? Did she not mind being forced to wear the veil? "First we get our country, then we deal with such trivia".

Yet despite caveats, the consensus of opinion is that the Peace Treaty is at least a start, a way out of the deadlock. With it there is *some* hope. Without it, there is none. When a student asked me what I thought, I told him of an old dream I have had, in which all the peoples of the region live in peace and harmony together, and Israeli skill combined with Arab resources turn the whole area into a garden of Eden. "I have that dream too", he said.

Shusha Guppy's most recent book is *Looking Back: A panoramic View of a Literary Age, Touchstone, 1993.*

Letter from Belgium

Alexandra Colen

Last February I was asked by the Flemish separatist party Vlaams Blok to stand as one of their candidates in the Belgian general elections. On 21 May I was elected a member of the Belgian parliament for Antwerp, Flanders' largest city. The party gained four of the fourteen seats in the Antwerp constituency and is the biggest party here.

In Belgium the Vlaams Blok has an extremely bad press. This should not come as a surprise. The party strives for the independence of Flanders, the Dutch-speaking northern half of the country, and it aims to abolish the welfare mechanism and cut back the powers of the State. Both these positions make it the enemy of the Belgian establishment, which controls virtually the entire national press. They lump us together with parties of the extreme right in Walloon and elsewhere in Europe, although nobody has ever explained how a party that wishes to limit the powers of the State, as the Vlaams Blok does, can be a "fascist" organization. Fascism, like all totalitarianisms, requires the concentration of power in the hands of the State.

The bias of the national press towards the Vlaams Blok has unpleasant consequences for the party. Some people tend to believe the stories about the party's racist inclinations, which in turn has led to some *real* extremists seeking admission to the party. As a result the party is constantly, and frustratingly, obliged to screen would-be members and activists. However, the bias of the national press is understandable. After all, we *are* a threat to the existence of Belgium and the establishment is fighting us with every available means. What surprises me, though, is the bias of the foreign press. Unlike their Belgian colleagues, foreign journalists are in a position to provide objective information about

the Vlaams Blok without the risk of losing their jobs. Yet somehow few do. I encountered some amazing examples of foreign "information" about the party.

The Vlaams Blok's slogan during the electoral campaign was "Nu afrekenen". The literal English translation of this Dutch slogan is: "Now (it is time to) settle the accounts". This was not an anti-immigration slogan. The accounts in question were the political scandals which abound in Belgium's gigantic government debt. However, the Brussels correspondent of an English quality paper had discovered a better meaning. She gave reality a twist in order to confirm her own biased ideas of the party as a racist anti-immigration party and, one week before the elections, wrote that the Vlaams Blok slogan meant "No Africans".

Although married to a Belgian I myself am an immigrant. As English is my native tongue, I wrote to this correspondent to point out the correct meaning of "Nu afrekenen". Considering that journalists often copy from each other, I thought it wise to fax a copy of this letter to all correspondents of English-language newspapers in Brussels. A few hours later I received a call from an extremely arrogant journalist from another quality newspaper. "Lady," he said, "my colleague made only a slight error of translation which you use to pretend that your party is not a racist party. I will tell you what you want to do with immigrants: you want to round them up, put them in camps and forcibly evict them."

The Vlaams Blok was not set up to be an anti-immigration party. If it was, they would probably never have asked me to be one of their candidates. But it is true that the Vlaams Blok is in favour of ending social security programmes for "needy" immigrants. These have led to widespread resent-

ment among local people and possibly even racist feelings amongst some of our voters. However, if racist sentiments occur amongst the Flemish electorate, we do not blame the people but the Belgian government's social security programmes.

The Vlaams Blok does not intend to send all immigrants home. It is in favour of sending back all illegal and criminal immigrants. It does not believe in the multicultural society and favours a more selective immigration policy, with incentives for some, and disincentives for other categories of would-be immigrants. Many problems are encountered with Moroccan immigrants who seem to have most difficulty in adapting to the Flemish cultural environment. Turkish immigrants are easier to integrate and East Europeans are even easier. The Vlaams Blok proposes that Flemish development aid go primarily to countries like Morocco which send large numbers of "problem" immigrants. This will encourage people from poorer countries to stay at home and help develop their own country. The Vlaam proposes encouraging those immigrants who wish to return home, by giving them financial aid to start businesses in their own countries.

The main aim of the party, however is to abolish the artificial construction that is the Belgian State. Our aim is for Flanders to become a full member of a European confederation of national states. The party calls itself a "nationalist" party. Being an Anglophone myself, I know this often leads to confusion. One should bear in mind, however, that in Dutch the word "nationalism" does not have the bad connotation which it has in English. By contrast, "patriotism" is a word which has a negative connotation in Flanders. In English it would be more correct to describe the Vlaams Blok as "Flemish Patriot". The same is true for

the word “liberal”. The Vlaams Blok is a liberal party in the sense that it wishes to restrict the welfare state mechanism. “Liberalism” in Dutch is exactly that. However, in English “liberalism” often means the opposite: expansion of the welfare state.

The campaign of the Belgian establishment against the Vlaams Blok is a real handicap to the party. Secret polls held one week before the Belgian elections predicted a massive victory for the Vlaams Blok. This victory did not happen. In the last week before the elections the establishment killed us off. Every newspaper in Belgium, the King, the Catholic bishops, the trade unions, the chancellors of the universities, all the other political parties, in short, the entire establishment exhorted the electorate not to vote Vlaams Blok. Prime Minister Jean-Luc Dehaene ran an advertisement in Antwerp’s biggest newspaper telling the Antwerpians that if they voted Vlaams Blok, the government in Brussels would refuse to listen to them: “No-one in Brussels cares about Antwerp any more. It is a brown city now. If you want to be heard again, vote for responsible politicians”. The code word of the establishment was that the people should vote “positive” — a “negative” vote being a vote for the Vlaams Blok.

I knew we were not going to win the elections when my sister rang to tell me that the priest in her local parish had told the assembled congregation: “Vote for anyone, even the Banana

Party if you like, but do not vote for Vlaams Blok”.

Our adversaries told the public that it was our intention to drown Moroccans in the river Scheldt in Antwerp, because hooligans had drowned a Moroccan immigrant in the river Seine in Paris. They told the people that we wanted to chase the king out of the royal palace — it is true that the Vlaams Blok envisages Flanders as a republic rather than a monarchy, but the king’s position is simply not an issue. He can do whatever he likes, perhaps remain king in Wallonia or even run for president in Flanders. When last year the Vlaams Blok became the biggest party in Antwerp’s communal elections with nearly one third of the votes — who could seriously believe that one Antwerpian in three is a fascist? None of the other parties was willing to form a coalition with us for the city council. Instead, they all teamed up and formed a coalition which included all the other parties — from Christian-Democrats to Trotskyites — against the Vlaams Blok.

However, the intimidation of the Vlaams Blok by the establishment goes even further. The Belgian Ministry of the Interior has put the Vlaams Blok on the list of subversive organisations because we constitute a threat to the existence of the State. As such, our activities are monitored by the Belgian secret police and many citizens are afraid openly to express their adherence to the party. The Belgian trade unions have adopted a policy of expel-

ling everyone who is a member of the Vlaams Blok. As unemployment benefits in Belgium are paid via the trade unions, the consequences for labourers supporting the Vlaams Blok can be severe indeed. The government currently has plans to abolish all subsidies to the Vlaams Blok. Gifts from companies to political parties have been made illegal and been replaced by government subsidies. Now there are plans to restrict these subsidies to “democratic parties”.

In a real democracy that need not bother us. The Vlaams Blok believes in democracy because this is the best political system there is, and its parliamentarians have all been democratically elected. Nevertheless, in contemporary Belgium a party is only “democratic” if the majority of politicians decides that it is so. It has been decided by the politically correct majority, that I, as a Vlaams Blok representative, am not a democrat, no matter how much I care about democracy. However, I can live with that so long as the world outside Belgium knows who I really am. My only problem at the moment is to find a good secondary school for my daughter — a school where, contrary to most schools in town, my daughter will not be taught that people belonging to the Vlaams Blok are the heirs of Hitler. I am afraid I will not be able to find such a school..

Alexandra Colen is a member of Parliament for Antwerp.

Sir Charles Pickthorn Bt (1927-1995)

Sir Charles Pickthorn, who died suddenly in June, was a founder, along with the Marquess of Salisbury, Diana Spearman and T.E. Utley, of both the Salisbury Group (of which he became the Treasurer) and the *Salisbury Review*. He was an occasional contributor to the *Review* but he will be remembered particularly as a generous benefactor and constant and helpful adviser to us to the end of his life.

Bagehot wrote that “An Englishman whose heart is in a matter is not easily baffled”. Charles’s passionate conservatism and abhorrence of fashionable humbug informed his robust uninhibited views on all the important issues of the day.

His great interest was English literature, and in 1979 he became Chairman of the newly formed Surtees Society which republished many Surtees’ favourites long out of print. The society also republished the unexpurgated edition of *Uncle Remus*.

Charles belonged to a vanishing breed, the eccentric Englishman, who says what he thinks, because he believes it to be true, and regardless of fashion. He was an amusing dinner companion whose conversation was larded with copious quotations from many sources who could compose the wittiest and most erudite vote of thanks on a Woodbine cigarette packet, while entertaining his neighbours with talk on their favourite topics.

Our thoughts are with his widow Helen and his family, as they mourn a life that was not only honourable but also amusing, inspiring and full of a zany good will.

Editorial

It is difficult to oppose medical research; for we all have an interest in health, and in the knowledge which helps us to restore it. It may therefore seem as though everything done to increase medical knowledge is a benefit, and everything done to impede it a harm. But such a view would be too simple. In the extermination camp of Auschwitz, Dr Mengele carried out experiments on living people, in order to gain information useful to medical science. From the scientific point of view the experiments were a genuine contribution to our knowledge. It could even be that the long term medical benefits of Dr Mengele's actions exceed the short term cost in human suffering. Nevertheless, Dr Mengele should never have done what he did, and people were right to condemn him as a criminal.

The case illustrates an important principle. It shows that moral questions cannot be solved by a computation of costs and benefits. An action may be wrong, even though it is the source of abundant happiness. And if it is wrong, you ought not to do it.

No doctors alive today would endorse the acts of Dr Mengele. But what he did was only the extreme version of conduct that is increasingly common, and which many doctors approve. For why did Dr Mengele behave in this way? *Not* because he did not regard his victims as human. If they had not been human his experiments would have been quite useless: for he wished to discover medical facts about the human body, using methods which had been previously forbidden. His experiments required him to believe — what Nazi propaganda denied — that Jews are normal examples of our species.

If Dr Mengele regarded his victims as human, why did he do this terrible thing to them? The simple answer is that he did not regard human life as sacred. He had no conception that there are things which you must not do

to humans, simply because they are human. This conception lies at the root of morality, and is the only possible answer to those who think that the end can always justify the means. Morality depends upon an idea of the sacred; and those who despise that idea, as a lingering survival of ancient superstitions, should remember that it is implanted in us by the species, and has proved its worth in ensuring the human race's survival. *Abolish* it and the way is open to the extremes of crime — to the concentration camp, the psychiatric prison, the forced transportation and all the other horrors of our epoch. *Honour* it, and your dealings with your fellows become clear, certain and humane.

The conception of the sacred has been put in question by modern medical science, which devotes itself instead to the spurious aim of 'choice'. In place of the foetus's inviolability, we find a 'woman's right to choose'. In place of the sacrament of sexual love and childbirth, we find surrogate motherhood and the test-tube baby. Medicine is increasingly devoted to the task of enlarging the options of the existing generation, regardless of the long-term interest of the species. Let us give a few examples of what could happen.

Suppose embryos are routinely screened not only to detect possible disability but also to determine gender. Boys being favoured more than girls, the female embryos would be routinely weeded out.

Or suppose that, for scientific reasons, doctors wish to lengthen the period in which the embryo is kept isolated from the mother. They could develop an artificial womb to carry the baby to full term within the laboratory. In Italy research is already being carried out which could lead to this happening. What sort of child would this be — who is thus born without a mother?

Or suppose that a man wants a child identical to himself. One of his cells is therefore cloned into a human egg, so

that his genetic makeup is exactly reproduced in a new individual. Agencies are established, offering such immortality at a fee.

There is a yet more alarming possibility. As one Australian geneticist has put it: "give me a human ovum and the ovum of a rat and I will make a new animal species". Suppose that a human egg is spliced with the egg of a rat and suppose the resulting monster has useful properties. Maybe it can 'man' — if that is the right word — the fiercest brigades of the army.

All such developments could in principle be justified, by those who think in terms of benefit and cost. Of course few doctors would wish to see them become realities. Yet current medical practise brings them closer every day. One such practise is in-vitro fertilisation, in which human embryos are bred outside the womb and then implanted in it. There is only a small chance of survival for such an embryo and the operation invariably involves multiple fertilisation, producing superfluous embryos which — failing to attract the sympathy of their scientist-creator — are eventually washed down the sink. What kind of attitude to human life does this imply? Are we really to accept that human beings can be created in this way, and then disposed of when they do not answer to their purposes? Is our sympathy for the infertile really to override our natural revulsion towards the mass production and mass destruction of human beings?

Medics justify embryo research on a variety of grounds. Through such research, they tell us, we shall learn how to avoid deformities; we shall make new discoveries that will arm us in the fight against cancer, Parkinson's disease and Aids. The question, however, is not whether there are benefits to be obtained from this research, but whether it should be permitted. Are we really entitled to treat the human embryo as we would the embryo of any other animal — as a piece

of matter to be used for the purposes of those with power to exploit it? Does not the inviolability of the human adult extend also to its infant predecessors, and to the little dot of life from which it begins?

When you ask such questions, you generally receive from the medical establishment nothing but the most slippery of replies. We are invited to distinguish the embryo from the 'pre-embryo'; or told that life does not really begin until the third week. This kind of casuistry fills the *Warnock* report, a document which exemplifies the spirit of compromise at its worst — compromising where compromise is impossible.

Surely we ought to assume, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, that it is *fertilization* that creates life. It is *then* that a new human being comes into existence. From that point the embryo contains its own unique genetic imprint with all the information it needs to become an adult, that is, all the instructions and capacity for cells to multiply, diversify and become organs, limbs, blood, hair, nails and teeth — and eventually to acquire the personality and moral nature of another human being.

Warnock's spirit of compromise is however truly amazing: the Warnock report would allow the sale and purchase of human embryos; and research and experimentation on embryos up to a period of fourteen days, with the stipulation that the victims of such research should then be destroyed. If such recommendations are followed, we shall have accepted for the first time in our history that human beings can be used for research and experimentation without their consent. We shall also have invented a new crime: that of keeping one of those human beings alive after fourteen days. It will become *obligatory* to kill members of our own species. Can we really accept that medical research, however beneficial, justifies this change in attitude? Whatever the rights and wrongs of abortion, nobody has ever suggested that there are categories of unborn child that *must* be killed — nor that it would be a crime not to kill them.

But this brings us to a deeper anxiety about the general state of medical research. We are acquiring the habit of disposing of future generations as we see fit, for the sole and selfish purpose of staying alive as long as possible. Already sufferers from Parkinson's disease are being treated with the brain

tissue of aborted foetuses.

The unhindered pursuit of medical advance leads inevitably to a society of geriatrics, and to the sacrifice of future generations for the sake of those who will shortly be dead. This constitutes a reversal of the true moral order. The idea of the sanctity of life is, at bottom, a device for encouraging sacrifice; it is the motive that binds man to woman for life, and which causes them to deprive themselves for the sake of their children. That is the pattern of conduct upon which the human race depends: the sacrifice of the old for their offspring. Modern medicine, with its ethos of 'options' and 'choice', inevitably leads in the opposite direction; to the sacrifice of the younger generation for their parents.

This casts a new and sinister light on embryo farming for medical purposes. What is this if not the theft of human life, in its youngest manifestation, so that those who should be preparing for the grave can postpone their day of reckoning for a few more years? Embryo research is the symbol of our selfish appropriation of the world's resources — even of human life itself — for the sake of our own bodily survival.

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Letters

Sir,
I found two articles in the June issue to be exceptionally well-argued and thought provoking: Stewart Deuchar's 'Malthus Revisited' is the best and the only sane, modern essay which I can remember on this topic. He reveals that mere hatred (however justified) of the UN's contraception-maddened bully boys — many of whom are girls — is no excuse for Pollyanna style optimism about the world's resources, whatever anarcho-capitalists might insist to the contrary.

The other piece is Ray Honeyford's 'Good Books', whose unashamed elitism makes one fear that the thought police are already knocking on his door. However, Mr. Honeyford fudges an issue which I would have thought was crucial to the subject — that of translation. Every educated person knows that it is impossible for a translation to be both accurate and satisfying. This surely throws into doubt the possibility, not only of your average deracinated illiterate Los Angeles lout having the faintest conception of what Dante and Homer were saying, but of any monolingual English speaker — however great his goodwill — doing so. To denizens of the affluent modern underclass, not excluding the staff of most publishing houses, the writings of Shakespeare and Milton are in a language at least as "foreign" as *The Iliad* or *The Divine Comedy*. Yet I have never seen this obvious point made in any discussion of Bloom's work. By mentioning it here I am like Mr. Deuchar "putting in a plea for rational discussion and hard information. *The Salisbury Review* would be an ideal forum in which to hold the debate".

R.J Stove, Australia

Sir,
Professor Hoppe's essay made a refreshing change from the usual "radical libertarian" manifesto for a complete open-door to the explosive

overpopulation in foreign culture zones, along with handguns and narcotics, "compensated" by the simultaneous abolition of the welfare-state and of laws against racial incitement: the worst of both worlds! While I prefer Hoppe's patriot/philosopher "king" to either mass democracy or our whip-ridden parliamentary shouting shop, I think a "prejudiced" majority among the English-speaking nations and western Europe would rest content with a border ban against unassimilable paupers.

The purposes of a government, funded from the "general contribution of the whole society" (Adam Smith) to avoid sectional bribery, are firstly to protect the area, people and culture of its territory against unwanted control, attack or "unarmed invasion" (Lord Elton) by outsiders, and secondly to enforce impartially agreed rules to ensure peaceful internal association among the inhabitants. Anarcho-capitalism replaces this arrangement with a myriad of individual transactions, whose "voluntary contracts" could be enforced only by protection agents probably financed by private insurance companies.

Modern societies function best when a shared culture provides the foundation for enforceable rules and also uncoerced general consent to them. Government should be limited to its proper functions, but *multiculturalism* presents a clear danger which must be understood and dealt with.

Jacqui L. Rufus, Perth, Scotland

Sir,
Mr. Purdue's review of Sir James Goldsmith's *Trap* is especially relevant to our economic and constitutional future. The Goldsmith alternative offers a fresh start for a counter-Heseltine foreign policy. Mr. Purdue recognises not only the theoretical fallacies of global free-trade doctrines, but their harmful irrelevance to the UK today. What served this "workshop of the

world" quite well in 1795 or even 1895 is not necessarily the panacea for 1995. It is clear that we could hardly expect to survive, let alone succeed, if compelled to compete in third world markets not only against an adjacent protected continental heartland system but also against the hi-tech but low rate manufactures pouring in from the Asiatic rim.

I believe a Conservative policy can be rebuilt on what your reviewer recognises as the "need to maintain the social and cultural fabrics which give nations their identities", as follows:

- 1) maintain Europe as a friendly association of what Robin Cook rather than Kenneth Clarke calls "independent nations";
- 2) maintain for the UK the principle of complete internal self-government and respect for domestic traditions;
- 3) reduce bureaucratic regulation which frustrates free trade inside the European region, and develop bilateral agreements with countries of similar outlook such as Australia and Canada;
- 4) insulate this region against any massive influx of either sweated goods or migrant hordes from alien culture-zones;
- 5) develop a European defence alliance, including a London-Paris SDI partnership to protect the entire sub-continent against nuclear missile developments elsewhere;
- 6) instead of the "majority vote" compulsion, aim at common support in foreign policy whereby each can expect solidarity or at least neutrality from all in the pursuit of national interests overseas — an approach that enhances the European combination on the world stage.

Instead of throwing money away into a Referendum Party, perhaps Sir James could consider investing in a Redwood Policy Tank, to which your authentic one-nation traditional Tory journal deserves access.

Peter Stockman, Essex

Reviews

Literature survives oppression in Prague

Barbara Day

Literature and Tolerance: Views from Prague, Czech Centre of International PEN

Literature and Tolerance: Views from Prague is published to celebrate seventy years from the founding of Czech PEN Club in Prague, and is an anthology of writers ranging from Karel Capek (first president of the Czech PEN Club) to Vaclav Havel, taking in not only the well-known names of Miroslav Holub, Ivan Klima and Josef Skvorecky but also such younger writers as Alexandra Berkova and Pavel Srut.

Czech PEN Club is an organisation that was founded and twice re-founded; once in 1945, after the Nazi occupation, and again in 1989 — not *after* the events of the velvet revolution, as an onlooker might suppose, but as part of that confident surge of initiative which preceded the restoration of democracy in Czechoslovakia, and made it inevitable.

The story of the founding and re-foundings is told by Lumir Civrny in an essay which forms approximately half the entire book; and which gives us a detailed and fascinating description of the setbacks, successes and personalities of 70 years. Czech PEN Club was a branch from the stem of the English PEN Club, founded four years earlier by Mrs. Dawson-Scott, a friend of Karel Capek. By Civrny's account, it took an unconscionable long time — two and a half years — to get off the ground. Eventually, however the first meeting took place on 16th February 1925 in the Cafe Louvre on Narodni

trida (now known as Gany's). Civrny expands on the literary and cultural context of Narodni trida, from the National Theatre and Slavia cafe at one end, to the Odeon publishing house and Theatre beyond the Gate at the other. Among the thirty-eight present at the inaugural present were not only Karel Capek and his brother Josef, but also Karel Capek-Chod, Frantisek Langer, Jaroslav Kvapil, Otakar Fischer and other distinguished playwrights, novelists, critics and poets. One of the earliest and most important decisions of the Czech committee was to invite German-speaking writers (such as Paul Leppin, Johan Urzidil, Max Brod and Pavel Eisner) to become members, and in 1931 Thomas Mann was invited as the guest of honour. The Czech PEN Club recognised its international connections (in particular with England and France) as a first priority and one of the earliest guests of honour (in 1926) was Rabindranath Tagore. This international element became of even greater importance in the thirties, as central Europe became overshadowed by the threat of fascism.

The strength of this international network was shown in earnest after the Munich agreement of 1938, when members of the British and French PEN Clubs — deeply ashamed of their own governments' betrayal of Czechoslovakia — worked to obtain visas for Czech and Slovak writers. One result of this was the opportunity to establish

a Czechoslovak PEN Club in England, with the exiled President Benes as chairman. In occupied Czechoslovakia, it fell to Capek's successor as chairman, Anna Maria Tilschova, to take the Czech PEN Club through the experience of being closed down by the Gestapo and revived in the short-lived post-war democracy; at the 1933 International Congress in Dubrovnik, Tilschova had already joined in the protest against Germany's suppression of intellectual freedom. Civrny uses the account prepared by Tilschova's treasurer Jaroslava Tumova to tell this part of the PEN Club story. It includes the amazing description of how Tilschova, with the connivance of the town of Litomysl, concealed PEN Club's capital from the German occupiers by investing it in the building of a convalescent home for writers. When, in 1942, Tilschova and Tumova were pulled in by the Gestapo, they presented PEN Club "as an innocent ladies-only society that was only there to provide hospitality — something women were best fitted to do, and so on." The Germans confiscated the contents of the Club's Post Office and Savings Bank accounts — deliberately left visible — and some carefully concocted "Club records". The actual records of the 17 years of PEN Club's activity were safely preserved.

The newly-founded Czech PEN Club held the first of a series of regular

meetings on January 30th 1947, with little foresight of what was to come in February 1948; Civrny records that even a month earlier, the political tension did not seem to have affected the Club's plans, which included a visit from Graham Greene. And yet by March an Action Committee had been set up to purge PEN Club of those considered unfit to be members, and further political interference followed. In time, PEN Club's place as the Czech centre of an international network was challenged by the Ministry of Information, which had taken that role on itself.

Nevertheless, it was surprising that PEN Club survived at all in the atmosphere of the fifties, when colleagues and neighbours could be snatched without warning to prison or execution. Civrny, who lived through that period himself, denies the view that during this period Czech PEN Club became idle and lacking in initiative: "The committee needed a great deal of stamina not to give in, to refuse ever new waves of negation, to dare to hope in a hopeless situation." From 1948 to 1957, Civrny writes, was a struggle for survival, followed by a certain degree of revival from 1957 to 1969.

The suppression of culture and independent thought in the 1970s took a

different form from that of the 1950s. The earlier regime pursued a selective and brutal course in order to eliminate the enemy, and imposed a blanket of fear over the country; whereas in the seventies there were no political executions, but the very reminder of the terror was sufficient to subjugate most of the population into compliance. Few people still believed in the principles of Communism, but those who gained power manipulated the lives of those in their network of influence. The Chairman of Czech PEN in 1968 was Adolf Hoffmeister, polymath and member of the pre-war avant-garde, who was unable to publish, exhibit, or speak in public. Similar conditions applied to other members of the Club. All its activities quietly slid to a halt. Meanwhile, many writers who had emigrated joined the PEN Centre for Writers in Exile, whose international secretary was Pavel Tigríd, the present Minister of Culture for the Czech Republic.

It was not until late in the eighties that plans began to be laid for the revival of the Club. The last few years before the restoration of democracy in Czechoslovakia were a dynamic time when forces for and against reform swayed to and fro in the seats of power; it was a struggle almost completely

concealed from western observers, but experienced as a series of judders, cracks and crashes by those actually living in the country. In the autumn of 1989 one of the authorities' most important concerns was that, at all costs, Vaclav Havel should not be elected president of the Club; and on the 19th November members of the newly-elected committee were arrested for fear they would "misrepresent" abroad the events of 17th November. As Civrny writes, the meeting of PEN Club in January 1990, held in an atmosphere of freedom, marks the beginning of a new phase in its history.

The contributions of the second half of the book — illustrations poems — and short stories, a short play from Daniela Fischerova, a brief and thoughtful feuilleton from Milan Uhde — complement Lumir Civrny's engrossing account, which can be read by all those interested in European history and literature, regardless of whether they have any particular affiliation to the Czech Republic. Very little has yet been published in English to fill in the "blank spaces" in the history of the post-Communist countries. *Literature and Tolerance: Views from Prague* is an important contribution towards this goal.

Africa's Lenin

Elizabeth Endycott

The Dark Side of Nyerere's Legacy, Ludovic Mwijage, Adelphi Press, 1994.

In the three decades and more since the first of the colonial countries became independent, to criticise the leaders — especially those ruling their people in the name of "Socialism" — has, apparently been tantamount to sacrilege. And to no-one has this applied more forcefully than to Julius Nyerere, Dictator of Tanzania; it has been easier to

criticise the Almighty himself than to suggest that this dreadful man is anything less than God and the Saints rolled into one.

This darling of the fashionable left, of governments both Western and otherwise, of the Aid industry and of most of the churches, ruled his country with as brutally iron a hand as any tyrant in

recent history. His ideology is Maoist and he ruled through a system of ten house cells, which meant that every ten houses had a government spy — ("How wonderful" I remember a leftist acquaintance saying, "an Ombudsman for every ten houses!") — whose job it was to report further up the hierarchy every word spoken out of

place, every unexplained visitor, even the appearance of a new pair of shoes or a kilo of sugar. Tanzania always had more political prisoners than South Africa but these were explained away as Economic Saboteurs, which seemed to satisfy the various agencies which poured money into the country, where it disappeared like water poured on to the Sahara.

Ludovic Mwijage was a young school teacher who dared to utter a word of dissent and, in 1983, was forced to flee. He went to Swaziland, but was abducted from there, first to Mozambique then back to Tanzania where he suffered two years imprisonment — without trial — in conditions which make South Africa's Robben Island look almost luxurious. After he was released he fled again, because of the habit of local police of re-arresting former prisoners on trumped-up charges, came to Europe where he was eventually allowed to settle — in Iceland, the only country willing to give him a work permit. It is an horrific tale, but one not unfamiliar to anyone who has honest knowledge of this horrible regime.

"It is difficult to understand how the world community could so readily condemn South Africa's Human Rights abuses while keeping ominously silent when African leaders committed similar excesses on their own black subjects," writes Mwijage. "South Africa's minority whites refused to grant political rights to their black majority, and they were persistently denounced for that. But when Nyerere's sole ruling party, with less than three million members out of a population of twenty four million, outlawed all other political groups, that was just fine." The money continued to pour in, especially from Scandinavia, ensuring Nyerere's survival with all the brutality, corruption and oppression through which he ruled single-handedly, bringing his nation to its present position as one of the world's poorest, in spite of having received the highest amount of aid, per capita, of any country in the world. (In asking where the aid has gone, it is worth noting that when the British relinquished power in 1962 there were

five prisons; today there are more than one hundred.)

In the past, Nyerere has received considerable kudos as a result of his support for various "liberation" movements from South Africa, from Namibia and others still under Colonial rule. Mwijage points out, very forcibly, that this support was very selectively given, confined to those advocating ideologies similar to his own. Dissidents from these selected movements, for example from South Africa's ANC or from Namibia's SWAPO, received the same treatment as anyone daring to utter a word against Nyerere — imprisonment, torture, starvation, even death. And while allowing no glimmer of opposition to his own rule, Nyerere financed the overthrow of regimes not to his liking in the Seychelles and Comoros, even stationing Tanzanian troops there to maintain in power leaders who were not popular with their own people.

An aspect of the Nyerere doctrine which had particular appeal for the left and for his supporters in the Church, was that of 'self reliance'. Mwijage writes: "For a Government which for twenty years crooned Socialism and Self-reliance Nyerere's achievement was quite the opposite; dependence on imports and foreign aid. But Nyerere operated an efficient public relations machinery abroad, through which he projected himself as a respectable figure in international circles". One of the operators of this P.R. has been Bishop Trevor Huddleston, a friend and admirer of Nyerere and a man of the most disgraceful double standards. While vociferously exhorting the world from his various soap boxes to help free Mandela and others who had at least been tried in a public court, he flatly refused to help in the case of two Tanzanians of my acquaintance, imprisoned for many years — without trial — saying that if Nyerere regarded these men as enemies, naturally he must keep them in prison.

This book should be compulsory reading for all students studying African affairs and for the Linda Chalkers of the world, who have pumped so much of their tax payers' money in the direc-

tion of this awful man, without, apparently, requiring any accountability as to how it was being used. This money has been used, not for the benefit of the long-suffering people of Tanzania, but to finance the ten-house cells, the whole prison and 'security' apparatus and the abductions from countries where dissidents thought they were safe. Tanzania has often been cited as a 'stable' country, with a popular leader. Mwijage comments that "the all-embracing powers given to Nyerere under the 1962 Preventive Detention Act achieved their desired steadying effect, cowing any opposition and confining the finest political minds in a fortress of fear. Mass fear and docility enable regimes based on personal power to present themselves as enjoying popularity." Later he hopes that future historians will reassess Nyerere's role as respected statesman and conclude what ordinary Tanzanians already know, that "...the man is an undemocratic tyrant with no respect for human values, though he conned the world into believing otherwise. His contribution to the betterment of mankind has, by and large, been negative. But it won't readily be forgotten by those who suffered under his regime".

Would Trevor Huddleston like to comment?

Western intellectuals have for years peddled — and peddle still — the absurd idea that European wealth and African poverty are two sides of the same coin.

Anthony Daniels

Conservative in more ways than one

Derek Turner

The Fading of the Greens, Anna Bramwell, Yale University Press, 1994.

Despite the close etymological and philosophical connections between the concepts 'conservatism' and 'conservationism', few modern conservatives seem to have anything intelligent to say about ecological matters. Like so many other debates, this most important one about the protection of the natural world from overpopulation, overuse of finite resources and insensitive management is dominated by voices from the left, who use ecological arguments to attack Western values. Anna Bramwell is an undoubtedly dedicated ecologist (she is an environmental strategy administrator for the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development) who begs to differ from this cosy Third World-centric consensus. This in itself tells us that the present work is an important one.

Bramwell writes books which are elegant and compelling (or "perverse and dangerous", according to the *Guardian*), about the so-called 'Green' movement. Previous books have discussed the ecological policies of Hitler's Germany and the roots of the ecological movement. In *The Fading of the Greens* she analyses the reasons for the political failure of Green movements, especially in comparison to their metapolitical success. As she herself says:

... support for environmental causes has grown, and reached unprecedented levels; supporting such causes is politically respectable, yet at the same time has not been translated into 'normal' political behaviour. I have tried to explain this paradox.

The major reason for Green political failure is, of course, that many Green arguments have been co-opted by the major political parties, and are now

conjoined to all parties' programmes. Sagacious politicians know that the Green philosophy is a vote-winner, associated with all kinds of positive feelings, "satisfying as it does the wish for many in advanced societies for a set of beliefs which harmonise scientific thought, however flawed, with mystical resonances, some of almost primeval origin." (Andrew McHallam, *The New Authoritarians: Reflections on the Greens*, Alliance Publishers, London, 1991.) But there are other reasons for Green political failure, such as lack of political finesse and lack of resources and, crucially, the association, in many minds, of environmentalism with all that is worst about modernism — for Greens have made common cause with the various 'victim' lobbies presently engaged in trampling Western culture under their feet.

There are two kinds of ecologist, according to Bramwell: 'reform ecologists', willing to accept piecemeal reform, and work with industry and governments; and 'deep ecologists', who are fundamentalists and enthusiasts. The second sort of ecologist, perhaps inevitably, has predominated within the movement. This, Bramwell believes, is one of the reasons why the movement has not succeeded. Normal people are suspicious of the millenarian quasi-Buddhism and anti-Occidentalism of these deep ecologists, and would listen more attentively to their gloomy prognostications if only they did not come packaged with pacifism, veganism, open borders, unlimited 'rights' for everyone, androgyny, euthanasia, nose-rings and socialism. It has been shrewdly guessed that some ecologists' opposition to fox-hunting, for example, stems more from a secret

desire to do down the 'ruling class', whose values they learned in college to "like, yeh, *totally* reject" than from compassion for the fox. (After all, the ecological argument runs in favour of hunting with hounds, and not against it.)

Greens are consequently not taken seriously as thinkers, however much one may secretly admire their Luddite persistence or rue the sight of immemorial Twyford Down being torn by metal teeth. They emote, rather than think, about what are, in truth, things we should all think about: the redefinition of man's relationship with the rest of the animal kingdom (should it be 'stewardship' or 'partnership?'); the notion, or extent, of nature's 'rights' (Bramwell details the many contradictions of the Green world-view in this respect); the uses of technology (Bramwell reminds us that man's ingenuity will constantly find ways to compensate for dwindling natural resources); and property rights and land ownership, which raise the question of national, cultural or racial identity and viability (deep ecologists call nations 'bio-regions' or 'natural communities').

There are problems with reform ecology, too, for all its greater pragmatism. According to Bramwell, "Green programmes demand a powerful central authority to enforce them". It is not only conservatives who draw in their breath with a hiss when they hear this phraseology, but also businessmen, who fear ever more draconian environmental legislation, ever more governmental interference and ever-increasing compliance costs. Furthermore — and civil libertarians will share this concern — who is to be

this “powerful central authority”? What powers will it have, and who will regulate the regulators?

Reservations like these prevent wholehearted co-operation from business and people not in a hurry to lower Western living standards. Reform ecologists are also vague about exactly what sort of economies we should aim to create in the long term, or what exactly is meant by the “sustainable development”, to which governments are committing us. Bramwell discusses these important matters, and others, at length. “There are shades here of ‘Needs Further Research’”,

she finally declares.

But ecologists have raised issues which might otherwise not have been raised. For this, traditionalist Tories should be grateful — although some conservatives, for whom conservatism is entirely about money, and for whom the British landscape is merely a random agglomeration of agricultural units interspersed with sites suitable for industrial estates, will always sneer uncomprehendingly. Ecologists at least love the land, even if they sometimes discount or even despise the influence of man. The sort of conservative who, like Kingsley

Fairbridge, thinks of the landscape as something fundamentally mystical (and perhaps somewhat melancholy), can empathise with that Tory sentiment: “I went down on my hands and knees on the wet turf to see it closer and when I looked up I saw that all the field before me was carpeted with daisies. I rose and went forward among them as it were upon wings. This was the land of my fathers and now it was my land.” And traditional Tories should feel doubly grateful to Bramwell, whose cogent, conservative, conservationist *cri-de-coeur* has finally given them some intellectual ammunition.

War Crime Fiction

Peter Coleman

The Hand that Signed the Paper, Helen Demidenko, Allen and Unwin, Australia.

In the week when the first of the British war crimes trials began, a best-selling but ferociously contentious Australian novel purporting to explain these crimes and condemning these trials, won its third literary award, a Gold Medal presented by the Association for the Study of Australian literature.

The author is a young Queensland woman of Ukrainian descent and her story tells how another young Australian woman of Ukrainian descent discovers that her uncle is a war criminal, an SS killer at Treblinka, soon to be brought to trial. She wonders in the opening paragraph if Eichmann had a daughter and how she felt. Her theme — which becomes the resolution of her anguish — is the banality of evil. In the unspeakable Ukraine of Stalin’s famine and Hitler’s Holocaust, even your uncle and aunt and the man next door may become monsters of evil... with or without the help of good wages, smart

Nazi uniforms and unlimited vodka.

The best you can hope for is self-awareness. You cannot call it redemption. *After such knowledge, what forgiveness?* But to attempt to deal with this by court-room trials and punishments only deepens the cycle of hatred and revenge.

The novel won its first prize two years ago — a Vogel manuscript award created by a Danish migrant and bread franchiser in collaboration with Rupert Murdoch’s newspaper *The Australian*. The judges described it as big and brave with a momentous theme, and Allen and Unwin contracted to publish it.

There were some early rumblings. One of the Vogel judges advised Demidenko to think carefully about rewriting some passages which might otherwise be taken as condoning the viciously anti-semitic sentiments of the Ukrainian characters. The first editor of the book, a Jewish migrant

from South Africa, refused to handle it. But when it finally appeared in August last year the leading literary editors and critics applauded its courage, integrity, and ‘contextualising’ of the Famine and the Holocaust.

One or two noted a cool nihilism, a post-modernist indifference to free will and morality. The general view was that it was a remarkable work by a 22 year old of great promise who deserved encouragement.

It was only a few weeks ago, after it had won Australia’s most valued literary prizes — first the Miles Franklin Award and then the Gold Medal — that the hostile critics rallied.

The judges were fools, they said. The book is hateful, cowardly, pernicious, mean-spirited, and loathsome. O.J. Simpson’s lawyer, Professor Alan Dershowitz of Yale, visiting Sydney for a Jewish fund-raising appeal, declared that the ‘subtle goal’ of the book was to ensure that anti-semitic

Ukrainian murderers go unpunished.

For her part Helen Demidenko saw the whole campaign as the work of 'the Jewish lobby'. She went into hiding, blaming death threats. She has become, she says, an Australian Salman Rushdie. In the deepening controversy, the literary critics insist that they have no interest in the politics of the book and simply admire the author's style and range. They dismiss the political critics as philistines and bullies. The political commentators in turn ridicule the literary critics, if not the literary community in general, as naive and ignorant.

It is too easy, in this dialogue of the deaf, to say that both sides — 'political philistines' and 'arty fools' — are right about each other.

The political will win the argument this time. There is indeed a true literary talent at work in the book. Some of Demidenko's images of savage life in

Ukraine will linger in the memory — from streets strewn with the corpses of pot-bellied, fly blown children in Stalin's Famine to vodka-soaked machine gunners vomiting with self-abomination while butchering Jews at Babi Yar. The book will bring home to some younger readers, for the first time, the diabolic inhumanity of Stalinism and the Holocaust.

But there is also an affectlessness which often undermines the literary achievement as well as the hope of redemption. It is as if Demidenko's sense of the banality of evil has infected her own vision — as if sometimes she is saying: Oh yes, I agree killing people by the million is wrong, but what else is new? The truth is that no amount of 'contextualising' can 'explain' the Holocaust.

Demidenko is more successful in her polemic against war crime trials fifty years after the event. Her case is that

they either perpetuate hatred and divisiveness or create them where they never existed before. There is more to be said for and against the trials than this, although the divisiveness issue must be given its due weight. The novel's principal narrator pleads with her sister not to hate the Prime Minister ('the silver budgie Zionist, bloody Hawkie, Bob Hawke. Shit') for putting their uncle on trial: "My sister is starting to hate. My sister who has never hated anything."

The uncle dies before his trial can begin. But Australia finished with its war crime trials when the Polyukhovich case ended in Adelaide in 1993. After years of bitterness (and a cost of about £12 million) the jury's unanimous verdict was not guilty. Perhaps the most divisive consequence of the trial has been Helen Demidenko's *The Hand that Signed the Paper* and its prizes.

Love in the Afternoon

Martin Tyrrell

The Morning After: sex, fear and feminism, Katie Roiphe, Hamish-Hamilton, Harmondsworth, 1994

Almost everyone under forty can name a television programme that their parents stopped them from watching when they were children: *Peyton Place*, *Dr Who* or perhaps even *Benny Hill* but *The Brady Bunch*? Surely not. *The Brady Bunch* was that chirpiest of chirpy Sixties series. It featured three pre-teenaged boys, three pre-teenaged girls, their parents and a housekeeper called Alice. Where they lived was a kind of permanent, suburban California. There, crisis, when it threatened, was never larger than a ball game, a maths test, the school prom or some teeth braces. Always the Bradys, either singly or, more commonly, in bunch formation, swiftly saw it off. *Heartbreak High* it wasn't. Curiously,

this fluff was the show that Katie Roiphe's mother used to ban for fear her daughters, having watched it, would finish up as cheerleaders. And later, little Katie was sent to a single-sex school, the better to speak her mind unperturbed at what the boys might think. All this has served her well. The mind that Katie Roiphe speaks is very much her own and she leads a cheer for no-one, least of all that sour sisterhood of spleen, feminism.

There has been feminism of some sort since at least the late-1800's and Roiphe is not out of sorts with all of it. Hers, though, is a liberal Wollstonecraft feminism of individual freedom, not the more recent package of received ideas, paranoia and prejudice. It is for

this "women's movement" that she reserves her anger. These latter-day feminists — victims with a vengeance — are long on cliché, subtle of line, awash with contradiction. They first rechristened privilege "equal opportunities" and then went on to carve themselves a niche in higher education, journalism and the arts. Naomi Wolf, for instance, who claims that beauty is a myth when she herself has beauty to burn; Andrea Dworkin with her "vampire novel of male sexuality"; Germaine Greer, long ago her own worst parody; Catherine MacKinnon with her "monkey-see-monkey-do model of male behaviour". To Roiphe, these are the girls who never grew up. Nunnish. Wise to all

but the way of the world. Petra Pans who want life High School safe. They seek *The Brady Bunch* gone feminist.

Feminism has had its sceptics, most recently Neil Lyndon, Warren Farrell, David Thomas and Camille Paglia. None of these, however, managed books as good as *The Morning After*. Roiphe is writerly, not journalistic. Where others harangue, she crafts. Deftly, she recreates a world of timidity, suspicion and good times gone bad against which hers seems often the only voice. *The Morning After* is best where feminists have done their worst — the (North American) University. Here, uniquely, attempts have been made to instal a distinctly feminist order.

The result is a place of chaos in which even the most mild and innocent seeming actions can have the most unintended and damaging of consequences. An environment where it is considered voyeuristic for a male professor to show any interest in a debate between two female students and prurient for a male tutor to empathise with Yeats' infatuation with Maud Gonne. Here, all manner of grotesques — feminists in rags, feminists in *haute couture*, male feminists — loom large, like Red Guards enforcing the political correctness of some nineties cultural revolution. This is a new order in which white, middle-class heterosexual men — the new Learned Elders of Zion — will have little or no place. This is where post-modernism and post-structuralism — those philosophies for the post-cognitive — hold sway, their various bits of jargon ever on or falling over the edge of intelligibility. In this world, there is a living to be had as a career feminist holding forth on the “hybridisation of the post-colonial female discourse”, “the inside of the outsider's insiderness” and similar Jabberwocky. This is the place where locker room graffiti that once advised “Make love not war” now recommend that “Sex is death” and “Sex is rape”.

It is not that sexual behaviour itself has changed, claims Roiphe. What has altered is the way in which that behaviour is now interpreted. Rape, like beauty, is, today, in the eye of the

beholder. This is worrying when that beholder is a university official or some politically *engagé* researcher, some of whom would dismiss as naive the idea that a woman can ever truly consent to sex with a man. So ubiquitous is the patriarchal “rape culture”, they argue, that almost any heterosexual encounter is a violation. It is through sophistry like this that feminism, having made beauty a myth, is making rape an epidemic — the “rape crisis”.

Call this “relativism” or simply “loose interpretation”, a climate of fear and loathing on campus is its most obvious consequence. Fear most of all. In *The Morning After* we learn how, these days, some male tutors are careful to leave their doors ajar when discussing a female student's work. The university has become a place where “... imaginations run wild, charges can seem to materialise out of thin air, and both faculty and students worry about a friendly lunch”.

Some universities have adopted the “blue light” system with said lights signalling to rape victims the whereabouts of the nearest emergency phone. At Princeton, says Roiphe, there are seventy such phones each with its own blue bulb. Seventy phones, the function of which is largely symbolic. Princeton is as safe as milk. These are paranoid times. She writes:

Looking down from Fine Tower ... the campus is dramatically dotted with glowing blue lights. They are eerie, beautiful, like fireflies. They signal reassurance and warning at the same time. Red means stop, green means go and blue means be afraid.

Anxious freshmen at Princeton and elsewhere are now briefed exhaustively on the dangers of date rape via information films and widely distributed pamphlets which tell of *The Lecherous Professor* or ask, rhetorically, *Is Dating Dangerous?* and *Could It Happen to You?*. Typically, these mix melodrama and demonology in equal portion. The girls are all Clarissa, the men, Lovelace. The “plots” of these booklets — boy meets girl, boy rapes girl, boy claims that girl consented, girl takes boy to court, boy is acquitted and girl gets into feminism — are recycled in the juvenilia of campus

authoresses.

Most menacing of all is the “Take Back the Night” march. If the rape crisis is an article of faith and campus feminism a kind of cult, then this bit of candle-lit rowdying is its principal ceremony; the marchers, its congregation; its liturgy, the testimonies of those who have been victims and survived. Such is the celebrity that survival confers that some will go to any lengths to appear as erstwhile victims. Many exaggerate, a few fabricate. It is a species of embellishment relatively free of penalty. In the eyes of some campus feminists, in fact even lies and defamation are merely “fictions in the service of a political truth”.

For fictions of a different sort, read Catherine MacKinnon, the high priestess of rape crisis. A particularly vivid description of this dreadful woman is one of the highlights of *The Morning After*. From Roiphe's account, MacKinnon's philosophy seems a take on the kind of relativism that reduces each of us to “gender”-specific roles within a context of patriarchal conditioning or, if you prefer, hands of cards dealt from the same, sexist pack. Accept this kind of thinking, and you can forget the Enlightenment — that sad old patriarchal wheeze — and all its whimsies: choice, free speech and selfhood. Have the MacKinnon experience and, if you've mind enough, you too will get to see that sex is rape and freedom, not doing what you choose, but doing what you're told. “MacKinnon's is a sophisticated political version of the classic grandparent's line: you don't know what is good for you”. Feminism, like many collectivist ideologies, boils down, in practice to a blueprint for one specific individual's empowerment. MacKinnon is, indeed, a high-priestess. Check in your wits and give her praise.

The Poor Mouth, Flann O'Brien's satire of last century's Irish language revival, has an urbane revivalist tell a gathering of starving native speakers that, not only does he speak Irish, Irish is the only thing of which he ever speaks. The *Katheder* Feminism of today is a similar sort of obsession. Professional women, women for whom

being a woman is virtually a career, are its mainstay whilst on-campus agitprop is its principal medium, well ahead of the drudgery of journals and seminars. But, if the university is its province then its dominance there has been such that it is unlikely that it will be permitted to be as dominant elsewhere. In the end, in fact, its importance signals

only the relative decline of learning in the West, a decline that has made a degree in the liberal arts the intellectual equivalent of a banknote from the Weimar Republic. It has no other importance. The high standing of the likes of Catherine MacKinnon and Andrea Dworkin among college students is, ultimately, of no greater sig-

nificance than that of Chairman Mao in the 1960's or that of Josef Stalin in the 1930's. I expect it to be as short-lived. Feminism has become a fad of the disaffected. Certainly, nothing of note has or ever will come of it. All the same, *The Morning After* indicates that something worthwhile can be produced in opposition.

The Decadence of American Entertainment

John Leake

Pulp Fiction, Quentin Tarantino.

The two main contenders at this year's recent Academy Awards ceremony were the films *Forrest Gump* and *Pulp Fiction*. Between the two films, the American movie audience was offered the full range of cheap entertainment. The grossly sentimental *Forrest Gump* gave Americans the opportunity to indulge their most shallow feelings of pathos, and the violent and perverse *Pulp Fiction* gave them the opportunity to gratify their darkest fantasies. In the end, sentimentality won the contest and a heap of laurels was bestowed on *Gump*. But *Pulp Fiction* was nominated for several awards and won that for Best Original Screenplay. It also received the most critical attention of any American film this year. Sentimentality has always been a key ingredient in the Hollywood entertainment recipe, so *Forrest Gump* is nothing new. But *Pulp Fiction* is widely regarded as possessing original artistic value and therefore warrants a little scrutiny.

There was great excitement among the young adult generation last fall when *Pulp Fiction*, the latest film by Quentin Tarantino, opened in the theatres. Tarantino created a new sensation in popular culture with his 1992

film *Reservoir Dogs*, a movie full of stylistic quirks, with scenes of intimate conversation among highly articulate gangsters, a chronologically disordered sequence of events, and extremely lifelike violence. *Reservoir Dogs* was at first a cult phenomenon, but like all "alternative" artefacts of popular culture, the sensation it created soon spread and the movie is now a favourite on college campuses. The guy "who learned about movies by working in a video store" became a model director, and with the release of *Pulp Fiction*, which won best picture at Cannes in addition to being an enormous commercial success, Tarantino is now America's most popular contemporary filmmaker. It seems that every young American (with a few exceptions) loves *Pulp Fiction*.

Seeing *Pulp Fiction* reminded me of Andre Agassi's famous aphorism "image is everything". Tarantino is like a sorcerer with a camera and editing equipment, and the theatre is like a Platonic cave in which we sit, reveling in the violent fantasy the sorcerer projects for us on the wall. We are so fascinated by the speed and rhythm of the dialogue, so stimulated by the jazzy, erotic music, and so dazzled by the

nauseating gorgeousness of the moving images, that most of us fail to realize the movie has no real drama and no real characters. *Pulp Fiction* is not a story, but a series of photographed scenes in which actors talk to, scream at, eat with, beat up, torture, rape, and kill one another. Tarantino has arranged the scenes in such a way, and has given each scene enough fast talk, bizarreness, and violence, that he is able to hold our fascination throughout the entire film. Yet none of these scenes is part of a coherent narrative.

Most contemporary film-makers have disregarded the Aristotelian model of drama with a beginning, a middle, and an end. Scriptwriters can rely on photography and editing — the manipulation of chronology, the insertion of scenes of sex, violence, and sentimental exchanges — to distract the audience from recognizing the absence of a well-structured plot. Hence, the majority of films could never be performed on stage. Tarantino has taken this use of photography and editing to a new extreme. He is particularly skilled at creating shock and surprise by manipulating the chronology of events. *Pulp Fiction* is a series of vignettes, each of which has charac-

ters that bear some relation to the characters of the other vignettes, and some characters play a role in all of them. The audience is aware that the vignettes could not all have happened at the same time, but the actual chronology is not immediately clear. Tarantino has ordered the sequence of the vignettes according to how they will shock and surprise the viewer rather than how they occur in time. If the events of the film were arranged according to their chronology, the viewer would plainly see the absence of any drama and the film would lose its entire effect. By disordering the chronology, Tarantino liberates the film from the constraints of time, pushing his audience further away from reality and into the realm of fantasy.

Corresponding to the absence of real drama is the absence of any real characters. The entire film takes place in a moral vacuum, with every character thoroughly corrupt. With the exception of an unconvincing scene where Jules finds redemption, nobody's soul is at stake. Their moral and spiritual condition was predetermined long before we are introduced to them. And we are given no clue as to why everyone is so bad. Perhaps Tarantino is a puritan at heart, who believes in the innate depravity of man.

The main players of the film are violent criminals constantly engaged in bantering wordplay. None of them is developed, but each is badly presented with all of his rhetorical ability, ugliness, and criminality on the immediate surface. They are like a bad pop song that presents its entire musical content in the first few seconds of play, and then repeats itself until the end. When Vincent Vega (an assassin played by John Travolta) makes philosophical statements about the world, or reads the libretto of *Madame Butterfly*, we are not being shown another, more civilized side of his nature, but are rather being given a dose of Tarantino's extremely artificial irony. Vincent Vega and his even more eloquent partner Jules (played by Samuel L. Jackson) are not real characters, but vehicles of action and utterance for the creation of Tarantino's fantasy.

Because *Pulp Fiction* is essentially

an adolescent male fantasy, the female characters are stereotyped. They are the "bitches" that men talk dirty about, who scream and get hysterical when men get violent. The main female character is Mia Wallace (played by Uma Thurman), a failed TV actress and Louise Brooks look-alike. She is a degraded idol (the kind described by Baudelaire), a white "bitch" who paints her face and decks herself out to be worshipped by men, especially by her black husband, the brutal gangster boss, Marcellus Wallace.

Tarantino makes his greatest effort at moral commentary in the vignette where Vincent Vega takes Mia out "to keep her company" while Marcellus is out of town. This vignette is a catalogue of images documenting the moral and spiritual barrenness of life in Los Angeles. The most subtle are of Marcellus's house, a posh L.A. "crib" purchased with gangster money. The camera focuses on the stereo, the intercom system, and the bar. The most notable decorations are the bouquets of white lilies (more irony) and the African statuary, a cynical commentary on the hollowness of the new 'multiculturalism'.

Vince and Mia eat dinner at Jack Rabbit Slims, a restaurant where they sit in a '57 Chevy booth and are served by a Buddy Holly impersonator. Over dinner Mia tells Vincent about her fifteen minutes of fame on a mindless television pilot show. *Pulp Fiction* is full of these depictions of the decadent fantasies, the idolatrousness, the shallowness, and the banality of modern American culture. At least a fourth of the dialogue is talk about food. L.A. is depicted as an appallingly shabby place of sordid apartment buildings and motel rooms, cheap bars, and dumpier diners. The only amusements are drugs, sex, pop music, television, and cars. The film makes a mockery of the idea of exalted feeling and heroism. When a boxer named Butch (played by Bruce Willis) risks his life to retrieve a gold watch his father gave him, what could be a heroic endeavour is made into a ridiculous farce, as we are told that Butch's father hid the watch up his ass for five years in a Vietnam p.o.w. camp. The gold watch vignette

is very clever — it makes us laugh at war, history, and paternal heritage.

Pulp Fiction is more striking for its incredibly lifelike scenes of violence. American cinema has been gory for several years now, but no director, not even Scorsese, has come close to giving the audience such an intimate view of violence. The scene where Jules and Vincent make a hit on some college boys is fantastically sadistic. In addition to the terror and cruelty, the film is full of obscene images. The close up shots of Vince shooting heroin, with the glittering syringe, the needle piercing the skin, and the cloud of blood flowing into the reservoir of yellowish liquid and then being pushed back into the vein, fills the viewer with nausea. The scene where Vince gives the overdosed Mia an adrenaline shot in the heart is so excessively sensational it makes one wonder why the film hasn't been consigned to the theatres on 42nd and 8th Street. Scarcely ten minutes of the film elapses without someone being shot, beat up, hit by a car, or in some way abused. And the brutality of the action is matched by the brutality of the language. The most common prop in the film is the firearm, and several people, including Vincent Vega, are shot at point blank range. In the most gratuitous scene of all, Vincent accidentally shoots a boy in the face. The boy's head explodes (in an exaggerated fashion) all over the back seat of the car, with blood and fragments of brain and skull splatting all over Vince and Jules. Jules and Vince feel no remorse for the boy, but engage in more bantering argument over what to do with the mess. And the audience is so swept up in the action and comical fast talk, that it never stops to think about the real horror of the incident.

Pulp Fiction is a nihilistic fantasy, and man is the "pulp" of the title, "a soft, moist mass" that eats, shits, pisses, and screams. Man is the sum total of the fast food he eats and the chemicals he shoots into his veins and snorts up his nose. If you fire a bullet into it, the pulp that is man explodes and is then nothing but garbage. As Wolf says in reference to the boy's exploded head in the back seat of the car, "take those rags and cleansers and sop that shit up." We, the

audience, are drawn into the fantasy, and we are amused, fascinated, and horrified in turns. The images, fast talk, and music flood the mind of the viewer with sensations, and he ceases to think about the reality of the world that exists outside the theatre.

For the viewer of *Pulp Fiction* no act of imagination is required. A perfect simulacrum of human bodies doing unspeakable things to one another flashes before his eyes, leaving nothing to his imagination. The failure to engage the imagination is the greatest

fault of the film. True art must lift the viewer's mind out of the trivial details of life, and focus our attention on a picture of the true meaning of life. Acts of imagination, unlike fantasy gratification, bring us closer to reality. Greek tragedians believed that acts of violence should never be performed on stage because the sensation of seeing the violence would distract the audience from grasping the true significance of the drama. As we are passively stimulated by the images of *Pulp Fiction*, we lose sight of the reality and

significance of violent crime. The destruction and violation of human life ceases to have any meaning. By stimulating us with the dazzling images of man's corruption, Tarantino obscures the true meaning of man's corruption. With his cheap fantasy, he only succeeds in corrupting the true ends of art. *Pulp Fiction* is therefore the most decadent kind of entertainment. It is essentially a sophisticated M.T.V. video, and appeals to the most base and untutored part of the human psyche.

The Heavy Foot of Evil

Geoffrey Vaughan

The Falsification of the Good, Alain Besançon, The Claridge Press, 1994. £7.95

"Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it." Job 1:7.

Alain Besançon points out two well-worn footpaths. In comparing the *Three Discussions* of Vladimir Soloviev and *1984* of George Orwell, he offers his readers two very different but penetrating accounts of evil. Besançon justifies this unusual comparison with two sentences: "Soloviev was a theologian by taste, almost by profession. Orwell was one despite himself, reluctantly, but no less so than Soloviev, at least in *1984*." Any reader should be convinced of the moral significance of these two authors by the end of the book and grateful to Besançon for having made the comparison.

Besançon calls Soloviev and Orwell theologians, and this is true. But, to overcome our strict divisions between studies, he would lose nothing in his argument to call them politico-theologians since, for each of them, evil takes a political form. In Soloviev's work the Anti-Christ establishes a universal

state, with himself at the head; the tyranny of Orwell's Big Brother is already well known. Neither author thinks evil attacks one man at a time and rests satisfied with each small victory. They both see that evil has as its goal the complete corruption of mankind and that this corruption must take a political form.

Why would they think this? Do Soloviev and Orwell condemn all political life? Do they recommend a retreat from politics to some inviolable and private realm? Besançon responds to the first question and answers no to the other two in his conclusion. "There is one piece of common ground," he writes, "between this Englishman and this Russian: an instinctive mistrust of 'spiritualism', as something which misleads mankind away from what it could reasonably expect. Soloviev and Orwell aspired towards a return to reality, which could only be found by renouncing the sublime and by humbly considering what we had actually done and what we could actually do." The world of politics, the world of

reality as long as man is man, is where evil acts and it is also where evil is fought. Soloviev and Orwell do not run from this fight, though neither expect to win. But they do fight and, perhaps more importantly, they tell us where the battle is taking place. It is in the realm of politics, the realm accessible to man as man. There, moral problems are most important and far reaching.

There are two striking features about the presentation of Besançon's argument. The first is its prose, for which we must thank in large part the abilities of the translator, Matthew Screech. The second and, I believe, not unrelated feature is the lack of ponderous footnotes and weighty secondary literature. Evil and what two thoughtful men wrote about it dominate the book. Petty scholarly disputes are of no concern. We get from Besançon exactly what we want from him: the insights of his work and not the bickering of others. As a result, the book is not only readable, it is worthwhile. Yet this virtue may be the book's downfall, not in the mind of the thoughtful reader

who wants to learn what he can, but on account of the scholar who insists on an internal debate with his colleagues. Besançon does not take up this debate; rather, he offers us the opportunity to consider with him two attempts to confront evil.

These comments on the style of presentation chosen by Besançon are not an afterthought, nor are they a quibble. He expresses his understanding of his authors and their subject of evil in the world by how he writes as well as by what he writes. By avoiding scholarly debates of stylistic influence; by avoiding reference to every other commentary on these authors; by avoiding the

jargon of literary criticism and textual surveys, Besançon writes his book in harmony with his topic, the human being's confrontation with evil. That confrontation has no footnotes. We do not resist temptation by cross-referencing to other attempts. We resist by exposing it. *Contradictur* rings out against the Anti-Christ in Soloviev's story, so it does in Besançon's book, and so it should in our own lives.

Besançon leads anyone involved in academia to reflect on what scholarship is and should be. His study of Soloviev and Orwell could be cited with profit by anyone working on these

authors, likewise for anyone working on the problem of evil. But does this do an injustice to his work? Does it undermine his attempt to keep the insights of Soloviev and Orwell in the accessible realm where they were placed by the authors first and then by Besançon? Perhaps there is little need to worry. Anyone who would refer to this book has probably gained by reading it and, I truly believe, satisfied its author. Nevertheless, it is unfortunate that Alain Besançon will most certainly not get the respect or attention he deserves in the very political realm in which he forces us to look.

As It Really Happened (Or Not)

Helen Szamuely

Age of Extremes, the Short Twentieth Century, Eric Hobsbawm, Michael Joseph, 1994.

Lenin: Life and Legacy, Dimitri Volkogonov, tr. ed. Harry Shukman, Harper Collins, 1994.

Has the time come for an analysis of the twentieth century, so hopeful at its start, so despairing at its finish? Professor Hobsbawm and General Volkogonov both try to analyze and explain what went wrong. Though their conclusions could not be more different, once upon a time they started from similar intellectual positions: both were Marxists and ideologically committed Communists. But while Volkogonov's researches, first into Stalin's life, then Trotsky's and Lenin's have propelled him to a view that Russia, and, indeed, the world were doomed as soon as the Bolsheviks came to power, Professor Hobsbawm remains comfortably ensconced in his Communist world-view. Interviewed after the appearance of *The Age of Extremes*, he shocked many by pronouncing that even if he had known about Stalin's crimes, he would have been supportive. This is not so very outrageous, in fact, but precisely what one would expect from a life-long Communist.

As Hobsbawm himself points out in his book, one of the crucial factors in the "short" Twentieth Century has been the existence of the devoted revolutionary élite, more devoted to power than revolution, but characterized by the undying, unthinking loyalty of its members. For the most part this élite was called the Communist Party. Nevertheless, the statement is puzzling. Two questions spring to mind. How could a man of Professor Hobsbawm's undoubted knowledge, intelligence and curiosity not have known for so many years about Soviet reality, which must have been of some importance to him? Secondly, and more crucially, *what* would he have supported even if he had known the truth? There is a suggestion here that Stalin's brutality could somehow be separated from Stalin's system. Convenient but untrue. The Soviet system from its very inception (General Volkogonov provides documents in *Lenin: Life and Legacy* to support this far from eccentric view)

presupposed a murderous crusade against anything and anyone it could not control. Stalin went even further: he murdered those he could control. The question is this: does Professor Hobsbawm support this crusade or does he still prefer to think of it as probably necessary, certainly regrettable, but not of essential concern in the assessment of communism? *The Age of Extremes* gives an ambiguous answer.

Of the two books Hobsbawm's is considerably better from a literary point of view. It is well-written, erudite, witty, with a spicy addition of slang, particularly American, as befits a known lover of jazz. Volkogonov is determined to prove his point by detailed knowledge, but also by repetition and dogmatic bombast. He is not really a good writer. In fact, thanks to Harry Shukman's translation and skilful editing the English version reads much better than the Russian. Yet it is Hobsbawm's book that made this reader yawn, while Volkogonov's turgid prose appeared

spell-binding. For it is Volkogonov who produces new information and seems audacious in his judgement. With all its superficial attractiveness and impressive sweep, taking one through obscure political movements and acute analysis of the astonishing change that consumer goods have brought to people, *The Age of Extremes* promotes general views that we have heard over and over again. The First World War was caused by capitalist rivalry, the slump by the free market, socialism in some form or another as the true salvation, fascism as counter-revolutionary and its unfortunate appearance as capitalism's last effort to defeat socialism, and so on. It seems incredible that an historian should ignore or deny the essential similarities between fascism (especially Nazism) and communism, but Hobsbawm manages it.

Hobsbawm characterizes the Twentieth Century as a battle between capitalism and socialism, in which capitalism saved itself by imitating socialism, and socialism, though apparently stronger and better, collapsed or, at least, became discredited. He seems too certain of the full and final demise of the Soviet system, and his mourning for it is almost indecent. The century, he thinks, is ending badly, catastrophically so, not because, as Volkogonov might have told him, of the powerful poison Leninism injected, but because, apparently, an antidote has been found. The consequences of the Soviet collapse are certainly not yet fully calculable, but it is hardly fair to say that most of them are negative.

It is not that Professor Hobsbawm is wrong or dishonest, but that he ignores so much. I have already mentioned his correct estimate of the importance of the party and party mentality in the politics of this century. (He is, after all, a prime example.) But it remains uncertain what this organized, dedicated élite is for.

Let us look at two political issues. It is Hobsbawm's contention, and this cannot be denied, that both world wars, or both parts of one war, ended in revolutions, the first in the all-important Bolshevik revolution of 1917, the second in revolutions all over the world,

inspired to some extent by the former. What he does not explain is that this second wave of revolution was also not simply inspired but actively promoted and financed by various branches of the Soviet Communist Party. Volkogonov gives extraordinary details of large sums being squandered in the early twenties on foreign adventures, while Russia starved. In the late forties a number of Communist parties did come to power. Despite Hobsbawm's learned discourse on various guerrilla movements (does he know that a guerrilla war against the Soviet régime was fought for ten years after 1945 in the Ukraine and the Baltic states?) this development had more to do with the presence of the Red Army than the presence of Communists among the resistance fighters. Hobsbawm does not deny this, but nor does he exactly admit it. He writes vaguely of the advantage of having connections with the Communist Party and the Soviet Union, leaving the reader to think that the Communists' power was in some way rooted in the support of the people. He enumerates the urban uprisings at the end of the Second World War: Paris 1944, Milan 1945, Warsaw 1944. The last, he says, failed, because unlike the others it was premature. All the uprisings relied on that the Allies driving the German armies back. Unfortunately for the Poles, one ally had an agenda of its own. The Soviet Army stopped and watched the uprising being put down and Warsaw destroyed, only to move in later, bringing a Polish government of its own choice in its baggage wagon.

Professor Hobsbawm rapidly analyses collectivization — possibly the greatest disaster to have hit various parts of the world (some, just as they were supposedly experiencing the golden age that preceded the collapse of socialism). He does not ignore it, he simply skates over it. The structure of the book is such that he can talk about collectivization in the Third World before going back to the original one, in which Stalin brutally destroyed the peasantry. The connection and similarities are therefore easily lost. Hobsbawm mentions that the policy was not popular, had to be enforced and, by a strange quirk, was always followed

by a famine. We get nothing so vulgar as an estimate of the victims — although a paragraph is devoted to showing that Soviet agriculture never managed to match the productivity of Russia's peasant economy, let alone to fulfill its true potential. The bread basket of Europe, one might say, has become the basket case of the world. But what are we to make of this conclusion: "In short the USSR exchanged an inefficient peasant agriculture for an inefficient collective agriculture at vast cost"? The logic is not quite impeccable.

It is clear why Volkogonov wrote *Lenin: Life and Legacy*. His trilogy: *Stalin, Trotsky, Lenin* is a revisionist version of what happened in the Soviet Union. His aim is to tell his countrymen how, why and by whom their country was destroyed. Unexpectedly, there are strong notes of self-criticism and some western historians could learn from that. Whether, as one might expect from an experienced military and intelligence strategist, he had another aim as well, it is hard to tell. The mere fact that a book like *Lenin* can be published in Russia is, *pace* Professor Hobsbawm, a positive effect of the Soviet collapse. But perhaps Hobsbawm does not want a well-documented book like this to be published anywhere. He is certainly happy enough to talk about "cold war mythologies" and Western propaganda. What is his eminently well-written, seductive tome but a species of successful (judging by the sales) propaganda? Professor Hobsbawm engagingly admits that he is not an expert on the Twentieth Century. Why write a book on it, then, apart from the usual Johnsonian reasons? Could Professor Hobsbawm, our most talented Marxist historian, be trying to stem the tide of well-documented books from Russia and the West that can no longer be dismissed as cold war propaganda? Could he be trying desperately to preserve the world view that he and his like have imposed on a gullible public, in which the left is always right and the Soviet Union is never as bad as it is painted? Our best hope for the next century is to discard that heavy left luggage, accept the truth and admit that eminent historians do not necessarily tell it exactly as it is.

The Academy Terrorised

Gerald Russello

Dictatorship of Virtue, Multiculturalism and the Battle for America's future, Richard Bernstein, Knopf, \$25.

This book, written by the former Paris Bureau Chief of the New York Times is an anecdotal look at the wide variety of absurdities, oddities and occasionally dangerous attempts at thought control loosely collected under the rhetorical umbrella of "multiculturalism". Bernstein documents, through a series of case studies, the near-complete domination of American cultural institutions — the media, the universities and think tanks — by the adherents of a bitter and oppressive ideology. Borrowing his title from Robespierre, Bernstein equates the multicultural movement in America with the Committee of Public Safety and the Terror, using the French academic term *déravage* meaning the "slide" from republicanism to totalitarianism in France from 1789 to 1793 — to describe the descent from what he sees as the wholesome aims of the civil-rights movement to the multicultural movement, which he claims is political ambition disguised as tolerance and diversity.

Dictatorship of Virtue has been discussed widely in the United States and generally praised by conservatives, who seem to have ignored Bernstein's approval of the "good" French Revolution, an event of considerable concern to conservatives since the days of Burke. Indeed, Bernstein says that the civil rights movement, "one of the most profound and truly liberating social upheavals of all of history," is linked in spirit to the events of France in 1789, and he firmly allies himself with those forces in American life that, during the tumultuous 1960's, gave birth to the modern conception of American pluralism. Some observers have pointed out that Bernstein,

Harvard educated and an employee of a significant entity in the liberal firmament, is in fact a part of the ideology he attacks so skilfully. His thesis, that multiculturalism has a stranglehold on the national life, is seriously weakened once one asks the question: if the New York Times allows its reporters to savage ideas it allegedly upholds, how strong can multiculturalism be?

The answer is: "very strong indeed", but not for the reasons Bernstein identifies. While Bernstein does a good job of showing how the manifestations of the ideology of diversity, such as the mandatory "sensitivity" training, the abuse of reason for narrow political ends and the purposeful blindness to the realities of history (and, in the case of some feminists, of biology), are a departure from traditional, American culture, he says very little in the way of defining what that culture is. In other words, he states very clearly that multiculturalism is a revolt, but does not tell us from what it is revolting.

Despite this weakness, the book has many strengths. Bernstein has divided *Dictatorship of Virtue* into three main sections, "Diversity", "Reasons," and "Battlegrounds". Each section collects stories from around the United States detailing the pernicious outgrowths of the new ideology. It is here that Bernstein is at his best, for he is an excellent journalist, and while conservatives — who have a professional interest in publicizing these stories — will be familiar with some of the more notorious instances, Bernstein's position guarantees them a larger audience. He uses examples drawn from the media, industry and the universities and he profiles the sophists and calculators who fill the ranks of the

new professions: diversity consultants and sensitivity trainers.

Most of the stories Bernstein recounts are clear evidence of decay in the national life. For example, Bernstein details the story of former University of Texas Professor Alan Gribben, who was literally made an outcast on his former campus. Professor Gribben had the courage to stand up to another professor's attempts to convert a college writing requirement into a tool of political indoctrination and was subject to a campaign of vilification so brutal that he left Texas for another institution. The manner in which members of this supposedly learned and civil profession treated their colleague is a paradigm of the new orthodoxy Bernstein has exposed so thoroughly.

Such stories of abuse toward those who do not hold the party line abound in American academic life these days, and not only at the faculty level. One student, in a training programme for resident assistants of undergraduate dormitories at Cornell University in New York, was denied permission to attend religious services and was instead forced to sit through a homosexual pornographic movie — in the name of sensitivity. Bernstein remains hopeful, due to some recent success stories, such as the victories of parents in Brookline, Massachusetts and in New York City in defeating multicultural initiatives in the public schools. These accounts prove to Bernstein that the battles are not yet over.

Bernstein defines American culture in the broadest terms, and his America seems to be made up of a combination of 1960's liberalism and the belief that the United States is a place that re-

wards hard work with material benefits. Both components serve to undermine the Bernstein thesis that multiculturalism is an irrational and unjustified outgrowth of 1960s tolerance and is ultimately at odds with American values.

First, as philosophers such as Alasdair MacIntyre have noted, the tolerance of the Enlightenment — of which Bernstein's American version is a descendant — leads to nihilism, in a belief that nothing matters. Traditional American tolerance is a negative value — you leave me alone and I will let you alone. The liberal generation has tried to make it a positive value: we will all be forced (by the state) to interact together. This has caused a power struggle, and in typical American fashion each side accuses the other of being "un-American"; in this context, terms like "diversity" become ideological covers. These conflicts have become increasingly bitter as the national government expands its reach into the most private areas of life, another effect of Bernstein's be-

loved 1960s. Bernstein makes the political point, but neglects to explore the logical connections.

The second point is more telling. In his discussions about how the multiculturalists in fact know nothing about the minority groups in America they are ostensibly supporting, Bernstein notes that many of these immigrants realize that their traditional religious and cultural values are likely to disappear in the next generation. The idea of America as a cultural solvent is not given full treatment by Bernstein, and he never explains what replaces these traditional values. It is not illogical to see that the 1960s zeal to strip away all outer restraints of family, neighbourhood and church leaves individuals susceptible to the rhetoric of the multiculturalists, who promise them a new identity and political influence.

If however, we are left with the "American" values of the marketplace, we find another fact Bernstein accepts but does not examine: multiculturalism is profitable. Diversity consultants and

Third-World Studies professors make a good living and the market — having no values itself — quickly and easily assumes whatever is popular at the moment. What is popular now are textbooks falsifying history and incoherent monographs mumbling the mantras of post-modernism. University presidents these days are corporate Chief Executive Officers and the customers are their students. If the customers want more feminist studies and less Shakespeare, why not? Culture becomes packageable and endlessly replicated: as David Rieff of *Harper's* has stated, "if the point of art is not greatness but the production of works of art that reflect the culture and aspirations [of various minority groups] within a society, then one is in a position to increase supply almost at will to meet increases in demand." This connection between capitalism and multiculturalism has been ignored by commentators on both the right and the left.

Victorian Lessons

Merrie Cave

The De-Moralization of Society: From Victorian Virtues to Modern Values, Gertrude Himmelfarb, Institute of Economic Affairs, 1995, £12.50

"Be virtuous", said Mark Twain, "and you will be eccentric". The Victorians were unapologetic moralists, not embarrassed at being 'judgemental.' In this model of accessible scholarship Professor Himmelfarb notes the contemporary substitution of the insipid word 'values' for the robust language of virtue and vice. Nietzsche changed the word 'values' deliberately in order to reject both classical virtues and Judaeo-Christian morality. The death of God meant the death of any moral order; henceforward there would be only values. The sixties hedonists learnt

his lesson well.

An anecdote about John Wesley neatly illustrates the Victorian achievement in civilising humanity. In 1747 and 1748 John Wesley had preached at Rossendale, in the first year to 'a large congregation of wild men' and in the second to 'a mob savage as wild beasts, who, undeterred by the authorities, proceed to every extremity of persecution, short of murder.' When William Gladstone opened a public park in the same district in 1864 he commented: "It is not too much to say a moral transformation has passed over the

district".

Professor Himmelfarb provides a comprehensive account of social mores in late Victorian England, such as family, the relationship between men and women, feminism and attitudes towards poverty. She effectively demolishes the myths (from sexual repression to Lady Bountiful, which have fed the glib pronouncements of superficial politicians about our ancestors. As she shows, the high Victorian age embodied all that was best in the English Puritan tradition. Darwin's attack on the Christian faith did not extin-

guish its moral force; man's moral obligation remained what it always had been, "to do his duty". Indeed humanitarianism became a substitute religion. The chamber music concerts (1877) at South Place, London, were timed at 6.30 by the South Place Ethical Society to tempt people away from church, but not to seduce them into sin

Manners were inextricably entwined with morals, and the idea of the gentleman was common to all classes: "I can make a lord but only God Almighty can make a gentleman". The Victorians took James I's exclamation very much to heart, for the working class culture did not differ from that of the middle class. Work, self-help, obedience, order and cleanliness were virtues to which everyone aspired. A gentleman treated his wife and children kindly, neither got into debt nor drank his money away.

The family, in this era, achieved an esteem it has not enjoyed before or since, triumphantly disproving Marx. When, after the Industrial Revolution, the family ceased to be an economic unit, the home became a refuge from the pressures of the wicked world. French observers like Taine marvelled at the respect in which marriage was held: arranged marriages were much less common in Britain than on the continent. There was little reference to infidelity; St John's Wood and the Seven Dials were the exception not the rule in later Victorian England.

Towards the end of the century middle class women engaged in philanthropic causes outside the home. Many of them were feminists; however, they were not rebels but reformers and always thought for themselves. Beatrice Webb and Octavia Hill were against the women's suffrage movement and today's career women might well ponder Webb's comment: "Surely it is enough to have half the human race striving every nerve to outrun their fellows in the race for subsistence or power. Surely we need some human beings who will watch and pray and who will guard and love all who are weak, unfit or distressed". Her sympathetic account of East End Jewry was full of admiration for its capitalist in-

stincts and superior moral character. Unfortunately she forgot her appreciation of self-help when she met Sydney in 1904: "At last I am a Socialist".

Himmelfarb puts the New Poor Law (1834) into perspective dispelling the myths spread by Dickens and TV documentaries. Of course the law was harsh, but it succeeded in providing minimal relief without encouraging the pauper to prolong his dependence. Moreover outdoor relief still continued and the choice was not always between work, workhouse or starvation. The system remained in force with a few changes until 1948. De Tocqueville was astonished to discover in 1833 that a sixth of the "inhabitants of this flourishing kingdom live at the expense of public charity". He thought that public relief demeaned the pauper, depressed the economy and when the money went short might provoke a "violent revolution". For Speenhamland, (outdoor relief) read the modern Welfare state. In the 1850's Taine visited a workhouse near Manchester: "Beside the rows of hovels in which the poor live, this place is a palace.....I am told they will stick to their 'home',... the workhouse is looked upon as a prison and the poor make it a point of honour never to enter one."

The East End settlements put the philosophy of self help into practice, although the university men and women who lived in them and engaged in community work in their spare time were criticised on the grounds that the enrichment of their own lives outweighed the benefits to the East End. These critics were obviously people who believed in massive state action as a panacea for poverty. Beveridge and Attlee both worked at Toynbee Hall; its founder however, did not want a welfare state, which he compared to 'continental socialism' (his name for Marxism). By the nineties many of the poor were more prosperous; Friendly Societies and Funeral Societies were flourishing. In 1849 there were three million members of Friendly Societies and by 1872 there were 927 retail co-operative societies with over 3 million members and annual sales approaching £10 million.

These co-operative societies also organised reading rooms, libraries and lectures for their members. Friendly Societies opposed state welfare; but the socialist lobby triumphed after the Second World War, by which time there was no need for a welfare state, as opposed to a judicious filling of the gaps with private charity.

The tragedy of the Thatcher years was the refusal to realize that the welfare state had deprived people of responsibility for themselves. The erosion of respect for the virtues made a return to moral capitalism problematic. Our economy now depends on a rampant housing market, instead of surplus money invested in industry, on mortgage tax relief at the expense of the tax payer and on gambling on one's dwelling at the expense of another. The Victorians would have deplored all that. Only a Renaissance of their institutions will bring about a return to morality and good sense. We should be grateful to Professor Himmelfarb for this brilliant defence of those institutions and of the sound moral sense which spoke through them.

*Morals
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us everywhere,
pervading society
like the air we
breathe.*

Samuel Smiles

In Short

Retreat or Reform? Russia's struggle for Democracy Robert Halfon, IEDSS Occasional Paper, No 62, £6, 1995.

Robert Halfon is concerned not so much with overall change in Russia, as with delineating the main groups which oppose democratic reform. The alignment is indeed threatening: several communist parties, led by Gennadi Zyuganov's Communist Party of the Russian Federation; right wing patriotic groups, primarily Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's "Liberal Democratic Party"; the industrial/agricultural complex, represented by the Civic Union; the leaders of the armed forces (particularly General Aleksandr Lebed) who are exercising increasing influence on foreign policy; and the security forces. Halfon touches on the unnerving transmogrification of former KGB and party bosses into influential, unscrupulous capitalists, who are linked with the mafia and capable of doing great harm to Western commercial interests.

The pro-reform forces, as viewed by the author, are weak and uncoordinated. The Russian people, poorer as a consequence of the reforms, hanker after stability, a strong hand, and better living conditions. Halfon's suggestions as to how the West should react are not, however, very original: we should be very selective in the groups and policies we support. The author admires Solzhenitsyn's ideas (promotion of grass-roots democracy via the old *zemstvo* system) as the ultimate solution, but admits that these ideas are unlikely to be implemented. This is a paper which is interesting and admonitory, though it probably underestimates the new elite's desire for personal freedom and western-style living standards, not to mention the potential for discord in the anti-democratic bloc.

MM

Price of Honour, Jan Goodwin, Warner Books, £7.20, 1995.

Is the subjugation of women intrinsic to Islam, or is it — as Muslim intellectuals invariably assert — mere cultural baggage? Jan Goodwin, who visited ten Muslim countries over four years, thinks that the Koran has been corrupted by men, who exploit women by perverting and misquoting holy writ. Muslim women are not only compelled to submit to the psychological imprisonment of *purdah* (which has no Koranic justification) but in many parts of the world are being systematically abused, tortured and killed. In Iran women wearing "un-Islamic" dress are arrested on the spot, and can be thrown into gaol or flogged. Pakistan, often regarded as more enlightened, sustains equally abhorrent practices: "The average woman is born into near slavery, and leads a life of drudgery," said a report which was suppressed by the Pakistani government. The hideous practice of female circumcision has no justification in the Koran, although there is a hint of it in the *hadiths*. Why are Muslim societies dominated by fear and hatred of women? Perhaps those Muslim thinkers now comfortably ensconced in the West could begin to tell us.

While Western leaders dismiss Islamic fundamentalism as a peripheral, containable phenomenon, the author insists that it trades on the misery of the Muslim masses by offering them material provision and hope. Islamic terror is highly organised, fanatically determined and receives generous funding from the major oil states. Sunni and Shia, traditional enemies, are cooperating to establish Muslim theocracy everywhere.

This book gains strength from its sympathy to Koranic Islam and should be read by everyone who cares about

the treatment of women in Muslim countries.

RH

Across the Borderlands of Europe Anne Applebaum, Papermac 1994, £10.00

The most exciting consequence of the fall of Soviet Communism is the freedom to visit that half of our European heritage from which we have been cut off for so long. Any knowledge we had was from old books and old refugees. Those who, like me, are fascinated by Eastern Europe, will find Anne Applebaum an enthralling guide. She strikes the right balance between an exciting travel book and an informative history. She is always apposite, and amusing, sometimes offering pathetic anecdotes about the people she met.

The history of the region was dictated by the lack of natural frontiers; no invader was able to maintain a dominance for long. Even the nobility chopped and changed. Five religions once erected houses of worship around a single lake, and a traveller like Applebaum can meet someone born in Poland who grew up in the Soviet Union and who now lives in Belarus but who has never left his village. Forty years of communism, not to mention the rivalry of three empires before that, have necessarily left their mark. Nevertheless Applebaum often found a cemetery, an old house or church which revealed the secret history of a particular nation, triumphantly demonstrating the refusal of the human spirit to be regimented and permanently stamped on.

MC

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