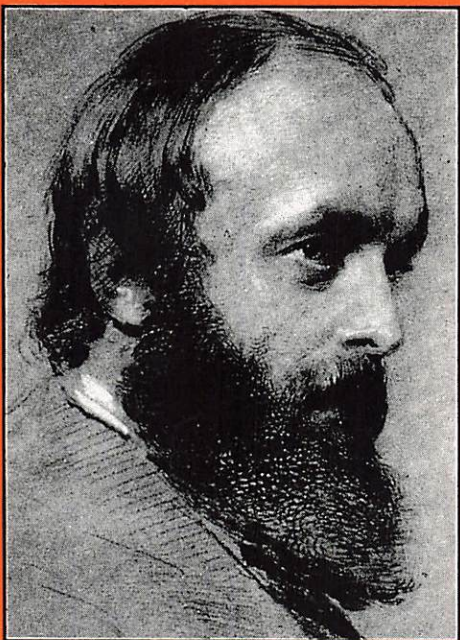


*Autumn 1996*  
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# The Salisbury Review

*The quarterly magazine of conservative thought*



The Third Marquess of Salisbury  
1830 - 1903

- The Common Crisis**  
*Margaret Thatcher*
- The Mental Health Industry**  
*Jeremy Walker*
- The Abolition of Thought**  
*Roger Scruton*
- Popper In New Zealand**  
*Roger Sandall*
- Housing and Race Relations**  
*Ray Honeyford*
- Tugboat Ahoy**  
*Roy Kerridge*

*The Claridge Press*

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## Conservative Journal *Perspectives*

*Perspectives on Architecture*, to give the journal its full title, is the voice of the counter-revolution in architecture inspired by the Prince of Wales. Although an independent journal, it promotes the ideas and activities for which the Prince is known, and mounts an articulate case for traditional ways of building, and for experiments in which traditional forms, materials and ornaments are properly respected. Edited to a high standard by Giles Worsley, it contains articles on every aspect of building — technical, critical, historical and didactic. It keeps a vigilant eye on the calamities that threaten the monuments of architecture — the principal one of which is the ignorance and barbarism of those who live with them. And it promotes an open-minded and cheerful approach to new styles, provided that they are motivated by modesty, a love of the environment, and a desire to blend (motives rarely encountered in architects). The journal also contains a regular column by the editor of *The Salisbury Review*, in which nooks and crannies of the modern world are summoned to judgement and not always found wanting. The issue for June and July of 1996 contains a

critical review by Giles Worsley of the Government's plans to sell off many of the historic buildings which it has in its possession. Richard Haslam enters a plea to save Palermo, and gives a vivid account of its architectural treasures — though these, like the culture, morality, religion and history of Palermo, need to be saved first and foremost from the people who live there. Gavin Stamp tries to set the record straight regarding the history of post-war architecture — a history deliberately distorted by the modernist establishment — while Mary Keen describes the idyllic garden created by the art-collector Frederick Koch in Sutton Place. Wide-ranging and enthusiastic, *Perspectives* has pitched its level of debate so far above anything that could be reached by the architectural establishment, that its arguments are sure to be ignored. It will therefore have a special appeal for readers of this Review.

*Perspectives* is published six times a year, and is available from 2 Hinde Street, London W1, at £3 per issue.

# The Salisbury Review

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What are the real issues which lie before us? Consult the newspapers, radio, television and the political establishment, and you will be given a variety of platitudes: the economy, poverty, unemployment, the welfare state, education and so on. These topics appeal to journalists and politicians, because both imagine that they can do things to affect them. Political parties have programmes for the economy, welfare, education and the rest, and small but significant changes arise from applying them. But something else, something far more important, remains unaffected, and the suspicion endures that these policies, however radical and imaginative, will never amount to more than first aid. The sickness of the organism will remain, ready to erupt in some new and unforeseen form.

The sickness of modern society is not economic or political, but spiritual. Societies depend upon a sense of individual responsibility and public spirit; they depend upon commitment, loyalty, self-sacrifice, and the ability to want and hope for things beyond the grave. Without faith these attitudes do not arise, or arise only in distorted and fragile forms. It is this which causes people, whatever they may think or want in the matter, to cease to invest their hopes in family life, and to hand over the responsibility for the future to the state. As Alexander Boot argues, this shift lies at the root of our modern alienation, and has made the state into the natural enemy of the family in all its forms. Whether it is possible, in the face of this, to institute the kind of Christian politics advocated by Gerald Casey, is an interesting question. But at least, if it is possible anywhere, it is surely possible in Ireland.

State bureaucracies have an innate tendency to cancel human freedom, and to treat the individual not as a responsible subject but as a disposable object. Nowhere can this be more clearly seen than in the mental health industry, described in these pages by Jeremy Walker. The phoney sciences of psychiatry have one meaning: which is to reduce human behaviour from action to symptom.

Societies and journals have been established with the object of naming the diseases which afflict us — for example, the disease which James Thurber described as ‘regressive knee syndrome’, or the back-to-front-baseball-cap phobia which will surely prompt one of our readers soon to some terrible crime, but which will also excuse him from the consequences. Modern psychiatry contains so many instances of the ‘abolition of thought’ described by the editor, that it is surprising that he did not mention it — though maybe his failure to do so is itself a symptom of disease, the indifference-to-psychiatry-syndrome which Freud was first to diagnose, and which, despite a lifetime’s devotion, he was never able to cure.

Most of our readers, and most of our writers too, would be certified as insane by enlightened egalitarians. You only have to read a few paragraphs of Roy Kerridge to see their point. Here is someone who wanders around London as though completely responsible for his own life, observing human beings as though they were also responsible for theirs. The welfare state seems never to have touched him, and he cannot see the misery, poverty, alienation and gloom which are the legacy of Thatcherism. And look at Lady Thatcher herself! Here she is, defending the Atlantic Alliance, and a Europe of nations, at a time when all reasonable people know that the Brussels bureaucracies have taken charge of our lives, and that we need never worry about anything ever again, unless it be the return of Thatcherism. In the face of such examples, it is not surprising that so many well-meaning people have joined in the efforts to keep the *Salisbury Review* out of schools, colleges, and other places where its corrupting influence would be felt.

Nevertheless, messages still reach us from the world of education — gentle reminiscences, like those of Stephen Pimenoff, or protests against the great egalitarian project. Not being listened to has one great advantage: which is that you can say what you think.

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# The Mental Health Industry

*Jeremy Walker looks at psycho-job creation*

They say, miracles are past; and we have our philosophical persons, to make modern and familiar, things supernatural and causeless. Hence it is that we make trifles of terrors; ensconcing ourselves into seeming knowledge when we should submit ourselves to an unknown fear.

*All's well that ends well II iii.*

**T**he psychiatric institution where I work is an average, middle-of-the-road one. Built in 1840/1, its neo-Gothic architecture is imposing without quite being spectacular; but it is under threat from modernisers who, as ever, want to replace the solid and durable with the showy and ephemeral. Still, it will certainly outlast the new wards they are planning to build down the slopes towards the cemetery.

At evenings and weekends it is a tranquil place. Urban seagulls strut across the grass, patients potter about, cadging cigarettes and, if the weather is good, sitting out on those benches which have not been spirited away to neighbouring gardens despite being bolted into concrete. During the week, however, I know that if I have not arrived by 9 o'clock at the latest, all the car parks will be full and I shall have to take my chance on the double yellow lines that guard the roads round the flower-beds. By 10 o'clock the paths which cross the lawns, which are tended by mixed teams of staff and patients on the mend, are busy with figures scurrying between offices, wards and various important institutional focal points. They carry the usual badges of the semi-bureaucratic way of life — bundles of files held close to the chest, over-heavy briefcases, supermarket carrier-bags with the print almost gone. By 12.30 or so, the queues in the staff canteen, a prefab which no doubt has been up for decades longer than

anyone intended, are starting to get irksome and the awkward ritual of casting around for space at a table with congenial company begins to get difficult.

Here is a small corner of the mental health industry at work, its focus the few thousand patients and their families and neighbours scattered around its urban catchment. Looking in the other direction, behind its watchful lens, it is not difficult to get a sense of the immense web of economic activities and liabilities that this industry sustains for its employees: mortgages, summer holidays, borrowings of a very wide variety no doubt, school fees perhaps for the consultants who are that way inclined — and so on.

The marriage of the mind and the market is proving a highly productive one, especially because its main medium, illness, is such an elastic concept. All illness is, in a sense, a metaphor in that it is not solely or simply corporeal or material. Illness, as Jay Haley said of problems, involves a fact plus a judgement: the fact, for example, of bacterial invasion or cellular change plus a judgement that this deviates, or should be seen as deviating, from a norm. This applies, perhaps more obviously, in the case of illness of the mind. There are the facts, say, of erroneous beliefs (delusions) or false sensations (hallucinations), no doubt accompanied by chemical and electrical activity in the brain; and attached to these are a judgement that these phenomena are sufficiently at variance with a norm to count as illness.

Most psychiatrists would, at this point, reply that around the world there is almost complete agreement about what constitutes madness — in other words, that what we are dealing with

are absolutes. This is actually not the case: many patients, once they embark on a career in the mental health system, will attract a range of diagnoses including, quite often, that of not being ill at all. But even if it were true, it is still perfectly possible to hypothesize a world or society in which these phenomena were seen, not as illness, but as evidence of, say, special powers or even extreme wellness.

This is not to say that mental illness does not exist, although, as Professor Joad would have said on *The Brains Trust*, it all depends what you mean by "exist". It doesn't exist in the material sense but it exists insofar as any construct could be said to exist. It exists, also, if you want it to exist, which makes it altogether a rather wobbly notion, relative and chimeric. And whereas the lexicon of physical illness<sup>o</sup> is rather static — apart from some dubious new additions like chronic fatigue syndrome, ME, Gulf War syndrome and so on, the mind offers almost limitless scope for extending the territory of illness.

In fact, the most recent *International Classification of Diseases (ICD 10)*, the psychiatrists' bible, loosens the boundaries still further by preferring "disorder" to "illness". This apparently enlightened move is actually highly expansionist and a rather subtle sleight of hand which makes possible the production of an endless supply of colourful and impressive-seeming categories from a rather modest hat. As Thomas Szasz points out, illnesses used to be invented by individuals — for example, Kraepelin gave us *dementia praecox* which was the forerunner of schizophrenia, a word coined by Bleuler in 1911. Now, however, they are churned out by a quasi-parliamentary system, consisting

of numerous committees toiling away for years and being visited from time to time by pressure groups lobbying for the exclusion or inclusion of particular phenomena.

Homosexuality, for example, was removed from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM) — the American equivalent of ICD 10 — in 1973. Interestingly, it has slipped into the list of “Disorders of Sexual Preference” in ICD 10 in the form of “Egodystonic Sexual Orientation”. This diagnosis, we are told, should be used when “gender identity or sexual preference is not in doubt but the individual wishes it were different”. Here, incidentally, is more evidence of the wobbliness of psychiatric concepts since, as a rule in medicine, the wishes of the patient are not seen as relevant as in the case of leukaemia, or schizophrenia, for example. In fact, in the latter the wish not to be viewed as ill is seen as proof of illness.

Both systems of classification, as they gradually push the boundaries of illness into the realm of everyday life and suffering, offer us new categories which are simultaneously seductive and bizarre. Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is now a well-established member of the team. It is “characterized by atypical depressive features including hypersomnia [sleeping too much], increase in appetite and weight, and cravings for carbohydrate foods”. This is believed to have something to do with an increase in melatonin in the brain, and those of us who thought that we just didn’t like long winter nights so ate too much will be comforted to learn that “high intensity long-term exposure to light has been shown to alter synaptic morphology and serotonin sensitivity in the rat central nervous system”.

DSM IV, the latest version of the American Manual, gives us “Identity Disorder” which apparently involves “severe subjective distress regarding uncertainty about a variety of issues”, such as “career choice”, “friendship patterns”, “moral value systems”, “long-term goals”, and so on. Those of us struggling with “Passive-Aggressive Personality Disorder” will exhibit

“procrastination”, will believe we are “doing a much better job than others think”, or might “protest that others are making unreasonable demands” on us. Should our children “argue with adults”, “refuse to do the chores” and “often do things deliberately which annoy other people”, they will almost certainly be suffering from “Oppositional Defiant Disorder” (DSM IIR 313.81). ICD 10 offers us Female Sexual Arousal Disorder (F52.2) and perhaps because that sounds too bland and untechnical, Psychogenic Anorgasmia (F52.3).

Dr Cary Cooper, an American who is in charge of “stress research” at UMIST, has invented the concept of “presenteeism”, which he claims affects employees who feel they have to stay at work “in order to show commitment and avoid the next wave of redundancies” — thereby pathologizing, with brilliant finesse, both industry and healthy self-preservation.

A piece in the *British Journal of Psychiatry*, a publication produced by the Royal College of Psychiatrists, about “dysthymia” (a rough translation would be “not feeling very happy”) and written by the World Psychiatric Association Dysthymia Working Group, nicely if unintentionally reveals some other currents that are at work here. The authors, generously awarded a grant by Hoffman-La Roche, makers of Valium, for their pioneering work in the vanguard of scientific discovery, describe a shift from seeing dysthymia as a “neurotic personality disorder”, that is character-ological and not treatable with medication, to “a subsyndromal yet more chronic form of a major depressive disorder” and therefore medicateable. The authors are aware that they are on slightly tricky ground because they concede that the “sufferer” functions well and is “not demarcated from [his] usual self”. The piece ends with a flourish: “the relatively recent identification of dysthymia as a discreet entity has been the main reason for the relatively late application of pharmacotherapeutic approaches”. George Orwell warned of the use of words of classical origin to give a spurious authority — he might

have added polysyllables as well.

There are other phenomena, now given the status of “condition” which, though not full members of the team, are nevertheless included in the squad. “Social phobia”, for example, was given an airing by the *Sunday Times* following a campaign by the Royal College of Psychiatrists in 1995 — significantly, just before Christmas. It will gradually become clear that there is no aspect of the human condition on which the Royal College does not keep its watchful eye. It now produces leaflets for every age and stage, such as one on “Surviving Adolescence”; it is in fact the direct descendant of the welfare state (itself the successor of organized religion), and will nurse your psyche from cradle to grave. Indeed, one of its members, Dr Michael Shooter, now advocates, in a piece about depression in men, that “psychiatrists should occasionally shift their services to places where they feel less threatened — to leisure centres, for example”.

We are told that “social phobics are people who are unreasonably afraid of social situations” and that there are “a million or so Britons who suffer from social phobia, an undiagnosed and under-treated condition”. It is clear that there are few, if any, Britons who do not “suffer from” at least one — and probably several — of the conditions laboriously documented by ICD 10 or DSM IV. Indeed, Karl Menninger, described by Szasz as “the undisputed dean of post World War II American psychiatry”, defined illness “as being a certain state of existence which is uncomfortable to someone and for which medical science offers, or is believed by the public to offer, relief”. The *Sunday Times* goes on: “the dilemma for sufferers is that 90% of the population are likely to dismiss their problem as trivial”, the clear implication being that they would be wrong, and in particular, callous to do so. Personally I found learning that Samuel Beckett rarely spoke a single word at social functions and coming across Penelope Keith’s dictum that shyness is egotism out of its depth, did wonders for my chronic social unease.

An even more recent invention, which will probably never qualify for inclusion in ICD 10 or DSM IV — although you can never be sure — is that of “Road Rage”, which the AA and RAC want to “have classified as an illness”, so the *News of the World* informs us. Indeed, Steven Norris, Road Safety Minister, plans to make motorists convicted of assaults have sessions with a psychiatrist. In this same piece, “psychologist” Conrad King tells us authoritatively: “this condition can strike anyone”. Another “Road Rage expert” informs readers of the *Suffolk Mercury*: “it is extremely worrying that 2 out of 3 drivers are succumbing to Road Rage. They are like time-bombs waiting for motoring stress to set them off”.

It is usually cases on the margin which best illustrate issues and this newcomer is no exception. No longer do we simply have motorists behaving badly or selfishly: instead, they are merely vulnerable to a condition or entity of some kind, lodged somewhere — maybe externally in some ill-defined sense. It is easy to see here — as with all syndromizing of human behaviour — that the invention of disorders casts a shadow over the will and our capacity to make choices. It has been accepted, at least since the McNaghten Rules, that certain forms of madness reduce culpability; but recently we have seen, in cases involving the killing of men by their partners or wives, vigorous attempts being made to broaden the category of mental states which are felt should dilute responsibility. In the case of Sara Thornton, who killed her husband Malcolm, the age-old defence of provocation could not be called upon; instead she was released on bail on appeal because it was retrospectively decided that she may have been “suffering” from the newly-minted “Battered Wife Syndrome”.

The erosion of responsibility is happening on many fronts. A piece in *Community Care*, the journal most often read by social workers who have managed to hang onto some volition and interest in life, reports on research carried out by the Prince’s Trust into

young people detained at Her Majesty’s pleasure. We are told that “one of the key strands of the debate is that the perpetrators are being punished for their role as offender and the legal system pays scant regard to their status as victims” — that is, of “childhood trauma in the form of abuse or loss[sic]”.

It will come as no surprise to those of us who have picked up which way the wind is blowing to see an old friend welcomed onto the stage: “one of the mechanisms by which abuse can translate into aggression could be post-traumatic stress disorder”. This is a condition, devised relatively recently, which can bring huge wealth to those to whom it is decided it should apply — and their lawyers, of course. A fireman, Paul Hale, no doubt a courageous man, was paid £147,683 as a result of the King’s Cross fire after three experts had been called to state that he was suffering from PTSD. This will, of course, be just a distant benchmark for far higher awards in similar cases in the future.

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***Steven Norris, Road Safety Minister, plans to make motorists convicted of assaults have sessions with a psychiatrist***

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The tendency to see human beings as objects rather than agents, responding rather than responsible, and at the mercy of malign forces, whether external or internal, clearly has a long way to run, such is its attractiveness to all of us for whom responsibility for our actions is burdensome. It provides imaginative lawyers much scope. Steffi Graf’s father, Peter, has claimed that his tax evasion was connected with brain damage he suffered as a result of abuse of alcohol and drugs. Morse Peckham, quoted by Szasz, is in no doubt that “psychological explanations of behaviour are, in fact, merely restatements of religious (divine) ex-

planations of it” and sees “the entire economic institution of psychiatry as satisfying our need for explanations of behaviour”. Indeed, Freud, with his usual barmy conceit, thought that his “psychology of the unconscious”, in explaining “the myths of paradise and the fall of man, of God, of good and evil, of immortality and so on”, would irrevocably “transform metaphysics into metapsychology”.

What is happening, of course, is that in the guise of science we are meeting a new determinism, in which the power to shape or redefine experience is, as ever, lodged with a narrow group whose obsession with entities — at the expense of processes — is so pervasive that what cannot be packaged can no longer be understood. Essence is now secondary to category. There is little psychological territory left to explore, little left to map. Diagnosticians and syndromizers have, like rapacious tourists, photographed and documented almost every private corner of experience. Diagnostic categories exist as a kind of psychological baton for doctors to pass between each other, a pseudo-wisdom which purports to encapsulate the patient but which actually only encapsulates itself.

It is a curious paradox that the more elaborate and refined systems of psychiatric classification become, and therefore the more scientific they appear, the more they seem to owe to magic and ritual. The real world demands that madness and mental suffering be described and explained from time to time; but such systems are over-determined and need magical attempts to control and neutralize suffering and the inexplicable. Perversely, in naming something you give it a life or impetus; more syndromes mean more suffering. Illness is to aimless, rootless Western man as snow is to the Eskimos, and our over-elaborate, ever-expanding diagnostic systems are little more than charmless, prolix taxonomies of snow.

It would be easy enough to say that maybe this is of little consequence, that it has always been the *raison d’être* of the expert to make the simple difficult; or that, in practice or in private,

psychiatrists don't take this seriously and that, out of earshot, the Emperor's courtiers all openly acknowledge that he has got no clothes. But like two sets of tunnellers whose eventual meeting gets gradually closer, there is another deterministic force at work.

Physical or biological explanations for schizophrenia, for example, are now being looked for with vigour. The *British Journal of Psychiatry* reports, in language strikingly reminiscent of nineteenth-century studies of the skulls of black people, that: "a considerable body of evidence points to the existence of structural abnormalities in the brains of schizophrenic people. These have ranged from cellular abnormalities to volumetric reductions in specific tissue locations as well as overall reduction in brain weight and volume. Recent reports indicate reduced cranial size in schizophrenic women and reduced head circumference in longstay schizophrenic men".

Indeed, being criminally inclined is now believed to be, according to Adrian Raine, a British Psychology Professor working in Denmark, "a disorder of the brain in the same way that depression or schizophrenia is a disorder". Once biological phenomena are seen as causing mental states, it is logical — indeed geneticists would argue it is their duty — to look behind these to heredity. Depression, alcoholism, anxiety and even a tendency to commit suicide, according to scientists at Bristol University, are all now deemed to have a genetic component.

Physical explanations for mental states have gathered such momentum that the theories of R.D. Laing, David Cooper and so on are seen as touching markers of the late 60's and early 70's, a brief, whimsical digression from the assured and unarguable march of biological science. All sorts of human activity or behaviour gets swept along in its path. A geneticist, J.L. Karlsson, maintains that he has identified, from his study of "the giants of literature", "similarities in cognitive style between creative and psychotic thought", including "emphasis on fantasy, divergent thinking and loosely associated ideas". Naturally, he concludes that

"the most likely explanation is that genes coding for creativity also code for madness, and that the tendency to one is inherited along with the other".

Only the naive will be surprised to learn that there are those who see this kind of homogenizing reductionism as an opportunity and justification for making further therapeutic inroads into everyday life. Claridge and Pryor, in *Sounds from the Bell Jar*, argue that society should protect "vulnerable individuals endowed with exceptional creativity against the potentially dark side of their gift", and that "children

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***The tendency to see human beings as objects rather than agents, responding rather than responsible, and at the mercy of malign forces, whether external or internal, clearly has a long way to run, such is its attractiveness to all of us for whom responsibility for our actions is burdensome***

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who show an unusual degree of imagination might benefit from counselling to enable them to channel their creativity and harden them against clinical psychosis". Melanie Klein, who had a very different understanding of the nature of mental states, believed that all children at the age of two or three should be given the benefit of her rather toxic brand of psychoanalysis, which would give analysts about five years' start on the Jesuits.

Finding a name for what is troubling or troublesome can certainly bring relief — though it is often temporary — and an illusion of control. Indeed, anxiety, which is the mass illness of our age, is actually fear of loss of

control which follows from an expectation of control. Once a name is found, it tells expert and sufferer that it is not unique and belongs to a class of things, and once you have a "thing" or quasi-thing, you may be able to do something with it, to convey it in some way to someone who may have, or claim to have, power over it.

But far from liberating, the invention of illness and the manufacture of disorder and syndrome actually enslave, by parcelling up the psyche for a self-interested alliance of pharmaceutical and therapeutic entrepreneurs and genetic manipulators. It is not always the overnight coup or the overt abuse of power which bring repressiveness: its seeds can be sown by pleasant people meaning well, offering solace and promising balm. Eastern bloc totalitarianism was brittle and absurd, but the foundations of psychologistic totalitarianism are being laid well and deep, and reinforced by huge financial and other rewards both for its propagandists and subjects.

Central to this new determinism is the collective failure to grasp that free will is a necessary assumption and that accepting the burden of that assumption is what distinguishes us from mere objects and keeps power away from those who would manipulate us as objects. We must resist the allure of seeming knowledge and strive, as Foucault put it, for the liberation of human thought from psychology. We have to embrace the terrors of the causeless and the contingent, and tolerate the fear of the unknown territory into which responsibility takes us. We must not, on our way, be seduced by the comforting landmarks of syndrome and illness, which may promise safety but which ultimately only diminish us.

**Jeremy Walker is a psychiatric social worker.**

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# The Christian Solidarity Party in Ireland

*Gerard Casey looks at its prospects*

Irish society has undergone some dramatic changes in the last twenty or so years. Some of these changes have been for the better, others have not. Social change is often brought about by, and in turn brings about, political change, and so we in Ireland have witnessed corresponding changes in the political landscape. Because of the scale and speed of change, many ordinary Irish voters believe that the established political parties no longer represent them, that they are, in effect, disenfranchised. The Christian Solidarity Party [CSP], was founded to give a voice to these functionally disenfranchised voters. This article attempts to give a brief account of the CSP's history and political philosophy.

## **Irish Political Parties**

The seminal event for present-day party politics in Ireland was the civil war of 1921-22, which came about when, in negotiations with the then Prime Minister Lloyd George, the republican forces split on the question of whether or not they were willing to accept an interim 26-county Free State or whether they should hold out for a 32-county Ireland. There is no need to go into the details of that distressing episode in Irish — and British — history. Suffice it to say that the two major political parties currently operating in the Republic emerged from the opposing sides of the split — Fianna Fáil from the pro-32 county side, and Fine Gael from the 26 county compromise.

Because of the bitterness of the Civil War, the opposition between these two parties has been as much historical, personal and familial as it has been ideological. Putting to one side the circumstances of their origin, if one

had to give a crude characterisation of the position of these parties on the political spectrum, one would have to say that Fianna Fáil is, to a large extent, a populist party with residual republican leanings. Essentially without principles, except the principle of grasping power whenever it can get it, the Fianna Fáil party has, like the Duke of Plaza Toro, always led from behind. In the last five years, Fianna Fáil has moved towards a consistently more liberal line in an attempt, probably vain, to increase its share of the middle-class vote. In contrast, Fine Gael, was for many years, the nearest thing we had in Ireland to a conservative party. This was the case up to the 1960s at which time it began to move towards the political centre. Over the last 15-20 years, the leadership of the party has been effectively captured by the feminist liberals and Fine Gael is now an enthusiastic contributor to "the liberal agenda".

The Labour Party, the oldest of the political parties, stood outside and apart from the divisions resulting from the Civil War. For many years derisively referred to as "half a party", it was effectively excluded from any share of power except on those rare occasions when it was required to form a coalition government. In recent years its strength has increased, and in the general election of 1992, it achieved its highest representation of all time with over 30 representatives in the 166 seat Dáil.

These three parties, Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and Labour, constituted the entire political party establishment until about 10 years ago. Then a split in the ranks of Fianna Fáil, based largely on personality differences, resulted in the

emergence of a new small party, the Progressive Democrats. Their approach to social, economic and political issues could best be described as libertarian-liberal. In the meantime, Sinn Féin (Official) had been moving from a predominantly republican ethos to a predominantly socialist ethos. Its name changed, first to Sinn Féin — The Worker's Party, then to The Workers' Party, then to The New Agenda, and, finally, The Democratic Left. It is more hard-line socialist than the Labour Party which, like Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael, has been sucked in the direction of the omnivorous central vortex.

## **Parliamentary/Voting System**

The Irish legislature is bicameral. The upper house, the Senate, is essentially powerless. Designed originally to be broadly representative of different vocational interests, it quickly became a rest home for out-of-work politicians. The lower house, Dail Eireann, has 166 deputies, elected by single-transferable vote in a system of proportional representation in multi-seat constituencies. There are 41 constituencies — 14 five-seaters, 14 four-seaters, and 13 three-seaters. From a party political point of view, the most significant feature of Irish political life is the system of proportional representation. It favours the existence and representation of smaller parties and has not been universally popular with the larger parties. Without PR, a party such as the CSP would have absolutely no chance whatsoever of making any impact on the political scene, and even the Labour Party — still more the Progressive Democrats and the Democratic Left — would find it difficult to win seats. The three seater consti-

cies are effectively closed to a small party such as the CSP, and only four-seaters with an especially favourable profile would be contestable. However, in the average 5-seater constituency, the fifth seat is winnable if a candidate can obtain 8-10% of the overall vote, in addition to a significant number of transferred votes.

### **Does Ireland Need a Christian Party?**

Since the population of Ireland is about 96% Christian, the creation of an Irish political party with a specifically Christian focus might not be thought to be a pressing necessity. This is a reasonable suspicion. At one time, indeed, all political parties in Ireland, with the notable exception of the Labour Party, shared a common Christian ethos. In 1964, Fine Gael's policy document *Winning Through to a Just Society* could state that "The social and economic thought of the Fine Gael party has been informed and moulded by the social doctrines contained in the Papal encyclicals. Most people in public life will state their acceptance of the teachings contained in the papal encyclicals...." This is no longer the case. Since the 1960s, there has been a gradual ideological shift away from a Christian consensus. Of the existing Dail parties, only Fianna Fáil retains any favourable disposition towards Christian principles and that largely among its rank and file members, but even here, among its leaders, there has been a de facto abandonment of such principles. Notwithstanding what was said above about Fine Gael, Ireland has never really had a conservative party as the word would be understood in Britain. The institutions, traditions, and customs that are the life blood of British conservatism simply do not exist in Ireland.

The CSP was founded just before the last General Election in 1992, suffered its first split almost immediately, [Brendan Behan remarked wryly that the first item on the agenda of any Irish organization is "the Split"], regrouped, reorganised, renamed itself and re-emerged in its present form two years ago. During the last two years its members have engaged in all the usual

tedious and time-consuming activities of political parties between elections: party development, fundraising, and policy development, as well as contesting two by-elections.

### **Policy Principles**

As a political party, the CSP has detailed and specific policy proposals on every area of political concern, such as employment, taxation, energy, and the environment. Here are some of the CSP's policy *principles* in the following areas: (i) The Spiritual Foundations of Society; (ii) Law and Morality; (iii) The Family as Foundation of Society; and (iv) A Christian View of Economics.

#### **(i) The Spiritual Foundations of Society**

The CSP is a Christian party because it is informed in all its thoughts and actions by Christian principles. It does *not* follow from this that the CSP is a religious or a confessional body. The political and social principles that the CSP promotes and fosters are rooted in the natural law and find expression in natural justice. These principles call us to be just and temperate in economic and social matters, prudent in our judgements, and resolute in our opposition to policies that are socially destructive. These Christian principles are held dear by people of good will of many different denominations and of diverse faiths. The joint determination of such people, whatever their religious convictions, is to ensure a peaceful, just and decent society for our children in the next century.

The CSP believes that human society cannot exist, still less can it flourish, unless it rests on a spiritual base that is integrated with its nature and activity. If this spiritual base is not Christianity then, in the West, it will be some sort of civic religion, most likely either some form of Marxism or, much more likely now, some form of secular humanism. There are no neutral positions. One of the most self-deluding of liberals' beliefs is to think that their option is uncontaminated by spiritual commitments.

After 2,000 years, we tend to forget how extraordinary Christianity is. Judged by the standards of the histori-

cal context in which it emerged it was neither natural nor normal and it still runs counter to the 'natural' cultural tendencies of man. What we are now experiencing in Western culture is a reemergence into popular consciousness of the old, natural paganism which preceded Christianity, and which it supplanted. Never completely annihilated, subsisting underground, emerging periodically and fitfully into Christendom, paganism has now re-emerged with a vengeance and looks set to exact a fearful revenge on its spiritual enemy. The western world has been living on the moral and spiritual capital of Christianity for almost 400 years and that capital is just about exhausted.

It is often assumed that the only Christian concerns in politics are such moral topics as abortion or divorce. This is not so. While we in the CSP are concerned to protect and promote life and family, we realise that to do so we must care about life and family in all their circumstances. Concern about alleviating the devastating social and economic effects of unemployment is as important as opposing abortion. The protection of the physical environment equals protecting the moral environment.

The struggle for our civilisation is taking place at many different levels, among them the spiritual, the psychological and the political. Some people, in particular some Christians, while acknowledging the importance of the spiritual and (to some extent) the psychological, have a tendency to believe that redeemed man has no real need of politics. This is a fatal mistake. Human beings, precisely because they are rational, cannot flourish without the support of a structured community. The choice that Christians face, is not whether, but how they should become politically active.

#### **(ii) Law and Morality**

Recently there have been many intense debates in Ireland on matters of public policy. A recurring feature of many such debates is the relationship that ought to exist between the civil law and the moral law. This issue is particularly germane given that our constitution is largely based on natural

law principles. Certain claims have been advanced by those promoting the 'liberal agenda':

1. The law, and all norms necessary for social coexistence, should express the will of the majority of citizens.
2. In a pluralistic society, people should be allowed complete freedom to dispose of their own lives.
3. The law may not choose between different moral opinions and may not impose one particular moral opinion to the detriment of others.
4. Objective truth is unattainable, therefore the autonomy of the individual conscience must be respected by legislators.
5. Politicians must clearly distinguish the realms of private conscience and public conduct.

The primary response of the Christian to these claims must be that while democracy is the least objectionable form of political organisation, it is not a substitute for morality. Nor is it an end in itself, but only a means to ends. These ends are not provided by a simple consensus within the democratic process itself; rather, they provide the moral context in which the democratic process operates. The values which democracy must recognise, and which are not provisional and changeable are: the dignity of the human person, respect for inviolable and inalienable human rights, and the recognition of the common good as the end of political life. These are the obligatory point of reference for the civil law itself.

The denial that the civil law must conform to the moral law lands one in the morass of legal positivism, — that the law is whatever legislators produce. This positive law is the only source of rights, and is grounded only in what are taken to be essentially non-moral social practices and conventions, or, at least, in social practices and conventions which cannot be assessed morally by comparison with some source of law apart from the acts of legislators. Legal positivism makes the moral law either subservient to civil law or denies that there is any intrinsic connection between the two.

The consequences of legal positivism are that one cannot condemn as

wrong whatever in fact conforms to the law of a state. A consistent espousal of legal positivism would prevent us from condemning apartheid, 'ethnic cleansing' (if sanctioned by law), either in its more recent manifestation or in the classic 20th century versions of Stalin and Hitler, or the re-introduction of slavery if sanctioned by 51% of the voters.

No society can survive, much less flourish, solely by relying on positive law and its coercive power. Positive law is much too crude and ineffective to provide the basis for social stability. The majority of people in a functioning society conform to its norms either because they have come to accept them as valid and have internalised them, or because of habit or custom. When the validity of social norms is undermined, when a significant proportion of a society's members no longer accept or internalise its norms, then that society is seriously endangered.

### **(iii) The Family as Foundation of Society**

The CSP believes that society is founded on the family. When the family flourishes, society flourishes; when the family fails, then society is threatened with collapse. The problems caused by family breakdown are well-known. While it is true, as liberal critics of the family never tire of saying that some families are dysfunctional, the point that must always be remembered is that, whatever the failings of particular families, no *institution* has yet been created that can adequately substitute for the family, certainly not the state or any of its organs. Although almost every revolutionary movement has attempted to dispense with the family as an obstacle to its plans for social engineering [and secular humanism is just such a revolutionary creed], the family has in all cases survived, though not without damage that can often take generations to repair.

In the family a child is initiated into language and culture, has his first experience of love and affection, his first experience of the demands of others to be treated as equals, his first experience of unconditional love. There is no substitute for this experience. The iso-

lated individual, the unit of the secular society, is a fiction. No human being can come into existence except in intimate relations to other human beings.

It is sometimes said that the family takes many forms. In a sense, this is true. The family, however, is not simply constituted by the conjugation of male and female with attendant offspring. From a Christian perspective, the family is a social institution *founded on marriage* in which the participants give an undertaking to society (and to God) to be mutually supportive and to provide a stable context for the upbringing of their offspring. If this is what the family is, then it is clear that not just anything called a family can be a family. According to the UN a family is "any combination of two or more persons who are bound together by ties of mutual consent, birth and/or adoption or placement and who, together, assume responsibility for, inter alia, the care and maintenance of group members, the additions of new members through procreation or adoption, the socialisation of children, and the social control of members." It doesn't require much imagination to realise that on this definition, any two or more individuals, whether of the same or different sex, whether married or not, can constitute themselves as a family simply by assuming "ties of mutual consent." It is significant that the Commission on the Family now deliberating on possible Constitutional changes has been given, as part of its terms of reference, the obligation to take into account the UN definition!

### **(iv) A Christian View of Economics**

The relative priorities of society and the economy can be stated quite simply: Economic life is not meant solely to multiply goods produced and increase profit or power; it is ordered first of all to the service of persons, of the whole man, and of the entire human community. Economics is limited by two principal factors; human nature and physical nature. Within these limits economics attempts to determine the relative invariances that exist in the areas of the production, consumption and distribution of mate-

rial goods. While recognising the importance of economic factors in providing the essential conditions for material welfare, the overall goals of any economic system should not be determined internally by that system but given to it from outside by the values cherished in society at large.

All forms of economic determinism must be rejected, so too must any view that social relationships are determined *entirely* by economic factors. In a seminal passage from the Encyclical in which he celebrated the hundredth anniversary of the first great social encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*, Pope John Paul II notes that "Economic activity, especially the activity of a market economy, cannot be conducted in an institutional, juridical or political vacuum....Hence the principal task of the state is to guarantee this security, so that those who work and produce can enjoy the fruits of their labours....another task of the state is that of overseeing and directing the exercise of human rights in the economic sector. However, primary responsibility in this area belongs not to the state but to individuals and to the various groups and associations which make up society." [*Centesimus Annus*, §48.]

A balance must be maintained between an economic system dominated by central planning, on the one hand, and one dominated exclusively by the mores of the market place. "Regulating the economy solely by centralized planning perverts the basis of social bonds; regulating it solely by the law of the market-place fails social justice, for 'there are many human needs which cannot be satisfied by the market.'" and while there is certainly "a legitimate sphere of autonomy in economic life which the State should not enter....the State, however, has the task of determining the juridical framework within which economic affairs are to be conducted..." [ibid. §15]

So much for some of our principles. Because more than one set of policy proposals can be elicited from such principles, the proposals selected for implementation at a particular time will be those that are most practically

realisable in particular political circumstances.

### Prospects

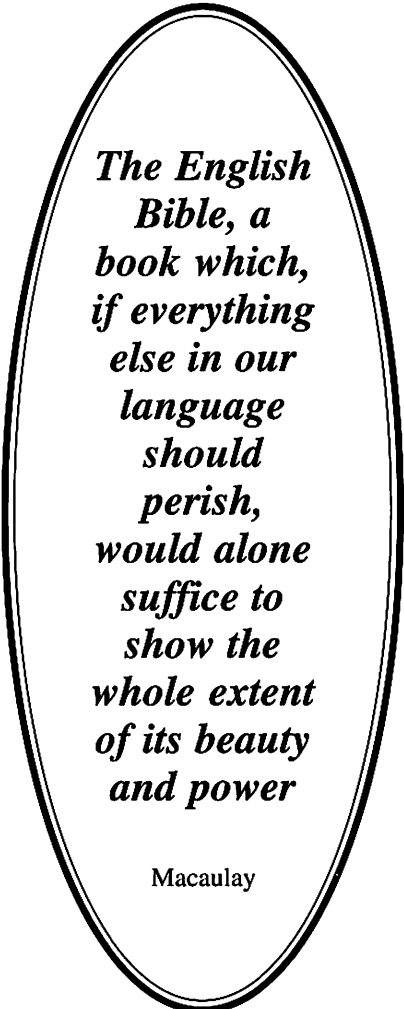
What measure of support is there in Ireland for a Christian party? The truthful answer is — we don't know! A reasonably practical estimate, based on our experience so far in most parts of the country, would be that the CSP could expect a core support vote of approximately 5%. As was indicated above, this would need to be at least doubled (in addition to acquiring a sizeable number of transfer votes) if there is to be any hope of acquiring Dail seats. Given time and application we believe that we can do this. However, a significant retarding effect on the CSP's progress is produced by the hostility of a large section of the media. There are two daily papers of national significance — the *Irish Times* and the *Irish Independent*, both of which are active protagonists of the liberal agenda. The national radio and television company, RTE, is also a leader in the social reconstruction of Ireland. There is no alternative journalistic voice where a party such as the CSP can get a fair and unprejudiced hearing. The CSP is generally under-reported; and the rare reports are often prejudiced. A certain impression is created and fostered which effectively alienates many potential supporters.

The notion of a Christian party is new to Ireland and many people are suspicious of the whole idea. Christian parties are, of course, commonplace on the continent of Europe, the most significant of them being the various Christian Democratic Parties. Even if the general populace were to become aware of the 'normality' of Christian parties in Europe, the records of those parties have not inspired confidence! Christian Democratic parties have not been successful in resisting assimilation to the secular orientation of most other political parties, and they have failed to resist the corruption that seems to be endemic to the political process. Part of the task of the CSP will be to overcome the initial strangeness of the idea of a Christian party and to show by its policies and actions that it is not a matter of natural necessity that a

Christian party must either become assimilated or corrupt.

A general election must be held before November 1997. The CSP hopes to run candidates in at least 10 of the 41 constituencies, though a major problem for many CSP candidates will be the lack of a credible political profile — such a profile is normally generated by involvement in local politics. It would be to our advantage if the local elections were held before the general election; unfortunately, they have been postponed until 1998. Without discounting the forthcoming general election the CSP must set its sights on the general election after next (2002 or earlier) by which time, if it is to have any future in the new millennium, it must make an electoral impact.

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*The English Bible, a book which, if everything else in our language should perish, would alone suffice to show the whole extent of its beauty and power*

Macaulay

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# Karl Popper

## *Roger Sandall examines the conflict between tribalism and the strain of Civilization*

South of the borders the Balkans were once more doing what they tragically do best, and it was natural for Václav Havel to glance in their direction in an address he gave in 1995. The murderous hatreds displayed put him in mind of the difficulties which the “open society” had always faced, and which Karl Popper had described, in prevailing against “wave after wave of tribalism”. Taking a long view of the matter in *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Popper’s vision of successive waves looked back to the original barbarian invasions of Europe which had overwhelmed the classical world. Taking a shorter view, Havel linked both tribalism and Popper’s historical reflections to the Nazi era. Nazism had been a form of “tribal fury”, Havel declared, and his observations suggested that while tribalism coming in wave after wave had been a persistent threat to civilization, the tribal fury of both the Nazis and their Balkan epigones was truly a disaster to be feared.

As it happened, the President of the Czech Republic was not speaking in Prague, but in New Zealand, the unlikely but benign location where Popper had written *The Open Society and Its Enemies* over fifty years ago. Far from war zones of every kind, New Zealand had been a refuge from the horrors of Europe (writing *The Open Society* was something Popper described as his “war work”), and Havel complimented his audience in the capital city of Wellington for providing their distinguished guest with a sanctuary between 1937 and 1945. He seemed, however, less than fully informed about New Zealand society today. And his flattering remarks about

the splendid contrast between New Zealand and the Balkans, the former being a country where he believed different cultures continued harmoniously to coexist, were perhaps unduly optimistic. *Pace* Havel (and while any comparison with more gravely tormented parts of the planet would be absurd) in New Zealand what might be called revanchist tribalism is on the rise, with wave after wave of rhetoric about the glories of old-time Polynesian culture washing over the country day after day.

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### ***The Open Society’s argument about freedom versus totalitarianism is much better known than the argument about “the breakdown of tribalism” on which it rests***

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Like other colonies where the original population was displaced and in some cases lost its land, long-muted grievances are being aired. Prodigious reparations are claimed. Secession is canvassed. Maoris, who constitute 12% of the population, demand sovereignty for themselves. Not long ago a professor suggested that Maori, a Polynesian tongue spoken only by this 12% and nowhere else on earth, should replace English as the nation’s official language. With all this going on, tribalism as a concept was something Havel’s

New Zealand audience knew all too well. Though they must have been surprised to hear anyone say the word out loud, for in public life it was purged from the political lexicon long ago.

Yet Havel’s usage was impeccable. Tribalism was the word he wanted — indeed he could use no other, for that was exactly the word Popper had used, and Havel was using it in exactly the same way. But *The Open Society’s* argument about freedom versus totalitarianism is much better known than the argument about “the breakdown of tribalism” on which it rests. In Popper’s famous libertarian testament it is however a recurrent theme. It can be found on the very first page of volume one where we are told that the book “attempts to show that this civilization has not yet fully recovered from the shock of its birth — the transition from the tribal or ‘closed society’ . . . to the ‘open society’”, and that it is the shock of this transition which is one of the factors giving rise to “those reactionary movements which have tried, and still try, to overthrow civilization and to return to tribalism”. It is most fully explored in chapter 10 of volume one, which itself bears the title “The Open Society”, and treats “the two great wars of 431-421 and 419-403 BC, between Athenian democracy and the arrested oligarchic tribalism of Sparta” (v1:178). It occurs in passing during a discussion in volume two where he says that a fact with “grave political and institutional problems, is that to live in the haven of a tribe, or of a ‘community’ approaching a tribe, is for many men an emotional necessity”, the “strain of civilization” being “partly a result of this unsatisfied emotional need” (v2:98). And it underlies

what is said in chapter 24 in volume two, “The Revolt Against Reason”, where we’re told that the original “rationalist undertaking” in classical Greece was constantly threatened by mystical tendencies: “The issue between rationalism and irrationalism is of long standing. Although Greek philosophy started off as a rationalist undertaking, there were streaks of mysticism even in its first beginnings. It is (as hinted in chapter 10) the yearning for the lost unity and shelter of tribalism which expresses itself in these mystical elements within a fundamentally rational approach.” (v2:228. All references are to the Fifth (revised) edition of 1966.)

This yearning for “lost unities” was a symptom of what Popper called “the strain of civilization” — the strain of having to be individually responsible for one’s acts after ages of communal protection, guidance, and support. Other thinkers, he pointed out, had made similar diagnoses. “I suppose that what I call the ‘strain of civilization’”, wrote Popper tentatively, “is similar to the phenomenon which Freud had in mind when writing *Civilization and its Discontents*.” There is indeed something to this: but with the greatest respect, rather a lot hangs on those two little words, “I suppose”. The story of humanity according to Freud described a movement from original freedom to the confinement of cultural rules; from primitive liberty to civilized constraint. “The liberty of the individual is not a benefit of culture”, he wrote. “It was greatest before any culture... Liberty has undergone restrictions through civilization...”, the very desire for freedom having its origin in “the primitive roots of the personality, still unfettered by civilizing influences”. In the sharply contrasting story of humanity according to Popper, civilization itself is liberating because it frees men’s minds from the “fetters” of tribal taboos. Common to both thinkers however was a feeling that evolution had produced a human organism with needs and expectations ill suited to modern life, this giving rise to what Popper called “strain” and Freud called “discontent”. But while Freud was ambivalent about progress, Popper saw the transition

from tribalism to civilization as plainly a forward move. Throughout much of its long and shadowy evolutionary past mankind had lived in “closed societies” disciplined by dogmatic beliefs, communal forms of association, unquestioned loyalties, and barbaric penalties for thinking or doing the wrong thing. Then, amazingly, came Athens. A door opened. A light shone. Both the “open society” and modern civilization were born, and Pericles could proudly claim that “Our city is thrown open to the world; we never expel a foreigner... We are free to live exactly as we please, and yet we are always ready to face danger... We do not look upon discussion as a stumbling block in the way of political action, but as an indispensable preliminary to acting wisely... We believe that happiness is the fruit of freedom and freedom that of valour, and we do not shrink from the dangers of war... To sum up, I claim that Athens is the School of Hellas, and that the individual Athenian grows up to develop a happy versatility, a readiness for emergencies, and self-reliance.”

But there were many who did not want the door opened, and many more who could not endure the light. Though tribalism had for the first time spontaneously “broken down” in Greece and Athens generally welcomed the change, the rest of Greece wasn’t so sure. Pericles’ emphasis on self-reliance was worlds away from Plato’s disciplinary regiment of “guardians” — but the fact was that some people preferred guardianship and did not want to think for themselves. In reaction against Socratic questioning came anguished calls for a return to the past. And as he developed his theme Popper suggested that this profound emotional longing for the security of the communal environment was a permanent feature of our psychic life — every bit as hard to renounce as the Freudian renunciation of sexuality. Romantic primitivism was no mere midsummer madness. For better or worse Rousseau’s ideas would be always with us because a longing for tribal life would never die.

Popper arrived in New Zealand in March 1937 — partly perhaps as a

result of a misunderstanding. He had visited Copenhagen the year before, calling for a few days on Niels Bohr in the course of attending a “congress for scientific philosophy”. In Copenhagen someone by the name of Warren Weaver introduced himself as the European representative of the Rockefeller Foundation — “a charming gentleman”, wrote Popper in his autobiographical *Unended Quest*, “who took a great interest in me”. But the organization and its purposes were a complete mystery. It “meant nothing to me; I had never heard about the foundations and their work. (Apparently I was very naive.) It was only years later that I realized that if I had understood the meaning of this encounter it might have led to my going to America instead of to New Zealand”.

So off he went to the Antipodes, where he had been appointed to a Senior Lectureship in the Department of Psychology and Philosophy at Canterbury College, Christchurch, a middle-sized provincial town in the South Island of New Zealand. Here tribalism must have seemed very far away, and the strain of civilization imperceptible. Those of us who grew up there at the time remember a stream called the Avon, with willows along its banks, winding quietly past yellow beds of daffodils to a place called Heathcote, and from there to another place called Brighton where it reached the sea. Students wearing college blazers poled along in flat-bottomed boats mimicking other students at Oxford and Cambridge. The gothic buildings of the university, of the nearby school of Christ’s College, and of the spired cathedral in the town square, might easily suggest that one wasn’t in New Zealand at all — which was indeed just the impression hoped for by the colonists who settled the place. Most Maoris lived in the North Island. Hardly any lived in the South Island.

Yet this was all deeply deceptive. Taken as a whole, rather than as the somewhat atypical enclave Christchurch represented, New Zealand was far closer to old-time tribalism than the Vienna Popper had just left. It was about fifteen hundred years

since Goths and Vandals had been rampaging around Austria. But it had been only a hundred years since ferocious wars had torn Maori society apart. And since Popper's immediate superior and Head of Department was a combined psychologist and cultural anthropologist specialising in Maori studies one might wonder why he didn't make greater use of local material in his argument. Taboo is for Popper a leading feature of tribal psychology — forbidden actions and unthinkable thoughts, in contrast to Socrates' ideal of the "examined life" — and since the word "taboo" itself is Polynesian (in Maori, *tapu*) and the clash between Maori taboos and secular Europeanism has always been a prominent feature of New Zealand racial conflict, that might have been a place to start.

But this was not to be. Both his classical training and his determination to expose Plato's role in what had gone wrong meant that Sparta and Athens were where Popper's ideas naturally belonged. Above all Greece was where the first, spontaneous transition from tribalism took place (the disruption of colonial conquest and settlement in the Pacific was really something else) and the parallels he saw between Sparta and the neotribal ideals of fascism and communism were striking. Fascism and communism, he said, were forms of "arrested tribalism". In a similar way "the ultimate aim that dominated Sparta's policy was an attempt to arrest all change and to return to tribalism". The attempt was doomed to failure, for "innocence once lost cannot be regained" — but you could learn a lot from Sparta just the same.

Spartan foreign policy was almost a caricature of prevailing Nazi and Soviet foreign policy. Its first command was to "shut out all foreign influences which might endanger the rigidity of tribal taboos". Almost equally dangerous was the threat of egalitarianism: where democratic ideas were in conflict with tribalism, these must be firmly suppressed. Protectionism was the third item: trade put one in touch with seductive commodities and insidious new ideas, both of which had to be shunned. A Spartan's own ideas were self-evi-

dently the best: an intense xenophobia insisted on the superiority of one's own tribe and the inferiority of everyone else — something which needed to be continually reinforced lest social mixing occur. To be strong enough to enforce these policies a tribe always needed to strive for mastery, enslaving its neighbours when possible, dominating them when not.

Popper agreed that tribalism was not uniform all the way across the map. There were variations — the New Zealand Maori representing one of these. But the power of taboo meant that everywhere it tended to be cognitively static and incapable of intellectual advance. "When I speak of the rigidity of tribalism I do not mean that no changes can occur in the tribal ways of life. I mean rather that the comparatively infrequent changes have the character of religious conversions or revulsions, or of the introduction of new magical taboos. . ." In any case, within such a cultural setting taboos so dominate the life of the mind that there is no real equivalent to the "moral problems" of modern consciousness, let alone abstract speculation about good and evil. For the tribal world is a world without doubts, and the average tribesman "will rarely find himself in the position of doubting how he ought to act. The right way is always determined, though difficulties must be overcome in following it. It is determined by taboos, by magical tribal institutions which can never become objects of critical consideration."

The last was important. It linked the growth of critical rationalism with the acceptance of personal responsibility. In an open society, when things go wrong, they can no longer be blamed on fate, on sorcery, or on the gods. Although today there are still residues of magical ideas, "in our own way of life there is, between the laws of the state on the one hand and the taboos we habitually observe on the other, an ever-widening field of personal decisions, with its problems and responsibilities. . ." We rationally consider the effects of this or that piece of legislation: we cannot rest content with rules which say you mustn't do this, and you mustn't eat that — and definitely not

on Fridays. "In what follows", he says, "the magical or tribal or collectivist society will also be called the *closed society*, and the society in which individuals are confronted with personal decisions, the *open society*."

But how serious was all his talk about tribalism? Did Popper expect his readers to take him literally — or was *nationalism* the real villain of the piece, *tribalism* being largely used for the polemical advantages of equating the nationalistic frenzies of Hitler's Germany with the sort of thing that occurred in the primitive world? Something like this often seems to have been involved. In *The Open Society*, constructions which employ 'tribalism' alongside 'nationalism', or are coupled to it in various ways, noticeably outnumber single uses of the term. We read that the principle of the national state rests on "the romantic fictions of nationalism, racialism, and tribalism", each of which is to be taken as almost equally fictitious and absurd (v1:288). Again, the national state is "an irrational, a romantic and Utopian dream, a dream of naturalism and tribal collectivism" (v2:51), nationalism itself appealing "to our tribal instincts, to passion and prejudice, and to our nostalgic desire to be relieved from the strain of individual responsibility..." (v2:49)

Yet although nationalism might appeal to tribal instincts, and though for polemical purposes there were certain advantages in equating the two, nationalism and tribalism were nonetheless distinct. This was because freedom of thought and enquiry, freedom from the fears and terrors of a dogmatic taboo-ridden world, were the ultimate values by which political systems were to be measured. Societies which allowed free truth-seeking were good societies, and those where scientists could successfully solve problems were better still. Nationalism could be a nuisance, as in the 19th century dispute between England and France over who first found the planet Neptune, and in scientific matters of this kind it was the source of a great deal of *folie de grandeur*. But only tribalism represented a cognitive system designed for failure — so taboo-ridden nobody

would dare to look for a new planet. In much the same way the Nazi physics of Philipp Lenard, the Soviet biology of Trofim Lysenko, represented the sort of cognitive paralysis or intellectual cul-de-sac otherwise found only in the pre-modern world.

Tribalism and nationalism both embodied the particular, the local, and the limited, and if Popper was anything he was a liberal universalist, who hoped to see the withering away of nationalism as the human family was brought more and more within the bounds of a rationalistic social order. He had been a Social Democrat in Vienna for twenty years and a disdain for nationalism went with the territory. He was also just the kind of Kantian universalist which post-modern cultural anthropology has steadfastly set itself against. Indeed, no words could better describe Popper in this regard than those of Ernest Gellner describing Kant: "It is the universal in man which he revered, not the specific, and certainly not the culturally specific. In such a philosophy, there is no place for the mystique of the idiosyncratic culture. There is in fact hardly any room for culture in the anthropological sense at all."

Popper's head of department in New Zealand, Professor Ivan Sutherland, was however a psychologist cum anthropologist, who took both "the mystique of the idiosyncratic culture" and "culture in the anthropological sense" very seriously indeed. And before long he came to develop a pathological dislike for the young and formidable Viennese, whose head was filled with ideas about the relation between politics, the growth of knowledge, and the state of the world, and who had so alarmingly arrived on his staff. The precise reasons for this we can only speculate about, but the upshot was that before long he was obstructing Popper in any way he could. At first glance Sutherland might have looked more as if he were a psychologist pure and simple. He had indeed been appointed to head the Department of Psychology and Philosophy in Christchurch on the strength of his psychological credentials. But the reality was more complicated. A New

Zealander five years older than Popper, Sutherland had first wanted to be a Methodist minister. At university he took up social science, travelling to London and coming under the influence of Graham Wallas, but in the words of one who knew him, "fundamentally he had the evangelical mind", and this strong missionary impulse became concentrated on Maori affairs. By the time he took up the Chair in 1937 he seems to have written almost nothing about psychology for nearly ten years.

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liberal universalist,  
who hoped to see the  
withering away of  
nationalism as the  
human family was  
brought more and  
more within the  
bounds of a  
rationalistic social  
order***

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Now a combination of cultural anthropology (which normalises the primitive and treats civilization as aberrant) and psychology (which may equally seek to normalize Freud's "primordial, deeply buried mental states") can be a very unstable mix. Some minds can handle it and some cannot — and the evidence from Margaret Mead onward has not been encouraging. The words of Professor Stanley Diamond, according to whom anthropology "is the most alienated of the professions", might also be borne in mind, for a schadenfreudian delight in the failings of civilization is often just as strong a motive for joining the profession as a positive interest in tribal life. And then there are other complications. Fieldwork brings the researcher into close personal and social relationships with communities where objectivity is hard to sustain, and be-

fore long the anthropologist becomes an advocate for their way of life, calmly relativising all matters of truth and value. Of course it wasn't always like this. But in today's postmodern version of anthropology universal relativization is virtually a cliché. And the invariable result is intellectual absurdity.

To cite only the most recent illustrative example to catch my eye, here is an anecdote reported by Richard Dawkins in his 1995 book *River Out of Eden*. "Suppose there is a tribe", he said to an anthropological colleague, "who believe that the moon is an old calabash tossed into the sky. Do you really claim that our scientific truth — that the moon is about a quarter of a million miles away and a quarter the diameter of the earth — is no more true than the tribe's calabash?"

"Yes," came the answer. "We are just brought up in a culture that sees the world in a scientific way. Neither way is more true than the other."

This is the opposite of everything Karl Popper stood for and combatted for years. It would of course be anachronistic to assume that back in the 1940s a man like Sutherland shared such views. In his day truth itself had not yet been relativised or ironised as "truth" and facts had not yet been abolished or ironised as "facts". Sutherland probably thought of himself as a man straightforwardly trying to establish the facts of the Maori situation in order to improve it. Nevertheless, the school of cultural anthropology to which he was drawn categorically denied any value in general laws of social evolution, in progressive stages, or in the claim that civilization was better than tribalism. It therefore held that there could be no possible reason for celebrating the change from a "closed" to an "open" society since the distinction was both meaningless and false.

This being so, need one look any further to explain the obsessive dislike, amounting to downright hatred, which Sutherland came to feel for Popper, and which Popper himself believed must have had something to do with Sutherland's eventual suicide? One might easily think not — though the truth seems otherwise. Those who

knew both men at the time are inclined to discount the role of their merely intellectual differences. Colin Simkin, Emeritus Professor of Economics at the University of Sydney, was a lifelong friend and associate of Karl Popper's, and is the author of both *Popper's Views on Natural and Social Science* and an informative memoir about the philosopher's New Zealand days. A lecturer in economics at Canterbury College at the time, he reports that the topics treated in *The Open Society* were not the sorts of things Popper was lecturing on, or would be likely to discuss with his head of department. In a letter, he writes that there was more than enough basis for conflict in "the difference between Karl's teaching of logic (propositional calculus, etc.) and the staple fare of Aristotelianism (essentialism and syllogisms) which philosophy departments in New Zealand had long dished out to students. Karl was subject to carping criticism about this. This led to difficulties in examining and teaching including scheduling lectures at inconvenient hours."

It was nonetheless a surprising situation. On the one hand we have a highly disputatious man, Popper, engaged in 1940 on a magnum opus, *The Open Society*, setting forth the failings of tribalism. On the other hand we have his Head of Department, Sutherland, publishing in that same momentous year of 1940 a major and widely-noticed collection of papers which is in several respects a defence of the tribal world. Add to this the fact that the two men are by then bitter enemies. Yet their mutual enmity seems to have owed nothing whatever to the inherent and profound antagonism of their political and social views. Academia is full of strange things, and this was just one of them.

At all events it is a fact that Sutherland instigated a prolonged campaign of harassment against his philosophy lecturer. Colin Simkin describes in his 1990 memoir how Popper's "heavy teaching burden as the only philosopher... was made more onerous by continual harassment" from his Head of Department. Attempts were made to curtail Popper's borrowing privileges at the library, and Sutherland even

went "so far as to make him buy paper used for non-teaching purposes". Matters came to a climax when Sutherland went to the police alleging that Popper was probably an agent of influence for the Axis powers — if not an actual spy. The Viennese visitor was thickly accented, and to the average New Zealand constable during wartime this was more than enough cause for suspicion.

When the police came knocking on his door, however, the lively and loquacious Popper was able to dissuade them from making an over-hasty arrest, and in the following days, shocked at their pitiful ignorance, he was seen carrying armfuls of books down to the police station to bring the officers up-to-date on the real nature of Nazis. For this episode Sutherland was forced to apologise to Popper by the college Rector. But his vendetta only intensified from that day on. It should of course be made clear that Popper was also surrounded by a number of men and women who fully appreciated him, who provided stimulation and companionship, and who generously assisted him in his work, as he acknowledges in a note to the first edition of *The Open Society*. Yet the hostility he had to endure from his head of department makes the achievement of the book seem all the more remarkable.

Karl Popper regarded New Zealand as an outpost of the Open Society he admired, years later declaring it to be "the freest country I knew". Yet how well he really grasped the complexities of the racial situation is unclear — partly no doubt because they were largely invisible in the quasi-English cathedral town where he lived and worked. But just as Havel earlier this year seemed unaware of the currents of tribal resentment in New Zealand today, it is possible that Popper was almost equally oblivious of the complex historical background to the Maori situation in 1940.

By that year New Zealand was not just an outpost of the Open Society — it was a Polynesian outpost already showing signs of nervousness about its own legitimacy. Intellectuals were beginning to look back with guilty regret

on the heroic days of conquest and settlement. Exactly one hundred years had passed since the Maori tribes had been militarily defeated and politically contained by the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi. As the centenary approached, historical reconsideration was under way, and much more sympathetic accounts of Maori life were appearing. And the leader of this movement of reappraisal in Christchurch, the editor of *The Maori People Today*, a major collection of papers dealing with the Maori cause, a man inspired by "his appreciation of the values of non-European ways of life and his active sympathy with the problems of a minority group", was none other than Popper's Head of Department, Ivan Sutherland himself.

If Popper is right, tribalistic longings are an invariable symptom of the strain of civilization. There is a singular irony in the fact that it was his academic fate in New Zealand to be yoked together with someone who personally embodied that discontent. In 1935, in *The Maori Situation*, Sutherland had written a book which invited sympathy for many of the things *The Open Society* explicitly disparaged. He was busy editing another. And yet at the same time here was his precocious subordinate, a combative Viennese of great erudition, working away on a project which declared that tribal or closed societies were dangerous, that an enthusiasm for primitive society was sheer romanticism, and that the "arrested tribalism" of both fascism and communism was the major menace of our time.

Along with others Sutherland wanted "justice" for the Maori people. Yet the concept of justice itself was a product of civilized thought about values and rights and human potential, and had nothing whatever to do with a traditional Maori culture — a culture of chiefs and slaves, hierarchy and taboos, in which "man was made for war, and woman for the warrior's rest". In his writings on Maori affairs Sutherland hoped to restore honour and prestige to a tribal culture which had been broken by civilization. Against this Popper argued that all such efforts were doomed. As he argued then, and

as is even more evident now, tribalism is the classical proof that lost innocence cannot be regained. And the danger of artificial attempts to reinstate it as a basis for modern life could not be more disturbingly evident than in the recent New Zealand film *Once Were Warriors*.

By 1945 Karl Popper was nearing the end of his stay. His manuscript for *The Open Society* had at last been published and he was soon to sail for England, leaving the obscurity of a life which might almost have been on another planet for international celebrity and justly enduring fame. In the teeth of the Soviet triumphalism of 1945, as if to spite the score of “revolutionary” governments being steadily imposed by the Red Army in the east, he argued that far and away the most significant historic change had been “the transition from the closed to the open society”, and that this itself was “one of the

deepest revolutions through which mankind had passed”.

In 1951 Sutherland took his own life. Toward the end his preoccupation with keeping Maori culture alive had become all-absorbing, and we are told that he was drawn back more and more into the flesh and blood lives of Maori communities, with all their reciprocal bonds and human responsibilities, “deepening his studies of present day Maori life, on the East Coast with his oldest Ngati Porou friends, in the Waikato and the Urewera, in North Auckland, in Taranaki.”

If it is true that anthropology is the most alienated of the professions, it is equally true that the vocational choice of anthropology is sometimes a signal of personal distress, of alienation from modernity, of inability to cope. In addition to this, the conflict between the obligations and duties of the tribal world he studies and the wider civilized world

of which he is also a part sometimes produces unbearable strains in the anthropologists’s sense of identity — his sense of who he is and where he belongs and what his duties are — and it would be surprising if this did not play a part in Sutherland’s breakdown. When his obituarist wrote that “the strain told”, one feels that the decision to end it all came also from conflicting allegiances which had become unmanageable. The cause of his unending personal struggle with Karl Popper and its final crisis might be seen as yet another symptom of the strain of civilization itself.

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# English Spoken

*Mervyn Matthews*

I have always regarded the English language as something profoundly worthy of admiration, perhaps because I have never been able to speak it properly. My Welsh accent has been graciously described as “attractive”, and “theatrical”, but I would be only too happy to be rid of it. How I have longed to possess the fine and fluted diphthongs of a Prince Charles, a former Lord Stansgate, or a Peter Shore.

All languages, one imagines, are praised by their native speakers, and are adequate for the needs of society. But admiration for English is particularly well-founded. Although it developed late (Welsh, for example, is many centuries older) it is grammatically simple, with only half a dozen irregu-

lar nouns and a few dozen irregular verbs. No silly masculine, feminine, neuter genders for the common nouns, no tones, and none of the horrendous morphology which clutters (say) the Slavonic languages, not to mention the minds of their speakers. The whole world is happy to learn it (with the exception, that is, of the French, who have actually made the use of English words *illegal* in some cases). Yet English virtually contains français within it and has, I believe, twice as many words. Perhaps it would be sensible to teach our children French not as a genuine foreign language, but as a dialect for use on continental holidays.

Of course, even good conservatives must recognise that spoken English has

to change, not only to embrace new words and concepts, but also to shed the wrinkles of age. Yet having said that, linguistic conservatism is entirely defensible: one cannot condone the deliberate neglect of educated forms, loss of subtlety, sloppy expression or the offensive use of four letter words. Degeneration should be countered, but some things, surely, clung to. I must say, though, with regard to the four letter words, that I personally would hate to see them disappear, if only because I sometimes use them myself when there is no one in earshot. They can be helpful in releasing intense emotion. Suppose, for example, a middle-class intellectual (the sort of chap who reads the *Salisbury Review*) were carrying a fine bowl of

trifle into his dining room, and a piece of his cracked ceiling dropped into it, bespattering everything in sight with his almond custard, and depriving his guests of a long planned culinary delight. He would, in my view, be quite justified in uttering the usual proletarian term for copulation. His guests would almost certainly commiserate, and tolerate such colourful verbal reaction. But use of such language should be restricted to circumstances which are exceptionally trying.

Degeneration is all too evident around us. Total confusion now reigns, for example, in the use of apostrophes. In my distant youth barrow boys were less educationally pampered, but none would ever have written "leek's" and "banana's" — at least, I never saw it. But nowadays you observe the same sort of thing painted on advertisements in Chelsea. Everybody knew the differences between "its" and "it's". My son, who went through Westminster School at horrific cost to his hard pressed progenitor, blandly told the latter that someone had "sent a friend and I" a present. His teachers had presumably not covered the dative, or had led him to believe that in this context the pronoun "me" has an uncultured ring, which it hasn't. I am much aggrieved by the loss of the pronoun "whom": although rather pointless, it is apparently our last distinct accusative, and well worth keeping for all sorts of sentimental reasons.

English is in a much worse state in America, where the threats to civilised speech include the loss (already well advanced) of temporal nuance ("did you read this book yet?", instead of "have you read ..."), the prohibition of masculine pronouns to cover both sexes, the senseless suppression of vocational feminine nouns (heroine, manageress) and all the linguistic absurdities of political and racial correctness, including dreadful limitations on the use of the adjective "black". Massive Hispanic immigration may cause further damage. American juvenile slang might disconcert, but it should, I imagine, be tolerated as a natural growth from below, the best that can be managed, given the state of their schooling.

Our language, of course, has always had a pretty bad deal in the remoter parts of the world, where its universal value is appreciated, but trained teachers are few. Post-communist Russia is a case in point. Time was (under Stalin) when any foreign connections, linguistic no less than political, could attract unwelcome attention. Indeed, the more abject Soviet citizens boasted an ignorance of foreign tongues in order to ensure a quiet life or, alternatively, to increase their chances of getting a visa to travel abroad. In fact, had we but known it, the good old KGB was protecting English from terrible potential depredation.

Things began to change under Khrushchev, when a knowledge of our tongue became socially desirable, and parents hastened to send their children to schools where a few subjects were taught in a heavily Russianised variant. "Perestroika" brought the possibility of association with English speakers, particularly in the capitals, and of foreign travel for ever greater numbers. The Russian upper classes are now possessed of an uncommon urge to learn English, though without any understanding of its subtleties, or proper facilities for learning them. Ask the average Russian English-speaker meaningfully to interpret: "She was a frumpish wench from Golder's Green, but my God, could she shimmy."

The problem is that few qualified English teachers in their right minds, and certainly no English-language editors, would settle in the Russian provinces (like other inaccessible parts of the world) where they are needed. So outside Moscow and St. Petersburg, where things are not too bad, Russia is developing a culture of published and spoken English of quite appalling quality.

The Russians may not realise this, or worry about it. And perhaps we shouldn't either. We have problems enough trying to protect speech at home.

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## *Sophist's Corner*

'The crisis of modern culture is a crisis of narrative.' Discuss.

'There is no "post-colonialism": there are just different texts and themes which some Western critics find it convenient to lump together.' Discuss.

'Both feminist and queer theory question the inscription of sexuality as identity.' Discuss with relation to *either* feminist or queer critical theory *or both*.

'Reading removes the subject-object division that constitutes all perception.' (ISER). Discuss.

Questions from Oxford University Degree Examination in English Language and Literature.

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# The Abolition of Thought

## *Roger Scruton considers its absence from education and public life*

Until two or three years ago I was spending all my working hours either in a university or reflecting on the needs of a university and trying to produce the kind of writing that university life requires. So I had many opportunities to consider what has actually been happening to our universities in the years since the war, and in particular in the last two decades. It seems to me not that thinking has ceased, but that people have cultivated and acquired the art of pretending to think.

I was educated in the days when there was a serious curriculum, which involved a considerable amount of knowledge: knowledge not only about our own society and history and culture but also about other societies, other histories and other cultures. Those of my generation who taught the humanities in the sixties and seventies were still teaching according to the old curriculum. It required us to teach not only the history of our own country but the history of ancient and medieval peoples. It required our colleagues to teach ancient languages, Latin and Greek in particular, and the culture that goes with those languages. Our colleagues had to teach religions which were no longer believed in; they had to inform their students about the intricate details of Greek and Roman mythology, about the habits, customs and values of the ancient tribes of Israel, Babylon and Egypt. These bits of information went naturally into the heads of young people throughout the last century and most of this century.

The curriculum that was being taught, in other words, was not simply confined to the culture that young people imbibe from their surroundings. It involved an education in a whole series of cultures quite unrelated to each other except through the accident of history. It in-

involved studying cultures of people who had long since disappeared from the earth, studying their languages, their gods, their ways of life, their expectations, and their history. It was indeed a multicultural curriculum.

This old curriculum has been destroyed in the last ten years by something called multi-culturalism, which tells us that our traditional education was ethnocentric. For it concentrated on the culture produced by dead, white, European males, as the American idiom has it. In place of the traditional curriculum was to be put the "multicultural" curriculum. This involves studying, or teaching at least, the products of a variety of cultures supposedly represented in the modern urban landscape. The result of this move has been that no culture in particular has been imparted to the youth of today, nor have they been given much knowledge about any culture other than their own. The multicultural curriculum typically involves studying rap music, comic strips, Rastafarianism — off-shoots of disinherited minorities in inner cities, most of whom are driven by their migrant situation into absorbing what culture they can from the television and the mass media. The result is an entirely mono-cultural curriculum, focused in an uneducative way on the trivia of day-to-day life in a modern urban environment. The 'multicultural' curriculum does not involve the acquaintance with any culture other than the commercialised mish-mash which is available to youth already. It is therefore not something that can really be put forward as a serious topic of study. This difficulty has come to the attention of those who have tried to teach according to the new multicultural programmes in American universities. On the whole they have recognised that there is noth-

ing very much that they are being asked to teach; they are required merely to rehearse the obsessions which students have when they come to university in order that they should retain them when they leave.

There is no going back, because our old curriculum, the truly multicultural curriculum, required serious knowledge before you could even begin to study it. You had to know some Latin, you had to know some basic history, and you had to have acquired these things at the age when your interest in them was still awakened. It is very difficult at the age of twenty two to begin to acquire the outline knowledge of history which is necessary to make sense of all the details. We are therefore now seeing a new generation of graduates who do not really have any structure to their thinking, because the time when structure could be acquired was passed over in attending to trivia.

It only required a little bit of thinking to recognise that our curriculum as it existed was multicultural, as multicultural as it could conceivably be without being merely confused. Under pressure from fashionable ideology and also the general laziness which confronts us in the modern world, this old curriculum was steadily abolished.

Feminism is, to my mind, another vehicle for pretended thought, in an area where thinking has been very much needed. What are men, what are women? How do they and should they stand in relation to each other? It is not as though people are not familiar with this topic, it is not as though a great deal of human thought has not been devoted to it. If you read the novels of Jane Austen you will see intense and extended meditation on what is possible between man and woman, and also what is ideal. All that

has been thrown away by the academic feminists, who regard even the novels of Jane Austen as constructed around an agenda formed by men. It is as though the whole history of mankind had been produced by one sex alone. If that were so it would say something serious about the other sex. But of course it is not so. As everybody knows, the relations between the sexes are the product of a million years of constant negotiation. The wisdom involved in that process has been encapsulated in the art and literature that has come down to us. It is this art and literature that we should be studying if we want to know about the situation of woman in the modern world. Feminism has thrown all traditional sources of social knowledge away. In universities, especially in America, it has set up branches of the curriculum devoted purely to the reading of feminist writers: *women's studies* or, in Stanford University, *feminist studies* — the assumption being that you have to be a feminist in order even to sit in the classroom. The effect is to close the mind entirely. Here is a subject which implies in its title that you have to agree with certain far from credible prejudices if you are to graduate. That too is an example of the undoing of thought.

Another instance, politically much more relevant in England, is the lobby in favour of animal rights. The slightest bit of thinking would here have prevented a great deal of confusion and brought much emotion to a sensible quietus. Anybody who thinks about the concept of a right will know that animals cannot have rights without also having duties; it would then be possible to blame them, punish them, reward them and also hold them guilty for their violations of others' rights. In which case whole species, like the eagle and the lion, would have to be condemned as inexorable violators of the rights of others. The confusion that would enter into our dealing with animals, if we really thought that they had rights, is so great that it would be impossible to relate to them coherently at all. It needs only a very small amount of thought to recognise that animals do not have rights and cannot have rights. Yet there is a movement in Britain, involving the lobbying of Parliament

and mass advertising, based on the assumption that animals do have rights and that terrible crimes are being committed every day when calves are rattled off in their cattle trucks for slaughter. Of course we cannot treat animals in any way we want. Nevertheless, a movement for animal rights cannot lead to anything but confusion. If we are to think seriously about the problem of how we deal with animals, we must begin from seeing animals as they are; namely creatures which can suffer, and which can also feel joy and pleasure, but which do not have rights and duties because they are not moral beings. This is another instance of the undoing of thought where thought is very much required.

The European process shows a similar deficit of thinking. Most of us are in favour of free and open relations with our European neighbours. Being by nature trading people, we are not protectionists. We should like there to be peaceful co-existence in Europe: we should like to exchange as much as possible with other countries. But why does this have to be embodied in a so-called union, and why are we given such strange descriptions of this union? We are told that it has a single legal system, and a court set up to adjudicate the obedience to the Treaty. At the same time, we are told, national sovereignty is in no way threatened. When you ask questions as to what that means you are referred to the concept of subsidiarity, invented by the papal court before the war in order to try and explain the relationship of the See of Rome to the dioceses of the Church of Rome. That is a weird thing to be offered in answer to the question whether Britain is or is not a sovereign power. In answer to the question "Are we sovereign or not?" there is no frank reply. Nobody has seriously thought about it. There is not such a thing as a sovereignty that can be over-ridden when it is in conflict with some other demand; yet the Treaty of Maastricht at every point implies that our Parliament can be over-ridden where its decisions conflict with those of the Commission in Brussels. Indeed, this Commission can issue directives which are automatically laws, binding on us

despite the fact that our Parliament has not even discussed them. We are told that this is no real compromise of sovereignty and that subsidiarity guarantees all that the British people ever had.

This absence of thinking displays also a lack of knowledge of history and a failure to reflect on what our history means. We have not gone through the two centuries of revolution, war, occupation and defeat that have characterised all the other countries in the Union. We have not gone through this because we have had an independent legal system, based on the common law, and outside the control of the state. Through that legal system our national sovereignty has grown as a property of the British people and not of Parliament. It is a sovereignty vested in the common law and also in the Crown as representative of that law. This means that we have always enjoyed a freedom and a stability which have been the exception and not the rule on the continent. It is perfectly reasonable for us to object to being brought under a system of law which not only dictates to us but is derived from the Napoleonic jurisdiction against which half of Europe once spent fifty years in rebellion. It is perfectly reasonable to say not only that there has been a loss of sovereignty, but that it will be a disaster for this country, whose political and national character is founded in an assumption of sovereignty of a very peculiar kind.

I will give one final example of the way in which thinking has been driven from our public life. Many of us were brought up on the Third Programme, that wonderful invention of the old Reith-type BBC which enabled you to sit for a whole evening being instructed, listening to highly educated people giving prepared discourses on things that you really wanted to know — on anything from Hegel's metaphysics to the fishing of the oceans. Fifteen minute talks, beautifully delivered and with the maximum information, obedient to the highest standards of English syntax and style, were the stuff of life to us. They would be interrupted by concerts, themselves carefully put together for the entertainment of listeners who were serious music lovers. The Third Programme was a

constant companion, both educative and witty. All that was suddenly destroyed and very recently. You could always rely on hearing something improving when you turned on the Third Programme. But it is at your own risk that you turn on Radio 3. It might be pop music that is being played, or a conversation between two half-educated people about a matter which they dimly understand, calling each other by their first names, easy-going and ill-prepared. The implication is that there is nothing very much to learn, but if you want to overhear this conversation, why not, this is just as good a way of wasting your time as any other. A channel through which thought entered the public life of our country has been silted up with all too familiar rubbish. We are not to provide programmes which cater to élites, because élites are no longer acceptable. It is part of the BBC's ethos to be democratic, where democracy is understood as giving no special value to any one section of the community over any other. The uneducated and the educated, the cultured and the uncultured, the intelligent and the unintelligent: all these have to be treated equally. They must have an equal voice on the wavelengths; if there is a programme that seems to have been designed for those people who think of themselves as part of an educated élite, then it must be brought down to the level of everything else, lest people should acquire the idea that there is a real distinction between that which is worth listening to and that which is not.

Thought automatically makes a distinction between truth and falsehood, between good and evil, and between thinking and unthinking. Thought threatens the idea of equality. There is a real distinction between those people who can do it and those people who cannot. The best way of undoing its subversive effect is to invent pseudo-thought: a commodity which looks like thought but which is available to anyone. If you look at the writings of literary critics today, especially those who are looking for jobs in English departments, you will find pseudo-thought very much in the ascendant. Deconstruction, radical feminism and so on produce concepts which can be used to create an

impression of thinking in people who are not thinking at all. These concepts make something look extremely difficult which is in fact rather easy. The net effect is always that no judgement can be made as to whether anything is good or bad. Anything goes. You can apply this pseudo-thought to anything and call it literature. Thinking is driven out of the university precisely in order that what remains should be available to anyone. However stupid you are you can write an essay in the idiom of Jacques Derrida. It will look like a piece of serious theory about literature but will in fact say nothing. The art of saying nothing has been cultivated to such an extent that whole branches of the academic curriculum are now devoted to it, my own subject, philosophy, being by no means innocent.

I have painted a rather depressing picture of what has been happening in the intellectual world. But all is not lost. There are two things that people with our background, culture and education should do by way of maintaining the vigilant presence of thinking in public life. The first thing which I would recommend is to make a great effort to hide the fact that you are thinking. In the Persia of the sixteenth century the Shi'ites, who had to conceal the fact that they were Shi'ites, invented a wonderful concept, the concept of *ketman*, which means 'hiding' in Persian. You hide your deepest beliefs in order to conserve them, and study to simulate the beliefs of your surrounding culture. You affect to agree with everything. You look smilingly on beliefs which to you are absolute anathema, and your own beliefs you conceal deep within your heart. This practice the Druze call *taqiyya*, meaning holiness. For them it is the only real holiness, to conceal that which you really believe in order to please your neighbours. This is the situation of the educated person in the modern world. You must hide your education so as not to give offence, and so as to arrive in the place where you can make a difference. If you reveal the fact that you are educated you will never be given a job teaching in a school; and it is increasingly unlikely that you would be considered for promotion in a university. But

when you have found the opportunity, you must act on your education and try your hardest to pass it on. That is the other piece of advice that I would give.

In the end rubbish has a very small survival value. It can survive only when produced in large enough quantities, so as not to be immediately swept away by the natural habit of looking for the truth. Rubbish requires mass production if it is to maintain any hold on public life; that is why universities are working full time to produce it. For the moment they are succeeding, and therefore producing a wholly uneducated ruling class. Nevertheless there are young people who are able to perceive the difference between rubbish and the real thing. All they need is to encounter the one educated person who believes in education and is able to communicate it. If that encounter can occur between those two people, then the light of education will not be extinguished. It only needs a few people to pass it on. Those people, once they have acquired it, and as long as they have also acquired the habit of *ketman* will be able to ascend to the highest positions in society and use their influence for the good. For it is true that there is the greatest difference in the world between the educated and the uneducated person and that, unless the uneducated are able to conspire to prevent them, the educated will advance. Educated people will end up controlling things and that is what must happen. But it can only happen if the educated acquire the habit of concealing this fact from the public eye.

Nietzsche was perhaps the first to perceive this clearly. He perceived that in the epoch of the democratic man there will be a vast conspiracy of the underclass to prevent any kind of human distinction. But this conspiracy will require such effort to keep it going that it will only be the fault of the intelligent if they do not finally emerge from it, to reassert their natural right of domination.

**This article was the Lantern Lecture given to the British Housewives League in October 1995.**

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# Press Freedom in Yugoslavia

In October 1952 the Foreign Office received the following classic account of a totalitarian régime's attempts to control culture while maintaining a pretence of sponsoring freedom of expression.

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Sir

In his despatch No. 72 of the 19th October, 1951, Sir Charles Peake analysed some of the problems in the world of literature which were exercising the main theorists of Yugoslav Communism and showed how M. Milovan Djilas, one of the Ministers without Portfolio in the Yugoslav Government, was trying to reconcile various apparently contradictory aims: to differentiate the Yugoslav system from Soviet bureaucracy and at the same time to prevent any ideological sliding towards the West, to remove the danger of any opposition to the Yugoslav Government and to prove that in the service of the Yugoslav State lies perfect freedom.

2. In the past year, as was to be expected, the difficulty of reconciling these aims has not decreased. In fact, as in the political field more and more emphasis has been laid on the need to dispense with state direction and "administrative action", the theoretical position of Djilas and the other mandarins of the Yugoslav intellectual world became more and more untenable. Authors have been able, not only to ignore directives and advice, but to accuse those who gave them of falling into Stalinist bureaucratic heresies. No direct criticism has, of course, been published of the régime or of its methods, but in the newspapers there has been an "escape" on an increasing scale into world news from edifying stories about the role of the Party. In literature there has been an often explicit rejection of "politically conscious" attitudes and of what is known

as the "slogan literature" of the immediate post-war years. More and more literary men seem to have been returning to the concept of "art for art's sake" and to the extravagant surrealist style which was the "French flu" of the inter-war period in Belgrade.

3. This is the background of the quarrels, of which there has been a surprising degree of public evidence for two or three months, between the official and less official parties in the Yugoslav literary world. These open quarrels are in themselves interesting proof of the highly pugnacious Serb temperament, and of the increased possibility of free discussion in Yugoslavia of something more than minor issues. They prove however to have had more than purely esoteric significance. They appear, in fact, to be a symptom of the dialectical battle which has been going on between the Yugoslav political mandarins on the one side and a number of Westernising Communists and non-Communists on the other. It is evident that M. Djilas himself is very much concerned and has been operating through M. Vlado Dedijer, the editor of *Borba*, M. Drenovac, his own Secretary and a member of the staff of *Borba*, and Mme. Mitra Mitrovic, the Serbian Minister of Culture. In the literary world the most important incidents in this continued conflict have been the following:

(i) The refusal of the Serbian Academy of Science and Culture to elect M. Milan Bogdanovic, editor of the semi-official literary fortnightly *Knizhevne Novine* to a vacant seat among their number, and the ensuing press campaign against them towards the end of July.

(ii) The withdrawal of a translation of Anouilh's *Bal des Voleurs* from the repertory of the Belgrade Drama Thea-

tre and the ensuing open attacks by the more "Western" Communists on the Serbian cultural authorities for interference with the "right of laughter".

(iii) Closely connected with the above, a continuous and open war between *Knizhevne Novine* and a rather less official literary fortnightly, *Svedocanstvo*, in which the latter has accused the directors of the former of trying to establish a literary dictatorship and of employing the abhorred "administrative methods" in so doing. The final result has been the closing down of both periodicals and the announcement that they will be replaced next year by a new one.

4. Since these incidents the official position of M. Djilas and his supporters has been crystallized in two public pronouncements. The first is a distinctly skilful article by M. Djilas himself in which he professes to sum up the course of the controversy. His main point is that the non-political bodies have been making too great claims for themselves. They certainly, he said, had freedom to publish and air their views, if anyone wanted to hear them, and this was proof of the existence of freedom of opinion in Yugoslavia. They had however been claiming that their own reaction against "slogan literature" and their retreat into "art for art's sake" represented in some wider sense a victory for freedom, and they therefore accused their critics of being the enemies of freedom. This claim and this accusation could not be admitted. The second pronouncement has just been made to the Yugoslav Authors' Congress by an eminent literary figure, M. Krlezha. The conversion of this personality into an official mouthpiece is surprising, since he has in the past been notable, not for his support of the Communist régime, but for op-

posing anything within sight (indeed it was he who fired the opening shot for *Svedocanstvo* in its recent battle with *Knizhevne Novine*). Krlezha calls for a much more active left wing literature. It is, however, the more negative parts of his speech which are most interesting, as well as most intelligible. He deplores the resurgence of those purely literary gentlemen who say that "revolutions come and go but lyric poetry remains" and notes with regret the influence which they exercise even on the intellectual left. Moreover he puts into the mouth of various "deviationists" criticism of Marxist methods which curiously enough he fails to answer in any of the existing reports of his speech. These criticisms are briefly that the Marxist materialists are themselves the victims of outdated idealist illusions, and that they are trying to impose an intellectual dictatorship by administrative means.

5. Of more immediate interest have been the activities of M. Djilas and the official party in the journalistic world. The first manifestation of these activities took place, I now learn, earlier in the summer when our proposal that a second party of Yugoslav journalists should visit England was refused, nominally on administrative but essentially on ideological grounds. An American proposal for a similar visit to the United States of America met with a similar refusal. In recent weeks it appears that something like a systematic purge is being organised of all but the most strictly orthodox press. This has hit the non-Party daily *Politika* particularly hard, and a number of its editorial staff, two of whom are particularly well known to members of this Embassy, have been removed. It was presumably to mark this occasion that *Borba* published on the 30th September a resounding leader on the responsibilities of the press (which should include a constant fight against all enemies of social democracy) and on the meaning of freedom, which could only be attained by deep understanding of the revolutionary process and must not be abused to give the "bourgeois" any voice in the press.

6. A number of immediate reasons suggest themselves for the action taken

against *Politika* and other newspapers. The Party must put its house in order before its Sixth Congress. The sales of *Borba* have been declining (a natural reaction by the public to the indigestible quantity of "Party" news carried in its columns) and those of *Politika* have been rising, and some action has been necessary to adjust matters. The movement of decentralisation has hit the central Agitprop committee, and there is a corresponding movement to find jobs for the boys at the expense of those who can be accused of reactionary tendencies. The editorial staff of "Politika" have been sufficiently far off the Party line in their treatment of e.g. Eva Peron and ex-King Farouk, to expose themselves to treatment as scapegoats.

7. Behind all these short-term motives, however, it is probable that some kind of groundswell of anti-liberalism is operating. It would be too much to expect the process of loosening-up to work smoothly and continuously under a Communist régime, and I have no doubt that the tides of liberty will ebb and flow periodically. It is the journalists who are more likely than the literary men to be swept under at the turns of the tide. They are much more closely bound than their literary colleagues to current political events and therefore more liable to accusations at least of negligence. The literary men are obviously of less danger to the régime, and the battle between them has so far been a domestic affair, not easy to represent as a struggle of principles. One can sympathise with M. Djilas in thinking that to die in the last ditch on behalf of the *Bal des Voleurs* shows some lack of sense of proportion. At the same time the open struggle in the literary world gives ground for some modified optimism about the course of "liberalisation" in the world of art and journalism as a whole. It is an important phenomenon that Yugoslavs have been willing publicly to stand out against the high Party line on behalf of freedom, even if it is only the freedom to write bad non-political poetry. It is difficult to coerce such men effectively, since they are good Communists and can invoke against M. Djilas and his henchmen

the highly official ban on administrative action and Stalinist practices. And their existence gives ground for hope that M. Djilas and his friends will, in their actions against the press, be subject to some restraint from within the ranks of the Party itself.

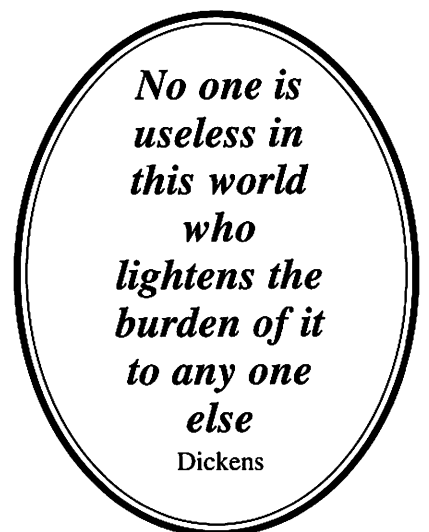
I have the honour to be,  
With the highest respect,  
Sir

Your most obedient, humble Servant  
Ivo Mallet  
The Right Hon Anthony Eden M.P.  
Foreign Office, S.W.1.

**Note:**

Sir Ivo Mallet, Britain's ambassador in Belgrade 1951-4 and in Madrid 1954-60, died in 1988 at the age of eighty-eight, though he still appears in the alphabetical listing in *Who's Who*. The historian Vladimir Dedijer (1914-90), like the better-known Milovan Djilas (1911-95) had been prominent in the wartime partisan movement but like Djilas broke with Tito on the issue of individual freedom in 1954; during the 1960s he was President of Bertrand Russell's International War Crimes Tribunal. The word *Borba*, used as the title for the journal he edited, means 'struggle'. Miroslav Krlezha (1893-1981) playwright, poet, novelist, essayist and short story writer, is considered the greatest Croat author of the Twentieth Century; he had fought in the Austro-Hungarian army during the First World War but took no active part in the Second World War.

Contributed by A D Harvey



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# Words

## *Demetri Marchessini*

When Lenin died in 1924 his obituary in the London *Times* (at that time the most respected newspaper in the world) was headed "Gospel of Hate". Indeed, that is exactly what Socialism has always been — a gospel of hate. In those days that fact was perfectly clear to everyone. Seventy years later, however, people's perceptions and beliefs have been considerably altered, and most people no longer consider Socialism evil — indeed they regard those who oppose Socialism too strongly as in some ways suspect. Brian Crozier, the writer and journalist, tells the story of a job interview in the early 1960s. It was for a job on a magazine, and at a certain point, the editor said to him "I must make it quite clear that we are a *centrist* magazine", to which Crozier replied, "And I must make it clear that I am strongly anti-Communist." Neither of them saw the slightest contradiction in those two statements!

How has this radical change in people's view of Socialism been effected? Obviously in many ways, but some of the best known have been: the very active propaganda machines of the Socialist countries, the continuous infiltration of the Hard Left into our educational systems over the past thirty years, the growth of sympathy for Socialist views in the media, and the continual manipulations by the Hard Left of well-intentioned, but misguided people through their guilt feelings.

One of the most effective but least noticed methods has been the manipulation of words as a way of altering people's perception of reality. By persuading people to use words in ways that are opposite to their real meaning, the Socialists have succeeded in making people say things that are different from what those people actually meant to say. From there it is only a short step to persuading people to change their

thoughts to conform to their words. To demonstrate the importance of words in our life, imagine that over the past thirty years homosexuals had been universally referred to as "sodomites" rather than as "gays". Would their position and political influence in society be the same as it is today? Yet "sodomite" is accurate, while "gay" is an outrageous euphemism.

A good example of an influential word whose meaning has been stealthily altered is the word "tolerant". The dictionary definition of "tolerant" is: "One who tolerates opinions or practices different from his own". The crucial phrase in that definition is "different from his own", because it makes clear that in order to be tolerant, one must first have opinions of one's own, and then that one is prepared to tolerate views that are *different* from one's own views. There is a famous occasion in history which graphically illustrates this point. When Constantinople fell in 1453, the Ottoman Turks overran Greece and the Balkans. Most people would agree that the Moslem religion is a very fervent, indeed almost a fanatical one. Yet during the almost four hundred years that the Turks occupied the Balkans, they did not interfere with the practice of the Orthodox religion in any of the Balkan countries. By contrast the Christian religion is a much more gentle religion, which preaches tolerance. Yet when the Christian Knights arrived in the Middle East with the Crusades, although many of them were very lax Christians themselves, they still chopped off the head of any Moslem who refused to embrace Christianity. It was the fanatical Moslems who were tolerant — it was the Christians who were not. The crucial point is that being tolerant does not mean *accepting* other people's views — it only means allowing others to hold views

that are very different from one's own. Indeed, once the views of others have been accepted, there is no longer any need for tolerance.

Yet today the word "tolerant" is used in exactly the opposite way. In order to be considered "tolerant", you are expected to *accept* the views of others, and anyone who does not do so is immediately labelled "intolerant". By definition, therefore, anyone who has strong views or *standards* of any sort, is automatically considered "intolerant". Now as traditional ideas invariably have standards imbedded in them, this results in traditional ideas immediately becoming considered "intolerant". In short, the truth has been turned inside out. It is not difficult to confuse people's minds if one goes about it systematically, and most people today — even intelligent people — are not aware that the word "tolerant" has been turned inside out. Of course, it is always the people who consider themselves "politically correct", and who do not allow anyone to have views different from themselves, who are intolerant.

George Orwell pointed out almost fifty years ago, in his famous essay, "Politics and the English Language", that there is a strong connection between politics and the debasement of language, and that slovenliness of language makes it easier to have foolish thoughts. By confusing the meaning of words, and encouraging people to use ready-made clichés, which will think their thoughts for them, political views can be transmitted into the minds of others with little difficulty. As Orwell put it, "Ready made clichés perform the important service of concealing your true meaning, even from yourself."

**This article will be included in collected essays to be published by the Quiller Press later this year.**

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# A Proper Education

*Stephen Pimenoff reflects on his training as a teacher*

On coming to Britain as a 24-year old bachelor in 1972 I went to teach mathematics at a Catholic boys' boarding school in Sussex. At the time, such schools were having difficulty recruiting mathematicians, which I suppose is why the headmaster decided to take a chance on appointing a Russian-Canadian immigrant of unproven abilities and uncertain potential. The school was independent, and one reason I had applied to it was that I had no formal teaching qualifications, and so could not teach in the state sector. All I had was my degree, a love of mathematics, some ability to communicate and an intense desire to try teaching for a few years, to see if it suited me. I did not think I wanted to spend my whole life teaching, but was not sure. Like, I suspect, most others at that age I was psychologically incapable of looking more than a few years ahead. It says much for the head's courage — not to say faith — that he was prepared to let me loose on several classes of young boys, indeed to give me full responsibility for their mathematical development. I imagine Mr Doug McAvoy would throw up his hands in horror at the very idea.

The morning after I arrived the head invited me into his study and offered some advice. "I should start off quite firm," he said, "and then later you can ease off a bit." Such was all the training I received. But I was determined that he would not regret having taken me on.

On the first day of school I was very nervous. I started each class with a little lecture on the standards I expected in punctuality, presentation, behaviour; just as I remembered my own teachers doing. The boys listened,

wide-eyed and silent. When I had covered everything I could think of I glanced surreptitiously at my watch. Only ten minutes had passed. Out of 40! Would every lesson be like this?

It seemed an eternity before the bell went. The boys filed out, each clutching a brand-new exercise book and text. I felt elated. I had done it! I had successfully conducted my first lesson. I was a teacher. Certainly the boys thought I was, and that was all that mattered.

I took to the school from the start. It was run by Benedictine monks, a notoriously humane and easy-going order, and was a happy place. There was an underlying sense of harmony and peace which made for a relaxed atmosphere while retaining a sense of purpose

I worked very hard in the first year, and as sailors are fond of saying about their own calling, it was not so much a job as a way of life. In term time, from the moment I lifted my head off the pillow at 7.30 a.m. until the moment, 16 hours later, I lowered it again, there was probably not more than an hour a day in total when my thoughts or actions were unrelated to work or the school. I taught 25 40-minute periods a week, slightly less than a normal load. I had one class of 11 year olds in the prep division, two of 'O' level, one of 'A', and one Oxbridge scholarship group. I also coached a boy with learning difficulties, which gave me insight into the problems faced by some. I still remember the look of total incomprehension and bafflement on his face as he struggled with the simplest of processes. Ever since, I have believed that all trainees should have to do some such teaching early on in their career.

Lessons ran from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. In

free periods I marked and prepared; in break I talked shop with colleagues. After lunch, in the breather before games, I met my tutor group, or helped with the chess club. After tea there were lessons again, until supper at 7 o'clock. After supper I prepared for the next day, and made further inroads into the mound of exercise books which lay on my easy chair as a silent reproach to my inability to find more than 16 hours in the day. I often worked Saturday night, and Sunday.

It was almost a monastic existence, which under the circumstances seemed wholly appropriate. Of social life there was practically none — at any rate for the bachelors on the staff. Our work was our life during term, and we accepted this.

I was rarely more than one day ahead of any class. Often I wasn't even that. Sometimes I was caught out by a question and had to bluff. "That's a good question, Smedley," I would say. "You ought to be able to do it yourself. Try it for prep. We'll go over it tomorrow." Back in my room, I would feverishly work through the solution so as to be able to deliver it effortlessly the next day. Thankfully, they were too endearingly guileless to suspect my innocent ruse.

I lived in an austere bedsit in the masters' residence. In an alcove was a single bed with, opposite, a wash-basin. There was a desk, cupboard, chest of drawers and arm-chair. The sole window looked out on to an oil-tank, which doubtless had been intentionally placed to discourage idle staring at anything that could be called a view. The loo was in a former broom cupboard up some stairs at the end of the corridor; the bathroom was on the first floor.

I had a car, and was determined to get out in it as much as possible, to prevent the chalk dust from passing too thoroughly into my bloodstream and soul; but I ended up using it only once a week, when I drove to East Grinstead to shop. My pay was £89 a month, net — not quite as bad as it sounds, considering that room and board plus extras were thrown in. Still, it was very much a trainee's salary

I was under a year's probation and, looking back, realise I was little more than an apprentice. I took full responsibility for all my classes, but my teaching was carefully, if discreetly, monitored by my head of department, to whom I went as problems arose. It might be thought a shockingly casual and amateurish way of training for such an important profession. Yet it worked.

There were several newly-graduated masters like me at the school. Did the boys suffer from being taught by acolytes like us? In a sense perhaps they did. Certainly the more experienced masters taught them more effectively and efficiently. On the other hand, we undoubtedly brought an element of freshness and enthusiasm which went some way towards compensating for our inexperience. As with most things in life, it was a matter of swings and roundabouts.

School fees are thought to be monstrously high nowadays, but, considering what parents get for them, can still be seen as amazingly good value (private education is one of the best bargains going). One of the reasons for this is that independent schools have traditionally employed a number of young graduates, who are on the staff essentially as apprentices, and who serve to keep down costs.

Were we exploited by the school? In a manner of speaking, yes. We were badly paid and worked long hours. But considering our work as training we did rather well; better, clearly, than students on a PGCE course, and with the same result. Indeed, at the end of the first year I suspect I was a better teacher than most PGCE students, though I may have known less than they do about such things as the history and philosophy of education (this

is not meant as a swipe at those disciplines).

The school had originally been a stately home, and lessons were given in a range of converted buildings. One row of six classrooms was a pre-fab structure erected as a temporary shelter in 1942; 30 years later it was still in use. The wind whistled through the cracks and the roof leaked unpredictably but no one complained, or even minded. Other classrooms had been set up in the potting sheds and stables. In winter, our form of central heating was to put on extra sweaters and long combinations; we were probably healthier for it.

The common room, a former servants' lounge, held a dozen comfortably, but was ludicrously inadequate for the 50-odd staff we were. Morning tea was taken shoulder-to-shoulder, with a cloud of tobacco smoke hanging like a pall over the room. Nobody lingered, which may have been a factor in the head's refusal to alter the arrangement.

A converted pantry adjacent served as the "mark room", where teachers who lived out could work during the day. The room only seated two, three at a pinch. It had no natural light or ventilation and tended to be avoided by all but a few regulars, who soon established sole squatting rights.

One hears much nowadays about a poor working environment being the cause of low morale in the teaching profession, but such was curiously not the case there. Morale was high, kept up in part by the camaraderie which comes from shared hardship, but also by the feeling that we were delivering a first-class education. Nevertheless, I heard recently that the school has built new facilities, including classrooms, staff rooms, a library and a science block. I do not know if this has affected morale: I certainly hope not.

Masters had their meals in their own dining-room. "We generally, er... read at breakfast," the senior bachelor told me on the first morning, possibly to forestall any regrettable tendency I might have towards chatting. "Would you like *The Times* to be delivered for you?" His tone admitted of no conceivable reply other than yes. Yes, I duly

uttered, and for three years the *Times* formed my sole indulgence.

Dinner was livelier, often uproarious. The dining room looked out on to the front quadrangle, and conversation would be interrupted by comments from John Stanton, a vast and eccentric historian with a taste for the military. "What is Flynn Three doing slinking across the quad at this hour?" he would ask. "Let's put a shot across his bows." He would heave with laughter, rocking back and forth and rubbing his hands as though washing them. I believe his eccentricity owed more to artifice than inclination, for he once said to me, "The boys love a character, don't they?"

Another master who emerged as a character was Andrew Bertie, pronounced Barty, subsequently raised to more exalted heights as the first English grand master of the Knights of Malta. Every day the peaceful air of early morning was broken by a yodelling-like sound he made as he came down for breakfast. A keen Arabist, he claimed this to be the muezzin's call to prayer. As there were few Muslims in that particular part of Sussex his cry was suspected to spring less from religious toleration than exhibitionism.

The monks were delightful men — hard-working, good-humoured, friendly; entirely without envy, rancour or the other destructive petty emotions which often breed in closed communities. Looking back, I realize that they shouldered a heavy pastoral burden, and uncomplainingly performed many tasks which their lay colleagues had left undone through carelessness or oversight. Their normality was impressed on me once at the end of term when, after all the boys had gone home, I went into the staff room and found a group of them sitting around the television, an open case of beer in their midst, drinking straight from the bottles and laughing uproariously at some sit-com. I just tiptoed away.

The head, Father Dominic, was a fine man, a born leader who drew loyalty and respect without ever having to indicate that it was due. In the three years I was at the school I never heard him shout, or even raise his

voice. His strongest rebuke was to show 'disappointment'. We all worked hard not to disappoint him.

What conclusions can we draw from the example of schools like this? First the obvious ones, about what makes a good school good: shared values, a sense of purpose and commitment, a well structured work programme, harmonious relations, sound leadership... In short, all the qualities of effective schools which have been so exhaustively studied of late and presented in the pages of educational journals as the original brainchild of high-profile professors of education.

Nor is this all. It is a curious irony that attempts to improve state education in Britain — through rigorous training of teachers, a huge investment in "resources", an improvement in teaching conditions and a scrupulous concern for the welfare of teachers, the last of which almost totally preoccupies the teaching unions — have been accompanied by an ever-spiralling decline in standards and the quality of the education dispensed. It is almost as if, despite the efforts of union leaders and educationists, there is some element which eludes them, without which all their attempts to raise standards remain unavailing. Perhaps they

should take a hard look at the independent schools, and try to discover the secret of their success.

In 1993, when the Government at last realised that something had to be done about the deplorable state of teacher training and began a pilot project to have teachers trained "on the job" in schools, the chorus of disapproval, amounting almost to abuse, was deafening, and came from all quarters. Professors of Education, hopping hysterically up and down, pointed out that such a scheme had been tried before, and had been rejected as unsound (actually, it had not been tried, at least not in the form then proposed); a Labour spokesman claimed that pupils would suffer; unions judged that teachers' work-load would increase (oh! bless them, dears). Most damning of all was thought to be the criticism that the initiative represented teacher training "on the cheap" — as if any solution that did not include heaving around balefuls of money had to be viewed as suspect on those grounds alone.

Yet early this year, to the mortification of all those critics, a Warwick University survey revealed that school-based training was proving a great success. According to a

*Guardian* report: "Teachers were found to be extremely positive despite the increased workload. They welcomed the fresh ideas and energy student teachers brought to the classroom, felt their own professional development had been enhanced and expressed increased job satisfaction."

The success of the project would have come as no surprise to those acquainted with independent schools. But when asked for a comment, the general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, Mr Peter Smith, could only mouth the same old tired objections. Government, he said, could not continue to "milk teachers' goodwill at the expense of adequate funding."

Ah, funding: I wondered when that word would appear. What a good thing no one knew it when I started teaching. Otherwise I doubt whether I would have received half such a good training, or been nearly so happy while receiving it.

**Stephen Pimenoff is a teacher and writer.**

## *Notes on Reviewers*

Roy Bland is a teacher in a West Country Comprehensive.

George Chowdharay-Best is on the staff of the Oxford English Dictionary.

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

Antony Flew's latest book *Shephard's Warning* was published by the Adam Smith Institute.

Shusha Guppy's books include *A Girl in Paris* and *Looking Back*.

Theodore Pappas is Managing Editor of *Chronicles*, a magazine of American culture.

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

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# Letter from Poland

*Grzegorz Kucharczysk*

On the 23rd of May 1996, while commenting on the present situation of the Catholic Church in Poland, John Paul II told the Polish pilgrims gathered in Rome: "We face now in Poland the endeavours to ridicule religion and to undermine the Church's authority. The rule: "*cuius regio eius religio*" seems to take the shape of the planned atheisation of life". These strong and unequivocal words caused a hasty reaction of the post-communists ruling now in Poland. President Aleksander Kwasniewski (elected in 1995 to the office as the leader of the post-communist formation) did not acknowledge any traces of the planned atheisation going on in Poland. Leaders of the post-communist fraction (which is the largest one) in Parliament put the whole blame on the Pope's "insufficiently informed" advisors. Danuta Waniek, Chief of the Presidential staff, dismissed the papal words with a short comment: "Well the old man..." Most of the press commentators, however, linked the Pope's estimation of the Church's situation in Poland with the procedure for ratifying the concordat.

The concordat between the Republic of Poland and the Holy See was signed in 1993, before the parliamentary elections in September that year which brought the post-communists to power, and which brought the process of ratification to a halt. The reason put forward by the ruling left-wing coalition for postponing the ratification was that the concordat would be incompatible with the new Polish constitution — a constitution which does not in fact exist. The sheer nonsense of this line of argumentation did not prevent the adoption of a parliamentary declaration ruling out the possibility of ratification before the new Polish constitution; this declaration was

backed by the left-wing majority. In that way relations with the Vatican gained the status of "special relations". For if an agreement with foreign partners must be viewed in the light of the future constitution; then the whole of Polish diplomacy would have to cease. Since this did not take place, the only state "distinguished" by the perverted reasoning of Parliament is the Vatican, ruled by a Polish pope!

The case of the concordat illustrates the attitude of the whole Polish left toward the Church. The opponents of this agreement consist not only of the former members of the Polish communist party but also of many from the ranks of the post-Solidarity Left. This unholy alliance orchestrated the whole campaign against the normalisation of relations with the Holy See, demagogically arguing that the Church was about to forbid civil marriages (in fact, the concordat only envisages the possibility for couples who do not want to register their marriage — which is now obligatory — to marry in church and pass the duty of civil registration to the priest, acting on their behalf). It is very hard for the Left everywhere to abandon one of the "achievements" of the French Revolution, i.e. civil marriages.

On the other hand, however, it seems that the Left's reluctance to ratify the concordat is based on much less idealistic premises. One of the post-communist leaders, Marek Borowski (the former Minister of Finance) admitted while speaking on the radio on the 26th May 1996 that a great deal of the post-communists' fears are caused by the stipulation in the 22nd article of the concordat, which guarantees the Church's freedom from any future state interference in its material and financial status. Mr. Borowski's sincerity only proves that the present post-com-

munist Left has not given up the anti-Catholic stance inherited from its immediate predecessor — the Communist Party.

The Polish post-communists have been taught by experience to realize that the Catholic Church in Poland, once independent from state institutions, is a formidable opponent of any leftist ideology promising the construction of paradise on earth. The Catholic Church in Poland formed the only *organised* force opposed to the communist state before the mass Solidarity movement of 1980. Besides, it was well known that the Pope and the whole Catholic Church in Poland sympathised with the latter's endeavours to undermine the communist dictatorship, particularly after the imposition of martial law in 1981. Father Jerzy Popieluszko, murdered in 1984 by the communist secret service, is the most recent example of the Polish Church's sacrifices in the fight against ideological enslavement.

Today the fight against the Church does not mean arresting bishops or killing "stubborn" priests. The ruling post-communists are now more sophisticated and try to use the process of democratisation as an instrument of ideological war.

Consider the newly gained freedom of the press. Under the previous censorship it was quite obvious that anti-Church attacks published in the communist-controlled press came from official sources. Now, when an average Pole sees blasphemous pictures and reads articles full of anti-Catholic hatred, the fixing of blame is not so simple, for we have a "free" press. Those inverted commas are necessary however. To ensure the existence of a free press, it is not sufficient to abolish censorship. We must also ensure that a diversity of opinions, interests and sympathies is reflected in

the press. What value has a “free” press which is in its large part dominated by only one political option? It can be officially free, as far as censorship is concerned, but is it reliable? The vast majority of the dailies are owned by the former *nomenklatura* left wing sympathisers. It is no accident that tabloid papers are entirely in the post-communists’ hands, one of them, quite widely read, being owned and edited by the former communist government’s spokesman. It is this allegedly free press which points to the Church as the most likely “danger” to democratic “freedom”. Freedom here means dropping all moral constraints, particularly with respect to sex, and promoting moral licence. Such propaganda finds a perfect help in the naivety of many people, for whom freedom presents a value in itself regardless of where it leads — to the good or to the bad. For many freedom means the possibility to read and watch pornography (forbidden before 1989) and to obtain abortion on demand (at present the Left majority in Parliament — consisting not only of the post-communists but also of the post-solidarity leftists — is preparing a bill to overturn the restrictions placed in 1991 on the previous liberal abortion law).

Another word frequently used by the Left in the mass-media is the word

“tolerance”, tolerance conceived as the blurring of distinctions between good and evil, between the normal and the perverted — in other words, moral relativism. The present Polish Minister of National Education, Prof Jerzy Wiatr, provides a good example. In previous times a hard-line communist ideologue (all his books are full of praise for Marxism-Leninism as the last word in philosophy and economics), he is now an apostle of “tolerance”. He announced a plan to introduce a new subject into the school curriculum: sex education. The notion is strongly opposed by the Church and many of the lay Catholics, because the proposed education means promoting sex to school children as a value in itself and presenting such sexual deviations as homosexuality as “a different way of loving”. The only answer of Mr Wiatr to numerous protests from parents outraged by this “tolerance” was his interview in the nation-wide TV in which he stated that: “parents have nothing to do with the model of education schools wish to adopt!” Such words clearly indicate the shape of this false tolerance propagated by the former *apparatchiks* who owe their present power to their former intolerance.

No wonder then that the Left’s media in Poland were infuriated by the Pope’s

condemnation of their particular “tolerance”, when John Paul II paid a one-day visit to his native country in May 1995. He said “Tolerance! But under the guise of tolerance we see now in Poland a real intolerance towards Catholics”. The Pope’s words quoted in the beginning of the article prove that John Paul II did not find a sufficient reason to alter his previous opinion; on the contrary, the Pope sees not only the danger of false tolerance but also the peril of a *planned* atheisation. John Paul II sees clearly what many Poles cannot or do not want to realize, that those who possess the *regio* (i.e. the power) will try to impose their own *religio* — a religion of moral relativism and total permissiveness which finds its ritual language in the new-speak (freedom, tolerance, democracy, free press, etc) propagated by the Left-dominated media.

In 1997 the Pope is due to arrive in Poland on his fifth pilgrimage to his home country. His strong words of truth are very much needed there.

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## The Common Crisis: Atlantic Solutions

### *Lady Thatcher reflects in Prague — the heart of Europe*

The Congress of Vienna in 1815 was called to restore order in Europe after the Napoleonic Wars; it began a series of such gatherings designed to achieve a Concert of Europe. But, as is usually the case in European affairs, the concert was dis-

tinctly discordant. The style was too rigid and inflexible. And finally, amid Europe-wide upheaval, Austria’s Chancellor Metternich, who had orchestrated the system, had to flee to England.

The Congress of Berlin in 1878 was called to resolve the Eastern Question,

this time with Germany’s Chancellor Bismarck holding court as an “honest broker”. Again, great power politics was relied upon to manage awkward national aspirations, particularly in the Balkans. But the Eastern Question stayed unresolved, the Balkans became more

Balkan, the shaky empires staggered on and, with fateful consequences, Germany emerged as the arbiter in Europe.

Here at our Congress in Prague, however, we have a very different purpose: the defence, entrenchment and extension of our Western inheritance of freedom.

The British, indeed, have a special fondness for Czech music: Dvořák and Janáček both spent some time in England. And although the phrase has since been used to rather different effect, it was Janáček who memorably remarked — on a visit to London — that the Czech nation was “the heart of Europe and Europe needs to be aware of its heart”. Magnificent buildings, superb art galleries, in fact on every side the accumulated evidence of a continuously rich intellectual life — anyone visiting this most beautiful of the cities of Central Europe needs no persuading of the justice of Janáček’s observation.

Moreover, here in Prague we are not just surrounded by beauty, but by beauty which was paid for by business success. In the last century, Bohemia was the industrial heartland of the Habsburg Empire. And before the last war Czechoslovakia was one of the world’s leading economies, enjoying an income per head equal to that of France. It is in keeping with that tradition of industrial prowess that the Czech Republic today is the outstanding economic success story of central Europe: where others have flinched under the pressures of free enterprise reform, Václav Klaus — my other favourite Prime Minister — has kept going down the right track. And the results are internationally recognised and admired.

Yet, we know also the darker side of Central European history, whose shadows in successive generations fell over Prague. We dare not forget that the freedom of this cultured, enterprising people was snuffed out by each of the two monstrous, totalitarian systems of our century — intimidated, dismembered and absorbed by Nazi Germany; subverted, betrayed and enslaved by Communist Russia; and each time with the West standing impotently aside. These are blots on the history of the civilized world. They came about because the West was selfish and unpre-

pared. And they confirm an important truth about international affairs. In the language of Hobbes: “Covenants without the sword are but words.” No amount of promises by world leaders, no amount of guarantees by international bodies without fire-power, mattered when the tanks rolled in. Such experience provides a poignant lesson for today’s multilateralists who retain a naive conviction that international institutions, rather than alliances of powerful nation states, can be relied upon to preserve the peace.

### **The Post-Cold War Crisis**

The fact that now the Czech and Slovak peoples, the Hungarians, the Poles and other former captives of the Evil Empire are free to express their nationhood, rebuild their economies and rejoin the international community as sovereign states is, therefore, a cause not just for rejoicing but for deep reflection.

We should reflect that it was not the United Nations, or the World Bank, let alone the European Community, which overthrew communism. It was a united West, under American leadership, enjoying the support of brave dissident patriots in the lands of the Eastern bloc: together we applied irresistible pressures on the Soviet system. And it was the inherent and cumulative failures of that system that caused it to collapse in the face of our challenge. Had we waited upon international consensus and its diplomatic practitioners to win the Cold War for freedom, we would be waiting still.

But, as so often, with victory also came complacency. And it was not long before signs emerged that all was not well with the so-called New World Order. Even the expression, “New World Order”, with its echoes of utopian euphoria from the League of Nations, should have sounded the alarm.

For the post-Cold War Western leaders had made a fatal confusion between two quite distinct propositions. The first, true proposition was that international institutions, above all the United Nations, could at last begin to work as originally designed in a world free from Soviet obstruction and aggression. The second, untrue proposition was that these institutions could themselves perform all the essential functions required to uphold global peace,

prosperity and justice.

There was a counter-part of this post-Cold War confusion in the domestic policies of our own nation states. Again, the release of tension induced a slackness of political muscle. With the lifting of the forty-year threat to our very existence, the general cry was for governments to cultivate the arts of peace. The demand was for a peace dividend — and politicians were too timid to explain that the only true peace dividend is simply the dividend of peace itself. Furthermore, the dividend is only yielded if sufficient is first invested in defence. But, in any case, the resulting — often imprudent — reductions in defence spending did not lead to governments spending less over-all: quite the contrary. For the state-welfare complex proved more rapacious than the Left’s favourite ogre, the military/industrial complex, ever was. To pay for increased welfare, governments weakened their own financial disciplines, ran deficits and hiked taxes. And all these actions in turn worsened deep seated social problems like welfare dependency, family break-down and juvenile crime.

These tendencies, as the experts have been explaining, are so general — and their results so deleterious — that we can without exaggeration talk of a “common crisis”. But it is not, of course, a crisis of capitalism.

Indeed, outside the hefty, unreadable tomes of the Marxist pseudo-economists, there was no crisis of capitalism, only a crisis of socialism — wherever and whenever it has been applied. Its sour fruits are still with us.

Where socialism has left its deepest impression — in most of the former Soviet Union — we see not Western style democracy and free economies, but corruption, cartels and gangsterism. There is a pervasive lack of trust and civility, the breakdown of civil society in matters large and small. A dour Russian parable on the history of Soviet communism says it all:

“That’s how it is with a man. He makes a bad start in his youth by murdering his parents. After that he goes down hill: He takes to robbing people in the streets. Soon he sinks to telling lies and spreading gossip. Finally, he loses all shame, descends to the depths of

depravity, and enters a room without knocking at the door first.”

That’s how it was with communism. It began in terror and mass murder and it ended in petty corruption, inefficiency, bad service, ill manners, the loss of every social grace, and a society pervaded by rampant egoism. The social desert thus created was unpromising ground for the economic transition to a market economy.

All the more credit then to our hosts here in Prague, and to the democratic reformers in other central European countries (like my fellow patron Leszek Balcerowicz) that they succeeded so well in their market revolution.

Alas, in some countries we have seen a reversion. There is a progressive disillusionment among ordinary people with pseudo-capitalism and — worse — a growing nostalgia for the false security of socialism. Former communists, sometimes in disguise, are returning to power in ex-communist countries. In Russia itself, there is the possibility of a government that combines communist economics with an imperialistic foreign policy.

Such a reversion is not uncommon. Kipling wrote about this as a sort of natural law:

As it will be in the future, it was at the  
birth of Man —  
There are only four things certain since  
Social Progress began: —  
That the Dog returns to his Vomit and  
the Sow returns to the Mire,  
And the burnt Fool’s bandaged finger  
goes wobbling back to the Fire;

...

As surely as Water will wet us, as surely  
as Fire will burn,  
The Gods of the Copybook Headings  
with terror and slaughter return!

We can and must provide against the dangers — the “terror and slaughter” — that this reversion threatens.

## Security Challenges

The world is today a freer, and in many ways better, place than it was when the two superpowers — America supported by her European allies, and the Soviet Union conscripting her European satellites — confronted each other. But, for three reasons, the world is also more complex, more volatile and more dangerous.

First of all, there was a kind of unholy

symmetry in international affairs created by a balance of terror. Deterrence — above all nuclear deterrence — worked as it was designed to do. Neither the West nor the Soviets could afford to let any regional crisis so destabilise the system that either side was pushed to the brink; for beyond that brink lay the abyss of mutual destruction. This does not, of course, mean that the Soviet ideological commitment to global revolution in those years was mere bravado. Had they been able to achieve their goals at a sustainable cost they would undoubtedly have done just that. But, accepting that attrition was the only possible strategy, and regarding their client states as pawns not players, they kept those client states under firm control. The breakdown of Soviet power, however, brought that discipline to an end: it allowed rogue states, often connected with terrorist movements, to emerge and set their own violent agendas.

Second, with the collapse of the Soviet Union there was also a dispersal of weapons of mass destruction and of the technologies to produce them. This has gone much further than we envisaged; and it now constitutes quite simply the most dangerous threat of our times. Yet there is still a conspiracy of silence among Western governments and analysts about it. We have, of course, known for some time about the danger of the so-called “back pack” nuclear weapon. The ability of rogue states to produce chemical and biological weapons, without detection, is a constant worry.

But it is the proliferation of advanced missiles and missile technology that has fundamentally altered the threat over the last few years. The North Koreans have developed (and continue to develop) a range of missiles which are even available for sale in a catalogue to all comers. The mail order missile business is no fantasy of science fiction: it is a fact.

There are many imponderables in precisely assessing the timescale of the threat: but they should increase our vigilance. On present trends, it is likely that the United States will be threatened by such missiles early in the next century. And, once they are available in the Middle East and North Africa, all the

capitals of Europe will be within target range. We thus face the appalling possibility — for which we are at present unprepared — of an attack on a Western city involving thousands of deaths.

It is not only the terrible consequences of their actual use, but the implications of their threatened use, that should disturb us. For that threat casts doubt on the ability of the West to project its power beyond our shores. The North Korean missiles are, for example, a threat to American defence of its allies in the Pacific. And would we have taken the punitive action we did against Libya in 1986, if Gaddafi had been able to strike with his missiles at the heart of our cities? Gaddafi himself has no doubt of the answer.

If [the Americans] know that you have a deterrent force capable of hitting the United States, they would not be able to hit you. Consequently, we should build this force so that they and others will no longer think about an attack.

Of course, the Gaddafis may be wrong. We must maintain all possible diplomatic pressure against proliferation. And we should not forswear the possibility of pre-emptive strikes. But, in face of all this our response must also urgently include ballistic missile defence.

Third, we are seeing today a fundamental shift of economic power — which will certainly have political consequences — away from the West to Asia and the Pacific Rim. Unlike the first two challenges — the emergence of rogue states and the proliferation of weaponry — this should not be regarded in itself as a threat to us. Although Asian countries may initially grow wealthier at the expense of our industries by capturing our markets, they will increasingly themselves offer new markets for our goods. All the classic arguments for free trade and against protection remain valid.

The danger, though, lies in the fact that these Asian countries, which are making such rapid economic advances, generally lack the liberal traditions which we in the West take for granted. America is worthy of its superpower status because it has been not only economically but politically liberal. Therefore the advance of American interests in particular, and the West’s in general, have been more or less synonymous with the advance of liberty. By contrast, China’s

extraordinary economic progress is occurring despite, not because of, its political tradition — which has always been one of tyranny. China's behaviour towards Taiwan demonstrates that the economic challenge from the Far East could easily become a security challenge too.

The task we face now is to devise a framework of international cooperation which allows these and future threats to be met successfully. It is one which requires principle and shrewdness, tenacity and flexibility, resolve to apply our strength but prudence in conserving it. Above all, it requires the unity of the West under American leadership.

### **The West**

This, however, is far from universally recognised. Irving Kristol once wrote that: "No modern nation has ever constructed a foreign policy that was acceptable to its intellectuals". This was true during the Cold War years. It is true now. And in recent years we have heard repeated suggestions that the West was essentially a Cold War construct, rendered irrelevant by the end of a bi-polar world.

In fact, it was — and is — nothing of the sort. The distinctive features of the Western political, judicial, social and economic system existed before communism and will continue after it. Those features are the longstanding historic commitment to human rights, the rule of law, representative democracy, limited government, private property and tolerance.

Attempts today to suggest that American civilization is antithetical and antipathetic to European civilization, which itself is portrayed by contrast as some homogenous whole, are bad history and worse politics. American civilization began its life as a branch of the English oak. It has since had the cultures and traditions of other European countries grafted onto it. It is today the centre of an English-speaking civilization with cultural and ethnic links to every European country. And in our present age, in which communications increasingly obliterate distance, culture is a more important fact of life than geography.

America is a European power — and must remain one. And even if we could

overlook our common history and cultural ties, we dare not ignore the politics of Atlantic cooperation. Any ideology that threatens Atlantic unity is one that ultimately imperils our collective security.

### **Europe — Dreams and Nightmares**

I must touch on the relationship between the Atlantic countries and the European Union. There are many supporters of Atlanticism who are strong devotees of European integration. Now, I take it as a sign of the strength of the Atlantic idea — and as a sign of its broad political appeal — that it has captured the imagination of many people who differ on other political questions, but imagination must also be complemented by clear thinking.

Of course, some of the lesser dreams which went into Europeanism are by no means ignoble. The dream of peace in Europe by permanent reconciliation of the old enemies, France and Germany, and the dream of reuniting a continent divided by the Iron Curtain, so that nations like the Czechs could rejoin the free West. The dream — of a less inspirational kind — of a single European market without barriers to trade.

But the overall European federalist project, which was envisaged by some from the start but which has only in recent years come out into the open, is in truth a nightmare. The drive towards a European superstate — with its own government, its own laws, its own currency and its own citizenship — would achieve none of the goals which enthusiasts on either side of the Atlantic claim for it.

Were it to come about, another great power would have been born — equal or nearly equal in economic strength to the United States. Does anyone suppose that such a power would not soon become a rival to America? That it would not gradually discover different interests from those of the United States? That it would not by degrees move toward a different public philosophy — one less liberal, more statist? And that it would not eventually seek to establish its own military forces separate from those of the United States?

If this new Europe were not to follow

the path to separate great power status, it would be the first such power in history to renounce its independent role. It would have pioneered a new course in self-abnegation. It would have chosen moral influence over political power. The history of Europe — bloodstained as well as idealistic — should not encourage us in these fantasies.

Europe separated from the United States would in my view be unequivocally a bad thing — bad for America, bad for Europe, and bad for the world at large. For America, it would transform an ally into a rival — or, at the very least, permanently threaten to do so. For the world at large, it would increase instability by dividing the West and so hasten the move to a multipolar world. And for Europe itself, it would remove from our continent the one power which has kept the peace for fifty years — and which no European really fears.

How quickly lessons are forgotten and deductions from events distorted! Two world wars have flowed from American disengagement from Europe. By contrast, the Cold War was won because America defended Western Europe's security as its own. So talk by some continental political leaders of the possibility of war unless Europe moves towards political unity is profoundly misguided — as well as unbelievably insensitive. Only if America, as a global superpower, remains directly engaged in Europe is there a guarantee against any Continental European power asserting dominance.

The shortcomings of a common European foreign and security policy have been shown by Europe's feebleness in the former Yugoslavia. There is no reason to believe that attempts to apply a common European defence policy would be any less risible or chaotic — though they could do untold harm to the Atlantic alliance.

All this means that our energies must be directed towards strengthening NATO, which is as important in the post-Cold War world as in the circumstances of its creation. NATO's role should be expanded. It must be prepared to go out-of-area, where so many of today's threats lie. It must be prepared to accept the Czech Republic and other Central European countries as full mem-

bers, giving them much needed reassurance in a time of growing fear about future instability to the East. NATO can also coordinate support for the construction of that system of global ballistic missile defence which is now an imperative requirement. And if, as I hope, there is a renewed enthusiasm for such a system in the United States, Britain and other European countries must make a fair contribution.

### **Atlanticism**

Economic integration on an Atlantic basis can nurture this vital Atlantic relationship in defence and foreign policy. It will also help to counter some unwelcome trends in European economics. For Europe today is far from being synonymous with free enterprise and open trade: it too often also stands for burdensome controls. In fact, that classic victim of Austro-Hungarian bureaucracy, the Good Soldier Svejk, might have felt gloomily at home in today's highly regulated Europe where, like then, "every day brought new instructions, directives, questions and orders".

The most practical way forward, I believe, is to merge the North American Free Trade Area with the European Community, including the countries of Central and perhaps in time Eastern

Europe. Of course, in terms of pure economic analysis global free trade is the ideal, but trade cannot be divorced from politics, no matter how hard we try: it is politically realistic as well as economically beneficial to concentrate now on creating a Trans-Atlantic Free Trade Area. Such a bloc would be able to push effectively towards global trade liberalisation. It would prevent trans-Atlantic trade wars from jeopardising wider trans-Atlantic links. It would bring our Atlantic civilisation closer together.

Finally, as part of this endeavour we must try to develop a real Atlantic political consciousness and public opinion. Of course, this will take time to emerge. Such transformations come about organically and subtly or not at all. So, I am not talking here about cultural politics. The stupidities of attempts to remould old national identities into new artificial forms — whether ruthlessly in the Soviet Union, or absurdly in the European Union — should not be repeated. But the Atlantic political consciousness is different — for three reasons: it reflects the realities of recent history, it does not seek to eliminate national identity, it respects it and it makes excellent strategic and economic sense.

For that we may need new institutions; we may need revived ones; but we certainly need more contact. This will follow our Atlantic Initiative and it is not the least of its advantages — and pleasures.

### **Spring in Prague**

My first visit to Prague was as Prime Minister six years ago. Memories of communism's inelegant death throes were still fresh and the joy of national liberation still sweet. Václav Havel's translation from prison as dissident to Palace as President seemed to symbolise not so much a new era as a new world, in which the meek — and the brave and true — would finally inherit the earth.

We in the West won a great victory in the Cold War. Let us not now forget why we fought. The mission of this Congress is to recapture that sense of purpose and clothe it with practical action. Spring in Prague is the time — and the place — to do so.

**This speech was delivered in May by the Rt Hon The Baroness Thatcher at the New Atlantic Initiative in Prague.**

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# Tugboat Ahoy!

*Roy Kerridge*

For most people, a boat ride on the Thames means a pleasurable day out, all workaday cares forgotten, amid the cries of seagulls and the muffled roar of the megaphone-man pointing out items of interest. But for some people, a Thames boat ride is not an occasional treat but a daily means of earning their daily bread. For Captain Bill Taylor, the Thames is a working river and his workplace is a tug.

My quest for the Thames tugboat took me first of all to a very different

craft, the Woolwich Ferry. I seldom venture south of the river, and so I approached the ferry with some trepidation. A cheerful young bleach-haired mother with infant and pushchair showed me where to stand, as the huge green box-shaped ferry arrived and slotted into the landing stage with a metallic clang. Large bare rooms below the car deck seemed to indicate a former importance. Five adult passengers and a child of three, dwarfed and forlorn in a boat large enough to transport a football crowd, seemed a sad

comedown for the ferry. At the far shore, some four minutes later, I began to wonder how we were going to climb up the forest of wooden jetty props that greeted us, casting green shadows on the sun-dazzled waters. Then, by some mechanical means, the river bank came down to meet us, with a grinding of winches and gears. It had scarcely been an epic voyage, but here I was, on the south bank at last! In the old days, before Cockney wit had gone sour, watermen would shout to the passengers, as the ferry moved away, "Have a

good voyage! Bring back a monkey and a parrot!” In the same spirit of mockery, a bargee shanty song referred to “the raging canal.”

Now began for me an interminable walk, in the hot sun, along a busy main road, the river’s edge, blocked by a mass of housing and industrial estates full of cul-de-sacs. Every time I tried to reach the Thames, I came to a dead-end and had to turn back. At long last, just beyond the Thames Barrier, I reached a short alley-like stretch of Riverside Walk, evidently tugboat territory. I had made an appointment to meet the staff of Cory Pollution Control Services, for which I was the customary two hours late. My surroundings, on the landward side, were desolate, the only living souls a bunch of men burrowing into the engines of a car on a repair yard for cars beyond repair.

Eventually, I entered a gateway marked “Cory”, and found myself in a large deserted car park, fringed by empty workshops and closed offices. Now what was I to do? All I wanted and had expected was a fifteen minute chat with a waterside-character, and then I intended to walk back the same dreary road on which I had come. A steep gang plank led down to a narrow wooden jetty. It didn’t look very safe, but I descended and hopped onto the jetty. A boat was moored alongside, with nobody on board. However I caught a glimpse of an orange-clad figure on a smaller boat behind the first one. So I jumped on one boat and cried “Ahoy!” at the next. A relaxed genial man came over and asked what I wanted. When I had finished explaining, he simply said, “Want a ride?”

“Don’t you have to ask at the office?” I faltered.

“No — I’m the Captain, so it’s all right.”

Awe-struck at such unexpected good fortune, I clambered aboard and found myself tottering on a foot-wide deck just below the wheelhouse. With memories of hitching rides in giant lorries with cab doorways high overhead, I lurched up into the wheelhouse and reintroduced myself to Captain Bill Taylor. Before I had collected my wits, and made sure my plastic bag was safe,

the Thames whizzed backwards and I realised that we were on the move! As a teenager, I had dreamed of being a Western hobo “hopping freight trains”, and this was just as good! Captain Taylor, of the Thames tugboat “Recruit”, held the wheel in his capable hands as we moved out to mid-river. It was a proper wooden wheel with handles, as seen in innumerable films of sailing ships at sea. A radio and television link to shore occupied part of the tiny wheelhouse, which also included a ledge for sitting on, a plaque that read “Launched 15th January, 1952” and a switch that automatically alerted each bridge approached on the river, so that the Powers That Be could look at a screen and see exactly which boat was on what part of the river.

“Our company is called ‘Cory Environmental’, part of the Ocean Group, and we have several other tugboats — ‘The Merit’ (my usual ship), ‘Swift Stone’, ‘Touchstone’, ‘Retainer’ and ‘Resolve’.”

They sounded like the names of a pack of foxhounds, if you ken John Peel. But what did this fleet of tugboats actually do?

“We tow away all the rubbish from London’s dustbins!” Captain Taylor explained. “The rubbish from Chelsea and all over the place ends up on a big tip at Wandsworth. We call it ‘Wangas’, after the gasworks that used to be there. Then it gets loaded into giant metal containers, like the containers you see at docks. These are put onto barges moored in the Thames, and our job is to tow these barges to and from the great tip of Mucking by the estuary, outside London, between Tilbury and Canvey Island. The containers go into lorries, a little way inland, get unloaded and the rubbish gets buried. Meanwhile, we go back to Wandsworth for more, to and fro, and then report back to Charlton, where you got on. I leave home at six in the morning, and expect to be back by nine at night. That’s on a good day, but today as the tide’s not so good, dropped point seven of a metre below prediction, I probably won’t be home at Dartford till ten. When I started this run years ago, the rubbish was simply tipped out onto open barges. You got

rats running all over the barges, and flocks of seagulls tearing bags open with their beaks. Care for a mug of tea?”

Neville, the bespectacled Chief Engineer, another tall, cheerful, burly man in orange oilskins, came in, did something technical and then left to make the tea. Despite the many tasks that needed performing, the atmosphere on board “The Recruit” was relaxed and easy-going. Soon we hove alongside a clump of enormous iron barges loaded with bright yellow containers, bank safes the size of prefabs. Two men jumped down on deck, waving hefty lariats of green and white-striped rope, very new-looking. Soon, one barge was fastened to our stern by two ropes, and we rushed forward at a great pace. All the way up the river, I saw only this one container-barge, and did not fully realise that two more giant barges were hooked on behind like circus elephants. “The Recruit” can move a great deal of rubbish at one time, even more than I can write, on a good day. However, the twenty containers on tow were empty, on their way to Wandsworth for a refill.

I complimented Captain Taylor on the skilful way his men had lassoed the barge.

“It can be more of a problem in bad weather”, he admitted. “All my crew are my ‘hands’ — that’s why I call some o’ the men ‘hands’.”

“We’re all lightermen — Thames tug crews are ‘lightermen’, called after the old sailing barges, or ‘lighters’, as they lightened loads from big ships once. This boat we’re in has 1,200 horse power. There’s a six year apprenticeship on these boats. The first year, you’re called a boy, the second year you’re still a boy, but after that, you’re a licensed hand. Then you get an examination test, where they ask you questions about the river. That’s called ‘going for your freedom.’ Then, if you pass, you become a Freeman of the Thames, as I am.”

Listening to all this, I felt as Mark Twain had done, when apprenticed to a Mississippi river pilot. As the hard bitten pilot pointed out landmarks and made observations, Mark Twain agreed lightly, half listening, while enjoying

the scenery. Later, he realised (when sworn at) that he was supposed to have learned everything he saw and heard by heart, as it was a vital guide to navigation. There was more than a touch of "Life on the Mississippi" on the Thames-going "Recruit", and the Captain will have to forgive me if I have remembered some of his remarks wrongly.

We were heading up the Thames, and soon approached the "tourist boat" reaches of the river. Captain Taylor gave his own commentary, and as he had no megaphone, I could understand most of what he was saying. He spoke of the many different kinds of river craft he had served on. He had even worked on a canal barge in the old days, "behind a horse." Every time we reached a bridge, he pressed a switch and a brilliant flashing light appeared far ahead of us, on the bridge itself. Once "The Recruit" triggered off two flashing bridges, one behind the other, far away.

"I've seen sailing barges with cargos of grain at Ipswich, thirty years ago", I mentioned. "The sails were brown."

"Some of those barges are still around, used for parties and pleasure cruises", came the reply. "'The Recruit' here doesn't always stay on the Thames. Once we took her out into the sea, up to Lowestoft to be refitted, and back again. I remember when rowing barges would take grain craft up the River Ravenstone."

"It's sad that the docks have closed, isn't it?" I remarked.

"Yes — that's about the biggest change I've seen on the river.

Look, there's the entrance to the old West India Dock. See those lighters, or conventional barges, going into the dock entrance? They're collecting rubble from the new Underground extension. Look at those chimneys — that's the little brother of Chelsea Power Station, the London Transport Power Station."

A brilliant sunshiny day mellowed into a pink sunset evening during our idyllic three hour working cruise to Wandsworth. Ripples from tug and barges caught the sunshine and flashed like approaching bridges.

Seagulls soared, and Captain Taylor

continued his commentary.

"Here we are at Greenwich — there's the 'Cutty Sark', and there's the red ball on the hill, that goes up and down the mast. That glass dome is the roof over the entrance to the river tunnel ... that wharf is Conroy's Wharf, the largest wharf up river. And that one is Rupert Murdoch's wharf, a very busy place. Yes, that big black bird's a cormorant — you see loads of them now, fishing, diving and coming up with fish."

I loved to see the narrow creek entrances, and creek-like dock entrances, slanting narrowly between high banks cut into the Thames. Every creek seemed to beckon with the call of adventure. Now if I were in a canoe... Wharfs, it appeared, were landing-stages where working boats unloaded. Canary Wharf, I suppose, is not now a real wharf at all.

I was shown Seacon Wharf and Senanton's Wharf, as well as a gaggle of "mud barges". Mud poured onto these boats from a huge blue overhead pipe emerging from the ground somewhere ashore, where another Underground tunnel was being made.

Bill Taylor sighed over the filled-in built-over plight of the Surrey Docks, "once the largest enclosed dock in the world. You could walk right over the lock without getting your feet wet, stepping from craft to craft."

(I was reminded of the pre-Navy days of great British oak forests, where a squirrel was said to be able to run from Gloucester to Lydney without once touching the ground.) Meanwhile, my tour continued.

"That's Nelson Dry Dock, with Nelson's house, and an old sailing ship alongside. This is Wapping Police Station Pier, where all the police boats go, and where all the suicides' bodies get taken ashore. It's not a nice job, fishing bodies out of the river ... That's Murdoch's print works, and ahead is the Tower of Ramsgate pub with the gallows outside. They say that Judge Jeffreys, the Hanging Judge, lived across the river to the gallows, and he'd sit outside to watch his victims die."

Near the entrance to St Katherine's Dock, a life size replica of an Eliza-

bethan galleon lay at anchor, looking wonderfully romantic in the evening light. Captain Taylor's love of the river made my ride a never to be-forgotten treat, and I only wish we could have stopped to let me gaze at the galleon. But lo! the light on Tower Bridge is flashing and we must go on. Through the rear window of the wheelhouse (or "wheelbox"), I could see the front barge ploughing through the water, held by a taut rope at each corner of her prow. On our left, we passed the Trollope and Colls building, head office of the firm responsible for saddling Liverpool with a crazy-looking Roman Catholic Cathedral. At Lambeth Bridge, near the Bishop's Palace, people looked down from the parapet for a bird's eye view of the barges. The Captain told me that children sometimes throw things at the boats.

"What do you do then?"

"Duck! Then warn the others on the radio. It gets a bit dicey around Guy Fawkes Night, when kids throw fireworks at us. If a firework got into the engine room and touched some fuel, we'd blow up!"

Chelsea Power Station loomed ahead, and there, on the Battersea Park Shore, was an entrancing pagoda built by Buddhists.

Journey's end for the rubbish containers that day was a stretch of mid-river not far from the well-known Chelsea houseboats. Two thousand ton weight of barges had to be released from the tug and re-fastened to some old moored barges used as a buoy. Members of the crew, whose existence I hadn't suspected before, appeared and began to do clever nautical things with ropes. One of the most able seemed to be Big George ("we call him that because he's big"). He leaped from barge to barge waving ropes like a cowboy and yelling. Rhythmic yells came back in reply, and the leading barge swung round and hit the moorings with a hollow "boom." Captain Taylor pulled a string and sounded the foghorn. "I have to judge exactly where they want the barge to go ... Big George is waiting — he knows exactly what I want."

Blue dusk was descending, as the

barges were fastened, ready to be collected next day and taken to Wandsworth. Big friendly men crowded the wheelhouse — Ron, Peter, Big George and Neville. All these strong men appeared to be in their fifties, and I wondered if a younger generation would follow them onto the river.

“Why do you have cut-out animals on those packs you’re holding?” I asked. Pete laughed. “It’s to tell our life preservers apart; we’ve got one

each, and they inflate with gas from a cylinder. We each have our trade mark — some like to have horses, if they like the races, others like cats, and so on.”

“Here we are at Chelsea!” Bill Taylor called, and to my joy he tied up at Cadogan Pier, where Big George helped me onto land. Then with a wave, the gallant band of rubbish-tuggers sped off up the river once more. I felt relieved to be in gracious, flowery streets, in place of the haunted

waterside of Woolwich and Charlton.

It seemed like a dream to be walking among white houses, up Flood Street to the King’s Road, after all my adventures. Never mind new Undergrounds — traffic ought to go by river.

**Roy Kerridge’s latest book, *The Storm is Passing Over*, is published by Thames & Hudson.**

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## Race Relations and Housing

### *Ray Honeyford finds dogma more influential than need*

Few will deny that housing is a key indicator of economic status and progress. Housing is also a fundamental human need. As such it generates powerful feelings, as well as fierce political debate. Moreover, housing is an enormously complex phenomenon. Housing needs and outcomes vary with income, social class and personal taste. We also know that housing aspirations and outcomes vary with ethnic group: Afro-Caribbeans are much more likely to inhabit rented council property than are Asians, whilst Asians are far more likely to own their own homes than are Afro-Caribbeans, and significantly more likely than are whites. Generalising about housing is therefore a hazardous enterprise. There can be few social phenomena less likely than housing to yield neat, statistical outcomes, and less likely to conform to the fashionable belief that equality of outcome is necessarily a public good.

However, this has not prevented the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) from its very inception from taking a simple-minded, egalitarian and dogmatic stance with regard to housing and race relations. Britain’s ethnic minorities are, according to the CRE,

hapless victims of a housing market determined to discriminate against them. This relentless and persistent pessimism has three sources: the CRE’s obvious vested interest in magnifying levels of racial discrimination in every area of our national life; a book published in 1967, *Race, Community and Conflict*; and a pessimistic report in the mid 70’s from Political and Economic Planning (PEP).

The book, written by two left-wing sociologists, John Rex and Robert Moore, was based on Sparkbrook, a decaying inner-city area of Birmingham, with a high New Commonwealth population. The authors concluded that black and Asian families were being forced into ghetto housing by an unsympathetic local authority and rapacious landlords. The basis of this was racial discrimination. This allegation has become the rallying cry of the whole race relations enterprise ever since. The picture painted by Rex and Moore was, broadly, supported by PEP — though the actual empirical data scarcely justified PEP’s conclusion. Moreover, there was good, reliable and readily available data before the PEP survey which would have justified

a fair degree of optimism about ethnic minority housing. The 1971 census had revealed that 76 per cent of Asians and 50 per cent of West Indians owned their own homes, compared with approximately 50 per cent of whites. The PEP survey actually acknowledged that, with regard to privately-rented housing, there was very little in the way of ethnic differences. The figures for occupation of council properties were almost identical for whites and West Indians, though they were lower for Asians — partly because Asians produce families too large to be accommodated in council houses. And, despite the surrounding gloom, PEP found that no fewer than 82 per cent of the ethnic minority groups were satisfied, or very satisfied with their accommodation — a figure only marginally lower than for whites.

The CRE has always been vulnerable to the influence of those academics who both share and help to produce the race relations lobby’s obligatory despair about the progress of Britain’s ethnic minorities. It is significant that, when the CRE convened its most high-powered, international conference on the subject “Ethnic Pluralism

and Public Policy” in 1983, it chose Valerie Karn, senior lecturer at Birmingham University, as its *eminence grise* on housing. She has been an enormously influential voice on ethnic minority housing. She has served on many local and national bodies, both statutory and private. And she is — or was — chairman of the housing journal *Roof*; and she has published widely on race and housing. Like Rex and Moore, and PEP, she perceives the housing market as a conspiracy acting against the interests of the ethnic minorities. The flavour of her reasoning may be judged from the nature of her rhetoric: “... racial discrimination and its attendant justifications are the product of the structural inequalities which obtain in society as a whole. Racial discrimination can be understood as a mechanism to protect race interests, just as class discrimination is a mechanism for protecting class interests”. One does not need to espouse the politics of the Right to be able to locate Miss Karn’s ideological position, a position not noted for promoting an entirely objective view of social realities. The important thing in this context is that this sort of ideological preaching is highly typical of the academic input into the CRE’s thinking and policies.

A much more balanced and defensible view of ethnic minority housing, at least in relation to the Asian community, has been provided by J.G. Davies in *Asian Housing in Britain*, published by the Social Affairs Unit in 1985. Davies’s report employed impeccable empirical data and methods, including actual interviews with tenants and property owners. His conclusion is heartening: “There is substantial evidence that Asians ... have successfully dealt with the task of providing themselves with decent housing. Most of them own outright, or are buying, the houses in which they live, and most of these houses are equipped with the basic amenities.” Davies has little sympathy for the cynics: “Yet this success story is insistently ignored by the academic literature emanating from sociologists, or persons associated with organisations such as the Community Relations Council.... The “problem”

of Asian housing is, then, the discrepancy between the reality of success and the academics’ imputation of, and insistence upon, failure. Fact and theory have parted company, and their rupture raises serious questions about the objectivity and disinterestedness of academics and race experts in a field urgently requiring dispassionate analysis”. Of course where vested interests and ideology are in conflict with the truth it is invariably the latter which comes off second best. Needless to say the work of Davies has been studiously ignored by the CRE.

Support for Davies came shortly after Karn’s bleak pontificating. In 1984 the Policy Studies Institute published *Black and White Britain*. This revealed the following:

	Asians	Whites	West Indians
Home Ownership	72%	59%	41%
Council Tenancy	19%	30%	46%
Private Rented	6%	9%	6%

This pattern was consistent across different households, regions, cities and smaller areas. Three things are noteworthy: the significantly higher level of home ownership amongst Asians than whites; the fact that, in the competition for council properties, West Indians do better than whites; and the great willingness of Asians to occupy council properties — in 1974 the figure was 4 per cent, which suggests that an encouraging degree of cross-racial integration was occurring.

This survey also revealed that over the period 1974-1982 housing conditions for the ethnic minorities underwent considerable improvement. “There have .... been considerable improvements in the housing standards of black (i.e. Asian and West Indian) people ... the proportion of black families sharing facilities with other households, or lacking the use of basic amenities, fell considerably in this period, from 26 per cent to 5 per cent, and from 37 per cent to 7 per cent respectively, as did the proportion living in properties built before the end of

the First World War, from 46 per cent to 35 per cent.”

Even the CRE, despite its continuing dependency about all things touching on race relations, has had to concede that there is positive information about ethnic minority housing. In its report *Housing and Ethnic Minorities; Statistical Information*, 1988, the CRE revealed that Asians continued to outperform whites in home ownership — in West and South Yorkshire no less than 91 per cent of Asian families own their own homes. Moreover, the difference between the minority and majority populations with regard to the exclusive use of bath and toilet was, by that time, very small indeed — 93.1 per cent, compared with 95.3 per cent. Regarding West Indians, the CRE report says this: “Overall, at the national level, West Indian households have almost the same housing conditions as whites.”

The most recent evidence of ethnic minority housing success comes from the Census Microdata Unit at Manchester University. Using information supplied by the ethnic minorities themselves at the most recent census, the Unit confirmed that the minorities continue to outdo the majority in terms of home ownership. (The same source also revealed that the minorities are also outperforming the majority in education and economic activity — though they are less successful in the labour market. Moreover, the most strikingly upwardly mobile group in Britain is not white but Chinese.)

To put the matter as mildly as possible the fierce institutional pessimism of the CRE, and the lobby which supports it, scarcely seems justified. But the CRE attitude is not simply wrong-headed. Its inability to take an informed, balanced view of the progress of the ethnic minorities — not least in housing — may well be helping to create resentment amongst the ethnic majority population, particularly those poorly housed whites trapped in the inner cities.

For instance, the CRE, on the basis of its distorted views of ethnic minority housing, persuaded the Housing Corporation — a publicly funded body — in 1986 to take race into account

when allocating money to housing associations. In 1992 the Housing Corporation published a policy document, *An Independent Future: Black and Minority Association Strategy 1992-1996*. This states that "in 1986 the Housing Corporation adopted a five year strategy to promote black and minority ethnic housing associations.... These are housing associations to meet the needs of ethnic minority people.... The term refers to people who have African, Caribbean or South East Asian ethnic or racial origins." That is, in allocating properties these associations must give preference to blacks and Asians. This policy has, effectively, been endorsed by the National Federation of Housing Associations, which has urged its members to set "race equality targets". It is clear from all this that the CRE, and those public bodies it successfully manages to persuade, consider that the basic human need for a roof over one's head varies according to skin colour.

According to press reports we now have sixty "All Black" housing associations in this country. Dr David Coleman, an Oxford specialist in demography, and a former adviser to

housing ministers, has said that this is tantamount to "legalised apartheid". It certainly appears that the CRE believes, not in the principle of multi-racial integration, but in racial separatism in the social organisation of housing. The Housing Corporation has made it clear that its "strategy on ethnic minorities is very much in line with the CRE's new Code for Rented Housing".

The worst aspect of all this, and what causes me, and I suspect a great many other people, deep disquiet, is that racial preferences are operating in only one direction. Any attempt to invest public money in a housing association which gave preference to white people would be met with howls of outrage from the whole race relations establishment, and would, almost certainly, be unlawful. And yet the vast majority of people — in terms of numbers — who find themselves in inadequate, poor quality housing are bound, in the nature of things, to be members, not of the ethnic minority, but of the ethnic majority population. A law which, at least ostensibly, aims to foster racial equality and good race relations, may, in practice, be encouraging the very

opposite outcome.

We should perhaps reflect a little on what happened not long ago on the Isle of Dogs. There, in a local election, 1500 people voted for an avowedly racialist candidate. They did so no doubt for a number of reasons, but no one questions that a key factor in this appalling occurrence was the widely held view that, in allocating properties, the local authority was discriminating against white people.

As I have said, housing is a very complex issue. It is also, especially when associated with race, a potentially explosive issue. If we are, as a society, to develop ways of thinking and policy-making, which are both appropriate and fair, then we need to begin by reflecting back at ourselves what we are really like as a multi-racial society — not least in the field of housing. Are we ever likely to do that so long as the CRE and the vociferous lobby which supports it continue to exist?

**Ray Honeyford is a former headmaster and writer.**

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## Broken Barometers and other Metaphors

*Alexander Boot shows how the state has tried to destroy the family*

**F**or self-defence, if for no other reason, we must study the totalitarians of the past, from Jean-Jacques to Leon, from Maximilian to Adolph, from Karl to Joseph Stalin. That way we shall be prepared for the advent of the new order and greet it with first-name familiarity but without ill-advised contempt.

Leon Trotsky, whatever we may think

of him, is a good subject to study. Like other totalitarians, he loved the young because they were less anchored in the past, less likely than their fathers to fall back on pre-totalitarian tradition. So he echoed Confucius and pronounced that 'the young are the barometer of a nation'. Tersely put, although his Chinese counterpart, encumbered or perhaps helped by the

unavailability of modern instruments, expressed the same thought better: 'A youth is to be regarded with respect. How do you know that his future will not be equal to our present?'

But we do know, for the young are putty in our hands, we sculpt them in our own image. Wet your hands, knead the clay and out comes a surreal Magrithish head with the top removed

to make the emptiness visible. Or else, appetite for group scenes whetted by the Burghers of Calais, spend a little more time in the studio and produce a realistic representation of four socio-economically disadvantaged youths joyously gangbanging a pensioner whose face reflects typical bourgeois absence of empathy for the united proletarians of the world.

We go about our business, our walk sprightly, faces relatively unlined, clothes just so, while back home in the attic the portrait of a youth we sculpted hardens into a diabolical caricature of ourselves. Before we complain of the young, let's see what we have up in our own attic.

There, you have your choice of metaphors, mixed and vigorously shaken to produce a single thought: the young don't have indigenous problems, they reflect the ills of society; society's disintegration is their demise. That doesn't mean they are not to be held individually responsible for what they are doing to the writhing pensioner, only that Trotsky had a point.

The young may not necessarily become as good as we want, but they will definitely become as bad as we allow. Most youths have in them the makings of both good and evil, and it's up to society to encourage the former or restrain the latter.

Society is like a young mother who doesn't know exactly how to bring up her children but learns as she goes along; except society operates on a loftier time scale — it took millennia to suspend the sticks and carrots in a delicate balance. To destroy the balance, however, was the work of a moment; it takes three years to produce a finely tuned Purdey, but only a couple of minutes to steal it, and then a mere second to blow away a strop-py pensioner.

Are the young more stupid today than a century ago? I doubt it — more ignorant, perhaps, but not more stupid. More vicious? More indolent? More bellicose? No — to the extent to which it is possible to peek into God's blueprints, good and evil, vice and virtue, intelligence and stupidity have their proportionate representation in every generation, and the proportions

don't vary much from one century to the next. And yet — 30,000 people are murdered in America every year, most by people legitimately describable as young. And yet youths with vacuous eyes terrorise our cities, loot and rape, steal our cars, cannot read or write, other than graffiti advertising the sexual preferences of their females — and in general present a rather unsavoury picture as viewed from the vantage point of a mere hundred years ago.

All this is lamentable; it does not, however, contradict the theory of even distribution of human qualities. For civilisation, the art of arranging society, encouraging good and punishing evil, managed to harness the nastier qualities reasonably well — as long as we had society. That is where the difference lies: a hundred years ago the West had polite societies; today we have political states.

The two sit at opposite poles: society is a family made up of families, and its objective in raising the young is to turn them into men and women who will perpetuate the family and help it live in peace and contentment. Family is about peace; the state is about control, ultimately achievable only through violence. That is why we should take a leaf out of Burke's book, and see the limitation of the state's power as *the* weapon in the battle against evil. And that's why, when we judge any particular state, be that Russia or Britain, we should ignore its self-describing monicker and concentrate instead on its strength vis-à-vis its subjects as the sole criterion: the weaker, the better; and let's leave all those socialisms, capitalisms, communisms, liberalisms, democracies, budding or otherwise, to the lobotomized corps of our foreign correspondents who swear by the redemptive power of the voting booth. It doesn't matter whether people themselves vote their executioners in; a process that can bring the likes of Hitler and Allende to power is an improper temple in which to worship. Tocqueville, a better man than all the *philosophes* put together, knew what he was talking about when he spoke of 'the tyranny of the majority'.

Throughout the Middle Ages, which only a cretin proud of 20th century

Mejdaneks and Magadans could still be calling 'Dark', the political nation state was either non-existent or weak, and people organised themselves into kindred groups closely patterned on the family: community, parish, monastery, guild. The peaceful family reigned supreme, and until the 100-Year War conflicts were few, relatively bloodless and short. Then the authoritarian state appeared, and the doctrine of divine right began to give rulers loopholes to put their militarising foot down, except the foot usually stopped in mid-air: as long as traditional institutions were allowed to survive, the prince's power could only go so far, which was not very far.

No king ruling by divine right ever had the same power over his subjects as the modern political state, be that a liberal democracy or its totalitarian variants. Which is another way of saying that, contrary to the prevailing academic banality, the authoritarian state is diametrically opposed to the liberal democratic or totalitarian state of modernity. Unlike those, it sometimes stood above the traditional institutions, but it never displaced them, unlike its liberal democratic and totalitarian antipodes. That's why liberal democrats and totalitarians alike have oodles of compassionate understanding for young murderers, but none at all for the authoritarian Franco or Salazar.

Traditional institutions may have been paternalistic, but they were not cannibalistic. They encouraged man to create; while the faceless Leviathan that displaced them encourages us to destroy.

It explains why in our accursed century the political state has murdered about 300 million people, a death toll so much higher than in all the previous centuries combined that it cannot be ascribed solely to technological advances. Also, it explains why the authoritarian Elizabeth I begat Shakespeare, while the liberal democratic Elizabeth II produced Martin Amis. And why the dying breath of authoritarian Russia rasped, 'I've studied all the lore of separation/ From grievances bare-headed in the night./ The oxen chew and lingers expecta-

tion,/ And in the last hour townsmen know delight...’, while the new-born totalitarian Russia echoed: ‘The Ukraine is hard to beat, there’s things to drink and things to eat’ — this at the time when 15 million Ukrainian peasants were being didactically starved to death.

While society prays for peace, the state worships at the altar of war. War is the midwife of the state, and no political state in history has been delivered without it, be that Russia, the USA, Israel or France.

War is also the nourishment of the state, for every shot fired in anger salutes yet further expansion of state power; and if you don’t believe me, compare the sizes and costs of British bureaucracies before and after the two world wars (in Victorian times the largest navy in the world was administered by a London bureaucracy of about 3,000; today’s navy, which is as good as non-existent, desperately needs its 30,000 Whitehall spongers). On the other hand, lasting peace spells a decline in state power, which is why Britain needed her Falklands as much as Argentina needed her Malvinas, America her Vietnam and France her Algiers. Violence and compulsive expansion are both the end and the means of the political state, and the difference in this respect, say, between Germans and Swedes is that of glandular secretions and not principle.

The objective of society is to prepare the young for adulthood; the objective of the state is to keep them perpetually adolescent. Adults, with notable exceptions, are constructive; children, with few exceptions, are destructive. Do not worry, says the state, destructive adolescents are better at goose-stepping, and when they return home, nauseated by congealing liquor, hollow cheeked and empty-eyed, they’ll be so much easier to control, so much better prepared to accept as natural the state’s dictate on every aspect of their lives, from diets to sexual techniques. Thus the hectoring provider state replaces the loving provider family as the core of the Western world; the only thing left for the family to do is to fade away. And it does.

The family is a building block of society but a direct competitor of the state, which always makes it its first target when the sniping starts. Thus one of the first acts of the Bolshevik state was to abolish the institution of marriage, and Iness Armand, Lenin’s *amante de révolution*, likened sex to drinking a glass of water, thus depriving it of any family-building significance and leaving one, for the sake of The Great Lover of All Mankind’s reputation, with the hope that she didn’t mean drinking it in one gulp.

The British state, while still not strong enough to abolish marriage and family, is strong enough to erode them — by squeezing its huge, anonymous bulk into the slot formerly occupied by the father. Thus made redundant in his social role of provider, the father disappears (witness the apocalyptic proportion of children born out of wedlock, and the number of couples around who live together without the benefit of marriage). For the British state to become big, today’s family had to shrink to its pitiful average size of 2.7 alienated modern people, eating overbaked modern meats full of antibiotics, and spouting half-baked modern ‘ideas’ full of liberal egalitarian rubbish.

Even as men used to be equal before God they are now equal before the state, today’s deity. John Major isn’t perhaps bright enough to be aware of this, but he senses it with his viscera of the state’s creature, and hence his drivel on the subject of the classless society. Society cannot be classless; only the state can, and John Major, along with his jolly predecessors and accessories, is the state in a sense in which no king ever was.

Education is one burden the state, in its endless beneficence, has decided to place on its meaty shoulders. After all, a one-eyed man can become king, but the likelihood of such an ascent is directly proportionate to the number of people he can blind.

That’s why all would-be totalitarians start out by kicking sand in children’s eyes, an activity on which Shirley Williams successfully built what passes for an educational system in this country. She and other chieftains of Barbaria

have achieved precisely what they ‘desired, planned or attempted’. For Barbaria to live England had to die, and the technique employed resembles getting rid of cockroaches in an infested house. You squash those you can see, then spread enough poison around to eradicate those in hiding and their offspring for generations to come.

There is some perverse logic behind it: the prime concern of an organism is survival. Institutions are like any other organisms. They do not know *bono publico* from Sonny Bono. They are out to ensure their own *bono*, and public be damned. That is their in-built biological imperative, and it holds true regardless of whether or not the people who man the institutions are aware of it. Governments are not only corruptible, they are *inevitably* corruptible; and that’s why sage men regarded governing least as the *sine qua non* of governing best.

That sagacity, alas, flies in the face of another biological imperative: government institutions have to grow indefinitely in order to survive. Unless you clip its branches, the growing tree of government will eventually destroy your house. So what hope, what theoretical candle glimmering a hundred yards away, is left for us? Education. So of course it must be vandalised.

In a democracy, an enlightened electorate is the only possible counterbalance to burgeoning institutions. A responsible government can be elected only by responsible citizens, and producing those has been since Socrates the real purpose of education. Alas, the very word ‘education’ has become a misnomer used to describe the acquisition of skills with which a citizen can fend for himself in the economic jungle. In fact, there is no visible link between economic success and education; the qualities involved can be picked up in street fights, the skills required learned on the job. The advertising industry is a good example. If you take its 500 most successful practitioners, you’ll find that not one has ever studied advertising academically, which doesn’t prevent them from driving around in £100,000 cars.

Every educational system has a

desirable end-product in its sights, the ideal towards which to strive. In Athens, it was the citizen responsible enough to vote. In aristocratic times, the paladin who did battle outside the city walls while the philistine cowered inside; in inchoate democracies the gentleman, a link with the traditional past. Mature liberal democracies and totalitarian states will not be outdone: they have targets too, and since they like to claim God-like powers of planning, they work towards their goals with a certain parody of rational consistency.

They want men who function according to the totalitarian theory of Rousseau, who can claim as much credit as Marx for creating the totalitarian frame of mind; indeed here's a man who 'discovered the universal truths of existence', as a recent book claimed. One universal truth Rousseau discovered is that the first commandment should be revised to say that man shall have no other gods before the state, no other loyalties, no other aspirations — and that he shall abrogate every right other than those bestowed by the state. But paraphrases cannot do justice to the patron saint of totalitarianism, so here booms his own voice:

The state should be capable of transforming every individual into part of the greater whole from which he, in a manner, gets his life and being; of altering man's constitution for the purpose of strengthening it. [It should be able] to take from the man his own resources and give him instead new ones alien to him and incapable of being made use of without the help of others. The more completely these inherited resources are annihilated, the greater and more lasting are those which he acquires.

This educational strategy was laid down in *The Social Contract*, and the complementary tactics in *Emile*, both compulsory reading for teachers in Stalin's Russia — as well they should have been, what with the author's vast practical experience in child raising (Jean Jacques didn't believe in contraception but he did believe in sex, so he simply dumped at strangers' doorsteps the numerous bastards resulting from this dichotomy, thus presaging the state's ideal in such matters).

The Soviets canonised not only Rousseau but also his best-known follower Pavlik Morozov, a 13-year old Pioneer peasant in the thirties who dutifully betrayed his father to an OGPU firing squad, and was lynched for his trouble by outraged villagers who apparently didn't share Pavlik's strong views on the collectivisation of agriculture. This sainted martyr was an ideal product of statism run riot, with loyalties removed far away from home and centralised in the Leviathan state. The same monster has produced the British young and trained them for the time when Maastricht is pushing statism to a level that barely twinkled in Marx's eye.

The state wants obedient zombies ready to die for it in apocalyptic numbers; it strives to replace familial groups with anonymous heaps of humanity; it naturally promotes egalitarianism, for class is as meaningless in a foxhole or dole queue as it used to be in church.

It is easy to deduce what the state *doesn't* want, what kind of qualities it will discourage in its young — they are the same qualities and the same type of learning good families used to encourage in their children.

Political philosophy, for example, is outright seditious — what if the young read Burke and get strange ideas? Classical music is too élitist, and too individual for words. Shakespeare is too hung up on heterosexuality and gang warfare. Foreign languages are ridiculous, it's about time we all spoke the same tongue, preferably some grammarless form of monosyllabic Euro-English. Rhetoric, logic? Forget it, or else people old enough to vote will realise that John Major is capable of committing every known fallacy in a short speech or a long sentence. Economics? The young might read Adam Smith or, God forbid, von Mises, and before you know they grow up resentful of feeding Leviathan to the tune of half of what they earn with the sweat of their brows. History? But let's make it modern history or current events.

Individual responsibility is out, date rape is in — if we don't alienate the sexes they might want to create real

families, rather than actuarial units for insurance and tax purposes. Crime against property is naughty but acceptable, as long as it's not state property. Murder really has two victims, the actual stiff who, by having failed to exercise due caution, provoked the crime and has only himself to blame, and the murderer who obviously needs therapy — unless he murdered a state official (in New York State, for example, only the killing of a policeman is classified as first-degree murder punishable by death; private citizens are fair game). Dickens should be expurgated from school curricula for his biased portrayal of Bill Sykes who, after all, was a victim of the Industrial Revolution; today he would be a prime candidate for free housing and a trip to an exotic location of his choice.

The amazing thing is that many people, including some who write for a living, believe that all these things one takes such delight in lampooning result from some sort of bungling in the past. They write names like Attlee or Shirley Williams, Wilson or Heath on giant posters, pin them on the wall and throw darts at them. This is ridiculous — there was no bungling; the people directly responsible for the young have produced exactly what they desired, exactly the result for which their statist loins ached.

The young may not be particularly bright, but their ears are finely attuned to the clarion call of the political state. So they take to the streets, looking for the old woman who irresponsibly neglected to wear a chastity belt that night.

In the subsequent din nobody notices that the barometer has fallen off the wall and smashed to bits. Be careful you don't cut your feet on the shards of glass.

**Alexander Boot grew up in Russia and emigrated to the United States before settling in London.**

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# Editorial

The Internet will transform business, learning and recreation in ways that could hardly have been imagined by our parents. The easy access to information, of whatever kind or quality, and the instant transmission of messages to every quarter of the globe, will ensure that none of us need be deprived of the knowledge required by our projects, however eccentric they may be. The result will be an enormous boost to the market economy, a liberation of world trade, and an end to every monopoly that relies on privileged information.

Like every technological advance, however, the Internet is morally neutral. It will assist healthy commerce and innocent friendships; and it will be useful to terrorist networks and criminal gangs. It will multiply educational opportunities; but it will provide the kind of texts and images which destroy the motive to learn. Shakespeare and Donald Duck exist side by side on the Internet, which is powerless to dictate to the children of the future which of the two they should call up on their screens.

The problem has come to a head with a decision of judges from the American Supreme Court, who have made a preliminary ruling that it is unconstitutional to legislate against pornography on the Internet. There was a time when decisions of the American Supreme Court could be observed with indifference from this side of the Atlantic. But the Internet has changed this as well. It is no respecter of national boundaries and its messages pass from jurisdiction to jurisdiction without the possibility of border controls. Moreover, it is US policy to make the network available free of charge to schools and universities. If the Supreme Court prevails, pornography will be available in all our homes, schools and work-places: children will be able to call up obscenities whose meaning they are too young to understand, and which

the majority of people would find deeply offensive. The effect on the psychology, morality and social outlook of the rising generation will be devastating.

The American Constitution gives to the Supreme Court the power to strike out any proposed legislation which it considers to be unconstitutional. In the days when judges were upright and patriotic citizens, who shared the moral values of the majority and regarded themselves as guardians of American society, they could be relied upon to interpret the constitution in a conservative spirit, looking for ways to protect the interests and feelings of ordinary people against the sharks and pimps who prey on them. Those days have long since vanished. American supreme court judges are now paid-up members of the chattering classes, liberal, secular and with the kind of snobbish contempt for decent people that is bred in modern universities. They have decided that the first amendment to the constitution, which protects freedom of speech, also protects pornography. Even video films of perverted sexual acts count as 'free speech' in the Supreme Court's reading. The idea that the Founding Fathers intended to permit any such thing is of course absurd. But the Founding Fathers were decent, patriotic and Christian people, and the judges are as contemptuous of them as they are of the moral majority.

Is there anything that can be done to avert the potential catastrophe? Diplomatic representations are powerless against the Supreme Court, which neither President nor Congress can control. And when individual freedom is obstructed by what liberals see as 'bigotry' and 'prejudice', the whole weight of educated opinion will rush to the defence of the Court, as happened in the case of abortion.

Yet if nothing can be done, the consequences will be dire, not only for us, but for America too. As hard porn

floods onto screens from London to Sydney, and from Samarkand to Timbuktu, the idea of America as the Great Satan will gain more and more adherents among the millions of ordinary people who live, as they must live, by decency and self-restraint. Corruption and anger will grow side by side, and lead, not in Iran only, but all over the world, to those dangerous explosions of belligerence towards the world's most powerful nation.

There is one important lesson in this for us, at a time when the chattering classes on this side of the Atlantic are pressing for a written constitution, and attempting to foist on us, through the Labour Party's reforms, an American style of government. When a constitution is first written down, almost everything at stake is left unsaid. It never occurred to the Founding Fathers — it never *could* have occurred to them — to mention that freedom of speech does not extend to pornography. The point went without saying, and to mention it would have been to insult the American people.

Once a bill of rights is written down, however, it is open to interpretation, and gradually the liberal interpretation will prevail, until all those acts which were once so shocking that it was simply assumed that the law must forbid them, are not merely permitted but positively encouraged, as the signs of a healthy constitution. In this way, the American constitution, which produced the world's most powerful democracy, is now being used to undermine it. The same would happen here, were we ever so unwise as to follow the American example. Meanwhile we must urge our politicians to do what they can to avert social catastrophe, when the Supreme Court succeeds — as it surely will — in inflicting a hurricane of obscenity on the whole civilised world.

# Letters

Sir,  
Since they claim to have no interest in twentieth century music, it is odd that Toni Dawes and Andrew O'Connor (Letters, Summer 1996) should have chosen to write to you on the subject of Pfitzner. One must assume that they feel they have some kind of mission to expose 'nazi fellow-travellers', of which Pfitzner, they claim, was one.

They do not mention Furtwaengler, Karajan or Richard Strauss, but similar charges have been made against them, on the grounds, it would seem, that they were, unsurprisingly for Germans, in Germany when Hitler was in power.

What is remarkable is that similar accusations are never made against musicians who were in the USSR when Stalin was in power. To give two examples: Prokofiev returned voluntarily to the country from abroad and lived there for the rest of his life; while some of Shostakovich's attempts to placate the regime are almost grovelling. Yet this is never held against them. They are judged, quite properly, on their musical achievements.

The bias is obvious and extends to fields other than music. A good example is the case of Walter Duranty, *New York Times* correspondent in Moscow in the early thirties. Duranty covered Stalin in the way Stalin wanted to be covered. He expressly denied, for example, that there was a famine in Ukraine even while millions of Ukrainians were being starved into submission. For his work he won the Pulitzer prize for journalism. To this day the *New York Times* remains the most solid and respectable of American newspapers.

Imagine that a major newspaper had had a correspondent in Berlin at about the same time who had reported everything in the way Hitler wanted it reported. Would that paper have remained respectable for over sixty

years? Indeed would it still be in existence?

David S.M. Williams  
London N13

Sir

In 'Our colourful Media' (SR Spring 1996,) Antony Milne derides *The Times* for expressing disapproval of the then Quebec premier's daring to say that 'the separatist vote was lost because of the number of non-white ethnic votes cast (which indeed was the case).'

That is preposterous. The premier did not mention non-whites (his phrase was 'money and the ethnics') nor is the non-white population of this province large enough to have much effect on the outcome of votes even in ridings where it is concentrated.

The furore over the premier's remark, admittedly somewhat overblown, arose from the fact that he was ostensibly elected to govern the whole province, not just the French Canadians. The separatists claim to be 'territorial nationalists', hence the term *Quebecois* (which actually means an inhabitant of Quebec City) fraudulently substituted for 'French Canadian'. They cannot have it both ways. The territory of Quebec was cobbled together by various acts of the Imperial and Canadian parliaments; only part was originally in New France.

Quebec separatism is essentially a tactic used to extract benefits from English Canada. If, nevertheless, the province were to secede, much of its territory, including the areas where 'money and the ethnics' are concentrated, would be partitioned off to remain Canadian.

Lionel Albert  
Hampstead,  
Quebec

Sir

Mrs Lança asks an important question

"How in a democracy can we prevent the dictatorship of the majority?" The answer is that we cannot so long as we retain the anonymous *irresponsible* vote of *ballot box* democracy. In no other sphere are we permitted anonymous transactions. I cannot validate a cheque, a deed, a Will or a bond with the mark of an illiterate (except my mark be witnessed) yet I can cast an anonymous irresponsible vote for the candidate whose party bribes and corrupts me with the offer of a greater share of the pelf of my neighbour's income and property than the other parties offer. Inevitably at each election the parties "up the ante" on each other.

The solution is to replace the present anonymous irresponsible vote with a *responsible* vote; i.e. a ballot, signed, recorded, and receipted. It may be confidential without being secret.

The immediate effects of such a voting system would be to impose responsibility upon both voters and party politicians. The parties would have to submit their tenders to the electorate in a proper businesslike way, specifying the cost of their programme. The Market, as opposed to the present bribery, would determine the outcome.

The question is what sanction do the electors have against the party system? Everyone can start acting responsibly by refusing to take part in an irresponsible and immoral scheme. They can instead use their ballots as a referendum on some single over-riding issue. I will be endorsing my vote "No E.U.", unless there is a candidate who presents an audited balance sheet of the costs of E.U. membership in his election address. If a few million voters pledge to do likewise the party game would be up.

A Cooney  
Liverpool

# Reviews

## Crown and Crisis

*A W Purdue*

**The Monarchy and the Constitution**, Vernon Bogdanor, Oxford University Press, 1995. **Royal Bounty, The Making of a Welfare Monarchy**, Frank Prochaska £19.95, 1995, Yale.

The old question was whether the monarchy could survive democracy. The new one is whether it can survive a late twentieth-century society in which the state exists to satisfy the demands of its "customers" as articulated by the media. Like so many of our venerable institutions monarchy is squeezed between the millstones of egalitarianism and the market. While Labour may ask whether palaces are compatible with an age of the common man, we await demands from John Major that the monarchy produce a mission statement, sign up to a Citizens' Charter and announce that footmen and equerries are to be treated within an Investors in People framework.

The British monarchy has been enormously successful in accommodating itself to democracy; more importantly it has played a significant role in enabling political change in modern Britain to be stable and evolutionary. Its existence blunted conflict and provided a focus of loyalty above class or sectional interest. Walter Bagehot's description of the constitution as allotting a largely dignified role to the monarchy, while leaving the efficient part to the politicians, was inaccurate when written, for he underestimated the political power of the mid-Victorian

monarchy, but became true because it was widely accepted and was taught to princes.

Edward VII refurbished the monarchy's ornamental role by which it became the centre piece of state theatre. George V, perhaps the first wholeheartedly constitutional monarch, did much to create a style of monarchy suitable for the twentieth century, a monarchy that was dignified, respectable and very British and which was continued by George VI and Queen Elizabeth. It is a tribute to the appeal of this style of monarchy that it was never more popular than when class consciousness was at its height and when, as in the 'thirties and 'forties, hardship was commonplace.

No doubt there was an element of luck in this: had World War I gone the wrong way, it might have been the Kaiser who stood confidently on a balcony as his relative headed for exile, while, but for Mrs Simpson, a long reign for the first royal super-star, Edward VIII, might have tested relations between sovereign and politicians. But underlying the endurance of the monarchy has been an identification with an institution which has a more than utilitarian function and which represents the continuity between the past and present nation in a

way that politicians can never do.

Vernon Bogdanor is a Bagehot for our time and he has written a fine book on the political role of the monarchy. But no treatment of the political and constitutional significance of the monarchy can by itself do justice to its importance to the British people; for its social influence is of greater importance than its remaining prerogatives. The monarchy is both less than and more than the state: less because, though the Queen is head of state, political decisions are made by governments whose real authority is vested in majorities in the House of Commons; and more because royal authority extends beyond the state to civil society. The Queen and the royal family protect us from the state and prevent it from acquiring untrammelled power over our lives. They provide protection for and give prestige to what remains of our independent and pluralist institutions. This is why the retention of the monarchy is so crucial and why the assault on it by "modernisers" and collectivists, who hate anything to be beyond the control of government and who detest the voluntary, the independent, the traditional and the local, has been so fierce and unremitting.

Frank Prochaska has a deep under-

standing of the social significance of the monarchy and in *Royal Bounty: The Making of the Welfare Monarchy*, he has done a rare thing. He has found something original to say about it. Studies of the monarchy and biographies of kings and queens invariably mention royal philanthropic activity, but tend to regard it as useful but ancillary work. Prochaska demonstrates that the very ubiquity of the charitable work of members of the royal family has disguised from us its centrality to the strength not only of the monarchy but of society.

The British are a profoundly philanthropic people and until well into the twentieth century private charity contributed more than the state to the amelioration of the indigent, provision for the sick and the promotion of schemes for social and educational improvement. From the reign of George

III the royal family has involved itself intimately in such causes and scarcely a major charitable foundation has not sought royal patronage. Prochaska charts the history of royal links with such institutions as hospitals, housing associations and well-known charities for the blind, the disabled, the prevention of cruelty to animals and the provision of a life-boat service. Not only has such activity been good for charities and given a warm and benevolent image to the monarchy; but by devoting so much time to charities and social causes, often in small provincial towns, the monarchy has penetrated deep into civil society and done much to safeguard its cohesion and independence.

Queen Victoria's uncles went their wicked ways, and a queen of some people's hearts demanded entrance to George IV's coronation in vain, yet the

monarchy endured. Whether the late twentieth-century monarchy survives, not just some unfortunate marriages, but the excuse these have given to hitherto closet republicanism, depends not just upon justifications of the monarchy's constitutional position but upon the rallying of civil society. Vernon Bogdanor comments that few states have made a positive choice for the republican system but that many have embraced it *faute de mieux* after a monarchy has become discredited. Conservatives would do well to realise with Frank Prochaska that the defence against republicanism should not just be based upon the monarch's role in high politics or on the "magical monarchy" of great state occasions; it should also emphasise how important the monarchy is in resisting the monolithic state and in forming a buffer between state and society.

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## France's George Orwell

*Shusha Guppy*

**The First Man**, Albert Camus, translated by David Hapgood, Hamish Hamilton, £14.99.

On 4th January 1960 a car driving from the South of France to Paris skidded and hit a tree. In the passenger seat was Albert Camus, France's most celebrated writer, who had won the Nobel Prize for Literature two years before, at the age of 45. He was killed instantly.

"The most absurd way to die is in a car crash", he had said. To the man who had invented the notion of the Absurd and popularised it in his first novel, *L'Etranger*, the irony of his own death would not have been lost: in his pocket they found his train ticket — at the last minute he had decided not to use it, but drive back to Paris with friends. "Those who live by the

Absurd shall die by the Absurd", he might have quipped.

In a bag near Camus' body was found the sketch of a novel on which he was working, *The First Man*. Its 144 tightly written manuscript pages, often illegible and without punctuation — as if drafted in one session — were meticulously edited and annotated by his daughter Catherine. It was published last year, and became immediately the literary event of the season and a best seller.

But why the delay of 34 years? In a preface written especially for the English Edition, Catherine Camus explains "the mood of 1960" in France, at the

height of the Cold War and the Algerian war. The Left, Communists and fellow-travellers, dominated French intellectual life, and forbade any criticism of the Soviet Union on the grounds that "it would weaken the regime and delay humanity's progress towards a better world". It favoured independence under Arab rule for Algeria, while the Right was adamant on keeping "Algeria French". At the time of his death "Camus was very much isolated and attacked from all sides", and publishing an imperfect first draft "would have given ammunition to his enemies". For Camus had antagonised the Left by condemning the Gulag,

stating that ideology must serve humanity, not the reverse, that the end does not justify the means, and that totalitarianism “destroyed any hope for a better world”. On Algeria he opposed both the Left and the Right by advocating a multicultural federation “where the two communities would enjoy the same rights”.

With the collapse of the Soviet Empire, the rise of Fundamentalism and the civil war in Algeria, Camus has been fully vindicated, and today his courage and intellectual probity have made him an exemplar for a new generation of French intellectuals, while the “ideocrats” who ostracised him have been discredited.

According to Camus’ Notebook, printed at the end of the book, he had been planning *The First Man* for many years: an autobiographical novel that would be also the history of Algeria from the arrival in the 19th Century of the early *colons* “in whose veins ran the blood of the 1848 revolutionaries”, to the Second World War. This first volume covers his childhood in Algiers.

It opens on a stormy night in 1913 with the journey of his parents in a horse-drawn wagon to a remote cottage on a farm where Jacques Cormery (Albert Camus) is born. (His father, a farm worker who had grown up in an orphanage and taught himself to read in adult age, was of Alsatian descent, and his mother of Spanish origin.) The following year the First World War breaks out, his father is mobilised, and is killed at the Battle of the Marne, aged 29: “He had never seen France. He saw it, and was killed”. The shell fragment that had hit him was sent to his widow and kept in a biscuit tin.

Forty years later Jacques sets out in search of his lost father. He finds his grave in a War Cemetery in France, and is overwhelmed by tenderness and pity, “the compassion that a grown man feels for an unjustly murdered child”. Then he travels to Algiers, where he grew up and where his family, mostly humble artisans, still live. He describes the bare three-room apartment in a poor district where Arab and French share the same “poverty as naked as death”, his hard, whip-wield-

ing grandmother who runs the household, his deaf-and-dumb, good-natured uncle, and his semi-mute infinitely gentle mother for whom “life in its entirety was a misfortune”. “The love of a son for his mother constitutes his entire universe”, Camus wrote elsewhere, and indeed *The First Man* is a heart-rending hymn of love to this woman who “knew nothing, desired nothing, and did not dare to desire”, and to whom the book is dedicated: “To you who will never be able to read this book”.

“Poverty is a fortress without drawbridges”, mitigated by sun and sea. Camus evokes the magnificent landscape of this coast where Africa and the Mediterranean meet, with a lyrical *élan* reminiscent of his early book *Noces* — hours of swimming in the warm sea, the lush countryside south of Algiers where his uncle, a cooper, takes him shooting rabbits on Sundays, the gorgeous sunrises, the brief twilights, the vast diamanté of the African sky arching above at night, and his own irrepressible *joie-de-vivre*.

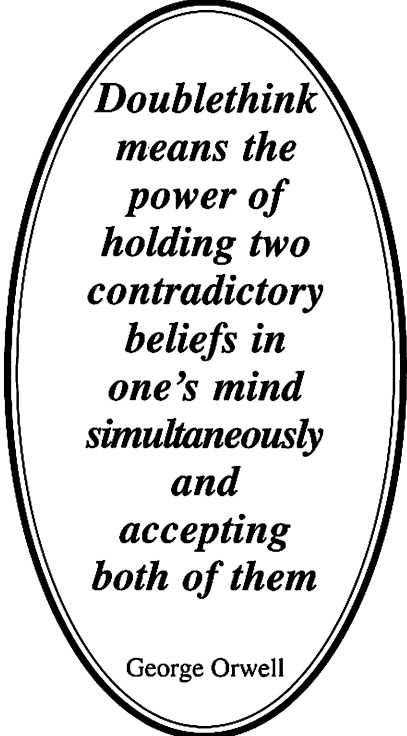
In this “kingdom of poverty” Jacques has no choice but “to be the First Man, find his own morality and truth... without roots and without faith”. He is torn between the desire to escape from a life that is “poor, ignorant, and mulish... a life of blind patience with no thought beyond the present”, and the knowledge that escape would separate him from these honest, good people he loves. Rescue comes in the shape of his primary-school teacher, Louis Germain (Monsieur Bernard in the book), a survivor of the Great War, who perceives Jacques’ potential, and coaches him successfully for the scholarship that will take him to the Lycée and beyond. Filling the matriculation form he has to write “servant” for his mother’s profession, and is suddenly stabbed by shame “and the shame of being ashamed”.

Camus never lost touch with his old teacher and mentor, and on the day he received the Nobel Prize in 1957, he wrote him a letter to thank him once again for his paternal kindness and his teaching all those years ago. *Mon cher Petit*, Germain wrote back “I would give a great hug to the big boy you have

become: who for me will always be ‘my little Camus’.” Both letters are published in the Appendix.

How much *The First Man* would have changed in the course of writing is a matter of conjecture. “My father was a very reserved man”, states Catherine Camus, and doubtless the plangent, confessional flow (at times reminiscent of Rousseau) would have been harnessed in favour of a more detached style. But perhaps it would have been a pity, for “chance is not a bad method in matters of culture”, and this first draft has the force and spontaneity of a spring as it gushes forth unimpeded. It might have lost its poignancy in striving for the cool elegance of his earlier novels — *La Chute*, *La Peste*. As it is, this marvellous book is suffused with the nobility and warmth that even Camus’ enemies acknowledged.

David Hapgood’s translation is on the whole fluent, with the occasional Americanisms that jar: “Cheap” for mean, “recess” for school breaks, “vacation” for holidays, “Kiddo” for *mon Petit* and so on. And *Ecole Normale* is not “a normal school”, but a Teachers’ Training College. But these are tiny caveats in an otherwise conscientious and readable translation.



*Doublethink  
means the  
power of  
holding two  
contradictory  
beliefs in  
one’s mind  
simultaneously  
and  
accepting  
both of them*

George Orwell

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# The End of Welfare?

*Stewart Deuchar*

**Community Without Politics**, David G. Green, Choice in Welfare No. 27, £8, IEA Health and Welfare Unit, 2 Lord North Street, London SW1P 3LB

All over the world welfare systems are running into trouble. They are no longer affordable. What is worse, they are not working in the way that everybody expected. Poverty has not been measurably reduced; crime has burgeoned. At the same time welfare has created side effects such as chronic dependency and the cult of the victim. Yet, faced with the overwhelming evidence of failure, the political and chattering classes can only think in terms of more of the same medicine. Green dares to think the unthinkable; is there any alternative? He also dares to seize and hold the moral high ground. Welfare raises moral questions of great delicacy.

This book is an excellent resource for dealing with all the muddled thinking and special pleading based on the idea that 'the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer'. For those, of whom I am one, who suspect that British top managers are vastly overpaid, he has little comfort, but he demolishes the Rowntree Inquiry figures so beloved by the likes of Bishop Shephard of Liverpool, which depict a society becoming ever more unequal. The fact is that, just as the race relations industry has a vested interest in racial conflict, so the poverty industry has a vested interest in class warfare.

Green draws deeply on American writers and American experience. There, the enormous investment in Lyndon Johnson's Great Society has had no measurable effect on poverty. Meanwhile the dependency culture has flourished, crime has soared, the quality of life has plummeted, the family has disintegrated, illegitimacy has more than doubled, all sorts of bogus

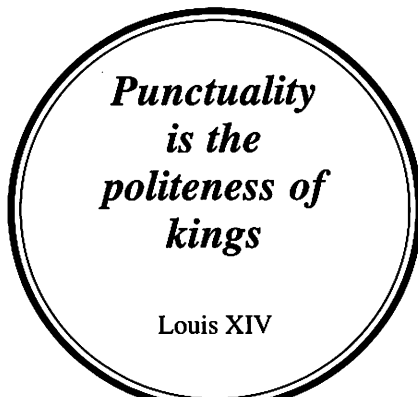
and unpleasant 'lifestyles' have claimed centre-stage, the dignity and personal responsibility of the individual have all but disappeared. Much the same, of course, has happened in this country, and indeed in the whole western world.

Yet there are still plenty of people who seem to believe that throwing (other people's) money at poverty 'solves' the problem — if it doesn't, try throwing a bit more. The appalling side-effects are mostly ignored, or attributed to 'capitalism' or 'deprivation'. Is it possible to break free from this vicious circle? To anybody who has read Green's *Reinventing Civil Society* (1993) it will come as no surprise that his recommendation is to draw on our past experience of friendly societies, which were remarkably effective in catering for life's emergencies without impairing individual dignity or responsibility.

Of course it is not difficult to dismiss such a suggestion as impractical or politically impossible, but the reality is that when you find that you can no longer, for any reason, run a car, you have to walk or ride a bicycle or make radical changes in your lifestyle. The welfare state is largely the result of Parkinson's Law, whereby people like Margaret Hodge take over more and more of our lives, and reduce us to a state of perpetual infancy. Where all this is leading us can be seen in Sweden, where omnipotent social workers can apparently walk into any home and remove the children permanently, operating often in defiance of court decisions. One result of this is that fifty percent of all children in Sweden are born out of wedlock.

David Green's proposals have a lot in common with those of the highly respected Labour MP Frank Field. He too recognises that the problem of how to deal with poverty is primarily a moral one, and that we should give due regard to preserving the dignity and autonomy of the individual. The moral questions are of course, complex. What, for instance, should we be doing about teenage single mothers? Being soft on them encourages others, being harsh seems unfair on the child. Green does not shy away from any of these questions. *Cherchez l'homme* figures prominently among his suggestions regarding single mothers. There is room for doubt as to the effectiveness of this particular measure, but his main arguments are compelling.

Our present arrangements reward the spendthrift, the feckless and the irresponsible and penalise those who save and marry and have decent law-abiding children. Somewhere along the line we have gone badly wrong, and if we do not have the courage to acknowledge the fact, our quality of life can only continue on its downward spiral. David Green's book deserves to be a classic.



*Punctuality  
is the  
politeness of  
kings*

Louis XIV

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# What John Gray once Believed

Antony Flew

**Classical Liberalism: The Unvanquished Ideal**, David Conway, Macmillan, 1996, £40.

*Classical Liberalism: The Unvanquished Ideal*, is an altogether worthy and peculiarly appropriate successor to the same author's *A Farewell to Marx: An Outline and Appraisal of His Theories*. Here Professor Conway begins by presenting classical liberalism as his answer to the fundamental question of political philosophy — "Which form of political organization of society is best?" He then proceeds to present, fairly and in their most formidable contemporary forms, the challenges of Modern Liberalism, of Communitarianism, and of Conservatism. By patient, detailed, systematic and often very elegant argument he demonstrates that — notwithstanding that they nowadays constitute dominant influences in the intellectual world — these challenges actually possess no intellectual force. Modern liberals, in Conway's usage, resemble classical liberals in their concern for individual liberty. But they are to be distinguished by their revulsion against the inequalities likely to arise under a classically liberal regime and by their consequent commitment to a very extensive welfare state and the heavy taxation required to pay for it. Since it is too late to redeem the word 'liberal' from this application the most practical clarificatory expedient becomes the addition of the qualification 'modern'. But this should not mislead us to overlook the perhaps greater appropriateness of the term 'socialist' or the expression 'social democrat'.

John Rawls, for instance, makes his socially contracting parties simply take it for granted, without a scintilla of supporting argument, that all existing and yet-to-be-produced wealth and income within their (to them temporarily unknown) territories is available, free of any morally legitimate prior claims to possession, for distribution or redistribution at their absolute collective dis-

cretion: that it is, therefore, by implication, already collectively owned.

Because he proposes later to dispose of so many additional representatives of modern liberalism Conway makes nothing of the fact that, although Rawls entitled his book *A Theory of Justice*, what he actually offers in it is an account of social justice.

Indeed the reason why Rawls has been so enormously influential, precisely is that he develops a systematic rationale for the ideals of what Hayek in his later years might have called the social democrats of all parties. Social democrats are forever insisting that the realization of their ideals is mandated by social justice, and assuming that this makes them *ex officio* occupants of the moral high ground.

However, in the understanding of the classical juridical tradition which stretches back to *Institutes* of Justinian and beyond, social justice is most emphatically not any kind of justice. For implementing the supposed mandates of social justice notoriously involves seizing under the threat of force (taxing away) some of what we must presume to be the justly acquired property of the better off and transferring this into the hands of others whose just acquisitions are considered to have been deficient. Such transfers may be in some way justified. But, surely, they cannot be justicized (shown to be just)? We thus have here another welcome occasion for the reminder that the true legendary patron of the welfare state is not the Good Samaritan but Robin Hood.

One of Conway's modern liberals can scarcely be accounted any kind of liberal. For Ted Honderich is quoted as asking, in his dreadful book *Conservatism*, "Why should members of a society not be compelled to contribute to its

economic well-being somehow conceived? Why should we proceed differently here than with the good end of securing obedience to the criminal law?"

Throughout Conway's primary concern is to dispose of what may be rated as philosophical objections to classical liberalism. But, especially in dealing with Communitarians and Conservatives he can, and with the help of publications of the I.E.A. Health and Welfare Unit does, show that developments which they deplore have been encouraged more by state welfare than by classical liberal ideas. It was, for instance, measures introduced by Lloyd George and Aneurin Bevan which in fact destroyed those paradigmatically communitarian institutions, the friendly societies. Again, following Charles Murray, Conway points out that "where basic forms of service become provided by the state" individuals inevitably come to "think they need not bother to be concerned for the good of their neighbours because it is being taken care of by the state."

Perhaps in *The Salisbury Review* a word should be said about our Editor's contention that, as Conway puts it, "a liberal polity" is unable to inspire and preserve among its members any *allegiance* or *Patriotism*" (emphasis original). So how is it that those Conservative MPs who are most strongly committed to the emancipation of the UK from the monstrosity of Maastricht seem at the same time to be those most sympathetic to classical liberalism? In sum Conway's second book presents a powerful and I think unanswerable response to hostile critics of classical liberalism. But, since those people dominate the media, they are unlikely to feel any need to take account of this book. Certainly there was at my time of writing no sign of a review in any daily or weekly journal.

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# Indian Freedom Fighter

*George Chowdhary Best*

**In the Vanguard of Freedom, Essays in Honour of Minoo Masani**, Ed. K S Venateswaran, Tata Press, Bombay, for the Minoo Masani 90th birthday Felicitation Committee, 1995, £10.

Minoo Masani, or to give him his full name, Minocher Rustam Masani, is a well-known person in India and to a lesser extent abroad. This volume of essays in his honour is written by a variety of people including our own Sir Alan Walters, Philip Mason, a former Indian Civil Servant and author of a number of distinguished books about the British Raj, Melvin Lasky, founding editor of *Encounter* magazine, and Bernard Levin. Not all the essays are about Masani and some are distinctly discursive. Nonetheless the book is most readable.

The journal *Freedom First* was founded by Masani in the early 1950s (see *SR*, Vol.8, no.3.). In some ways it is comparable with *Encounter*, in others with the UK Freedom Association's Journal. Masani was its editor in 1975 when Mrs Gandhi's Emergency struck. Before that, he had been active in the movement for Indian independence.

Masani was born in Bombay of Parsee stock. His mother belonged to a great ship-owning family, the Wadias, and his father, until 1925, was a municipal commissioner, the first Indian to hold such a post, as well as being Vice-Chancellor of Bombay University. Naturally enough, with such a background, Masani proceeded for his higher education to England and found himself at the LSE in the 1920s. In one of his autobiographies he admits to having been more extreme than Krishna Menon (which is saying something), refusing to stand for God Save the King and telling the India Society Committee that he would not drink the loyal toast. This was reported by Menon to Beveridge, then the LSE's director,

who said that if the toast was not drunk he would not come to the Society's dinner. Masani thereupon climbed down and the committee with him. Returning to India in 1928, he joined an Englishman's chambers (John Coltman's) in Bombay. But his legal career was curtailed by his participation in the non-cooperation movement from 1932 onwards. At the beginning of 1933 he decided to 'court arrest' as was then the fashion; and having announced that he was to preside over an illegal meeting was arrested almost at the beginning of it by an English Deputy Police Commissioner who told him he was simply being foolish.

After his release, in December 1933, Sir Jamshedji Kanga, Advocate-General of Bombay, tried to prevent him practising at the Bar. Kanga was a Parsee 'of the old mould, and an old time loyalist'. But he was overruled by the High Court Bench, presided over by an Englishman, Sir John Beaumont, and leave for Kanga to appeal to the Privy Council in London against Masani was refused, yet another example of how the rule of law operated in many ways quite impartially between the races in British India.

In February 1934 Masani helped to form the Congress Socialist group, of which his father disapproved, not liking propaganda for the class war being conducted from his home. But Masani gradually became disillusioned about socialism and after independence, when he was appointed to a United Nations Sub-Commission on Minorities, emerged as an opponent of the Soviet delegate, Borisov, who in June 1949 claimed that the Soviet Union's record in respect of the protection of

minorities was exemplary. Masani responded by referring to a *New York Times* article asserting that the USSR was on the one hand conducting an anti-semitic campaign on its own territory and on the other purging Muslim elements. For his pains he was described by Borisov as a 'cad', a 'valet' and worse. The Indian Foreign Ministry, instead of backing Masani's rather gentle rebuke, criticized him for daring to make remarks in any way critical of the Soviet Union. Borisov was replaced by a less obnoxious character and Masani was unanimously elected Chairman of the Sub-Committee, in which post he continued until 1952. But in 1954 his re-appointment as a member of the Sub-Commission was, he claims, vetoed by Mr Nehru.

In 1957 he was elected to the Lok Sabha (Indian House of Commons) as an Independent. Indian Socialists, he decided, 'were still living in the past when the main threat to freedom and social justice came from capitalism. The new threat to these values from the direction of the state, with its totalitarian character, did not seem to worry them very much.' It certainly worried Masani, who in an address to the Rotary Club of Bombay (15 January 1959) advocated the formation of a Liberal Conservative Party. On agricultural co-operation in particular, he took a firm stand against Nehru's policy which seemed to presage collective farming on the Soviet-Chinese pattern and not genuine co-operation between farmers. In India, he pointed out, self-employed agriculturists were nearly 54 per cent of the population, landless labourers less than 13 per cent. Nehru retorted

on 19 February 1959 that 'Mr Masani knows even less about farming than I do'; but Masani received powerful support from C Rajagopalachari, elder statesman and former Governor-General of independent India. It was 'Rajaji' as he was known, who at Bangalore on 7 June 1959 announced the formation of a new Party and named it the Swatantra Party. 'Swatantra' is essentially untranslatable but can be rendered as 'self-propelled, self-motivated, self-determined'. It was, if you like, a 'stand on your own two feet' party. Rajaji himself had favoured the title 'Conservative' but Masani and others were not in favour of this, preferring to emphasize its libertarian aspects.

By 1962 the Party, though trailing behind Congress, had won over 207 seats in State assemblies and 25 in the Lok Sabha. This was still less than the Communists, who had 29 seats; and although the Party had some success in the years of Congress decline after Nehru's death, in 1971 it was reduced

from 44 to only 8 seats, whereupon Masani tried to resign from the Presidency. The Swatantra Party met for the last time in Delhi in August 1974, when it was decided to dissolve. Masani thereafter concentrated on *Freedom First*.

Whilst the Swatantra Party, then, never really took off as a Conservative Party in the Western sense, it may well have played a crucial role in preventing wholesale collectivization of agriculture in India, which would almost certainly have wrecked an economy which was already weakened by a somewhat relentless application of socialist principles, as Sir Alan Walters points out in his opening essay in the book. The heavy-handed bureaucracy of the 'permit-licence-quota raj' as it was dubbed by Rajaji and his supporters, led to India lagging behind industrially and achieving less than half the growth rate of Hong Kong. Now that the controls are being lifted and the economy is, somewhat ponderously, forging ahead, though at nowhere near

the speed of the Far Eastern 'tigers', it is possible to balance up more clearly the pros and cons of political and economic freedom.

Both these forms of freedom, of course, have their price. At moments, for example, Leonard R. Sussman in his essay seems to be arguing for total freedom of information on the electronic network. The Government should be involved only, he seems to be arguing, in order to ensure fair competition. He does not address the question of the possible dissemination of evil and seditious propaganda, pornography, and so forth. Nor is economic freedom without its drawbacks. On a recent visit to India, it was good to see that people were so much better off; less good to observe the choking pollution of the Delhi streets as a result of the wider accessibility of the internal combustion engine and its adverse effects on people's health. Nevertheless there is no doubt of the importance of freedom, provided it is exercised within a framework of order.

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# Against Relativism: A Cause for Conservatives

*Roy Bland*

**The Way We Live Now, Richard Hoggart, Chatto & Windus, 1995, £18.**

It is almost forty years ago since I read, with mounting excitement, Mr Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy*, his brilliant social documentary on urban working-class life. I knew then that what he described there was authentic because I come from that class. I have never forgotten his description in the book of the working-class mother sitting rubbing rhythmically at the arm of her chair. This was, Hoggart explained, her smoothing away of the problems and hardships of working-class life as she sought to make ends meet. I had

often observed my own mother in such an act, but it was Hoggart who turned it into epiphany. In his new book he makes sense for us of new social developments affecting classes and cultures. In describing how working-class people have dealt with technological innovation, he shows how they have turned the motor-car into a sort of mobile living-room, the latter being the centre of working class life. Hence that familiar but baffling sight on sea-fronts of a family sitting in their car, never leaving it, observing the view,

with the windows wound down. He also points out that Britain has one of the highest percentages of video-rental shops among all developed countries, because working-class people have made use of the video-recorder to turn their living rooms into a sort of home cinema.

This is one of the great pleasures of reading *The Way We Live Now*: Hoggart never allows the passion of his analysis to let him forget the human beings at its centre. His humour and humanity shine through the book.

A section on Quangos and Broadcasting is followed by a description of those aspiring intellectuals who “tried to climb out of perhaps bookless environments...They include the bachelor in the terrace house opposite, living with his mother, who had a shelf-full of encyclopaedias”. Reading Hoggart on the current financial and censorial pressures on Public Libraries, I recalled how my local library was for me the way out of my bookless environment, a haven of culture and possibilities, far more important than my boys’ secondary modern school.

The book’s argument is that authority and deference have disappeared and the vacuum filled by “relativism” and “consumerism”. He argues persuasively that Tory governments from the end of the Seventies have exploited “relativism with new forms of authoritarianism, of populism with privilege”. That is not all: “relativism leads to populism which then leads to leveling; and so to reductionism, to quality-reductionism of all kinds from food to moral judgements”. This process is what the Americans call the “dumbing down” of society.

Everywhere there has been change for the worse. In education we have gone from: “The founding of university extra-mural education in the mid-19th century, followed in a few decades by the Workers’ Educational Association; the 1870 Elementary Education Act...the 1944 Education Act, the Open University of 1969... to the *Sun*”.

The emphasis on vocational education by the Thatcher governments is seen as another retreat, indicating “mistrust of the free-ranging, speculative not ‘function orientated’ — mind and imagination”.

Turning to mass and popular culture, language, broadcasting and the print media, the “evidence is all around, painfully” of decay. So an Oxford don can express the view that “lavatorial graffiti are not to be distinguished in any qualitative way from the drawings of Rembrandt”. This is a world where anything goes, where there is nothing against which to measure standards.

I recently told a friend that the work of some modern painters — among them some Turner Prize winners — is

rubbish. But, she replied, doesn’t perhaps that really tell us something about you? I replied: No, because it **IS** rubbish, simply that, and one must not be afraid of saying so. But in the relativist world of the Oxford don we have become afraid of identifying junk as junk.

In a section of the book on the arts-and-public-purse debate, Hoggart attacks those who say that they agree with spending public money on the arts, but say “that just now they need a new swimming pool or children’s playground before this or that artistic item. This was said by some councillors of St Ives when the new Tate Gallery was established there and needed some public money. It will always be so”.

I live in St Ives and can confirm the swimming pool story. It was Tory councillors and their supporters who, eager to support what they saw as a populist cause, opposed the building of the gallery — now a great success.

Looking at our country today, can anyone doubt the truth of Hoggart’s analysis? We have seen over the past seventeen years the growth of a junk mass culture; of an education ethos in our schools in which study, high aspirations and high achievement are frowned upon; where standards in the arts have lost all meaning (Rembrandt indistinguishable from lavatorial graffiti); where the Murdoch tabloids reign supreme in the print media; where public broadcasting standards have declined, and where the utterings of our politicians are dismissed with contempt by the electorate — and deservedly so.

Conservatives cannot escape responsibility for all this. It is not just that the slide to relativism occurred under Tory governments — that is shameful enough. Where, we are entitled to ask, was the resistance from Conservative intellectuals? Why were they silent?

Because “It Were the *Sun* Wot Won It” — and not just an election. This is surely the most chilling boast of recent years. (The hysterical success of the National Lottery is an equally sickening sign of the shallowness of our culture.) But the *Sun*’s claim captures exactly the yobbish tones of our times.

If that boast is just partly true, what does it tell us about our standards of public debate, the state of our democracy, media and culture?

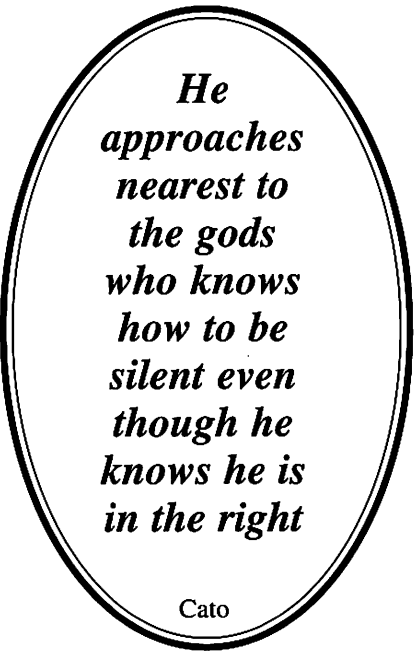
What does it tell about the way we live now?

Hoggart does point to some signs of resistance — “the grit on the flywheel” — to the onslaught of relativism, for example in the survival of class feeling, and in an uneasy sense of lost values. But the intellectuals are silent.

Richard Hoggart is no supporter of the Tory Party, but wise conservatives will heed his analysis and even at this late hour take up the challenge to resist any further slide towards relativism. We do need — dare I say it — a “back to basics” campaign, but one this time rooted in a serious concern to save our culture and democracy from the relativist cancer. *The Salisbury Review*, with its record, is in a good position to lead that resistance.

This book inspires with its seriousness, its high-mindedness and humour, its humanity and passionate argument. Hoggart quotes Chekhov: “You live badly, my friends. It is shameful to live like that”.

Shameful indeed — and a shame we surely cannot comfortably live with any longer.



*He  
approaches  
nearest to  
the gods  
who knows  
how to be  
silent even  
though he  
knows he is  
in the right*

Cato

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# Wartime Tricks

*Theodore Pappas*

**Selling War: The British Propaganda Campaign Against American "Neutrality" in World War II**, Nicholas John Cull, Oxford University Press, 1995.

'I have in my possession', announced President Franklin Roosevelt on October 27, 1941, 'a secret map, made in Germany by Hitler's government, by planners of the new world order (which indicates) the Nazi design, not only against South America but against the United States itself'. Startled as much by the speech as Americans themselves, the Germans denounced the charges as 'ludicrous' and called the map a 'brazen' forgery. When Germany declared war on the United States two months later, it cited this incident as evidence of American provocation.

Many Americans believed that the discovery of this map meant that war with Germany was imminent. To the internationalists in the US Senate, which was about to decide whether to revise the Neutrality Acts in Great Britain's favour, the appearance of this 'enemy' document was the 'evidence' they needed to win the vote. But to the Anglo-American intelligence community, this 'Nazi plot' meant something else: the greatest propaganda coup to date; Britain's man called INTREPID, the forger William Stephenson, had struck again.

Nicholas John Cull, a Lecturer at the University of Birmingham, has written a thorough and often amusing account of how British propaganda helped to secure America's entry into World War II. His thesis is simple, that 'British propaganda brought America to the brink of war, and left it to the Japanese and Hitler to finish the job'. When Winston Churchill admitted in a speech on February 15, 1942, that Britain had long 'dreamed of, aimed at, and worked for' America's entry into the war, Whitehall was shocked

by the Prime Minister's candour. The American people had been duped, both by their own President as well as by a foreign government, but as British Ambassador to the United States Lord Halifax argued, it was risky and imprudent to brag about it. The Americans, after all, might get 'the idea that a simple innocent people have been caught asleep by others cleverer than themselves'.

As Cull's research shows, it is difficult to cite any action by Britain between the Munich crisis of 1938 and the attack on Pearl Harbour in December 1941 that was not crafted to court American sympathy or aid. For example, the declaration of union between Britain and France, which was hurriedly made public on the eve of France's fall, was drafted solely for 'its effect on US opinion'. So was the use of Americans in the RAF. As a secret memo from the Foreign Office stated, rousing BBC broadcasts about courageous American pilots serving the RAF, 'even if exaggerated, would have an excellent effect, and would give the hero-worshipping public of the United States a feeling of identity with the conflict'.

When Mutual Broadcasting, the most anglophile of America's radio networks, broadcast 'live' from the Maginot Line, it received assistance from the BBC's sound effects department. According to Cull, the Special Relationship between 'Auntie' and Uncle Sam made it 'impossible to say where CBS or NBC productions began and the BBC or MoI (Ministry of Information) stopped'.

Cull's analysis is particularly good on the cinematic front, where Britain

engaged every maudlin theme imaginable to stir American sympathies. Even with bombs exploding around her pumps, the undaunted Mrs Miniver, with the support of her neighbours, the Chirpy Cockney and Kindly Aristocrat, rose triumphant in this People's War. British cineastes and their American allies were not content with just sugar-coating perceptions of English life; outright duplicity played a role as well. The most perfervid of the stiff-upper-lip films about the Blitz, *London Can Take It*, was produced by the MoI Crown Film Unit but released in America as a 'Warner Brothers documentary' by Quentin Reynolds, a correspondent for *Collier's Weekly*. Staunchly anti-Nazi since 1936, when the SS killed one of its employees, Warner Brothers was happy to assist in the deception.

More subversive operations issued from Britain's headquarters in New York. From various floors in the Rockefeller Center's British Empire Building on Fifth Avenue, and from the RCA building at 30 Rockefeller Plaza, such groups as the BBC, the British Press Service, and the British Library of Information, conducted their propaganda campaigns with the full support of the Roosevelt administration. Many of the organizations which Americans assumed to be gatherings of concerned citizens — such as the Non-Sectarian Anti-Nazi League, The League for Human Rights, — were in reality front groups formed or funded by SO1, the covert operations wing of the BSC, to sway American public opinion, by spreading propaganda damaging to the character and cause of the isolationists.

Stephenson's campaign of dirty tricks knew no bounds, occasionally bordered on the absurd, and frequently failed. When Stephenson tried to disrupt an America First rally at Madison Square Garden in October 1941 by distributing thousands of counterfeit tickets, the ploy backfired and ballooned Charles Lindbergh's audience to over 20,000, well beyond the number expected to attend the event. After months of spying on the private life of US Assistant Secretary of State Adolf Berle, who was the chief Cassandra in Washington warning against British propaganda, the only 'dirt' that Stephenson's agent could find was that Berle and his wife had two tubs in their bathroom.

In the summer of 1941, Stephenson hired an Hungarian-born astrologer named Louis de Wohl to shock the United States with his prophecies of imminent Nazi defeat. He even arranged to have Wohl's predictions echoed by an Egyptian sheik and a Nigerian witch doctor. This low opinion of the average American grunt was reflected in the BBC's approach to its American broadcasts: 'This material must appeal to an audience of relatively limited mentality, an audience who believes in thrilleresque, is not squeamish, and is almost completely credulous'.

When King George VI and Queen Elizabeth toured the World's Fair in New York in June 1939, and visited Roosevelt at his home in Hyde Park, British publicists made certain that the royal couple devoured hot dogs and quaffed beer for the cameras. Though the American public was thrilled at this display of gastronomical populism, Roosevelt's British-born butler was appalled: he refused to witness the indignity and demanded the weekend off. When Joe Palooka, one of America's most beloved comic strip characters, 'visited' England in 1940 and found a land of prissy appeasers sporting monocles, the British Embassy dispatched officers to correct this perception. After wining and dining illustrator Ham Fisher, Palooka's 50 million readers were soon joining him in a round of 'Rule Britannia'.

Cull's narrative is entertaining, and these stories are helpful for explaining the waning of American anglophobia between 1939 and 1941. But there are problems with the book. Most off-putting to the American reader is its triumphalist tone and Whiggish historiography, according to which America's maturity is measured by the gradual unfolding of an internationalist foreign policy. From this perspective, Britain should be applauded for her propagandizing, for as Donald Cameron Watt of the London School of Economics states in his back-cover plug of Cull's book, Britain's duplicity was necessary to show the United States 'where [her] true interests lay — in meeting tyranny on its own ground rather than sheltering behind a mythical Fortress America'. British propagandists were apparently acting in America's best interests; they were like parents coaxing a child who refused to grow up, trying a little trickery to make the kid leave home. This tendentious approach leads Cull down some dubious roads: he acknowledges that Britain had invented tales of "Hun" atrocities, and had faked the evidence to win America's entry into World War I. But this perfidy notwithstanding, Cull still believes that America's 'propaganda panic' and 'isolationist witch hunt' in the 1930s had more to do with 'nativism' and 'knee-jerk isolationism' than any logical backlash against previous British warmongering on American shores. Nor can Cull imagine why the America Firsters believed that British agents such as William Stephenson or movie director Alexander Korda, who recruited Hollywood directors for the MoI, should have been deported as spies. He even labels the anti-British suspicions of the 'troublesome' Adolf Berle as 'uncharitable', as if a citizen of a sovereign nation should have to apologize for his aversion to foreign agents spying on his personal life.

Cull's understanding of the isolationists and America Firsters is weak. At one point he refers to them as 'tired old men', ignoring the fact that the America First movement developed from the mainstream of American

political life; that it comprised both men and women, young and old, conservative and liberal, Jewish and Gentile; and that before Pearl Harbour nearly every serious American writer or poet, from Pound, Eliot, Jeffers, and Frost to Robert Penn Warren, H.L. Mencken, and Sinclair Lewis, was rabidly antiwar. He slanders the America Firsters by mentioning that Germany tried to channel them money, as if this is surprising or a taint on their character. Cull should know from the sources cited in his bibliography that there is no evidence that Nazis or their supporters ever gained any influence within the America First Committee. The trickle of German money that indirectly made its way to a handful of isolationists not only pales in comparison with the blatant payoffs made today by corporate and foreign interests to the political élite of both Europe and America who most feared the resurgence of America First rhetoric, but it contrasts sharply with the torrent of British funds that flowed through pro-Allied groups in the United States. What Cull's research proves is that the spies Britain planted within these American organizations had much greater success than any fascists ever had within the AFC.

Cull also misrepresents the strength of the anti-war movement, thereby overstating his case about the power and success of British propaganda. He says that 'American foreign policy on the eve of Pearl Harbor stood in radical contrast to the knee-jerk isolationism of the 1930s', and that the November 1941 vote in the US Congress to revise the Neutrality Acts in Britain's favour was a sign of isolationism's weakness and 'defeat'. But this bill barely passed the House of Representatives, with a vote of 212 to 194, though, with the death of 115 Americans by another German U-boat attack just days before the vote, one might think that the bill would have sailed through Congress virtually uncontested.

'If the Pearl Harbor attack had not taken place', argues Justus Doenecke, one of the foremost historians of the America First movement, 'and if Hitler had refrained from attacking American

shipping in the Atlantic, the America First Committee might well have won the major battle'.

Cull concludes by relishing the VE Day parade that snaked through Manhattan, when British agents from their office windows at Rockefeller

Center rained down on Americans ticker-tape made from stacks of undistributed propaganda. Cull calls this scene 'poetic justice'. But considering that America has twice this century waged war to save Britain, and that British lies and chicanery

figured prominently in both instances, one wonders whether such candour and chest-thumping are prudent. After all, as Ambassador Halifax feared, the simpletons caught napping could always awake.

## What was the Reddest Thing about Fred Engels?

*A D Harvey*

Among the Distinguished Dead whose Estate Duty returns may be examined in the Public Record Office is Friedrich Engels, co-author of *The Communist Manifesto*. According to Engels's biographers he left nearly £30,000, but the forms filled in by Samuel Moore, one of his executors (and translator of *Das Kapital*) show a total amount of only £25,155. 3s. 11d. (P.R.O. IR 59/166). Engels had given up his partnership in the cotton-spinning firm of Ermen and Engels in 1869 and at the time of his death in 1895 more than half of his money was invested in three different gas companies — domestic gas being in those days a 'politically correct', as well as safe, industry to buy into — though he also had over £6,000 in the Buenos Aires Great Southern Railway and a few shares in The Channel Tunnel company. (The latter enterprise dated from the 1870s: it failed to build a tunnel but remained in business as a property company for over a hundred years.)

Despite his German origins, Engels had only four bottles of German wine in his cellars at his death, but he also left 1,062 bottles of claret, 616 bottles of port and 163 bottles of champagne. His outstanding debts included £42.14s.1d (£42.70<sup>p</sup>) to various wine merchants as compared to 12s.3d. (£0.61<sup>p</sup>) to the milkman. Not that Engels should be written down as a high liver; his jewellery consisted of only a gold watch with a gold chain, gold cuff-links and gold collar studs. Hire of a special hearse train from Waterloo, cremation at Woking, and supply of a container for his ashes, cost just under £44: the ashes were subsequently dumped in the sea near Eastbourne. And the Inland Revenue collected £994.19s.9d. in Estate Duty.

# In Short

*A Balloon Waiting to be Burst? Pseudomanagement Training*, Stephen Williams, Social Affairs Unit, Morley House, 314 Regent St, London W1.

"Management education is a vital part of what makes a nation economically competitive" said Mark Thatcher, who has helped Oxford University to get 20 million pounds for a new business school. He is only partly right. Harvard Business and the London Business School do have a place, but unfortunately the mania for going on courses and the need for visible activity have resulted in an epidemic of management courses in areas like education and the church where they are not appropriate. Even lay magistrates suffer silly games, psychological exercises and fatuous self-appraisal procedures on their training courses. The worst example quoted in this excellent study is that of the hospital chaplains who are being required to draw up 'business plans' to justify their cost effectiveness. This infection has arisen, like so many ills, from our lack of national self esteem and the need to copy other more successful countries. Japanese or even American industrial culture cannot be imported here. More recently the obsession with "market values" has reinforced the management habit. Intelligent people successfully ran the British Empire with the aid of an "irrelevant", usually classical education. Good management in industry used to require detailed knowledge, integrity and skills with dealing with people. These courses do not help people to manage a smaller budget, or to cope with staff problems or higher management. No follow up or any cost-benefit analysis takes place — however "apart from the Johari Window and the technique of huddling, it has subliminally taught them

something else: do not rock the boat".  
MC

*Most Armed and Most Free?*, Richard Munday, Piedmont Publishing Ltd, 53 Regent Road, Brighton, £9.95 + £2 p&p.

This book on the well-armed Swiss society may well divide readers even of the *Salisbury Review*. One's attitude to it will to some extent depend on what one thinks on the subject of gun control. If, like Richard Munday, you feel that the ability to bear arms bears no relation to the criminal level in a particular society, this book will provide an erudite, well-argued confirmation of the suspicion many people have that governments control guns because they are afraid of the people. But what if one does not agree with that point of view? What if the massacre at Dunblane has simply confirmed the opposite: that society in this country is in such a deep malaise that relaxing gun controls would exacerbate the problems and make the streets of our cities unsafe to walk on? It might be worth reading this book, anyway. It is very well written, lavishly illustrated and gives a fond insight into a society and a way of life that, alas, we in this country know very little about and tend to dismiss with that clever quip from *The Third Man*. Richard Munday gives a historical account of the never-ending battle between the Swiss authorities and the Swiss people, the first, as governments everywhere, wanting to control guns, the second insisting on their birthright as free people and free citizens. Of late, the government has acquired a powerful ally in the shape of the European Union and this will not surprise anyone. Show them liberty and they will want to destroy it. But the people of Switzerland, 500,000 of whom belong to the

NRA, are determined to fight back. Whatever one may think of gun control, it is exhilarating to read about a whole nation intent on remaining what Machiavelli described them: "most armed and most free".  
HS

*Octopus: Europe in the grip of Organized Crime*, Brian Freemantle, Orion 1995, £16.95.

One of the worst consequences of the federalization of Europe is the growth of organized crime. This development has been exacerbated by the collapse of law and order in Eastern Europe and Russia and the growth of mafias there. Corruption is rife at every commercial and governmental level and the vast bureaucracy of Brussels is an encouragement rather than a hindrance. Already there are large profits being made from illegal trades in drugs, sex, immigrants, armaments, nuclear materials, art, antiques and human organs. All these are narrated in exhaustive detail by the author, who worked undercover for several years. He devotes one chapter — "The French Affair" — to the story of one contract. A coastal development in the Var seemed to fulfil all the EU requirements. Unfortunately it was perfect for the Mafia too. However, they encountered a wealthy but determined British businessman who refused to quit and has prevented them from gaining control.

Freemantle is convinced that only an effective pan-European law enforcement agency can cope with the problem. Its chances of success appear slim, and Freemantle admits that it would never happen because of inter governmental rivalries and jealousies. He sees de-criminalisation of drugs as a positive solution.

MC

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