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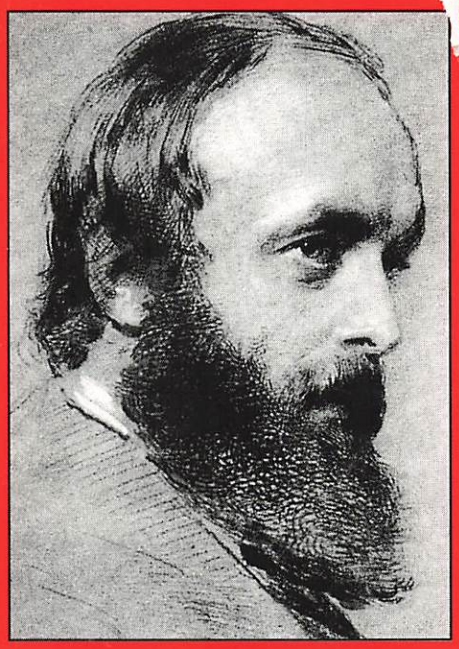

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The Musical Times

What a pleasure it is after fifty years to renew one's acquaintance with a publication and find that it has not changed that much. *The Musical Times* was established in 1844 and has been published continuously ever since. Unlike other musical publications, it has not succumbed to 'busy', invasive typesetting but is clearly and attractively laid out and enhanced by musical quotations, and illustrations of various kinds. All the heavyweights of musical scholarhip and criticism are here – Arnold Whittall, Peter Phillips, Wilfred Mellers, Ivan Hewett and many others with a catholic and eclectic range of articles and reviews like the discovery of three Tomkins anthems, the 15th century Burgundian composer, Binchois, Bach's trumpeter, Gottfried Reiche, the musical encounters of the late nineteenth century novelist, George Gissing, and the relationship between performance practice and recorded music. Sometimes a whole manuscript is printed with the article: in the Autumn issue, Christopher Maxim discusses a little known keyboard piece, *Ave Maris Stella* by Hugh Facy (fl 1620).

Of course a good deal of attention is paid to new trends in musicology and the debate between traditionalism and modernism. The latter is often treated critically: Peter Williams (Summer 2001) wonders whether anyone would bother to read through the proceedings of the Musicological Society, and regrets that music degrees have less and less music in them. Ivan Hewett welomes the enduring values in three books (Autumn 2001) whose authors grew up before Music criticism was attacked by 'analysis', an attempt to put critical judgements of music on an 'objective' scientific basis and then if one wasn't enough, by an invader from literary studies 'Theory', with its unlovely off-shoots: gender, deconstruction, post-colonialism, which have often rendered criticism in many disciplines unreadable.

Each issue carries a guest editorial: Ivan Hewett discusses the threat of 'fusion in music' (Autumn 2001). 'It has no body – no melodies, no harmonies.... but its presence is everywhere... in film music, 'world music', jazz, pop, even in classical music.' He attributes its emotional and intellectual vacuity to the trend in the arts 'to break down bariers' and mingle everything 'so as to annul and flatten all those wicked elitist distinctions between art-forms and genres... In its refusal of real human attachment and its restless search for new flavours, it is the perfect expression of consumerism.'

Older readers will enjoy the extracts from back numbers: the Progress of Bach's Music in England (1851), Hubert Foss on Vaughan William's *Pilgrim's Progress* (June 1951) and Wagner as a Concert Giver (September 1901).

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The Salisbury Review

Editor A D Harvey
Consulting Editors Roger Scruton
Sir Richard Body
Dennis O'Keeffe
Literary Editor Ian Crowther
Managing Editor Merrie Cave

33 Canonbury Park South, London N1 2JW
Tel: 020 7226 7791 Fax: 020 7354 0383
E-mail: salisbury-review@easynet.co.uk

Web site: http://easyweb.easynet.co.uk/~salisbury-review

Even before 11 September's terrorist attacks on New York and Washington we had been lining up a number of articles on foreign affairs for this issue: Mervyn Matthews on Putin's Russia, Leslie Marchant on China and Taiwan and Neil Bartlett on Macedonia. A quarterly publication like The Salisbury Review cannot hope to provide up to date commentary on events that might be turned on their head while our next number is at the printers, but Brian Crozier's piece on Terrorism and Paul Gottfried's letter from America were both written directly after the events of mid-September and will be found very much to the point when read to the sound of the Bells of Bethlehem ringing out their wistful Christmas message.

Paul Gottfried reminds us that, irrespective of which Ayatollah is currently proclaiming war against Christendom, there has been a jihad in progress against us for some years already, a jihad waged only nominally because we are 'Christians' but really because we are not the same brand of fanatic as the champions of jihad. Their demand, their Official War Aim, is for us to cease to be us. And it is not only Moslems who are engaged in this war: other holy warriors from quite different cultural and ideological backgrounds are engaged in the same cause, often with quite different weapons. Some, like Gerry Adams, with his two-tier terrorism (an ethical terrorism with cocktail party cred alongside but not to be confused with a morally reprehensible terrorism that jeopardises fund-raising in the U.S.) have a gun in one hand and a sheaf of typescripts in the other. Some have bundles of paperwork and press releases in both hands. Vivian Linacre, writing from post-Sassenach Edinburgh, Frank Ellis examining post-objective history, David Oderberg discussing the legal sleight of hand by which the hopelessly bed-ridden are exempted from the inconveniences of the Human Rights Act, all touch, from very different directions, on the mental – can we really call them intellectual? – processes by which our society is being progressively uncoupled from any sense of who or what we truly are.

It may seem a long way from the school books written round a total vocabulary of seventy nine words which Penelope Tremayne considers in her article on primary education, to the fundamentalist's dream of the Crescent one day flying in triumph over the White House, but there is the same absolute conviction of rightness at work, the same monopolistic denial of the possible autonomy of other people – and the same total intellectual vacuity backed up by institutional clout or bank balances and canned applause.

There is even a hint of this anti-us agenda in the p.c. disapproval of boxing to which Norman Yearley refers in his article on the 'Sweet Science'. When as a result of Immigration controls devised to be 'human and above all sensible' rather than to enforce an Immigration policy, terrorists blow up our city centres, we expect firemen and construction workers to be on hand to risk their lives under tottering buildings even though we have done our best to deny them any schooling in nerve and self-reliance. When political correctness explodes in our face, we need the politically incorrect.

As this editorial is being finalised the war in Afghanistan seems to be drawing to its end, leaving us to admire the way in which the Prime Minister has made fools of the pundits who predicted that his mutual admiration pact with Bill Clinton would be followed by four or eight years of cooling in the Anglo-American entente; but the tremendous vulnerability of the material underpinning of our civilisation, and the limitless malice it sometimes inspires, will remain. In spite of what people like Francis Fukuyama say, history has not ended, though it may be that one set of challenges, one type of threatening pressure, has ceded first place to another. Our safeguard in the future is not America's giant aircraft carriers and B-52's nor the readiness of Tony Blair and Jack Straw to strike Churchillian – or at least Anthony Edenish – poses on television, but the sanity, generosity and courage in mutual support of the anonymous millions whose values and beliefs constitute the civilisation which has been under renewed attack during the last months.

The Pitfalls of Anti-Terrorism

Brian Crozier

I have spent much of my life studying the phenomenon of terrorism, but the events of 11 September provoke a good deal of re-thinking. When I wrote my first published (as distinct from unpublished) book, *The Rebels* in 1960, I delivered myself of a phrase that goes deeper than it looks: 'It takes a rébel to rebél' (accents added). The same, multiplied by an X factor, is true of terrorists. Terrorists are born as such before they practise the evil inherent In their natures.

I dare say that the 50-plus brethren of the Saudi-born terrorist Osama bin Laden may include a few potential emulators, but clearly none so driven by his interpretation of Islamic-blessed sanguinary violence. Things have changed (for the worse) since I traced the origins, aims and methods of insurgencies against French or British rule, in favour of Marxist objectives or against communist tyrannies.

The evolution of political violence is important. In Malaya, Vietnam or Algeria, as in Kenya or Cuba, with many etceteras, terrorism was usually the early stage of guerrilla war. Now, as in the unprecedented incidents of New York, Washington and Pittsburgh, terroristic violence appears to be an aim in itself: an expression of unlimited hatred attributed to religious faith. So deeply felt is the hatred, so profoundly based on a malignant interpretation of a centuries-old faith that no thought appears to have been given to the earlier view that terrorism is merely a prelude to guerrilla war against a colonial power or an ideological oppressor.

For after all, the Islamic fundamentalists that constitute the Taliban regime in Afghanistan cannot claim that their country is occupied and exploited by the United States. Ironically, the Americans, after years of supporting less extremist groups in their war against the Soviet Union, are reported to have switched their support to the Taliban, thus helping to bring to power a government that provides the worst terrorist threat of our times, and the one that has picked on the US as its overriding target.

Narrowly elected in a closely contested contest, President George W.Bush faced the most dramatic and violent challenge to his international role as leader of the West when suicide pilots and highjackers crashed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York, and into a corner of the vast Pentagon in Washington. Much berated for his fumbling public speaking, the new President rose to the occasion. In so doing, however, he ran into two minor oratorical traps. His much praised address to both houses of Congress included a sentence that bothered me, and doubtless many others. Referring to 'the heirs to all the murderous ideologies of the twentieth century, he denounced the terrorists for following *'in the path of fascism, Nazism and totalitarianism'*. Why, I wondered, not name the third ideological enemy – communism – instead of Giovanni Gentile's polysyllabic gift to Mussolini? It emerged that 'communism' was removed for fear of offending *China*.

In other respects, however, the President's wordsmith, Michael Gerson, deserves congratulations for providing the President with a rousing form of words. On the same subject, however, the President's earlier call for a 'crusade' was bound to arouse hostile reactions, and was duly exploited by bin Laden in the statement he released on 24th September, calling for a *jihad* (holy war) against 'the American crusade'.

And yet, of course, the President's call was surely justified by events. The problem is that in the current international context, the three major monotheistic religions appear to be at war with one another: Israeli Jews against Palestinian Arabs, and Afghan extremists of the Taliban (sheltering Osama bin Laden) against the Christian world led by the United States. This is, of course, only a segment of the terrorist challenges of the troubled century now ended and the new one made worse by the likes of bin Laden.

Most of the other terrorist challenges in the second half of the twentieth century involved ideological or ethnic groups rather than religions. For example, the Spanish Basque terrorism of ETA, still flourishing, is an ethnic form of it. But by far the largest number of revolutionary groups in the 1970s and 1980s were led by Marxists of one kind or another, such as the Trotskyist *Partito Comunista Revoluzionario* in Italy, the Moscow-line *Acçåo Revolucionario Armada* in Portugal or the Castroist *Ejército de Liberación Nacional* in Bolivia or the Maoist *Ejército Popular de Liberación* in Colombia.

Our own experience of terrorism is of course, in its relatively minor way, a religious war between the Catholic terrorists of the IRA and the dominant Protestant population of Ulster. The trouble with extremists, as our present government is re-discovering, is that they do not willingly drop their extremism, even if the PC language used in negotiations ('decommissioning' arms instead of handing them over) is designed to accommodate them.

Back to the present. The scale of the terrorist attack on World Trade buildings, and of the casualties it caused

(by now well over 6,000 deaths) dwarfs all previous assaults, Unfortunately, it was made possible by suicide pilots, apparently trained by bin Laden or his disciples in some sixty training centres in many countries. Although Afghanistan has a long history of defeating or discouraging its invaders (including the British as well as the Russians), America and its allies have advantages not enjoyed by previous opponents. Unbelievable as this would have been during the disastrous Soviet attempt to subdue that inhospitably mountainous country, President Putin of post-Soviet Russia is apparently ready to help the West's only superpower, the United States. From a man whose early career was in the KGB, this is a remarkably helpful *volte-face*.

President Bush also enjoys the support (with minor reservations) of NATO. More importantly, in my view, he has the support of Muslim Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf, admittedly in the face of considerable opposition from segments of his country's mixed population. More important still is the potential support of the Afghan Northern Alliance, still in control of a pocket of land near the Tajik border. The Alliance suffered a major blow with the recent assassination of Ahmed Shah Massoud, known as the Lion of Panjshir and a hero of the war against the Soviet invaders. The assassins were two Arabs posing as journalists on the eve of the assault on America. This loss, although severe, is of course an incentive to help the West against the extremist Taliban regime.

The offensive against the ideologically insane Taliban is fraught with difficulties, but can be, and must be, won by the West, to the ultimate benefit of people and peoples oppressed by fundamentalists.

Brian Crozier's The Rebels *became compulsory reading for NATO and later for the US military training center at Fort Bragg. In 1970, he launched the Institute for the Study of Conflict and ran it for nine years.*

Civilization - and its alternatives

Roger Sandall

Civilization — it's good to see you back! We badly need you. Because as soon as things get really nasty, and people are dying and blood flows, there's no other way of describing mankind's highest achievement except by some ideal of civility, and decency, and kindness, guaranteed by freedom under law. Civilization is the name of that ideal.

We must therefore be grateful that George W. Bush has reintroduced the word into public discourse. He makes it clear that the immolation of thousands of peaceable citizens at a single stroke was not merely an 'outrage', or a 'tragedy', or even something to be described as 'an act of war'. It was even worse. Above and beyond all such indictments it was 'an attack on civilization itself' — an attack involving (as Brian Appleyard put it the other day in London's *Sunday Times*) a confrontation with 'atavistic savagery' that must be seen for what it is.

Clear thinking about the idea of civilization is long overdue. For fifty years the term has had a shamefaced air about it. In progressive circles it was condemned to the outskirts of intellectual life. In some places it became unmentionable. Not long ago there was an issue of *National Geographic Magazine* treating what used to be called 'the rise of civilization', but because any use of the word was taboo, it was hard to know what the magazine was talking about. Until Mr Bush spoke up, 'civilization' had become the virtue that dared not speak its name.

In its place we all used the term 'culture' — used it incessantly — and were delighted to find cultures everywhere. Of course we were not allowed to compare them because someone or other might feel bad as a result. We couldn't say that some cultures allow more freedom than others, or offer better education for women, or encourage more peaceful ways of life, or provide better health and much greater prosperity. Cultures were good by definition. Cultures were incomparable. Cultures were beyond good and evil. But not any more. Not now. Because the frightening facts speak for themselves. What has gradually developed as the 'culture' of the Taliban in Afghanistan, influenced by the fiercely puritannical Wahhabi sect and supporting bin Laden's killing machine, is plainly not a good thing. Thousands have died hideously at its hands, and if anyone had any doubt how hideously, they had only to look at CNN's film about Afghani women the other night to have those doubts laid shockingly to rest. Yes: live on TV, women being shot in the head in a sports stadium to the sound of cheers. A merciless culture of punitive death with its fanatical gunmen in action.

The new realization that civilized life means the opposite of this sort of thing is welcome. But there is something else which has to be grasped too. The Open Society we all live in is not merely very different from the Closed Cultures of the traditional tribal world: economically, socially, and politically, the two things are poles apart.

The more people who understand this the better and

the better prepared they will be for dealing with the resentment and hostility prosperous, democratic, open-minded people often encounter in lands to which none of those adjectives apply.

Because defending the ideal of civilization is more than just a verbal matter. It must be defended against the perversity of human nature too. On the one hand western civilization arouses resentment because of the unflattering mirror it holds up to cultural backwardness, economic ineptitude, political incapacity and judicial corruption; on the other hand it is feared because of the intimidating spectacle it presents of growing prosperity and continuously expanding technological prowess. So that what we would like to see admired and emulated — the way of life we generously hope will become a model for others' achievement — becomes for some unhappy people a source of daily humiliation, until finally its destruction is sought in catastrophic acts of spite. To this there is no answer. And there never can be. Envy is one of the seven deadly sins. But if the price of liberty is eternal vigilance, then the price of civilization today is a courageous willingness to prevail, with force if necessary, against whatever vicious and uncomprehending enemies try to strike it down.

Roger Sandall is the author of The Culture Cult: Designer Tribalism and Other Essays.

Macedonia

Neil Barnett

What exactly is going on in Macedonia? Why were NATO troops sent there on a '30-day' weapons collection jaunt? These questions are not easily answered, and the international press has made precious few efforts to answer them.

First, despite the lazy assumptions currently taken for granted, Macedonia is *not* simply the latest in a string of Balkan wars resulting from the collapse of Yugoslavia; it is categorically different. Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo were essentially wars caused by long-simmering tensions between competing ethnic groups living cheek-by-jowl, exacerbated by Slobodan Milosevic's malign stirring. Yet during the 1990s, the decade of maximum instability in former Yugoslavia, when the fledgling state of Macedonia was at it weakest, Slav and Albanian lived together with few problems. Macedonia was a tolerant multi-ethnic state also including Greeks and Turks, in which the majority Slavs no doubt had an upper hand, but which was by Balkan standards a shining beacon.

Why then has conflict erupted in the last year? The timing of the trouble gives a clue. When KFOR arrived in Kosovo over two years ago, it faced the tricky task of disarming the Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK), and persuading its leaders that they did not, in fact, have a mandate to rule the province. But still the Albanian nationalists had unfinished business. First, they set about ethnically cleansing the remaining Serbs in Kosovo. Second, they started a guerilla campaign to 'liberate' the Presevo valley, a majority Albanian area of Serbia on the eastern border of Kosovo.

During 2000, after the demise of Milosevic, KFOR and the Yugoslav National Army started co-operating to stop the insurgency in the Presevo Valley, carried out by a sprig of the UCK catchily named the Liberation Army of Presevo, Medvedja and Bujanovic (UCPMB). This left the UCPMB boys in the disagreeable position of having no-one to shoot at, so they crossed the border to Macedonia and started recruiting unemployed Macedonian Albanians in the mountain areas above Tetevo. These were mostly men with little or no military experience who learned from and followed Kosovo Albanians. They then set themselves up in the hills above Tetevo and began machine-gunning the town, and have continued in much the same vein ever since. KFOR's initial response was to massively reinforce the Kosovo-Macedonia border, as it was clear that the Macedonian rebels were being supplied from Kosovo, and that they were retreating into Kosovo to evade the Macedonian security forces. The National Liberation Army (NLA, the Macedonian equivalent of the UCK) is probably no more than 800 strong. Although the conflict has undoubtedly polarized the Slav and Albanian populations, the NLA certainly did not spring from the will of the ethnic Albanian population. Rather, it arrived on their doorstep and presented them with a war supposedly in their name.

Why has the UCK set up shop in Macedonia? Well first and foremost its unspoken agenda is to create an independent Albanian state comprising Kosovo, the Presevo Valley and northern Macedonia. The NLA is in the process of splitting Macedonia, and talk of adjustments to the constitution and improved status for the Albanian language are little more than PR. Interestingly, the term pan-Albanian does not really apply, as the last thing the Kosovars want is union with the decrepit state of Albania. They seek a new, separate Albania. In addition, instability in itself serves two important purposes. In Kosovo nationalism and organized

crime have been inseparable since Ottoman times, and today this more true than ever. The Balkan route, which conveys refined heroin from Turkey to the markets of Western Europe, is Kosovar Albanian controlled. Other lucrative businesses include trafficking in women and refugees, counterfeit and contraband cigarettes, and of course weapons. Instability in the border areas facilitates this traffic, and reinforces the power of gangster-guerillas.

Instability also reminds the West that the UCK retains the means and will to fight for independence. It is now nearly two and a half years since KFOR entered Kosovo, and the Kosovars want independence, and they want it now. As David Owen, the British politician and former Balkans negotiator, recently told the BBC, if the Kosovars don't see movement towards independence soon, KFOR can expect to face guerilla warfare from the UCK. There are precedents for this kind of turnaround, such as the British intervention to protect Catholics in Northern Ireland in 1969, and the Syrian intervention on the Maronite Christian side in the Lebanese war. The political price in the West – and especially the US – of taking casualties in Kosovo would be immense. Still Washington is haunted by the television images of US airmen's corpses being hauled around the streets of Mogadishu in Somalia, and crossing the 'Somalia Line' is their worst nightmare. You can see this by driving on the roads of Kosovo – US troops travel in heavily-armed convoys, wearing helmets and flak jackets, and keep as far as they can from the local population.

In February 2001 'former' UCK members sent a reminder to KFOR. They used a culvert bomb to kill 14 Serb passengers on the Nis Express coach. Had they detonated the bomb a couple of seconds later the Swedish Army escort would have caught the blast. There are now 50,000 KFOR troops in Kosovo, and despite their training and equipment, they are little more than hostages to the UCK. More seriously yet, KFOR is exclusively supplied from the Greek port of Thessaloniki, and rebel closure of the road from Thessaloniki via Macedonia to Pristina would choke KFOR. A glance at the map reveals no alternative ports or transit routes.

All of this should help to illuminate the situation in Macedonia. Although there is a swamp of acronyms and detail to wade through (which may account for the vagueness shown by some observers), it is not hard to suspect that at a very high level the West has caved in to the Albanians. In Kosovo the UN Police and KFOR do the bare minimum to control organized crime – the counterfeit cigarette trade goes unmolested, the UN recently licensed thousands of cars it knew had been stolen in Western Europe, and it took two years to even begin addressing the blatant protection rackets running throughout the province.

In Macedonia the NLA – who NATO Secretary-General George Robertson at first described as 'criminals' – have now been granted equal negotiating status with the elected national government. And their dearest wish of internationalizing the conflict and having NATO wave its magic wand has been granted. The force will stay for far longer than 30 days. Moreover, the stated aim of collecting 3,300 weapons is not even a political gesture, it's simply pointless – the Parachute Regiment might just as well collect stamps. The porous, mountainous borders of Kosovo and Albania allow weapons to pass as freely as consignments of sausages pass from Germany to Austria, and anyway the NLA has well upwards of 50,000 small arms already in Macedonia according to KFOR estimates.

At least Britain cannot be accused of double standards, having applied exactly the same sort of pusillanimity to the Provisional IRA. But it now looks as if the West en masse (in its guise as the simultaneously lame and sinister 'international community) may preside over the *de facto* breakup of Macedonia. The signs of contempt for Macedonia are many. It is referred to as the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), a diplomatic circumlocution that seems to deny it full statehood. Although Greece objects to the simple fact that the Macedonians want to call their country Macedonia, Greek troops man the Kosovo border crossings, and are now deployed inside the country. And when the 'Essential Harvest' force deployed to Macedonia, a junior US Army officer told the press that the delay of the full consent of Macedonia's parliament was 'not the issue'.

Any pretence of the West's neutrality was shattered in June at the village of Aranicinivo on the outskirts of Skopje. Here a large contingent of NLA, who had threatened to cut off the capital's water supply, fire mortars at the airport and shoot down passenger jets, were surrounded by the Macedonian security forces. At this point George Robertson, Javier Solana and their retinue materialised, clucking like mother hens that the government must 'draw back from the abyss'. As a result US troops entered the village and escorted the *still armed* rebels safely out of the village in buses as Macedonian troops watched powerless. The rebels were then disarmed and set free (although for some reason this was not publicized), but still Macedonia had been humiliated in order to allow battle-hardened rebels to fight another day. That night Slav crowds in Skopje rioted against the government's weakness in the face of EU and NATO pressure.

This, then, is the future of international diplomacy. The principle of national sovereignty and the right of a country to maintain order and defend itself has been replaced by a sort of heavily-armed fuzzy do-gooding, which ties itself in knots of fascinating complexity. One can only hope that countries such as Hungary and Poland, which have suffered so much under foreign domination, do not see their sovereignty fatally compromised in their new role as second-rank members of the EU, especially in areas of interest to the EU such as gypsy rights. The outlook is not encouraging.

Neil Barnett is a freelance jounalist based in Budapest.

Let's Think Again

A. D. Harvey

The Conservative party may not always have got things right in the past but the one mistake it didn't make – at least between 1945 and 1997 – was to pretend that after an election defeat there was no need for a rethink of worn-out policies.

In 1958 Harold Macmillan told the Coningsby Club that the essence of all politics was 'the struggle to occupy No-Man's Land – to seize the middle ground'. New Labour has been very successful in this, and Kenneth Clarke's supporters in the last contest for the Tory leadership evidently felt that the New Conservatives should adopt the same battle plan. They forgot that too often no man's land is where last year's corpses and forgotten pockets of poison gas lie hidden and that a flanking movement to establish a new front might be both better political tactics and a better way to move the nation's interests forward.

The 'middle ground' concept, of a notional realm of thought halfway between the parties, owes much of its attraction to the phenomenon of the 'floating voter', supposedly Mr or Mrs Extra-thoughtful who, unlike party loyalists, really reflects hard and conscientiously and with a fresh clear mind about the issues in each election, and plumps for the party which, after long and careful consideration, seems most likely to deliver what the country needs. Perhaps we should worry less about this kind of 'floating voter' than about the forty per cent of the electorate who in the 2001 General Election floated away from the party contest altogether and didn't bother to register a vote. Under Thatcher we had Conviction Politics: under Blair we have Lack of Conviction Politics, and a Labour government beside itself with conceit at having a huge majority in the House of Commons that results from fewer than one in four of the electorate voting Labour. Iain Duncan Smith's task now is to get the country back to conviction politics.

How is this to be done? The answer is simple. It is also, like all simple remedies for poor performance, very difficult. The only way the Conservative Party can qualify itself for future government is by putting in some hard thinking. That has always been how the Conservative Party recovered from previous electoral landslides. As far back as 1834 Sir Robert Peel's response to the electoral disaster of 1830 was a strong clear manifesto, ostensibly directed to the 586 voters of his Tamworth constituency but 'addressing through you, to that great and intelligent class of society of which you are a portion, and a fair and unexceptionable representative'. It was of course much briefer and more limited in scope than a modern party manifesto, and Disraeli later jeered at it as 'an attempt to construct a party without principles', but it was the first time a nation-wide appeal of any sort had been attempted in British politics, and it had a tremendous impact. It was, incidentally, discussed in the Cabinet beforehand – Peel was then at the head of a minority government – and should be seen as the work of a leadership team headed by Peel rather than as simply one man's initiative.

After the 1906 General Election, when the Tories, disrupted by Imperial Preference in the same way as they were in 1997 by the diametrically opposite issue of Europe, were defeated by the Liberals 400 to 157, there was no real attempt to rethink party policies, with the result that it was nearly sixteen years before the Tories returned to power. That was the last time – till 1997 – that the Conservative Party did not immediately respond to an electoral débâcle by buckling down to the task of thinking how to do better next time. Even the 1929 election, in which the Conservatives gained more votes but fewer seats than Labour, was followed by the establishment of a new organization that ever since has been a presence (if not perhaps always a force for good) in the party, the Conservative Research Department. After the Labour landslide of 1945, the Conservatives set up the Parliamentary Secretariat, which had the task of providing Tory MPs with the facts and figures they needed in their rearguard action against Labour's legislative programme; theoretically it was a kind of clone of the Conservative Research Department (with which it merged in 1948) but in practice it was something much more important, for it provided a base for Enoch Powell, Reginald Maudling and Iain Macleod before their election to the House of Commons in 1950. Meanwhile R.A.Butler, as head both of the Conservative Research Department and of the party's industrial policy committee, was developing and disseminating ideas about social and economic policy that were to dominate Conservative Party thinking for the next twenty years. The General Election of 1950, which resulted in Labour returning to power with a greatly reduced majority, was followed by the publication of *One Nation,* a collection of essays by nine Conservatives who had just entered Parliament for the first time, including Macleod, Powell, Edward Heath, Robert Carr and Angus Maude. The foreword to the volume was by R.A. Butler who acknowledged that the author's 'have boldly squared up to the defects in the administration of the present vast system of social

services. What is more, they have made positive suggestions with the object of remedying certain crying needs.' *One Nation* – both as a text and as a battlecry – and the conviction it projected of a coherent, comprehensive and above all informed commitment to growth and social justice was a major contribution to the Tories' victory in the General Election of 1951.

Labour won the 1964 election by promising results. In contrast to what they called the 'thirteen wasted years' of Conservative Party rule since 1951, they pledged themselves to deliver economic growth, better housing, improved social services, lower interest rates and the benefits of technology. Once in office, they found they had either to abandon or to rethink almost every single policy they had urged while in opposition. The Selective Employment Tax, which was to buck the overall trend of all developed economies by reversing the drift from industrial production to services and administration, had all the appearance of a scheme dreamt up one lunch time after getting tipsy celebrating a Grade D in O-Level economics. Attention was frequently drawn to the academic credentials of those of the Labour Cabinet who had been Oxford dons but in fact the new government simply hadn't done its homework, hadn't prepared itself intellectually for the tasks ahead. The lesson to be learnt from this was not lost on the Conservative Party. Even before Edward Heath took over as party leader in mid-1965 there were more than thirty policy groups at work examining different aspects of government responsibility: as the personnel involved included non-party experts and academics as well as Conservative M.P.'s and party officials. One result was that the 1970 election manifesto, *A Better Tomorrow,* was unusually detailed and specific in its undertakings; and, despite the Heath government's subsequent reputation for U-turns, an unusually high proportion of those pledges were fulfilled. Admittedly some of them would have been much better forgotten, such as entry into the Common Market (as it was then called) and the establishment of what turned out to be a disastrous new regime in Industrial Relations: but at least there had been a coherent programme resulting from an exhaustive process of consultation and discussion. By contrast, the five years of Labour government that followed after the electoral defeats of 1974 were little more than an elaboration of all the various failures and capitulations of the Heath Regime.

Some of Heath's colleagues – not of course Heath himself – concluded almost as soon as the fall of his ministry that the Conservative government of 1970-1974 not only had failed, but had failed because it had been pushing in the wrong direction. Sir Keith Joseph established the Centre for Policy Studies as early as March 1974. 'My aim,' he told Richard Cockett much later, 'was to convert the Tory Party'. The Conservative Party leadership's abandonment of One Nation ideology and adoption of free-market doctrines during the next five years is one of the most striking examples in British history of a mass organization redeploying behind a programme that was substantially at odds with its previous thinking. Sir Keith Joseph did not in fact convert the Tory Party, only parts of it, and it is arguable that of the parts he did convert, Margaret Thatcher (the key individual in the whole process) did not stay converted long enough. By 1983 the doctrinal clarity of her first years of office had evaporated, and Mrs Thatcher was beginning to make increasingly little distinction between those who opposed her because they were 'wets' and those like Sir Alfred Sherman who hinted dismay that she was not going far or fast enough. Yet what Margaret Thatcher will be remembered for above all else is the tremendous sense of purpose – and purpose with a plan – that she generated when she took over the government in 1979. For a couple of years at least she seemed to have enlarged the scope of possibility in British politics.

How different the situation in the Conservative Party has seemed since the General Election of 1997. There was much talk of party reform during the months following Tony Blair's landslide victory and in December 1997 William Hague sent a Christmas video promising reforms to associations in the constituencies. A *Times* leader of 30 March 1998 claimed that Hague's proposed reforms had taken the party on its first steps to recovery. By January 1999 there was talk of the party rank and file (what was left of it) being given a role in national policy making. In June 1999 it was announced that the number of research staff was to be doubled in a radical overhaul of Central Office (though indeed Central Office had been radically overhauled, without visible benefit, in 1993-1994). In practice, as far as anyone outside the inner councils of the Tory Party was concerned – as far as voters in the General Election of 2001 were concerned – nothing at all was done. If since 1997 there has been a ferment of new ideas at all comparable to the intellectual effort of 1945-51, of 1965-1970, or of 1974-79, it must have been written up in very small writing on one of those holiday postcards Consignia keep losing.

There are several reasons for being grateful for the election of Iain Duncan Smith as the new leader and one of them is that he is more likely than Kenneth Clarke to sponsor the programme of reflection and reconsideration, of new thinking and new policies that the party needs if it is to return to government within the next ten years. Kenneth Clarke, with his twelve years of cabinet experience and his honorary doctorate from Huddersfield University, has always made it clear that he knows it all already. William Hague was the least experienced leader the Conservative Party had had since Bonar Law; his successor is the party's least experienced leader ever; but it doesn't need much experience to see that there must be more to his new job than simply coasting along with the throttle rusted at its 1992 setting.

Some of the points in this article are also made in Anthony Seldon and Peter Snowdon's Centre for Policy Studies *pamphlet* A New Conservative Century?

Peking's Planned Anschluss with Taiwan

Leslie R. Marchant

It is quite in order for analysts to compare the present methods being used by the Chinese Communist Party Government to unify China, and end its civil war by absorbing Taiwan in accordance with its One China Policy, with those used in 1949 to win the mainland and drive the Nationalists to Taiwan. The methods that brought victory then, may perhaps promise a final solution now.

Some observers, following the accommodation reached by the two parts of Korea, assume that a bilateral agreement is an alternative offering new rays of hope. That is based on a superficial opinion, not on a study of facts. The cases for China and Korea differ markedly. The Korean split has a short history led by ideological nonentities in the world Marxist-Leninist movement. It came post-war, in the wake of the Russian expansion east following the attack on Japan, and as the Chinese communists rose to power. China's civil war was by then long-existing, and its communist leaders already prominent with their own unique ideologies, couched in a Chinese cultural context. These ideological beliefs still guide, and are not likely to be cast aside because its small neighbour, which has ever followed other ideologies, has held talks with its other half. Experiences in the civil war which brought victory are more likely to persist and dominate.

The two separate but correlated methods popularly regarded as being responsible for the 1949 victory were military action by the People's Liberation Army, the armed wing of the Party, combined with the 'united front' tactics designed to undermine, fragment and isolate 'the main enemy', that is, the Nationalist Party (Kuo Min Tang), while winning support and approval for the communist-led side at home and abroad. The military solution warrants little detailed analysis. Success through war has been well recorded. In 1949, the War of Liberation showed that armed conflict brought quicker results for socialism than relying on a 'dispossessed proletariat' to rise and overthrow capitalism, as Marx had predicted, and offered more assured ways for communists to take power than trying to win majorities in parliament.

The belief that socialist 'power grew through the barrel of a gun' was further demonstrated by the creation of the communist monolith which extended from eastern Europe to China with additions around the globe. This monolith was viewed as rising from the ashes of the Second World War and, like the phoenix, growing larger through Wars of Liberation which alliances like S.E.A.T.O. failed to halt. It therefore is logical for Peking now to assume that Taiwan can be won in the same way, by armed conflict or by the threat of it, on the basis that no alternative is evident. There is no dispossessed proletariat in Taiwan urging leaders to overthrow capitalism and replace it with socialism. Nor is there a branch, or likely to be a branch, within Taiwan of the 'Share Property Party', the Kung Ch'an Tang, translated in the West as the Chinese Communist Party, that can expect to win power in Taiwan's parliament. Chinese communists do not understand parliamentary processes. They have never faced an electorate at home, nor held parliaments. In Taiwan they would be rejected by voters in view of their suppression of democrats and any other opposition at home.

For the Peking government, military force therefore may seem the best option. However, that kind of solution in the year 2001 will not be as simple as it was fifty years ago, for five reasons:

First, because the People's Liberation Army massacred democrats in Tien An Men Square, its troops will not be likely to be welcomed as liberators of the people in Taiwan. They are the armed wing of a totalitarian regime that is continually haunted by the events of 1989. Taiwan is a parliamentary democracy whose principles are deeply rooted in Confucian humanism which permeates the outlook in that region. It lies at the core of the education system.

Second, any war would be high-tech. Peking has the weaponry and is buying and producing more, but its ranks of technocrats have been limited by the Cultural Revolution, which undermined the education system. Taiwan is smaller, but more capable, and it is a high-tech power.

Third, the one-child policy promises to affect the People's Liberation Army. Its recruits today, often criticised as spoilt brats wanting mobile phones, are not like those who joined the struggle in the 1940s equipped with the self-sacrificing 'Spirit of Yenan'.

Fourth, China lacks unity at home. Dissidents and provincial and territorial independence movements have emerged, and are being crushed. Controlling these could fragment China's forces. (In the case of the self-determination movement, incidentally, the threat of military violence against Taiwan can also be viewed as a warning to democrats and dissidents. Peking is making clear that it will allow no Chechnyas in places like Tibet or in Moslem regions, about which

discussions were recently held with Russia.)

Fifth, Taiwan has good reason to resist strongly. If Peking takes command, its advanced economy promises to be overshadowed by the key economic areas being developed in the People's Republic, as is happening to Hong Kong. There, a high-tech key area is being developed without correlatively advancing the agricultural-fisheries-small, light industry base. The result is an increasing gap between rich and poor, and between those with a future and those without hope. This has increased tensions, and as in other key areas, has stirred opposition to development, to increasing government impositions and to measures undermining social security, as cartoons in the mainland press reveal. The Taiwan parliament and financial institutions would not be able to guard against this. After an *Anschluss* they would become toothless tigers. There are also other factors prompting resistance. The replacement of English with the communist Chinese script in Hong Kong could mean that the traditional script taught in Taiwan would be replaced by the communist variety. That would not only cause generational divisions, but would also cut off the Chinese in the democratic region, from their traditional literature and knowledge of the past expressed in their ideographic and pictographic writing.

What Peking may view as its trump card is the carefully conceived, sophisticated methods of the 'united front' which, more than action by the armed forces, brought victory in 1949. For these tactics made whatever the People's Liberation Army did, palatable, and won Chinese communists international acceptance in a widespread manner never enjoyed by Russian communists. The essence of the method, as described in my book *To Phoenix Seat*, is for the Communist party to have a United Front composed of disparate political groups such as land reformers, supporters of women's rights and others, with the Communist Party maintaining control of the Front. When exhibited, these component parts attracted the support of outside liberals and reformers and the like, who concluded that China was reforming in the image of their beliefs and hopes for China. This image was confirmed by complimentary media reports made at the time by selected reporters invited for that purpose. For example, Colin MacDonald, the knowledgeable *London Times* correspondent who read Chinese, was not invited, which was foresightful. For later on, when a communist guide in a provincial city was explaining how they had built a university there for the people, MacDonald pointed out that the characters carved in stone above the entrance proclaimed that it was a Christian Mission University for the people, built long ago.

These days, in view of China's shift to a market economy and its openings to outside businesses and investment under Communist Party direction, business people seeking trade and contracts, and government officials supporting them, are proving to be Peking's main champions. It is not unusual for them to proclaim that the Tien An Men Square massacre was a storm in a teacup, and that the fifteen hundred or so people massacred are of little matter in a country with such a large population, and that China is now on the road to capitalism. What they do not see is that the Communist Party exercises a strict control over culture which, since the Yenan Forum on Literature and Art in 1942 (when foundations were laid for the socialist conversion of China by cultural revolution), is viewed as propaedeutic economics above all else. For culture is conceived to be the core element in the revolutionary process.

This type of 'united front' tactic, incidentally, was used by Burke and other W.A. Inc. governments in Western Australia and others which sought to maintain their rule based on political correctness. The 'right' in their party took command of economics and development while the left and radical elements were given control of the arts, although cultural revolution was conducted by political gurus in higher echelons. The administration of the arts was used to end traditional forms associated with 'the bourgeoisie', and to promote a *Proletkult.*

The devolutionary structure was inherently unstable: undermining by the SNP is inevitably hastening its collapse.

Although foreigners involved in business and investment are making an impact creating modern impressions of China, Peking's obtaining support at home and abroad to unify China by means of an *Anschluss* with Taiwan fifty years after the start of the division, will not be as easy.

Peking has badly blotted its copy book with the Tien An Men Square massacre. That was a mistake impossible to undo, whose repercussions promise to grow worse with each anniversary and with each further arrest or act of political oppression that highlights the continued plight of political dissidents. Communism and socialism are everywhere discredited and in retreat, even in Germany and Russia, their very birthplaces in Europe. It will be difficult to muster international support for the totalitarian communist government in China, and to revive flagging interest in Marxism-Leninism, because of the failure of its predictions derived from dialectical theory. They can no longer be relied on to prophesy the future. What happened previously when predictions went wrong was that communist theorists kept on adding new stages to explain capitalism's failure to fall. Imperialism was declared to be a higher stage of capitalism that had to fall before socialism could reign. When that prediction failed, neo-colonialism was added as a further higher stage, and so on, so that instead of the prediction coming true, more and more stages were added to the pre-requisites.

What the Chinese communist theorists and practitioners have done in China is not provide a new stage, but alter the timing. They have been proclaiming that a state of socialism now lies in the distant future. This has given rise to the 'Theory of Two Points'. This means that in the present conditions of the world, officials in the Communist Party Government of China can act as economic developers using market economy techniques, but in doing so they must keep the ultimate aim of establishing socialism, that is the Second Point, firmly in mind. That is one basic reason why they refuse to share political power. Others might be less single-minded with similar aims. The communist monolith has disintegrated, and Peking has few fraternal links abroad. The main one left in Europe has been Serbia, with which Peking forged special relations in 1979, after its friendship with Albania soured. Peking will now have to rely on non-fraternal powers to win approval to take Taiwan. One point of interest to Australians in this regard is former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser's approval of the parliamentary democracy of Taiwan being absorbed by the totalitarian regime in Peking. This was made in a thoughtless manner indicating feeble research or a lack of intelligence.

A more important difficulty to overcome, stems from the fact that when Mao conducted the revolution, he jumped the gun. Soon after he won the mainland, he leaped forward to socialism on the mainland, instead of waiting until China was unified. This was done with such excesses that it will now be difficult to attract the other part to join, making a truism of the Marxist belief that socialism cannot be established in 'half a nation'. What has happened to dissidents in the communist part will not make an *Anschluss* with democratic Taiwan easy to accomplish. The eschatological beliefs that socialism grows through set stages, which led Mao to jump the gun, will deter Taiwan from forming any close political link with the communist-led part. When Mao won in 1949, he announced the democratic-proletarian stage of the socialist revolution. That was a period of reconstruction. That stage ended in 1956 when the socialist stage of the revolution was announced. That is the present stage led by the Communist Party, which is reluctant to step back one stage. Non-socialists in Taiwan cannot expect either to share power as happened in the democratic-proletarian stage of the revolution, or to help to plan for the future of the nation which will be fashioned in accordance with the Two Point Theory initiated by the Communist Party. There has been great confusion about Chinese communist beliefs and practices, largely as a result of various American scholars from the 1950s dominating the textbook market and disseminating misleading information, while marginalising other more proficient scholars. The main fault with text-book writers like Fairbanks is, that like most Americans who were cut off from Europe before the rise of doctrines of action, they have no experience and little knowledge of ideological politics. And tend to look at Chinese communists and nationalists as Asian reflections of their republican and democratic parties. That is why there are few or no analyses of communist doctrines and of essential sources for these, such as the Sino-Japanese wartime 'Yenan Forum on Literature and Art', in their text-books. Scholars and students in Taiwan are more sophisticated, with a better understanding.

Apologists such as text-book writers and uninformed journalists – who spread the idea that Chinese communists in reality are not communists but nationalists intent on economic development designed to elevate China to great power status – may not be able to propagate this as easily as in the 1940s. A major difficulty with this line is that China is an empire, not a nation. What the Chinese communists have taken control of is the vast imperial system created by the Manchu dynasty in the 17th and 18th Centuries, when China became the second largest political unit after Russia. China is now made up of a variety of territories and nationalities. Many of these regions, like Tibet, are demanding self-determination and are objecting to China's policy of changing the racial composition of the outlying territories by Chinese migration.

Taiwan will add to the problem of nationality. It is a very new part of the empire, and has been under Chinese jurisdiction for only a short period. Prior to the Manchu period (from 1644 to 1912), it existed as a Pacific island with its own indigenous people. It became a kingdom of sorts in the 17th Century, when the Dutch and Portuguese moved in to establish a trade base near China and Japan. The island was captured in 1683 by the Manchus who made it a dependency of nearby Fukien Province. In 1885, as part of a general re-organization of the empire made to shield it from expanding Europe, Taiwan was made a full province. That status did not last long. Taiwan was taken by Japan in 1895, and remained part of its empire until 1945. The nationalists retreated there in 1949. The call for unity, in these circumstances, will require detailed explanations, at least for those with scholarly knowledge. The Taiwan people might insist on speaking about their own future.

The main weakness of the argument that the Chinese communists are nationalists in disguise is that it reflects a superficial form of anti-communism. It implies that communist beliefs in China are not deeply entrenched. That is not the case. Chinese communists have firmly held beliefs. To think otherwise is to give credence to an illusion. Those who conduct business or make bilateral links founded on that illusion, may find themselves being used as pawns or puppets, or short-term acquaintances.

Professor Marchant was the foundation director of the Centre for East Asian Studies at the University of Western Australia This article was previously published in the National Observer *(Australia).*

Putin's Russia

Mervyn Matthews

Russians, it is said, love a charismatic leader who appears dramatically on a white charger. Vladimir Putin's slight figure and shifty gaze do not easily fit that image: and the KGB, from which he emerged, never bothered with horseflesh. But Putin's popularity with the masses is still undoubted: opinion polls give him up to 70 per cent support, depending on the issue. How long he will be able to retain this depends on the success of his policies.

Public well-being has arguably been Putin's most pressing concern (that is, after his own). He has undoubtedly taken over a very poor country. Last year, for example, the average wage was officially stated to be about $37 a month and the average pension was only $21. The unregistered shadow economy (which was said to equal between a quarter and a half of the Gross National Product) no doubt benefited many, but according to some Western reports the per capita gross domestic product was still only 13% of that of the USA.

The economic malaise is reflected, inevitably, in a poor demographic picture: the population (145 million) continues to fall by over half a million a year, despite a substantial influx from the former Soviet republics, and male life expectancy is down to about 59 years, (as against 73.5 years in the USA). Health patterns are correspondingly poor.

Certainly, since Putin came to power in May 2000 the economic picture has improved somewhat. The economy showed a growth rate of around 8%, inflation fell to 20%, living standards rose by about 9% and unemployment also went down. In absolute figures, however, the volume of Russian output in 2000 was only just over half of what it had been in 1989. The recent improvement, moreover, was a consequence not so much of Putin's policies as of high international oil prices: fuel and energy sources provided nearly 60% of Russia's principal exports.

Foreign observers do not expect this progress to be maintained, and regard the government claims that the 2001 budget will be balanced as over-optimistic. The impact of the September terrorist attack on world oil prices – and on Russia's economy – remains to be seen. In any case, servicing Russia's heavy debt to the IMF, Paris club and others will present considerable difficulties, especially in 2003.

If rapid economic progress is essential, how does Putin propose to achieve it? Free from the ideological trammels of Marxism-Leninism, his ten-year plan (published in May of this year) stressed support for a free economy, greater facility in starting new business, stable banking, and a new, more effective tax code. He has talked of 'clear regulation in the market place' (by which he means freeing business from conflicting regulations) and he has criticised red tape. But in practice government policies, some initiated before Putin came to power, have been uncertain, or inadequate. The most generally recognised impediments to economic growth, and the attempts to remedy them, may be summarised :

A large proportion of Russia's manufacturing equipment is antiquated, but the inflow of foreign investment (which can best remedy the situation) is poor. Last year Russia attracted only about 3 billion dollars, though figures like 15 and 18 billion have been quoted as a desirable level. According to one assessment, Russia was 55th out of 59 countries in terms of competitiveness. Some nine bills to promote de-bureaucratisation of the business sector are currently before the Duma, and an Investment Agency has been set up to improve matters, but Russia is a long way from being regarded as a safe home for investment.

Corruption is endemic, and there is little Putin can do about it: 40 per cent of the economy and a third of the banks are said to be in the hands of criminal groups.

Corruption is endemic, and there is little Putin can do about it: 40 % of the economy and a third of the banks are said to be in the hands of criminal groups. Putin's planned massive rise in the salaries of higher officials can hardly shift attitudes widespread throughout the bureaucracy. Officials are so poorly paid that they regard under-the-counter payments for the issue of permits as a regular source of income. An anti-corruption law is, however, going through the Duma, and this (if observed) should permit better public scrutiny.

The tax and excise duty laws have been onerous for business and erratically applied: they have also been changed frequently, and tax collection has been poor. However, last year personal income tax was pinned at a low 13 per cent, and a new law due to be passed by the Duma should reduce the tax on profit from 35 to 24 per cent. This move has been described by the Economist Intelligence Unit as a major step towards a fairer and more transparent system. There has also been some progress in clarifying the laws on bankruptcy.

The banking system is weak and unreliable, with a plethora of small, underfunded institutions and staff lacking skills. Reforms are under way, a bankruptcy law has been passed, and a Committee on Financial Monitoring has been set up. The efficaciousness of this has, however, been questioned, and the banking system is not expected to reach international accounting standards until 2005. In June of this year Russia was named as one of fifteen territories used most extensively for money-laundering, though it has just been removed from the ignominious list.

Then there is the important matter of land ownership, which Putin has not been able to solve. In Soviet times, of course, all land was nationalised or in communal ownership. Non-agricultural land has recently been released for commercial transactions, and some intrepid foreign developers may be delighted to learn that they can purchase a plot of Russian soil. However, agricultural land still cannot be bought and sold, and remains, almost in its entirety, in the control of local government. This inhibits its development, and blocks an important source of collateral. The release of the land is opposed by the anti-capitalist Agrarian Party, which fears that (given Russia's poverty) land could be sold to business interests at knock-down prices, or broken up into small inefficient units. At present it looks as though Putin is prepared to delegate decision-making in this sphere to the localities – leaving a very messy situation indeed.

Moreover, behind Putin's declared intention to encourage free enterprise, there is a profound ambiguity. He favours small and medium-sized enterprises, but has a highly selective attitude to big business. He criticises the so-called 'oligarchs' but at the same time he protects a number of oligarchic cronies. His ill-concealed hostility towards others stems from their potential for political opposition – their ownership of large sectors of the economy, media outlets and their regional power bases.

The two oligarchic figures who have suffered most visibly at his hands are, of course, Vladimir Gusinski and Boris Berezovski, though ironically the latter had offered to help Putin in his election campaign. Both are, or were, multimillionaires, Gusinski as a result of his ownership of Media Most, the country's biggest media conglomerate, and Berezovski on account of his stakes in the Russian state airline, oil, and the ORT television station (of which more in a moment). Both men are currently living abroad and face corruption charges in Russia.

Social problems interact with economic ones: Putin is currently grappling with labour, justice, education, health and pensions. A new labour code is under discussion, as the existing version is too protective of workers' rights and job tenure, to the detriment of employers and commercial flexibility. Reform is being fiercely contested by the Unions. A proposed reform of the system of justice is progressing very slowly, the aim being to fight corruption, increase the independence of the judges, and reduce the highly intrusive powers of the prosecution. However, provisions to make it easier to remove judges may lead to greater official pressure on them, and a new criminal procedural code does not contain a presumption of innocence.

The education and health sectors have undergone considerable privatisation, but they face more, and 100 per cent economic rents are proposed in public housing. All of this, while necessary for progress, is detrimental to the interests of the poor, and unpopular. Putin has increased pensions by 30 per cent and more, but most of this benefit has already been swallowed up by inflation.

Putin's policies have been bold, and very much in the spirit of the Yeltsin reformers, but progress has been disappointing, with a string of poor compromises, delay, and ineffective legislation. Putin himself has hesitated over many issues.

The political changes, by contrast, have been clear-cut and decisive. When he came to power Putin expressed dissatisfaction with the governance of the country. The December 1993 constitution gave the President considerable power at the centre, but allowed diversity in the localities. With the disappearance of the unifying bonds of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and other organisations, and the emergence of independent business interests, many of the 89 administrative areas (or 'subjects', as they are called) strove for more independence and passed regulations which did not accord with the constitution. A few renamed themselves and queried the payment of taxes to the centre. Those with large non-Russian populations demanded more autonomy *per se*.

Putin considered the system too flaccid and localised, with a real danger of disintegration (a danger enhanced by the Chechen, and potentially Ingush, demand for independence). He announced his preference for 'a more rigid vertical [structure] of power, solving law enforcement problems, and improving the work of the presidential administration'. The contrast with Great Britain, where successive governments have been falling over themselves to yield power and territory, is painful indeed.

Putin lost no time in introducing seven new, over-arching administrations, corresponding to the existing military districts and covering the whole country. Each administration was headed by a 'Presidential Representative' nominated by Putin, and had its own procurator. Two of the Representatives were former KGB officers and two generals, this caused dismay among liberals; in fact the Representative for the St. Petersburg district was formerly responsible for the suppression of dissidence there. The Representatives were ordered to respect existing legislative and executive structures, but at the same time create a unified legal and information 'space'. They were to oversee a massive review of local legislation and bring it into line with the central laws. This last operation has, in fact, been quite effective.

Associated with this partial re-centralisation policy was the downgrading of the Upper House of the legislature (the Council of the Federation). It was a powerful body, consisting usually of the governors and leaders of the

local legislature. It had the right to initiate legislation and block or delay measures approved by the Lower House (the Duma). In fact this occurred with about a third of the measures. Putin has now changed this so that when the governors' current terms of office finish they will return to their bailiwicks: instead, each of the 89 subjects (of the Russian Federation) will send two representatives (one nominated, one elected) who will reside permanently in Moscow. The departure of the governors means that the Council is due to lose its clout, which is one hurdle less for Putin. Putin has set up a new body, the State Council, where the governors can meet and express their views to him directly. But since this body has no legislative power it cannot be other than marginal. The Constitution, incidentally, does not describe the upper chamber in detail, so Putin has been able to make these far-reaching changes without formally amending it.

The Duma, with its 430 members, has been largely 'putinised'. The largest group are the Communists, usually supported by Agrarians: they are still Soviet-orientated, but much more suspicious than Putin of business activity. The pro-Putin parties comprise nearly two thirds of the Duma vote so most of Putin's measures have been passed easily. The only potential opposition groups (with which the British Conservatives, for example, might find a common language) are Grigorii Yavlinski's Yabloko ('Apple') faction, with 19 seats, and Boris Nemtsov's Union of Right Forces [URF] with 33. The other groups in the Duma are the extremist Zhirinovski's Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (14 seats) and 44 independents.

Putin's popularity is likely to falter but this may not matter if he has established an impregnable political base.

Unfortunately, Putin's plans for further political development represent a direct threat to Yabloko and the URF. He thinks the current political scene, which comprised, according to a recent count, some 197 socio-political groupings, to be too fragmented, and he intends to clean it up. His new bill on political parties, now going through the Duma, would limit state registration to those having at least 10,000 members, with branches of at least 100 members in half of all administrative subjects.

Yabloko and the Union of Right Forces, even if they united, are not likely to reach these levels, and they might well be eliminated from the Duma after the next elections. More recently Putin has again hesitated, indicating that he might postpone this measure. He is clearly anxious to leave the Duma with some democratic colouring, not least to reassure potential foreign investors.

A mini Putin personality cult has developed following the publication of his biography *First Person, Conversations with Vladimir Putin* (second edition to hand, 50,000 copies). In most of the 57 photographs Putin manages his faint, uneasy smile, though in a snap with his infant daughter Masha he looks as though he has just shot an opponent. He is encouraging an enthusiastic pro-Putin youth movement. These political changes surely confirm that Putin is no democrat at heart, indeed, Berezovski saw them as switching Russia to a 'unitary government'. Criticism of the trend has been widespread in freedom-minded circles.

Freedom of information is central to democracy. In post-perestroika Russia freedom from the all-pervasive system of censorship was established specifically by the June 1990 law on the media, and censorship (outside the narrow sphere of state secrecy) effectively disappeared. Putin's policy, alas, has involved a sharp increase of state control in this sphere, combined with sanctimonious proclamations about freedom of expression. In practice Putin has launched a broad attack on media critical of his policies; the instruments used are control of ownership, the extension (or threatened extension) of state licensing, and the establishment of state information agencies to exclude unfavourable reporting, (particularly in Chechnya). The 'information space' established by the Presidential Representatives is presumably aimed at ensuring that news suppressed in one area can be suppressed in another. The Radio Liberty office in Moscow has come under increasing threat, and Putin has also tried to set up a Kremlin-friendly union for journalists.

The main battlefields have been the three national TV organisations, (RTR, ORT, and NTV), the central press, particularly Gusinski's papers, and the local press which (given the great distances in Russia) is important. The national television outlets have now, to a significant degree, been suborned. RTR has always been regarded as a Kremlin station, ORT was controlled by Berezovski (through a 49% share holding), but he thought it best to relinquish his interest. NTV was controlled by Gusinski through his Media Most group, but he lost it after the authorities organised masked raids to check up on his purported embezzlement of vast sums from conglomerate Gazprom, and evasion of taxes. After various manipulations control of NTV passed to the Kremlin.

As for the five thousand or so periodicals in the provinces, a detailed report on media freedom quoted in the Moscow journal *Zhurnalist* in December, 2000 found problems in 87 of the 89 administrative units of Russia – excluding Chechnya and Ingushetia, which were not investigated. Pressures would have emanated from local interests, rather than from the Kremlin, of course. Publications in Moscow and St. Petersburg were the freest, those in the non-Russian republics the most fettered.

Public reactions to Putin's media policy have, from a Western perspective, been strange indeed. A poll conducted in January showed that 42% of the respondents thought there was enough freedom of public opinion in

Russia, and 18% thought there was too much. Another analysis, published in March, found that 57% actually wanted censorship re-imposed! Among Russian liberals, there have been many expressions of concern, and the threats to the media have also been discussed by several international bodies. The picture is indeed gloomy: Putin has virtually established a pro-regime central television network, and looks set to nobble the print media as well.

However, important freedoms have been created or widened since Soviet days. For example, the audience for foreign radio stations is probably small, and their influence overwhelmed by national TV and radio, but the BBC and Radio Liberty still have their offices in Moscow and jamming, as in Soviet days, would be unthinkable. In July 12.8 million Russians were said to be 'on line'. The government aims to increase the number to 100 million by 2010. Access to electronic information can to some extent be controlled through the servers, but limitation would present enormous technical problems, and cast a shadow over Russia's foreign economic relations.

Free speech ironically may be broader than in Great Britain, where we have stringent slander laws, and suffer from the censorship of bodies like the Commission for Racial Equality. In sharp contrast to Soviet days, association with foreigners (despite newly-orchestrated spy scares) seems to be entirely uninhibited. Russian citizens have retained their post-perestroika freedom of movement and can chose their place of residence (with restrictions, possibly unconstitutional, in one or two large towns). Some five and a half million Russian citizens went abroad on tourist or private visas, in 1999. Another three million went on state or private business.

Putin has been careful to cultivate a tolerant, pro-religious image. He has been in contact with Christians, Jews, and Moslems (though the Dalai Lama, presumably under Chinese pressure, was recently refused a transit visa). The New York-Washington terrorist attack raises weighty questions. Russia has had a few terrorist bombings attributed to Chechen fighters, but a more general clamp-down, for security reasons, might well involve a significant restriction of the exisiting personal freedoms together with a heightened suspicion of Russian Muslims.

After perestroika the organisation was cut back severely, but given Putin's KGB background it was inevitable that its successor services – primarily the FSB (Federal Security Service) and SVR (Foreign Intelligence Service) — should have been favoured. Former KGB officers have been appointed to important government posts. The FSB has been allowed to open its own public relations office, and a return to the use of the old name (KGB) has been mooted.

The concept of 'the enemy' (within and without) is essential to the functioning of the organisation. A short time ago an intelligence official proudly announced that in the year 2000 no less than 400 spies had been caught. Yet the Russian lawyer who defended Edmond Pope, an American accused of spying, was openly contemptuous of the 'guilty' verdict. Putin was then quickly persuaded to pardon the culprit, so as not to damage US-Russia relations. In general, contact with foreigners must be difficult to monitor – large numbers enter the country (7 million in 1999). The Foreign Intelligence Service is said to have activated its spying activities abroad. One might hope, perhaps naively, that a powerful FSB would be precisely the instrument needed to fight corruption and organised crime: alas, many senior KGB officers have gone into business, legal or illegal, themselves. The crucial need for commercial contact with the West, and the existence of post-soviet freedoms make it unlikely that the FSB would become entirely repressive, as before. Cooperation with Western intelligence in anti-terrorist investigations is essential.

Putin's plans for the armed forces include modernisation, up-grading equipment, and further reductions of manpower. He wishes to reduce the (highly unpopular) conscription to provide about 20 % of the total, and reduce the term of conscription from two years to six months. He promises better pay and conditions, for desertions and resignations are massive; however, the disgraceful war in Chechnya is likely to drag on, damaging Putin's popularity as a result.

Putin's foreign policy has involved following an anti-American course through trade and weapon sales to states of which the US is suspicious like North Korea or Iran, but Russia is so desperate for economic help that Putin has to tread carefully: hence, for example, his successful meetings with President Bush and his ready condemnation of the September terrorist attacks. Russia is tolerating American use of air bases in Central Asia for its attack on the Taliban. The fight against terrorist outrage may form another bond between the great powers.

Putin's internal policies have had mixed success. Evidently he is working for a centralised Russia but with more economic freedom than in Soviet days. He wants a business sector which is efficient, but bereft of political power. He wants more contact with the West, while dreaming of a Russia which will once more be a leading player on the world scene. One suspects that he wants a long, perhaps life-long presidency, backed by a docile legislature with a marginalised opposition. (We have someone like that in Westminster.)

Putin's popularity is likely to falter but this may not matter if he has established an impregnable political base. From a Western point of view, he is obviously a less desirable neighbour than were either Gorbachev or Yeltsin. His career in the KGB, of which he appears to be proud, was orientated against the West, and carries sinister connotations. Putin does not have the openness of Gorbachev, or get jovially drunk, like Yeltsin. Perhaps we can take some comfort that Putin's Russia is, from our perspective, a vast improvement on the monolith which preceded it.

Mervyn Matthews is writing the sequel to his autobiography, 'Mila and Mervusya'.

Letter from Scotland

The roots - and the rotten fruit - of devolution

Vivian Linacre

Scottish Nationalists are right in arguing that Edinburgh is a natural capital city. But they don't go far enough. It is a natural capital city, not merely for Scotland but for the entire UK. Transplanting Parliament from the Thames to the Forth will check-mate the Nationalists in one move. Let Edinburgh be Washington to London's New York, Ottawa to Toronto, Canberra to Sydney. Separation of the *national* capital from the metropolis and its absorption of the *provincial* capital is imperative if the Union is to be saved. (This proposed northern migration is not so much lateral thinking as longitudinal!).

Scottish affairs tend to be treated in isolation; but the problems of the 'regions' (erstwhile 'provinces') derive primarily from the problems of London. What distinguishes debate on the governance of Scotland is that it is also aggravated by the *Braveheart* factor – a preoccupation with chauvinistic myths. Scottish Nationalism provides a ready-made outlet for mediaeval as well as for regional grievances; but the real conflict is Scotland *versus* London – not *versus* England. Atavistic complaints of oppression by the 'Sassenach' (a term of abuse for the English which, as the Gaelic for 'Saxon', was originally the Highlanders' term of abuse for Lowlanders) are still inflamed by raucous renderings of *The Flowers of Scotland*, the unofficial national anthem, a modern Anglophobic dirge that the Princess Royal herself – Hon President of the Scottish Rugby Union – is obliged to mouth before matches against 'the auld enemy'.

the Tories... having campaigned against devolution until it came about, have participated in it ever since, using the excuse that they had to help 'make it work'

But the Scots came from Ireland, mixing with Picts and ancient British, then were joined by Anglo-Saxons, Norse and Normans: they're as mongrel as the English. 'Bruce' derives from Bruis near Cherbourg, 'Wallace' means Welsh, and Edinburgh itself was named after King Edwin of Northumbria. Yet now, while the nationhood and independence of the United Kingdom – its integrity, identity and global status, its democracy and system of justice, its customs and culture – are being usurped by the European Union, the principal opposition party in the so-called Scottish parliament is hastening this process of subjugation under the guise of doing precisely the opposite. In the name of independence it is hell-bent on reducing Scotland, not merely to one of twelve UK regions indirectly ruled from Brussels, but to the most subordinate rank of a colony, ruled *directly* from Brussels. The devolutionary structure was inherently unstable: undermining by the SNP is inevitably hastening its collapse. The body of the UK – its Welsh limb enfeebled, its Northern Irish limb paralyzed, and threatened with English regional infection – has lost control over its Scottish limb, which now risks amputation.

The danger is extreme. On 28 May, Henry McLeish ('McCliché'), Scotland's First Minister (who has now resigned) travelled to Flanders, with the blessing of our Man of Straw, and duly signed the 'Colloquium of Constitutional Regions', to engage in preparatory work for the Intergovernmental Conference in 2004, along with Bavaria, North Rhine Westphalia, Catalonia, Wallonia and Flanders, *et al.* The EU proclaims the principle of subsidiarity, while by-passing national parliaments to impose regulations that control the minutiae of every citizen's daily life; and now the member states are being virtually eliminated by direct rule through their constituent regions, in pursuance of 'the process of creating an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe, in which decisions are taken as closely as possible to the citizen' (Article A of the Maastricht Treaty). As a Scottish 'European Familiarisation' Seminar reported: 'The penetration of regional governments in the area of national sovereignty, enshrined in the Europe treaties, is a spectacular phenomenon, which started in the 1970s, with the partenariat [*sic*] of regional policy, that enabled direct contacts between regions and the European Commission' and 'The role of regional democracy and of regional parliaments and governments is only wakening up. Our time has finally come. The debate will be about sharing sovereignty at European level, and about what use is national sovereignty at the beginning of this century.'

That object is being achieved. Conflicts are threatened between Westminster New Labour and Edinburgh Old Labour over nuclear energy and immigration policies and strategic defence – a subject reserved to the UK parliament but vital to the Trident fleet based in Scottish waters. And what if the Conservatives win a general election in 2005, only to be confronted by a hostile administration in Edinburgh? What if English

MPs of all parties decide that they've had enough interference by moon-lighting Scottish MPs, including several senior Cabinet Ministers, who enjoy the power while leaving their MSP counterparts to take care of their constituencies? (Who at Westminster realizes that the MP for the constituency covering the notorious Glasgow district of Sighthill, scene of the recent racial disturbances, is none other than Michael Martin, Speaker of the House of Commons?)

Disaffection is already mounting: over the McLeish office expenses investigation that was quietly dropped when he renounced his Westminster seat; over the revelation of a secret fortune left by the 'Father of the Nation', the saintly Donald Dewar, including shares worth some £982,736, despite his recording 'no registerable interests' in the register of Members' interests at both Parliaments; over proportional representation for elections to the Scottish parliament – nobody, after all, voted for the ruling Labour-LibDem Coalition – which has created severe tensions within the parties across the border; and over secret discussions with the Treasury (allegedly) for extra funding to enable the Scottish Executive to fulfil its rash commitments; e.g. to abolish students' tuition fees, provide free care for the elderly, award a 23% pay-rise to teachers and write off Glasgow's £900 millions housing debt. Despite the fact that the size of Scotland's economy could never justify as big a budget as the Scottish Executive's £26 billions, even that may soon be busted, with only three possible consequences: bailing out by English tax-payers – impossible except over the Chancellor's dead body – or spending cuts – unimaginable to MSPs – or tax increases – which are more than likely.

Lord Watson, MSP and Convener of the Scottish Executive's Finance Committee, announced during an address to the Edinburgh International Book Festival on 15 August that the administration's power to increase the rate of income tax by up to 3p in the £ should be fully utilized by the next administration, following the Scottish elections due by May 2003. What a strange occasion, during the summer recess, on which to declare a major new policy! This tax-varying power gives rise to the dreaded 'tartan tax' of which Michael Forsyth warned the country throughout the Major administration. Watson said: 'With 3p in the pound you would raise £750 millions [per annum]. It is not insignificant and I would advocate that it is used for a specific project'. How generous of him to regard an additional impost of almost a pound a day for every tax-payer in the country as 'not insignificant'! His fiscal illiteracy is shown by the notion of 'ring-fencing' (hypothecating) specific sources of revenue, which has everywhere proved impracticable. He has not even considered the costs of merely introducing this extra tax burden, estimated by the Scottish CBI to approach £200 millions. The consequences for the Scottish economy of a differential tax rate (during the expected recession) would be devastating. Once this threat materializes, as a result of any such budgetary initiative – in pursuit of what Scottish Ministers call 'fiscal freedom' – a full-blown crisis will arise that can only lead to an SNP government.

Displacement of the Scottish by the UK parliament – a merger of the Palace of Westminster and Palace of Holyrood – would avert this catastrophe, and also eradicate the whole devolutionary issue. But this is so much more than just a political manoeuvre. For the benefits both to Scotland and to London – commercial, cultural and environmental as well as constitutional – are incalculable. It would alleviate most of the ills that afflict Britain's body politic. The costs of migration and reorganization, first of all, would be more than recouped by the savings from the wholesale shake-out resulting from relocation. All the dead wood could be scrapped – Ministries downsized, divisions dismantled, departments decimated and management delayered throughout. Moving office always affords the chance to dump years of accumulated junk. Bureaucratic obesity would be banished: a much fitter and leaner government would open for business in Edinburgh's bracing climate. The long-term effects would transform the UK economy, leaving behind 'big government' once and for all. State spending as a share of GDP could be reduced from over 40% to under 30% and Tax Freedom Day wound back by several weeks. There is no other way such a revolution could ever be brought about.

The biggest immediate bonus is the elimination of what Billy Connolly calls 'the wee pretendy parliament', which automatically becomes redundant. That would produce a huge annual dividend for the Treasury. It would also restore respect and efficiency to Scottish local government, enabling Councils once again to perform their proper functions in direct consultation with central government. And it would exorcise the dreadful parochialism and introversion that have afflicted

Scottish society in consequence of devolution. 'Westminster Live' on TV is not entirely an oxymoron – there is still an occasional twitch of animation and even the odd flash of wit or rhetoric – but 'Holyrood Live', foisted on Scottish viewers, is sheer bathos.

Even if a sudden constitutional or economic crisis does not arise, the UK government will still be faced eventually with an inescapable choice, because of the continuing fall in the polls and media interest. The Edinburgh parliament will have to be either downgraded, its status relegated to that of a Regional Council, or else upgraded: given yet more money and power in order to attract popularity and media interest. But the latter could only hasten SNP control and the prospect of UDI, and in any event would be unacceptable to the House of Commons as well as the Chancellor. Downgrading, however, could be achieved by (i) revising the skewed Barnett formula to eliminate Treasury (i.e. English tax-payers') subsidies; (ii) legislating to abolish the proportionate representational arrangements that have so distorted the parliament's composition and presented so many MSPs with sinecures; (iii) implementing the provisions in the Scotland Act to reduce the number of Scottish MPs at Westminster from 72 to 58 and the number of MSPs from 129 to 101; (iv) cutting Edinburgh's umbilical cord to Brussels; (v) beefing up local government and quangos, all at the Scottish Executive's expense; and (vi) diverting Cabinet patronage to the revitalized office of Secretary of State.

But what a waste, maintaining all the new structures and machinery while rendering them ineffectual – how much better to eliminate the parliament completely! Its quiet consignment to history resulting from Edinburgh's elevation as the UK capital would be greeted with celebrations in the Royal Mile. Labour may be compelled to adopt this solution; but as for the Tories, what a miraculous opportunity to seize the initiative and restore their credibility, in both Scotland and the UK! Having campaigned against devolution until it came about, they have participated in it ever since, using the excuse that they had to help 'make it work', yet knowing that it never could; and having campaigned against the PR electoral system, they have become its chief beneficiaries, every Tory MSP being returned from the regional lists. Worst of all, as a party they have never even tried to resolve the problems posed by devolution. Well, here's the chance to obliterate all that shame and become Scottish heroes. The new party leader mustn't wait until Tony Blair is compelled in desperation to think of it and claim the idea as his own. A Conservative leader can proclaim, not only the merits this final solution to the accursed Scottish problem, but also its incalculable benefits to the UK, at home and abroad.

Central government is a cuckoo in the metropolitan nest. Whereas the USA, Canada and Australia are vast countries, ours is a highly congested little island; and whereas those three are all federations, ours is a highly centralized state. Jamming the UK government and metropolis together is rather like crushing the heart into the skull alongside the brain. The organs need to be separated. If Scotland's government threatens our whole nation's future, while London has become ungovernable, then the proposal to transplant the government from one to t'other solves both problems at a stroke.

London's ills are all-too-familiar – dreadful congestion, collapsing transport and infrastructure, decrepit public services, crumbling urban fabric, housing costs beyond the reach of key workers, crime and squalor – but nobody in the three-ring circus of government, London Mayor and City of London Lord Mayor will crack the whip. The outlook is frightening: sociologically and economically as well as politically. The only remedy for this terminal constipation is to evacuate central government, allowing the metropolis to breathe and its heart to beat again! The City – on whose performance as a global financial centre the prosperity of Britain increasingly depends – will function far more efficiently once government is off its back. Westminster and the West End, too – and hence the tourist and conference trade – would benefit immensely from the easing of traffic, improved public services and replacement of armies of civil servants by expanded commercial and leisure facilities. (Apart from State Openings of Parliament, which are very low-key affairs nowadays, the Queen and Royal Family would be unaffected, continuing to use Buckingham, St James's and Kensington Palaces as well as their country homes.)

What is intended to become the jewel in Edinburgh's crown... is the new Scottish parliament building... estimated to cost £40 million and now certain to exceed £300 million... known as the biggest scam in architectural history.

Even within Scotland, the incompatibility of capital city and metropolis has long been demonstrated. The old saying was: 'Edinburgh is the capital but Glasgow has the capital'. But Edinburgh has been transformed within the last generation. Its old industries have shrunk or moved out, to be replaced by the booming financial services industry, tourism and bureaucracy. As one of the world's cultural capitals and one of Europe's foremost financial centres, glorying in its architecture and institutions of learning and the law, Edinburgh offers the ideal setting for a premier capital city. The city and environs have a population of only half a million, with the resources, physical and social infrastructure and hinterland capable of absorbing half as many again.

What is intended to become the jewel in Edinburgh's crown, of course, is the new Scottish parliament building itself, initially estimated to cost some £40 million and now certain to exceed £300 million. It has become known as Scotland's answer to the Dome and as the biggest scam in architectural history. To service that

capital expenditure, at base interest rate, and adding running costs, maintenance and hundreds of support staff, will cost over a quarter of a million pounds for each MSP each year forevermore. Meanwhile, the number of people on the council housing waiting list in Glasgow alone exceeds 35,000, while over 32,500 *families* in Scotland are registered as homeless. Like all good Socialists, this Labour administration knows its priorities!

However, the consolation is that this stupendous folly can be turned to good account, as the nucleus for the new Houses of Parliament, with the House of Lords in an easily adapted Palace of Holyroodhouse across the road. The former Scottish Office buildings are also available: both the original, a great 1930s building that is now half-empty, and the very new one in Leith (built at vast expense as central government's HQ in Scotland when devolution was already impending), inherited by the Executive as another white elephant. So the cost of any extra essential accommodation, which could easily be built on vacant land at Holyrood facing the Queen's Park, would be negligible compared to the proceeds from disposal of the present Palace of Westminster – future uses for which could be inspired by the architectural-cum-commercial competition of the century. An additional colossal bonus would result from disposal of the vast piles – monuments to Empire – from which our bloated, archaic government is still largely administered, in and around Whitehall.

Considering that the Dail in Dublin still meets, as it has done since 1921, in Leinster House, the lesser requirements of a provincial assembly in Edinburgh could have been met among several existing buildings of comparable grandeur and utility – and have since, indeed, been served splendidly in a conversion of the Assembly Hall leased from the Church of Scotland, in conjunction with neighbouring offices previously occupied by the defunct Lothian Regional Council. So this post-modern complex at Holyrood always was completely superfluous. But as the new Westminster (or 'Northminster', perhaps), it can discover a providentially far greater purpose.

The 25 June issue of the magazine *'Holyrood'* contains all 129 MSPs 'smug-shots' and CVs, revealing that no fewer than 30 are former teachers and lecturers and 25 former social workers. Many others appear to have had no previous career at all: either they gained no qualifications worth mentioning or they progressed straight from university into politics. Many were full-time Councillors before promotion to national government. Most have spent their entire lives in the public sector. Hardly any had experience of commerce or industry, although several call themselves 'business consultant'; but who in business would ever pay to consult them about anything?

Typical is Karen Whitefield (Labour) aged 31, BA (Hons) in Public Administration, who was Personal Assistant to Rachel Squire MP from 1992 until elected in 1999, yet states as her 'Career': 'Civil Servant with Benefits Agency', but when – since her political career started at the age of 22, after graduating? Or Ian Smith (LibDem), 41, whose 'Career' was as an 'Advice Centre Manager', but when – considering that he was a Fife Regional Councillor from the age of 22, on graduating from university, until his election in 1999? Or Michael Matheson (SNP), 31, whose 'Career' was solely as an occupational therapist from the age of 21 until elected in 1999 – life as an MSP providing his own occupational therapy. No wonder Alex Salmond, so long the SNP leader, resigned as an MSP in order to stay with the grown-ups.

The next Scottish parliamentary elections will be held seventeen months from now. The only available issue is whether this devolutionary regime is better than full independence – the devil or the deep blue sea. It is bad enough that this spendthrift play-school is running Scotland, but unbearable that it may cause the break-up of the United Kingdom. Devolution was always a very dangerous constitutional drug, and there are only two possible treatments for a junkie: either to condemn it to a painful death by continuing to feed its addiction, or cold turkey.

Vivian Linacre practised as a valuation surveyor for forty years – divided equally between Edinburgh and London.

Sophist's Corner

Reported in Metro, Oct. 25 2001

Rudolf may have had a shiny red nose but he was definitely a she – as were the rest of Santa's reindeer, according to the European Commission. The body's statemnet came as Eurocrats in Brussels denied they were forcing shops to stock Mother Christmas outfits on sex equality grounds. Apparently both males and females grow antlers in the summer but males shed theirs in early December. Females however, hold on to theirs untli they give birth in the spring. A spokesperson said: 'We should have known: only women would be able to drag a fat-ass guy in a red velvet suit all around the world in one night.'

Enoch Powell and the Raj

David O'Regan

Enoch Powell (1912 – 1998) was an enigmatic figure. A gaunt prophet-like, character, whose sepulchral tones denounced what he saw as the hypocrisies and pettiness of a declining nation, he aroused more adulation and greater loathing than perhaps any other mainstream English politician of his generation. The target of vigorous denunciations, he was also the subject of strongly sympathetic biographers, notably Patrick Cosgrave (the hagiographic *Lives of Enoch Powell*, London, 1989) and Simon Heffer (*Like the Roman: the Life of Enoch Powell*, London, 1998).

Powell's outspokenness on many issues – from monetarism to the accretions of power of the burgeoning European federal institutions – marginalised him from mainstream politics during his time in the Conservative Party. But it was above all his critique of mass immigration that alienated many who would otherwise have been his natural allies. These reflections glance at a frequently under-emphasised aspect of Powell's early life, and the effect that it may have had on his later attitude to immigration. Given the continuing controversy over Powell's views in this area, and the manner in which they were stated, it is only fair that the author sets out his own perspective on the subject. Although he respects Powell's many academic and intellectual achievements, he considers the nature and tone of some of the anti-immigration statements to have gone beyond the boundaries of respectable politics.

Although these reflections do not attempt to analyse the rights and wrongs of Powell's political statements on immigration, they offer a possible – and possibly contentious – explanation of them. In the 1940s Powell fell in love with India. He was not the first visitor unable to stay aloof from a seductive subcontinent, but Powell did nothing half-heartedly. This, after all, was the man who was the British Empire's youngest professor, at twenty-five, and one of the British Army's youngest brigadiers, at thirty-two. Powell's Indomania illustrated the extraordinary emotional intensity and intellectual curiosity that animated his being, and it seems to have been of such intensity that it never left him. He coveted the viceroyalty, an ambition thwarted by post-war Indian independence. Frustrated in this mission, his unsatisfied desires may have stayed with him until they were to explode a quarter of a century later amid the acrimonious immigration debates.

Powell served in India as a military intelligence officer for two and a half years, from August 1943 to February 1946. After arriving from North Africa to join the Military Intelligence (India) Service, he served on the South-East Asia Command planning staff, working on plans for combating the Japanese in Burma and Thailand.

Powell's stay in India coincided with difficult times. The final phases of the independence struggle were playing themselves out against a backdrop of both civil disobedience and armed insurgency. Gandhian agitation bubbled, despite suppression of the 'Quit India' movement launched in 1942, and M.A. Jinnah's Muslim League was pressing for the creation of Pakistan. Meanwhile, under Japanese patronage, the Indian National Army of Subhas Chandra Bose – Netaji – was fighting the British in the jungles of Burma. The seeds of independence and partition, and the accompanying holocaust, were being sown.

In 1944 Mountbatten transferred the South-East Asia Command from Delhi to Sri Lanka, but Powell decided to remain in India. Promoted brigadier that year, he sat on the Willcocks committee, charged with looking at the post-war defence of the subcontinent. This work required him to tour extensively throughout the subcontinent, assessing the situation on the ground and interviewing provincial politicians and military personnel. The resulting report was finalised before the end of 1945, but was made redundant by subsequent events.

Unlike Churchill, who combined a strong personal dislike of India with recognition of its political importance to the Empire, Powell soaked up the culture of the subcontinent like a sponge. Nearly forty years after leaving India, he confessed in a *Times* book review to having fallen 'hopelessly and helplessly in love' with the country. This love was immediate, genuine and profound. He took every opportunity to travel throughout the subcontinent, after a visit to Humayun's tomb in Delhi triggered a passion for Mughal architecture. He even learnt to ride a bicycle to facilitate his explorations.

Powell's Indomania categorises him as an Orientalist, in both the positive and pejorative senses of the term. His love of India reflected the passions of the early British Orientalists, the gentleman-scholars who plunged lovingly into the languages and literatures they discovered in South Asia. Men like Sir William Jones (1746 – 1794), who combined his duties as a judge of the East India Company's High Court in Calcutta with researches in Sanskrit. The latter resulted, among other things, in an early articulation of Indo-European gram matical affinities that helped to formulate the modern discipline of comparative linguistics.

Like such men, Powell threw himself into the acquisition of linguistic keys to unlock aspects of the subcontinent's cultures. Yet he was also an Orientalist as it has come to be defined, pejoratively, by Edward Said and his disciples. The Saidians have applied Michel Foucault's theories of the dialectics of power and knowledge to the western study of eastern cultures, claiming that the British Orientalists were the intellectual shock troops of colonialism, serving the Empire's ideological purposes. However crudely such arguments have been presented, they do contain a kernel of truth. Powell's view of India was framed firmly in traditions of paternalistic imperialism. He had absorbed a Curzonian rhetoric that depicted the British as stern though beneficent guardians of the subcontinent. Like Curzon, the man who in Nehru's words had 'restored all that was beautiful in India', Powell had no difficulty in juxtaposing a genuine love of India's cultural heritage with a dismissive view of the Indian capacity for self-government.

Powell's academic and professional accomplishments were staggering, and it is little wonder that Margaret Thatcher referred to him in her *Path to Power* (London: 1995) as the Conservative Party's 'finest intellect'. Powell's achievements in academic and military life have been hinted at above, and he later combined a demanding political career with intellectual adventures in matters ranging from constitutional history to biblical exegesis. Roger Scruton has affectionately portrayed Powell's overbearing self-confidence:

Intimidating people are not many, but Enoch Powell was one of them...he radiated a deep and absolutist conviction on every topic...And he gave a distinct impression that present company was no more than temporary – that he might at any moment be lifted by divine intervention from this world of fools to take his former place among the angels.

Powell's intellectual arrogance was deserved, and with a characteristic blend of rigorous logic and Wagnerian passion he turned his mind in India to learning Urdu. Powell threw himself fully into his training as an interpreter (Heffer informs us that he spent three hours a day in his linguistic studies), and his Urdu became so proficient that, back in England, he was to broadcast in that language on the BBC World Service well into the 1950s. Having held a chair in Greek, and with proficiency in several modern languages, Powell clearly had remarkable linguistic talent. However, it is worth reflecting on Powell's decision to master Urdu, as even for a linguist of Powell's considerable gifts tackling that language is no easy matter.

Urdu is a Persianized form of Khari Boli, literally the 'standing speech' of Delhi and surrounding areas. An Indo-European language, Khari Boli has distant affinities with English. The Persianized version of Khari Boli emerged during five hundred years of Muslim dominance of northern India, from the Delhi Sultanate to the Mughal Empire. During the Muslim era, Urdu gradually displaced Persian as the lingua franca of educated classes throughout the entire subcontinent, not merely on the Gangetic plains. (Indeed, the first great flowering of literary Urdu occurred far from Delhi, in the Dravidian strongholds of the Deccan.) While Khari Boli absorbed significant amounts of day-to-day Persian and Arabic vocabulary in its colloquial registers, formal Urdu adopted a more learned vocabulary from these sources. It also adopted certain phonetic characteristics of Arabic and, above all, it used a Perso-Arabic script.

Partly in conscious sectarian opposition to Urdu's dominance, a later development saw the rise of Hindi, a Sanskritized form of Khari Boli. Hindi uses the Nagari script, avoids the phonetic characteristics of Arabic, and looks to Sanskrit to augment its more formal vocabulary. In summary, high Urdu and high Hindi can reach levels of mutual unintelligibility, though they are essentially varieties of Khari Boli with a core genetic stock of grammar and vocabulary.

This linguistic digression is intended to show the extent of the challenges faced by Powell in learning Urdu. He did not simply grasp an Indo-European language related distantly to English: he mastered both the Persianized and Sanskritized forms of the language, and their fearsome writing systems. Moreover, this linguistic acquisition was not a mere functionalist exercise for administrative purposes. It was a gateway into the high culture of the subcontinent, particularly that of the north. As Powell moved through northern Hindustan, he mixed with speakers of various communities through the medium of Khari Boli and its dialects. This linguistic mastery was the key to his love affair with India.

At one stage Powell even considered preparing a critical edition of the works of Altaf Husain Hali (1837 – 1914). Powell's attraction to Hali was undoubtedly based in part on the fact that his Urdu teacher was a nephew of the poet, but it may also be due to Hali's attempts at literary experimentation. Hali attempted to venture beyond classical Urdu poetic forms to create an idiomatic style that drew inspiration from English poetry Powell seems to have been attracted to this pioneer of cross-cultural literary fertilization.

Without his experiences in India, Powell may never have entered politics. His alleged ambition to be Viceroy may have originated prior to his arrival in India, but his direct and romantic experience of the subcontinent crystallised this desire. Indeed, the main stimulus for Powell to enter politics after the war was to take part in India's governance. Attributing to Edmund Burke the notion that 'the keys of India were not in Calcutta, not in Delhi, they were in...the Despatch Box at the House of Commons', he entered parliament.

Powell also pursued his interest in Urdu by taking an advanced diploma in the language at the School of Oriental and African Studies. Just as he wished to make his mark in metropolitan politics as a prelude to the viceroyalty, he clearly felt that mastery of Urdu would

boost his viceregal credentials. Powell's ambitions were of course overtaken by events. In 1947 the Conservative Party decided to accept the end of the British Raj by offering only token resistance to Attlee's India Independence Bill. India was independent, Pakistan had been created, and the viceroyalty coveted by Powell was abolished.

That Powell was devastated by Indian independence is beyond doubt. What is more intriguing is the extent to which the man's heart ever really mended. The disintegrating Mughal Empire aroused feelings of loss, fragility, and decline among the Muslim communities of South Asia, articulated by Urdu poets such as Sauda. Similarly, for the khaki-clad officer-professor intoxicated on Urdu poetry, who spent the prime of his life exploring the decaying Mughal monuments of Hindustan, the sense of loss following the end of British dominion must have been immense.

It may be an exaggeration for Heffer to have claimed that Powell felt 'as much Indian as British' after his thirty months in the subcontinent. Nonetheless, Powell once remarked somewhere that the British were married to India as Venice was married to the sea. Powell too, perhaps, had been emotionally married to the subcontinent, and his later opposition to large-scale immigration may have been partly the result of the emotional scars of his frustrated viceregal ambitions.

These reflections do not claim that Powell's inability to achieve his political ambitions in India was the sole source of his vehement denunciation of later immigration from the subcontinent. That would be too extravagant. After all, Powell opposed other New Commonwealth immigration, not only that from South Asia. However there does seem to be a plausible link between the two. It may be one, albeit important, element of a complex subject. Major Minnies in Ruth Prawer Jhabvala's *Heat and Dust* emotionally recited Urdu poetry and admitted that 'It gets to you....It really does'. Similarly, Powell adored India, its literatures, and its cultures. This love was the equal of the other passions that animated his life, and the loss of the British Raj seemed to haunt him like a sorrowing ghost.

David O'Regan is a chartered accountant.

Notes

Powell did not leave an autobiography, but a valuable collection of his writings and speeches has been edited by Rex Collings: Reflections of a Statesman: the Writings and Speeches of Enoch Powell *(London, 1991). It includes his 1983 review of E.M. Forster's* Passage to India. *Roger Scruton's portrayal of Powell is included in* On Hunting *(London, 1998).*

Letter from America

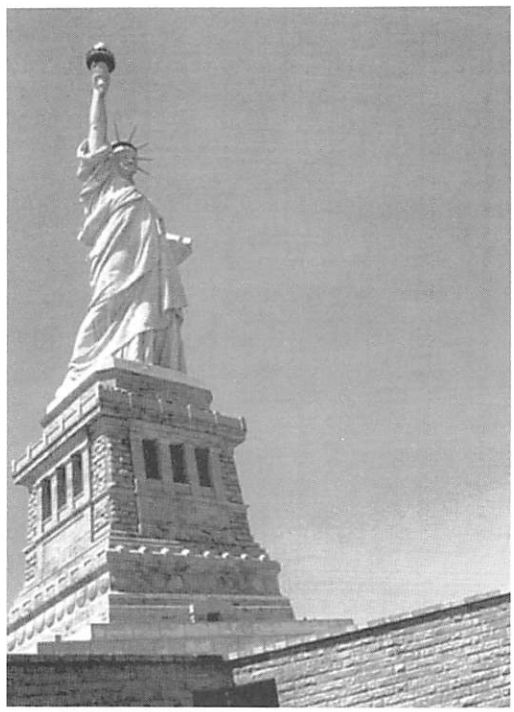
Yes, Enemies Do Exist!

Paul Gottfried

Amidst the reasons for fighting an ideological war proclaimed by the *New York Post* were valid observations by columnist Fred Siegel (September 14, 2001). Siegel's comments provide a welcome relief to what the Post imagines to be the moral reasons that we should be opposing terrorists. The editorial page on September 16 has Henry Kissinger exultantly explaining that *'democracy and America face not only a challenge but an opportunity'*. Kissinger warns us lest we confuse *'a radical minority with the humane aspects Islam has displayed in its great periods'*. Are we to believe the Islamic mobs pouring into the streets across the Middle East and Pakistan, to rejoice over the murder and mayhem that struck us in September, are an isolated minority that has never read the Koran? Even more unsettling is the condemnation by *Post* columnist D.K. Thomasson (September 16, 2001) of the *'political and religious insensitivity'* shown by Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell, who linked our present suffering as a nation to the prevalence of a gay and abortion culture.Thomasson makes the point that our present mobilization is against *'the unimaginable barbarism'* that comes from religious fanaticism, associated, one might infer, with Old Testament morality as well as Islamic Jihads.

Siegel notes the embarrassing fact that Muslim Fundamentalists hate the U.S. for what Americans have less and less interest in being, a Christian country that sprang from an ancestral Christian civilization. Muslim Fundamentalists have been targeting Christian minorities in predominantly Muslim societies for years; and this persecution has gone on, most viciously against black Christians in the Sudan, while Western Christians pretend not to notice. Osama bin Laden and his followers would continue to hate the Christian West even if there were no *'Zionist entity'*. bin Laden has denounced and tried to destabilize the Saudi regime, which already bans Christian worship and Christian symbols from its realm, for not going far enough to combat the infidels. He despises with special fury the U.S., despite the fact that it was his leading supporter in the Afghan-Muslim war against the Soviets.

Siegel is to be praised for daring to say the obvious. Political Muslims are blowing up our cities not because, as Jack Kemp, Henry Kissinger, and Dubya would like to believe, we stand for *'democracy'* and not simply because, as some on the right are insisting, we interfere in the rest of the world. Muslim terrorists, who exploit our lax immigration policies and multicultural fixations, imagine that America is a Christian empire. They go after Americans for the same reasons they persecute Christians elsewhere, because they consider them, like Israelis or like the Zoroastrians in Southern Iran, to be historical enemies who stand in the way of creating a more thoroughly Islamic world. Having spoken to Arab Christians in the Middle East this summer, I heard this view expressed repeatedly. It is also one that bin Laden and other Muslim Fundamentalists do not hide, any more than did the Ayatollah Khomeini, who looked forward to seeing the crescent flying over the White House.



While the U.S. has indeed engaged in meddlesome foreign policies, we have also worked to accommodate Muslims, to the outrageous point of ignoring their atrocities against Christians, allowing them, including their terrorists, to enter and settle in the U.S., and bombing a Christian Balkan people, who did no wrong to this country, in support of Albanian Muslims, including terrorists. It may be a deep offence in the eyes of Arabs and other Muslims that we give foreign aid to Israel. But our collected revenues have been showered on Egypt and Jordan almost as lavishly. (Last year the American federal government gave more than 140 million dollars to bin Laden's hosts in Afghanistan.) Also as Siegel reminds us, we in the West beat our breasts contritely over the slave trade, while avoiding any mention of the far greater Arab and African complicity in this allegedly sinful practice, when done by Westerners. My terminally liberal Protestant colleagues are agonizing that Third World people dislike us so profoundly that they are slaughtering our population. All of this killing may be for the other side quite therapeutic, but in the case of those who slobber over their would-be killers no truer illustration can be found that *Deus vult perdere prius dementat*!

It is a sign of political maturity, as opposed to the multicultural death wish, to be able to distinguish friends from enemies. But one must be equally able to prioritize evils, to be able to know which enemy should be confronted in which circumstance. Although effusively sympathetic to the old right suspicion of big government, and of its one-note global democratic shills, I believe that some on the right are focusing on secondary causes in trying to explain Muslim terrorism. Muslim Fundamentalist hatred of Western Christian peoples is a fact of life, an existential and historical situation that a largely decadent and self-hating Christian society has inherited, whether or not it supports Israel. Because of American power and the accessibility of American territory, we have become a tempting target for predestined foes, and these enemies are persecuting Christians in all shades and sizes independently of Middle Eastern politics.

Calls for retribution against the sources of recent terrorist activity are entirely justified and should not be dismissed because it requires government action or because the project appeals to neoconservative warmongers. There are times when even wayward governments do the things for which legitimate authority is established. In conformity to already existing Jewish tradition St. Paul urges obedience to authority (exousia), insofar as even the tyranny of imperial Rome was protecting its subjects against violence. Despite our increasingly warped constitutional frame, the U.S. government continues to do at least some limited good, by protecting, to whatever degree it chooses, our lives, property, and contracts. Punishing terrorists is certainly what normal states can and should be expected to do. And while admittedly some have pounced on the occasion to advance their specific agendas, the fact is one cannot always pick one's allies. There is a compelling case for armed action against Muslim terrorists and their obliging hosts, and being in bad company while urging a particular action is not a sufficient argument against it. Pace the medieval Arab maxim, *the enemy of one's enemy can also be one's enemy*.

Paul Gottfried's latest book is Multiculturalism and Western Guilt *published by (University of Missouri Press)*

> The belief in the possibility of a short decisive war appears to be one of the most ancient and dangerous of human illusions.
>
> *Robert Lynd*

A Book to Remember

Roy Kerridge

When I was eight years old, in 1950, my great aunt came on a visit from California and gave me a wonderful present. All I remember of my aunt is her shock and disappointment that I had not been brought up as a Polish boy and did not kiss her hand in greeting. I had not known, until then, that such a custom as hand-kissing existed. My chief feeling was one of relief that she didn't kiss me. But when I opened my present, the joy I felt abides with me yet.

It was an enormous brown book called *Animals of the World*, with a small but vivid picture in the middle of the dust jacket of a moose in a bright green forest. This was swiftly cut out and replaced in a scrap book, but wonder of wonders, the same moose appeared in the same place on the stiff cover beneath, though not in colour.

The writing inside the book was a little hard for me at first, as the book was intended for adults, but I soon grew into it and still re-read it every few years. Soon I had covered the shiny margins of the pages with doodles. Each page of the encyclopaedia-like book was covered with old photographs of animals. Compiled and edited by the wise J. Walker McSpadden, the book was an amalgam of two already hefty volumes, *Animals of America* and *Animals of Other Lands*. The latter part had been derived from an English book of animal photos and writings, with the American animals removed. 'First published 1917, second publication 1947', I read, but the English book appeared older still, with an Edwardian-cum-late Victorian atmosphere. Few such collections of animal photographs could have been published in 1917, and the book may have caused a sensation in its time.

Many of the photographs in the *Animals of Other Lands* section had been taken at London Zoo, a place referred to in the text simply as 'The Zoo', which must have puzzled Americans. Most of the heavily-barred cages with dark doorways leading to brick indoor quarters were still in use at the Zoo in 1950, and were easily recognisable. Other pictures showed bygone plains of Kenya in the days when big game hunters and native porters stalked the land. Some of the exotic hoofed animals stood in lush English pastures. Such photographs bore the credits 'By permission of the Hon. Walter Rothschild of Tring', or 'Photo by the Duchess of Bedford, Woburn'. Glimpses of stately homes and folly-esque stables could sometimes be seen in the backgrounds. Other pictures had been 'printed by permission of Carl Hagenbeck, Hamburg'.

In the late nineteenth century, Hagenbeck (son of a seal-keeping fishmonger) was a pioneer of humane and attractively landscaped zoo-keeping. His moated enclosures, replete with log bridges, palm trees and artificial rockwork, eventually led the London Zoo authorities to build larger, more natural enclosures, such as Monkey Hill and Mappin Terrace (both now in ruins). The private animal parks of the Rothschilds and the Bedfords, which grew from deer parks, also inspired the London Zoo people to found the 'country zoo' of Whipsnade.

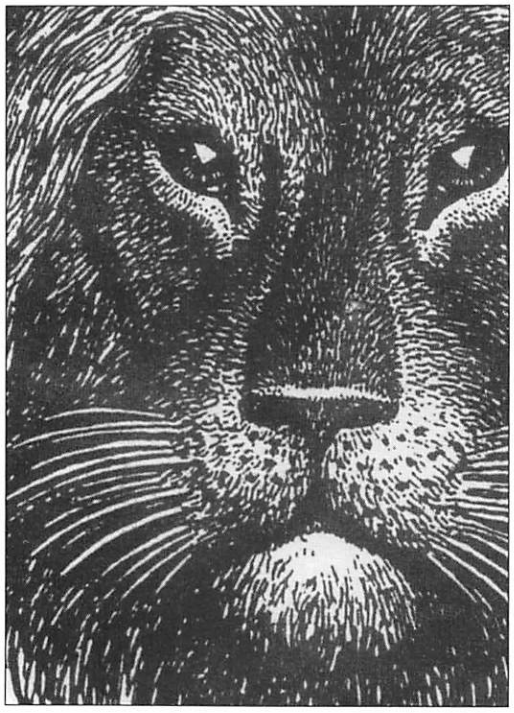
Walter Rothschild and Carl Hagenbeck shared a fascination for hybrid animals, and I returned again and again to the pictures of a cross bred tiger-lion and a leopard-puma, together with the progeny of a one humped and a two humped camel, which ought to have had three humps but instead owned only half a hump. Another unusual photograph showed a wild Algerian lioness, a now-extinct breed, sitting up alertly at the roadside. Turn a few pages, and there was an extinct quagga (half zebra, half wild ass) standing stolidly in its heavily-barred pen at London Zoo. Tigers in a zoo at Turin, Italy, lounged in a shed-like cage before a stage backdrop of palm trees and tropical vistas. In future years, I was to visit the late Walter Rothschild's museum at Tring, where I recognised many of the stuffed animals from photographs in the book. The walrus and the sea-elephant must have been taken out of their glass cases and posed before painted backgrounds of implausible ice-bound scenery.

In the American part of the book, the pictures were more glossy and modern-looking than those in the English section. A few had been taken at the New York Museum of Natural History or the New York Zoo, but most had been snapped in the National Parks and the Great Outdoors, in a Laurel and Hardy America of wise woodsmen, rickety old cars and picket fences.

Long before I left primary school, I had read the book from cover to cover, enjoying both halves, but preferring the English section. This is not surprising, for although the chapters had been arranged 'scientifically', beginning at the Darwinian top with apes and descending to marsupials and egg-laying platypuses, the book read as an anthology of explorer-essayists. Most of the articles on African big-game were by F.C. Selous, the famous African traveller, big-game hunter and leader of Rhodesian Pioneers. Passages from both Kiplings, Rudyard and his father Lockwood, enlightened me on the subject of Indian animals and a

long-ago India. 'Captain Jackson, of the Nizam's Service', described an antelope-hunt in Hyderabad that turned into a wolf hunt when the hounds were joined by a refugee from the *Jungle Book*.

The okapi, a short-necked giraffe from the Congo, was described by its English discoverer, Sir Harry Johnston, a great hero of mine in boyhood days. Sir Harry informed the reader that the forests of Africa had still more secrets in store. Stanley, who had heard rumours of a 'forest donkey' that proved to be Sir Harry's okapi, told the author that a mysterious giant wild pig dwelled in the same region of green half-light and narrow paths between cathedral-like trees. This massive forest boar was officially discovered by the redoubtable Colonel Meinertzhagen after the book had first gone to press. It is now known as the *Giant Forest Hog*. How pleasant to imagine the eminent explorers chin wagging over their drinks at the Travellers' Club or a Royal Geographic Society get-together!



In both sections of the book, Imperial English or woodsy American, constant references were made to 'the naturalist and sportsman'. Readers were presumed to belong to one or the other, or both, of these categories. A world away from modern 'ecological, environmental and endangered-species-ism' writing, a great deal of the text was given over to hunting stories. These I greatly enjoyed, for chasing an animal seems a natural human reaction. If you don't believe me, take a child to a farm. The behaviour of animals in such a crisis is interesting, as all resources of brain and foot-power have to be put to use.

I imagined myself chasing the animals to capture them alive, for I don't approve of big-game hunting. However, I found that I approved of many big-game hunters, affable avuncular men, good yarn-spinners and congenial company, to judge by their writing. When I was a boy, such pipe-smoking unflappable men seemed every inch the enviable Grown Up.

One of the English writers, however, belonged to a very different strain. Louis Wain, the cat-caricaturist, had been roped in to describe domestic felines. A foppish man, who ended his days painting fiery cats in an insane asylum, Louis Wain was a brilliant artist. His playful cats grin maliciously from many an Edwardian postcard. As a writer, he proved less memorable, and none of his drawings appeared in the book. A cigar-smoking cat drinking whisky and sporting a monocle would have looked rather out of place there, I must admit.

In an attempt to be scientific, the American section of the book printed two articles per animal. The first article would summarise the habits, colouration, range and allied subspecies of a creature, under headings, in scientist-notebook short hand. Dental formulae were always provided, a rather Gradgrind touch. At that time (say, 1917) if a wild animal varied from its brothers by so much as a blotch or a freckle, it would be an Allied Subspecies with its own Latin name before you could say William T. Hornaday (then the much quoted director of the New York Zoo).

I would skip most of this 'factual' stuff and go straight on to the hunting stories. The chapter on Woodchucks, for example, includes an idyllic account of a day in the life of a bare-foot farm boy straight out of Mark Twain's Missouri. Red Indians and their hunting methods would be mentioned in chapters on larger Rocky Mountain-dwelling animals. These 'Indians' would usually be spoken of as free-spirited nomads unaffected by the advance of the White Man. Pioneer days of 'prairie schooners' were but yesterday to the 'Animals' writers, who quoted frequently from 'Wolfers', grizzled prospectors and nature writers such as Ernest Thompson Seton.

In the Preface, it was explained that the book would not describe animals in their Evolutionary Order, but would begin with the most interesting and work down to the least. Thus the book began with white-tailed deer and ended with bats. Auberon Waugh, the noted chiropteraphobe (bat-hater) would have have approved, but I was puzzled. Why begin with a small deer, when moose, pumas, bears and wolves were so much more interesting?

Only now I have been to America do I understand. Every 'Anglo-Saxon' American enjoys shooting deer above all other pleasures, and the white-tailed deer is the most common and hence the most shot-at variety.

Taxidermy is big business in America, and mounted heads of whitetail bucks line many a young man's bedroom wall. As the sportsman-reader eagerly turns the pages of *Animals of the World*, he may feel reproachful glass eyes staring down, reading over his shoulder.

Roy Kerridge's book Subjects of the Queen *will be published byDuckworth*

Education, Education

Penelope Tremayne

Some dozen years ago, hoping to learn why so many children seemed to be interested in so few things, I bought numbers 3a and 3b of a series of twelve booklets in use at the time to teach reading to school-children aged six to seven. An introductory page claimed that these books 'embrace the natural interests and activities of happy children' and that the illustrations were designed 'to create a desirable attitude towards learning – by making every child *eager* to read each title.' Called 'Things we Like' and 'Boys and Girls', the booklets present. Jane and Peter, first shown on a seesaw and on a swing and later on a trampoline of their own. 'Here are Peter and Jane. They like to play.' Mummy and Daddy are mentioned, but we are told nothing about them; a policeman is characterised as 'nice'; he has a police boat and is said to be 'at the school. He is helping the boys and girls.' (With what?) And once 'some boys and girls' come to tea, but they neither do nor say anything; we are not even told their names. Only one other human being is mentioned and he too is nameless: he is just 'the man in the shop'.

The pictures show that these two moronic children live in a leafy suburb, and go to a park and a beach – where they jump about on a beached boat (no-one tells them off for doing so). 'I like this.' 'I like to jump'. They sit on a rug with Coca-cola tins and cakes. They buy cakes and a rabbit. ('We want that rabbit, Peter says to the man.') They have a dog, which they like to play with, but they never feed or exercise or clean up after it. (The dog 'likes to play' with the rabbit, and for a moment one hopes the children may be jolted into thinking, or even doing something. But no.) They go on a bus. 'It's a red bus. It was fun at the station, says Jane.' They go in car with Daddy, see a toy shop and a sweet shop. 'There's a cake shop, says Daddy.' 'Yes, I want a cake says Peter.' At the end of 86 pages, thank God, they go to bed. 'You are a good girl, Jane, and you are a good boy, Peter.' Can a normally intelligent 6-7 year old possibly subsist on this stuff day after day, let alone be *'eager'* to read it?

These two booklets use a total vocabulary of 79 words, of which the longest/most difficult is 'station'. (The trampoline is shown but not named.) I compared them with two old school readers for the same age group: one in Farsi and the other in Greek. The Farsi one uses upwards of 1,500 words, including many of three syllables (longer words are unusual in Farsi). In the Arabic script of course vowels are shown only by diacritical marks; here they are inserted only the first time a word is used; after that they have to be remembered.) Each lesson brings in different people of all ages, and assorted animals. We see one child teaching another to cross a street only at the lights, another rushing home from school to bring his father's animals in to the yard and feed them, and we are told what each is fed on. There are a couple of Aesop's fables and a battle between a flock of sparrows and an elephant (the sparrows win). Each lesson is followed by a short list of new words and three or four questions to test comprehension ('Why does Mrs Kokab stand the milk-pail in a shady place and put a cloth over it?' 'Why do you think the crow dropped the fat?') The Greek book is along the same lines, without the questions but using still more (and longer) words, and more real-life stories in proportion to fairy tales. Tassos has been to the sea and watched fishermen landing a catch. He says one fish was nearly as big as a school bench. Someone asks, how did they land it if it was so big? He tells how the net is let down, the big fish lured in after the small ones, and the catch hauled inshore, net and all. Another asks how big is the sea? Tassos says he can't describe it: 'I looked, and looked, and still I couldn't see any land the other side.' 'Is it very deep?' 'Not against the rocks, where we were. We all went in, and it hardly covered us. But I asked Captain Frangkos how deep it was out there where they fish, and he said, oh as deep as two or three bell-towers on top of each other.'

A small child is knocked down by a car outside the school, because he stopped to play in the road; the schoolmaster tells the bigger children it is their job to see the little ones safely across. Manolakis helps his grandfather on a farm. 'How did you help?' He fetched up supplies from the village, drew water and carried it, looked after lambs. 'Did you milk them?' 'No, silly, they were too little to have milk; I took them to their mother'. And he learned to ride a donkey.

The author of the Peter and Jane books, himself a headmaster, writes that 'three hundred words account for about three-quarters of the total number of words found in juvenile reading.' No doubt he knows; but what an indictment of his profession. Some of our school teachers today will have been pupils of his and of others who used the same method: what wonder if we are faced now with a yob-culture, if only in revulsion from such pap?

But there are more things than vocabulary that differentiate the English book from the other two. There are fundamental differences in aim. Peter and Jane never for a moment step outside themselves, never think an

independent thought, let alone put one into words. Their only mental processes are 'I like' and 'I want'. The Hassans and Takis by contrast are shown looking outwards. They explore the world all round them: it is bursting with interesting things, and they begin to see how grown-ups live in it. From the first page or two onward, they are taught about responsibilities and duties. They learn useful things about the weather and the seasons, the names of farm implements and masons' and carpenters tools. And all the time imagination is being woken up in them. Ali and Azad see a flight of pigeons circling and settling. They start thinking what else has wings: butterflies, dragonflies ('in my opinion' says Azad, 'they're the most beautiful') Ali says 'Once I saw a goshawk.' Azad flaps his arms and says how much he wishes he could fly. 'But you can.' 'What d'you mean?' – 'God didn't give us wings, but He gave us brains. There was a man who wanted to fly just as badly as you, so he went out and designed an aeroplane.'

A third great difference may make less mark at the beginning yet have huge influence in the long run. The Farsi book begins with the first day of term; the teacher has already written something on the blackboard and the children read it aloud. 'In the name of God'. 'Yes' he says, 'I wrote that because everything that we do together, here, we shall do in the name of God.' And the idea is reinforced every ten pages or so, through the book. The Greek one begins. with a short poem: 'If I were a winged bird/ with a most beautiful voice/ I would waken all Creation./ If I were a flower/ I would scatter my sweetest scent/ to all Creation./ I am a little child/ with sense, and I have a soul and a heart, and faith./ Therefore I lie down, and wake up/ and say my prayers, and sing my thanks/ to the Christ of all Creation.' And as the book goes on, each of the main Christian festivals is described and related to daily life. What we learn in our first few reading years stays with us all our lives. What sense of purpose, or sense of belonging to something, are Peter and Jane going to move forward with, to set against these? When can we look forward to a new set of English school-books?

Penelope Tremayne is a writer on political and military subjects

The Decline & Fall of History: Windshuttle & Ruder

Frank Ellis

In *The Killing of History,* Keith Windschuttle writes, '*When television viewers these days see the typical sociologist on their screen, adopting a predictably provocative position on some controversial issue, their most common response is not belief but wonder at how someone with views so divergent from ordinary intelligence ever got a job at a university in the first place.*'

I have a hunch that one morning, Keith Windschuttle, an Australian academic, decided that enough was enough and that henceforth there was going to be no more Mr Nice Bloke. The result is a truly outstanding book, *The Killing of History: How Literary Critics and Social Theorists are Murdering our Past.* First published by the Free Press in 1997, it has now been reissued by Encounter Press, as a paperback with an afterword by the author. In its breadth, erudition, power and its many exquisite and devastating arguments, not to mention many hilarious asides, this book must rank as one of the most important defences of the West written in the last twenty years, certainly on a par with Alan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind* (1987) or Jacques Barzun's magisterial *From Dawn to Decadence: 500 Years of Western Cultural Life* (2000). *The Killing of History* is a must read for those who believe in the idea of the West. The author demonstrates an encyclopedic knowledge of the enemy and knows exactly where to concentrate his fire to achieve maximum casualties. His hit list includes meta-historians, postmodernists, feminist poststructuralists, cultural relativists and all the other fruitcakes and purveyors of mega-meta-nonsense, who are trying to destroy the boundaries between traditional disciplines and replace them with something called Cultural Studies.

Of the book's nine chapters I would say that chapters six, seven and eight, which deal respectively with the fall of communism, history as social science and history as literature are the most important. The chapter dealing with the fall of communism is of special interest to a Slavist. Here, one of the main targets is Francis Fukuyama's book, *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992). To be fair to Fukuyama he has written a very good book. He shows a clear understanding of the nature of communism and he is acutely aware that the postmodernist insistence on there being no 'privileged perspectives' is extremely vulnerable to the same relativist attack its adherents deploy against everything and everyone else. Moreover, Fukuyama understands all too clearly the nature of the threat to the West and its traditions posed by liberalism's adopting a false mask: 'A future left-wing threat to liberal democracy is much

more likely to wear the clothing of liberalism while changing its meaning from within, rather than to stage a full, frontal attack on basic democratic institutions and principles'. This is precisely the point that Windschuttle makes himself when he discusses Antonio Gramsci's strategy of getting leftists into government and other institutions. And while Fukuyama's 'struggle for recognition' – what he calls *thymos* – is on its own insufficient to explain the complexities of history, it undoubtedly identifies a state of mind which can be found in the writing of Ernst Jünger (*Der Kampf als inneres Erlebnis*, for example).

The major failing of *The End of History* is the assertion that the end of communism (has it really ended when some 30% of Russians vote for the communist party?) means the end of history; that all possibilities are somehow exhausted. There are so many imponderables, so many scenarios that could come to pass, that the assertion cannot be taken seriously. Windschuttle cites four objections to the Fukuyama end-of-history thesis. First, there is nationalism, which has torn the Balkans apart and continues to bedevil the naive expectations of multiculturalists who demand that people reject their own culture while embracing 'diversity' (read aliens). A major threat here is China and anyone doubting the threat posed by the China's brand of national socialism/ communism would be well advised to read Steven Mosher's *Hegemon: China's Plan to Dominate Asia and the World* (2000). Tell the Chinese leadership that history was over and they would fall about laughing. Second, there is Islamic fundamentalism which has no place for liberal democracy. A third option is state corporatism (the main contender in Europe being the European Union). A fourth objection is what Windschuttle calls creeping socialism, something we in Britain would recognise instantly.

the traditional discipline of history is seen as such a threat. Consequently, rational enquiry, evidence, consistent arguments, openness and free speech have to be destroyed or discredited

Another serious flaw is Fukuyama's historicism, which, while it may contain observations gratifying to the right, is based on the same fallacies of Hegel, Marx, Tolstoy and Lenin. To quote Windschuttle: 'The historical process is not moving inexorably in one direction or towards any goal or end; it has no hidden pattern or itinerary waiting to be discovered. The job of the historian is not to search for some theory that will reveal all, nor some teleology that will explain the purpose of things. Rather, it is to reconstruct the events of the past in their own terms. The reason that narrative is the most appropriate method through which to do this is because the historian is dealing in unique events, in the realm of the contingent. Such events never repeat themselves, but they are nonetheless dependent upon, contingent upon, every other event that came before. What happens in history, therefore, is never random, but neither does it conform to any deep-seated design. Hence, as long as the human species survives, it can make no sense to speak of an end to history'.

Having dealt with Fukuyama, Windschuttle discusses the findings of two French scholars, Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, who have pointed out the debt owed by Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan and Jacques Derrida to the German Nazi academic Martin Heidegger. Important, too, is the work of Victor Farías who uncovered details of Heidegger's Nazi past. Equally unpleasant for all those postmodernist luvvies are the revelations of the Belgian scholar, Ortwin de Graef, who discovered some interesting things from the past of one of America's most influential literary theorists, his fellow Belgian, Paul de Man. In German-occupied Belgium, de Man had been a Nazi collaborator while later claiming in America that he had been a member of the Belgian resistance. As Windschuttle notes: 'The revelations raised the awkward question of just how firm was the connection between pro-Nazi attitudes of the 1930s and 1940s and the French radical theory that had become so influential in our own time'.

Windschuttle's successful rebuttal of Sir Karl Popper's brand of scepticism is especially important, given that so much of the postmodernist agenda depends on the notion of there being no possibility of discovering truth or establishing objective criteria. In *Conjectures and Refutations: The Growth of Scientific Knowledge* (1963), Popper asks an important question: how do we know anything? His example, which Windschuttle uses as the basis of his discussion, is a report in *The Times* that the Prime Minister has returned to London ahead of schedule. In order to answer this question, we are obliged, argues Popper, to ask questions about the veracity of the sources, so many in fact, that it leads to 'infinite regress'. No matter how many questions we ask, we can never be certain that what we have read, say, in *The Times* is true. The same problems arise in the study of history, only on a much greater scale. Windschuttle applies Popper's logic to the assassination of President Kennedy. He concludes: 'Popper's position commits him to doubting not simply whether Kennedy was killed by Lee Harvey Oswald, or was shot by one gunman or several, but whether he was killed at all!'.

Though Popper claims we can never have any certainty about the past, he nevertheless uses the past in writing an important defence of the West, his two-volume, *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (1945). Both volumes apply traditional scholarly methods – close reading of primary source material and footnotes – methods, which Popper would have us believe in *Conjectures and Refutations* are hopelessly flawed. In chapter 2 of the same book, Popper, having discussed Plato and geometry, introduces the next section: 'These are the historical

facts. They go a long way, I believe, towards establishing my main thesis...'. This reliance on historical facts as an aid to establishing the main thesis is rather odd in view of what Popper has earlier written about 'infinite regress'. Popper's other important work, *The Poverty of Historicism* (1957), falls foul of the infinite regress thesis as well. In order to demolish the arguments of historicism, he relies on the arguments and books of others. Popper undermines our belief or confidence in the veracity of documentary evidence, yet when it suits him he is quite willing to use the same documentary evidence to make a case, in this instance, against historicism. As Windschuttle repeatedly points out, this is a standard and fundamental flaw in the many genres of postmodernism. Also, if we can never know anything for certain, then the notions of justice and punishment are themselves fatally weakened. Popper unwittingly provides support for Foucault's views expressed in *Madness and Civilization*. And where this leads can be seen in the ideas of a British Open University lecturer cited by Windschuttle: '[...] the "patient" and "illness" are "sociological fictions" which can be expunged by "elements of feminist theory and Derridean concepts of *différance* and intertextuality"'. Tell that to the parents of a child who is dying of meningitis.

One of the conceptual tools now being applied to history is based on what Keith Windschuttle quite correctly identifies as the 'provocative proposition that history is *nothing more* than a form of literature'. To illustrate Windschuttle's fears let me consider an example of the sort of thing that now passes muster as serious history in the field of Russian studies, Professor Cynthia Ruder's *Making History for Stalin: The Story of the Belomor Canal* (1998). The Belomor Canal, better known as the White Sea Canal, was built with slave labour in appalling conditions, without proper equipment and without any reference to cost and efficiency, or even need. Solzhenitsyn reasonably states that some 100,000 slave-labourers died while working on the project in the first winter. Affidavits presented by Viktor Kravchenko when conducting – and winning – a lawsuit against the French Communist paper, *Les Lettres Françaises*, corroborate the basic picture: ferocious treatment of slave-labourers, miserable conditions and heavy loss of life.

Armed with metahistory and an unquestioning acceptance of Hayden White and Michel Foucault, Ruder has written something superficial. Her sceptical pose – and it is no more than a pose – frequently renders her incomprehensible and, despite her promises, the book does nothing at all to 'deepen our understanding'. Her aim, one of them, is to persuade us to abandon any notion that the Soviet Union was totalitarian – a nasty word for (her)storians – and to see the Soviet system, and, especially the construction of the White Sea Canal, in isolation from Stalin's other murderous social-engineering schemes. Nor does she make any convincing case for 'deepening our understanding' in the first place, which, had the publishers forced her to do so, might have led to a brief article instead of pages of postmodernese. Chapter titles such as 'Reconstructing the (F)Actual History of the Belomor Canal' (chapter 2), 'Mythmaking and Mythbreaking, The (Hi)Story behind *The History of the Construction of the Stalin White Sea-Baltic Canal'* (chapter 3) and 'Literary Text as Historical Narrative, *The History of the Construction of the Stalin White Sea-Baltic Canal*' (chapter 4) immediately alert the reader to the Ruder agenda.

Having noted Solzhenitsyn's revulsion at the glorification of slave labour (Ruder prefers to use 'forced labour'), she solemnly informs us: 'that the more we learn about Stalinism, the more we realize that it is impossible, and often unproductive, to classify events and actions in purely black-and-white terms'. Really? And once again is the *caveat* to apply to the Nazis as well? And what of the issue of slavery in the United States in the 19th Century? By Ruder's relativist yardstick, the time has surely come for us to cease judging the former slave-owners in 'black-and-white terms' as well.

In her characteristically euphemistic way, Ruder notes that 'the presentation of the Belomor as history is complicated by the fact that the Party officially validated it, charging the OGPU [early Soviet secret police] with the task of organizing the Writers Brigade'. And her explanation: 'Yet at the time, no organization but the Party could have mandated the Belomor volume, especially in an era in which literary groups were being consolidated and controlled.'. Quite so. And why was this the case? Ruder writes as if she is completely unaware – possibly she is – that the Soviet Union was a totalitarian one-party state, exercising absolute control over the means of production, which includes all publishing houses (no small matter, if the censors did not like what you had written) and, of course, operated a system of unparalleled censorship. Furthermore, at the time the Belomor

Canal was built, the catastrophe of collectivization had just torn the countryside apart and Stalin's preparations for the Great Terror were brewing. Not wishing to take things out of context, I suggest that these (f)acts might just have more than a passing connection with the construction of the Belomor Canal and the OGPU's and, subsequently, the NKVD's, attempts to bribe, to cajole, to threaten, to fool and to force writers to produce the grotesque official 'history' of the White Sea Canal.

Ruder is, however, unmoved by such arguments: 'This does not mean that the writers relinquished their creativity and artistry; it simply means that a more powerful agent of control made its presence known throughout the creative process.' In plain English, the OGPU, then its successor the NKVD, made the writers an offer they could refuse at their peril: cooperate fully you dogs, or you, too, can dig the tundra with your bare hands.

Having staked out her postmodernist, (hi)storical or even herstorical approach, and in so doing, having cast doubts on the conventional use of the word 'history', Ruder creates a whole series of unintended problems for (her)self. For, if the history of the White Sea Canal is no longer history but (hi)story – something along the lines of *Auntie Cynthia's Scary Bedtime Stories from the Land of Belomor* – then words, and the intellectual processes they denote, such as 'analysis', 'evaluation', 'objectivity' and 'evidence', are redundant No matter that when it suits her, Ruder is quite willing to rely on the work of historians and literary critics using traditional methods, while at the same time attacking the supposed inadequacies of such methods. Note, for example, her bizarre justification for *not using* documentary information: 'these materials benefitted from the advantage of hindsight.' Citing an implausibly named Art Jester, Ruder asserts that they offer a 'false clarity'. When it comes to working out any sense in 'false clarity' or why hindsight is such a disadvantage, we are on our own. We need the insight of the elect, or maybe 'false clarity' is just an artless and pretentious jest. In the Alice-in-Wonderland logic of (hi)story things are never what they seem: an advantage is not necessarily an advantage. The many millions of Soviet citizens ('enemies of the people') shot and starved to death in Stalin's Final Solution of the Peasant Question are not necessarily many millions shot and starved to death. Perspective is everything don't you know. This is not serious scholarship. And how useful are the published Soviet literary sources, if they are subject to, as we know they were, the full and savage weight of Soviet censorship? This is a question that Ruder totally ignores. In his masterful demolition of Michel Foucault, Windschuttle notes something similar. Thus, the French theorist, Michel de Certeau, attacked Foucault because he, Foucault, used documentary evidence (Windschuttle, 1997, p.33). This incidentally is the same de Certeau, the author of three books, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other* and *The Writing of History*, who sees writing as a form of oppression. To quote Windschuttle: 'for someone who thinks that writing is a form of oppression, he has done a lot of writing'.

Likewise, Ruder notes Ivan Chukhin's book, *The Canalarmyists* published in 1990, and his 'meticulous attention to the details of the project' and that other memoirs have substantiated his findings. And then one begins to question whether she understands what she is saying or whether she is merely incompetent. If, as she acknowledges, Chukhin is so meticulous, how has he bypassed 'the cultural, literary, and manifestly historical issues that the Belomor construction project raises'? One moment we are warned of the dangers of 'false clarity', the next we learn that other memoirs have substantiated Chukhin's work. Substantiation sounds suspiciously like the traditional historical enterprise.

Chukhin does indeed address these issues. This police lieutenant-colonel – no Soviet-hating dissident he – condemns the writers of the Stalin-approved history in no uncertain terms, accusing them of 'consciously perverting the truth'. The writers have, he asserts, violated the traditions of Russian literature. The whole tone of Chukhin's well-written book represents a prolonged rebuttal of Ruder's approach. Chukhin condemns Stalin, Stalinism, the OGPU/NKVD, the writers and the camp administration. As for the much-vaunted *perekovka*, he can find no 'objective corroboration, since', as he puts it, 'the greater part of the prisoners were not criminals, and needed no reforging'. Possibly, the stiffest challenge to Ruder's theorizing is to be found in the sub-title of Chukhin's book: *The Canalarmyists: The History of the Construction of the White-Sea Canal in Documents, Statistical Data, Facts, Photographs, Testimonies of Participants and Eyewitnesses*. Every single word in this sub-title is an uncompromising rejection of the historical relativism espoused by Ruder and offers strong support for the traditional historical approach defended by Windschuttle. Nowhere in her book does Ruder provide a full bibliographical citation of Chukhin's book, referring to it as *The Canalarmyists*. While it is perfectly acceptable to use a shortened title in the text, on a first mention, the full title should be given. In any case, a full citation is obligatory in any academic bibliography. Given Ruder's particular views on clarity, objectivity, facts, data, evidence and historical narrative, one wonders whether considerations other than brevity influenced the omission of the sub-title.

Pursuing the type of anti-historical agenda that she is, Ruder can afford to be somewhat cavalier with mere facts and accuracy. For example, she tells us that the

***Why do so many seemingly intelligent men and women subscribe to the intellectual nihilism and charlatanry subsumed under the rubric of postmodernism* et al?**

OGPU was the forerunner of the KGB – the NKVD was – and the KGB, contrary to what Ruder writes, no longer exists. It was replaced by the FSB. (A photo reproduced on page 33 shows the letters NKVD on a barrack-room door. What is quite likely the first letter of the OGPU acronym is visible as well). On page 55 there is a reprint taken from the Belomor camp paper. Ruder tells us that the face on the front page is that of Yagoda. Beneath a caption 'Lenin on Competition', there is a face with a suspicious resemblance to some bloke called Lenin. But who cares? This is her-story.

By the end of this book, we are none the wiser as to the many new truths which she promises to reveal. Certainly, there is no 'deeper understanding'. Stalin's words, when seeing the Canal for the first time, sum this book up quite well: 'shallow and narrow'. Those who took part in propagandizing slave labour both in the Soviet Union and especially the West are guilty as charged. Nearly seventy years on, slavery is still slavery and all Ruder's prodigious and evasive waffle about 'texts', 'emplotment', '(f)acts', '(hi)story' and 'contexts' cannot hide the brute, ugly facts.

Far more sinister than Ruder's clumsy attempts to persuade us that history and literature are the same thing is the climate of censorship that has accompanied the rise in prominence of French radical theories. The sort of academic posturing and Pythonesque buffoonery which Windschuttle has painstakingly documented in *The Killing of History* would on their own not be enough to kill history. Coercion, vilification and censorship are needed. The bizarre claims made, for example, about black achievements (Beethoven was black, so was Hannibal and so on) simply cannot withstand the scrutiny of rational enquiry. This is one of many reasons why the traditional discipline of history is seen as such a threat. Consequently, rational enquiry, evidence, consistent arguments, openness and free speech have to be destroyed or discredited. This process is well under way in Europe (France and Germany) and Canada. In a recent article on the new censorship, in *American Renaissance,* Jared Taylor has sounded a warning which we cannot afford to ignore: 'The full-blown, unabashed censorship laws in Europe and Canada are a giant step backwards in the history of Western Civilization. It was perhaps one of the most significant breakthroughs in human thought to recognise that the social cost of suppressing "error" is far greater than the damage unchecked "error" can do when men are free to refute it'.

Reading Windschuttle's powerful book, I kept returning to the same questions. Do the people who believe that there is no such thing as history, no bracing narrative of mankind yet enjoy the benefits of Western technology, really believe in the (hi)storical nonsense they preach? Do they really believe that all that separates the intellectual achievements of Sir Isaac Newton from voodoo is cultural perspective? And if the transition from foot power to Saturn V rocket does not represent the staggering triumph of Western civilization's devotion to empirical science, analysis, evidence and intellectual rigour, then what does it represent? Why do so many seemingly intelligent men and women subscribe to the intellectual nihilism and charlatanry subsumed under the rubric of postmodernism *et al*? That many academics do is beyond doubt. Why though? Some reasons are obvious enough: attention seeking; a certain celebrity; even a certain vandalism inspired by too much comfort and boredom. Orwell had one of the answers. He noted that for all their waffle about equality and the working classes, left-wing intellectuals despised the 'people'. They were essentially driven by power and in order to secure power for themselves, they declared war on tradition, our great heroes (especially our warriors) our folkways, in a word our history. As the bureaucrats in the Ministry of Truth realised, knowledge of the past is an obstacle to the agenda of rewriting history or killing it. This is another reason, possibly the most important, why the traditional study of history, defended so magnificently by Keith Windschuttle, goes to very heart of the idea of the West.

On this point, the author of *The Killing of History* should have the final word: 'Ever since Thucydides wrote the *History of the Peloponnesian War*, writers in the Western intellectual tradition have been distinguished by their efforts to distance themselves from their own political system and religion and to write from a position outside of both. To look down, as it were, upon your society and become a critic of your own practice is a characteristically Western notion and, indeed, is one of the great strengths of Western culture – possibly even its greatest strength. Moreover, the freedom to engage in such criticism has long been one of the most cherished possessions of those who have inherited the culture [...] The preservation of this intellectual heritage is what is ultimately at stake in the current contest over the status of history'.

Frank Ellis is Lecturer in Russian at the University of Leeds.

> And the simple step of a simple, courageous man is not to take part in the lie, not to support deceit. Let the lie come into the world, even dominate the world, but not through me ...One word of truth outweighs the whole world.
>
> *Alexander Solzhenitsyn*

Starved to Death in the U.K.

David S. Oderberg

On 3 September 1953 one of the most significant international treaties of the post-war era. came into force, called the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, it was agreed by member governments of the Council of Europe, which had been established in 1949 as part of the Allied plan to 'reconstruct durable civilisation on the mainland of Europe'. Legislation based on this has been hailed by the Labour Government as a 'major step forward' in its programme of constitutional reform, enabling people to enforce their human rights in the domestic courts without resort to the lengthy and more cumbersome process of applying to the European Court of Human Rights.

The Human Rights Act has been praised on all sides, with barely a dissentient voice, as a triumph of legal and moral progress, a model for all states to follow. The U.K. was the first country to ratify the Convention and played a large part in its drafting; no wonder, then, that it should be almost a matter of national pride that the treaty be put at the very centre of English law as one of the principal standards according to which all legislation must be interpreted and all judicial decisions made.

One might expect, therefore, that this shining beacon of ethical advancement will promote the safeguarding of human rights in the United Kingdom. Many of the articles of the Convention, like governing the right to marry and the right to privacy, look like admirable recognition of natural human entitlements (even if one can easily see the perverse way such articles are likely to be interpreted). If you are a delinquent teenager worried about receiving a righteous wallop from your exasperated parent, then have no fear because the lawyers will be queuing up to protect you under Article 3 (prohibiting 'torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment'). If, on the other hand, you have the misfortune of having not yet emerged from your mother's womb you are offered scant legal protection. Article 2 declares magisterially, and admirably, that 'everyone's right to life shall be protected by law. No one shall be deprived of his life intentionally save in the execution of a sentence of a court following his conviction of a crime for which this penalty is provided by law.' And it goes on to make exceptions for self-defence, lawful arrest and quelling a riot. As might be expected, the absolute nature of the right (subject to the exceptions) was undercut by the European Commission of Human Rights which helpfully explained in 1980 that the term 'everyone' generally applied only post-natally and that the life of the unborn child was intimately 'connected with, and...cannot be regarded in isolation of, the life of the pregnant woman'.

For all its grandiose words the Convention, in the shape of the Human Rights Act, may not offer much in the way of a safeguard for other categories of human being. This is all the more likely when we learn that 'the Convention need not – indeed should not – be interpreted as it would have been by those who drafted it fifty years ago. It is a "living instrument which must be interpreted in the light of present-day conditions" (*Tyrer v. United Kingdom (1978) 2 EHRR 1 at para. 31*). As such its meaning will develop over time and new case law will develop in an organic way without old case law being specifically overruled.' An English court, when interpreting the Convention, must do so 'by the standards of society today, and not when the Convention was drafted.' The jurisprudence of the Convention, then, appears to be defined by the shifting moral standards of society, in a word relativism. When you combine that with the need for 'inventiveness' on the part of lawyers, you have two results – a document that will end up meaning whatever its guardians want it to mean, and a veritable bonanza for the legal profession, with dubious human rights cases blooming like blue-green algae over an already decadent judicial system.

This decadence, deriving partly from the moral relativism to which the Human Rights Act has been energized, was already displayed when the House of Lords in 1993, refusing to be bound by the outmoded common law of murder, sanctioned the starving to death of Tony Bland in one of the most notorious cases in English law. Mr Bland, injured in the Hillsborough Football Stadium disaster, had been in a so-called 'persistent vegetative state' (PVS), which I will call, more properly, a persistent *non-responsive* state (PNS), for four years before the Law Lords allowed the hospital, in accordance with the wishes of his family, to deprive him of 'artificial nutrition and hydration' (ANH), the now common technical term for food and water. If, then, English judges were prepared to be inventive in the interpretation of their own home-grown common law, should anyone be surprised if they made a level playing field by taking a similarly creative approach to imported legislation?

Enter Dame Elizabeth Butler Sloss, President of the Family Division of the High Court of Justice. A cursory look at her judicial activity (or rather activism) indicates a decided unwillingness to be bound by old-fashioned

moral standards. So when presented with the case of Mrs M and Mrs H, both in persistent non-responsive states, and whose doctors and families wanted them to be deprived of food and water, Dame Elizabeth was only too happy to oblige. After all, not even the Official Solicitor representing the two unfortunate women opposed the application: he was there only because the rules compelled him.

Mrs M, 49 and married with three children, had been in PNS for nearly three years following a cardio-respiratory arrest during surgery. She was being fed through a tube and one consultant said she could live for many years. Mrs H, 36 and previously married with one child, suffered brain damage during a cardiac arrest after admission for pancreatitis. She had been in PNS for nearly a year. She had also had problems with feeding by tube and had already been receiving only water for several weeks before the court hearing. There were other surgical methods available for administering food, but the doctors testified that these were risky and invasive and hence 'not in the best interests of the patient'. Dame Elizabeth agreed: 'On the evidence presented to me it would not be in the best interests of either patient to continue treatment.'

How was this decision reached? As a professional philosopher with a degree in Law, I long ago learned not to equate philosophical reasoning and legal reasoning. Lawyers are not logicians. The courts are there for the purpose of achieving justice, and a judge's reasoning cannot – and should not – be expected to read like an extract from the *Summa Theologica*. Nevertheless, this does not mean that judges are allowed to commit fallacies, to twist the natural meanings of words, to go beyond what the evidence permits one to infer – in short, to make a mockery of the process of reasoning common to all professions, from philosopher to stamp collector.

We can see the distortion of words immediately in the judge's following of *Bland* by regarding the provision of food and water as 'medical treatment'. Yet the fact that this action is given the polysyllabic title of 'artificial nutrition and hydration', then shortened to the acronym ANH, makes it no more a form of medical treatment than if you helped someone with a sprained ankle to cross the road and called it 'artificial maintenance and transportation', or AMT. But it goes much deeper than that. Dame Elizabeth recognized two obligations in Article 2. There is the negative obligation not to deprive someone of his life intentionally, and the positive one of safeguarding life ('Everyone's right to life shall be protected by law'). Would the starvation of Mrs M and Mrs H amount to the intentional deprivation of life? No, according to the President of the Court, because this requires 'a deliberate act, as opposed to an omission, by someone acting on behalf of the state, which results in death.' And she adds, 'The death of the patient is the result of the illness or injury from which he suffered and that cannot be described as a deprivation.'

It is astonishing how many mistakes can be committed in such a short span of words. For a start, why the distinction between acts and omissions in this context? Dame Elizabeth gives no reason, other than the implication that an omission cannot cause a death. So how would she treat a mother accused of starving her baby to death? Fortunately the courts still regard such a case as murder or manslaughter, but on Dame Elizabeth's way of thinking that could not be right. Indeed, to say that the deprivation of food and water is not a real deprivation looks about as close to a logical contradiction as one can get. Lord Mustill in *Bland* at least recognized that the doctors would cause Tony Bland's death by withdrawing food and water, and a commentator on the present case had this to say: 'it may be difficult to say that the doctors do not cause the death of the PVS patient by withdrawing ANH... Better to rest her view of the scope of the negative obligation in Article 2(1) on a *robust, pragmatic* – and it can be said, *commonsense* – interpretation requiring active taking of life.'

Secondly, there is more to the act than simply the withholding of food and water: there is in fact the intentional, positive action of *withdrawing* the feeding tube in the first place. So if Dame Elizabeth is looking for 'a deliberate act, as opposed to an omission' she does not have far to search, any more than in the case of a conscious patient whose intravenous drip was pulled out by a malevolent nurse (occasionally, in Britain, such people still go to jail). Thirdly, how is it that the death of the patient is supposed to be the result of the illness or injury which she suffered if the judge has already agreed with the consultants that Mrs M, at least, could live for many years? Since they would both die within weeks of being deprived of food and water, surely Dame Elizabeth should have suspected that this may be the true cause, even in the case of Mrs H who was having complications associated with her artificial feeding.

What about the positive obligation in Article 2 to protect life? As one commentator says, whilst 'the negative obligation is absolute, subject to the exceptions listed in Article 2(2)...the positive obligation in Article 2 is *more flexible* [emphasis added] and...allows the court to take account of a doctor's common law duty to act in the patient's "best interests".' One can immediately see the potential for whittling the negative obligation down to nothing by means of a 'flexible approach' to the positive obligation. Sure enough Dame Elizabeth takes the flexible approach, judging that 'in a case where a responsible clinical decision is made to withhold treatment, on the grounds that it is not in the patient's best interests, and that clinical decision is made in accordance with a respectable body of medical opinion, the state's positive obligation under art 2 is, in my view, discharged.' So it was not, according to Dame Elizabeth, following both *Bland* and the evidence of the consultants in the present case, in the best interests of Mrs M or Mrs H to stay alive. They were, in other words, better off dead.

By what process of reasoning does Dame Elizabeth Butler Sloss reach this judgment upon the fate of Mrs M

and Mrs H? Unfortunately the reasoning is never made explicit. What is clear is that she is following the Law Lords in *Bland*, who believed that Tony Bland was alive 'but has no life' (Lord Hoffmann in the Court of Appeal, whose ruling the House of Lords upheld), that he was in a state 'with no prospect of recovery' and in which feeding 'confers no benefit upon him' (Lord Keith of Kinkel). Of course, it was the 'responsible body of medical opinion' which was of most influence with Dame Elizabeth as with the Law Lords. Further, since not even the Official Solicitor 'representing' the two women actually represented them, and since Dame Elizabeth refused to hear the opposing view of the anti-euthanasia organization ALERT, it is clear the women did not have a chance judicially. But since English judges are permitted to review the professional clinical opinion as to what is in the patient's best interests, it is also clear that Dame Elizabeth did not feel bound by what she was told but agreed with it wholeheartedly, after not hearing a single bit of evidence to the contrary. To quote another commentator on this case, referring as well to the infamous recent Siamese Twins judgment which also considered Article 2: 'The common feature to both decisions is that the court has determined the result it wished to achieve (here ensuring that the switching off of life support machines for PVS patients can lawfully continue) *before* assessing the impact of Article 2.' (Emphasis added.) In other words, Dame Elizabeth knew the result she wanted to achieve, and made sure she got there.

How could she get around the fact that the European Commission of Human Rights determined that Article 2 require 'preventative steps to be taken to protect life from known and avoidable dangers'? True, the Commission also says that 'the extent of this obligation will vary inevitably', but it explicitly refers only to 'the source and degree of danger and the means available to combat it' and to 'policy decisions relating...to the use of state resources', which it adds must be 'compatible with the fundamental rights guaranteed in the Convention' including, one assumes, the right to life itself. It says nothing about whether certain kinds of people are 'better off dead'. But the European Court in the same case says that Article 2 must not 'impose an impossible or disproportionate burden on the authorities'. This is the phrase Dame Elizabeth seizes on, interpreting it to mean that treatment is not required if it is 'futile', and it is futile if, as Lord Goff said in *Bland*, 'the patient is unconscious and there is no prospect of any improvement in his condition.'

It is the plasticity of terms such as 'impossible or disproportionate burden', 'futile', and 'best interests', or rather their wilful distortion, which allows Dame Elizabeth Butler Sloss to reach the decision she was determined to reach. Giving food and water to a living human being is never futile – how could it be if the person will die without it? Why should Lord Goff have assumed that giving it to Tony Bland was futile because he was unconscious and there was no prospect of recovery if he would not – as one charitably assumes he would not – have made the same assumption in the case of a person with terminal cancer, or mental handicap, or any other condition from which the person would never recover? What has the provision of food and water, any more than warmth and shelter, to do with relieving the condition in question rather than with hunger, thirst, cold, and all the other necessities which anyone, whether they are in a white coat or not, is obliged to provide to another who is in their care? The Convention does not impose an obligation to strive to keep someone alive at all costs and whatever the means or likely outcome – nor should it. If this is what is meant by an impossible or disproportionate obligation, it is not a duty recognized by morality. Nor does morality recognize a duty to administer treatment which is not able to relieve the condition at which it is aimed – if that is what is meant by futile treatment, then the Convention must not be interpreted so as to contain such an obligation. As the European Court declared in *Osman*, however, the authorities are obliged by Article 2 to 'do all that could be reasonably expected of them to avoid a real and immediate risk to life of which they have or ought to have knowledge.' If this does not include the provision of food and water to those in their care and trust, it does not include anything.

There is something deeply incoherent about asserting that a person can be 'better off dead', that they can have a life 'not worth living'.

There is something deeply incoherent about asserting that a person can be 'better off dead', that they can have a life 'not worth living'. Dame Elizabeth does not even begin to offer substantive reasons for her agreement with the consultants that it was not in the best interests of Mrs M and Mrs H to continue feeding them; one wishes she had not hidden quite so much behind the consultants' white coats and given us the benefit of her wisdom on this matter. She does, however, add somewhat disingenuously that her judgment must not be seen to be relevant to (the inevitable) future applications to administer lethal injections to people in similar conditions. Perhaps this is why she was so concerned to portray the acts contemplated in the present case as really omissions, and so nowhere near as abhorrent, in her eyes, as a straight-out murder.

The other main provision of the European Convention that was discussed in this case is Article 3, which declares that 'no one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment'. You might think that starving another person to death was both inhuman and degrading treatment. Dame Elizabeth does not, however, share your intuition, for she judged that Article 3 did not apply to the case of people who were 'insensate'. Why not? After all, as John Finnis cogently pointed out after *Bland*, Tony Bland, though (apparently) insensate, had an inherent right to dignity, e.g. not to be sexually abused or thrown alive into the hospital rubbish. (Lord Mustill had

said that Bland had 'no best interests of any kind'.) There seems every reason why the test for whether Article 3 is violated must be an objective, not a subjective one: there should be no necessity that the person experience physical or psychological suffering.

You may (or may not, by now) be surprised to know that it was the Official Solicitor 'representing' the patients who prompted Dame Elizabeth with the thought that Article 3 had no application. She happily accepted this, and went on to cite two decisions of the European Court which allegedly supported the subjective test. The first, if she had read it carefully, explicitly allows that treatment may be inhuman if it causes '*actual bodily injury* or intense physical and mental suffering' (emphasis added). Starvation causes actual bodily injury, so how does this judgment support her view? The second case held that 'as a general rule, a measure which is a therapeutic necessity cannot be regarded as inhuman or degrading.' Surely, then, the administration of food and water to any living person is a therapeutic necessity, and so by its nature not inhuman or degrading? (Moreover, the European Court has held that there is no violation of Article 3 in force-feeding a prisoner on hunger strike; so *a fortiori* there can be no violation if the person is unconscious.) And if so, does not the corollary naturally follow, that *not* to administer a therapeutic necessity *is* inhuman or degrading? Further, Dame Elizabeth gave no indication that she thought it a veritable therapeutic necessity that Mrs M and Mrs H not continue to live; so it is difficult to see how this case supports her contention either. As one commentary on this case put it: 'Is not one purpose of art. 3 to protect such a fundamental right to dignity, which every person must have whilst they are alive, whether they are asleep or awake, in PVS or fully conscious?'

The assumption that PNS patients are indeed insensate, is highly dubious, but Dame Elizabeth gives no evidence of having considered any empirical evidence to the contrary, coming from physicians every bit as expert as the ones whose opinions received her judicial notice. She does not appear to have read the work of Dr Peter McCullagh, Senior Fellow at the John Curtin School of Medical Research, suggesting that severely brain-damaged individuals may well experience the sensation of thirst. Had she allowed representation by ALERT she would have read the assertion by Emeritus Consultant Anaesthetist Dr. David J. Hill that 'it cannot be securely claimed that PVS patients are insensate', who added: 'If it were not for the desire to kill...PVS patients there would be no question of trying to convince the Court that these patients can have no sensation. Neither, of course, would there be any cause to re-classify the giving of fluid and nutrition as "medical intervention" rather than the humane treatment of the incompetent.' Nor, it appears, did Dame Elizabeth read a paper by Dr. Keith Andrews of the Royal Hospital for Neuro-Disability in London called 'Recovery of Patients after Four Months or More in the Persistent Vegetative State', or enquiring after his more recent research on recovery from PNS after even longer periods, let alone asking for his paper revealing that in a survey of patients admitted to a brain damage rehabilitation unit between 1992 and 1995, 43% were found to have been *misdiagnosed* as being in a 'persistent vegetative state' and could in fact communicate by eye-pointing or using a touch-sensitive buzzer.

I end with two brief reports, both terrifying, the second also unsurprising: Catherine Roberts, a student whose parents had been informed by doctors that their daughter, who was in a coma, would never recover consciousness, has accepted £100,000 for negligence in an out of court settlement from the Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospital NHS Trust. She was not given food for two months after her naso-gastric tube had fallen out, because her doctors believed that she would die within a matter of days. Two months later she was still alive and doctors advised that hydration should also be withdrawn, as her death was imminent. However, after her parents had begun to make funeral arrangements, they saw their daughter opening her eyes and blinking, responding to their presence and then to questions. Since then she has made slow but steady progress, and is now reading for an Open University degree.

The case raises some difficult issues concerning the disparity of advice given by doctors on the treatment of PVS patients. Further research based on sound evidence is clearly essential in order to produce uniform definitive guidance for all doctors dealing with cases such cases.

The second report concerns Dame Elizabeth Butler Sloss herself, who on March 30th this year, some five months after this, further ruled that a 73 year-old woman who had been on assisted feeding for eight years after a brain haemorrhage (having suffered a stroke five years before that) be 'permitted to die peacefully', 'the patient showed virtually no awareness of her surroundings'. Dame Elizabeth 'was satisfied there was "now no evidence of a working mind".' The woman's family had wanted the hospital to act sooner, but the doctors were in this case cautious. The judge said 'I think that they might, if I may say so, have come sooner'. Dame Elizabeth made an order banning identification of the patient or the hospital trust until after her death, 'expected in around two weeks. She was anxious to protect hospital staff from being troubled by "various groups who hold strong feelings on the subject of life and death".' She permanently banned the media from identifying the doctors or the hospital itself. This, by the way, is the same judge who in January made an unprecedented order banning the media for life from disclosing the new identities or whereabouts of the two young murderers of the Merseyside two-year-old James Bulger, recently released after eight years in youth detention.

David Oderberg is Lecturer in Philosphy at the Universtiy of Reading. This paper was delivered at the Right to Life *Conference, Melbourne, August 2001. References for this article are available from the author.*

The Sweet Science

Norman Yearley

Almost ever since its inception as a modern sport, boxing has been vilified. Its detractors have been vociferous in its condemnation, their criticism ranging from 'brutal' to 'barbaric', and the calls to ban it have been many and long. Most of this criticism has been aimed at the professional side of the sport. It would appear difficult to defend a sport in which the primary aim is for the participants to hit each other, apparently bent on beating each other until one collapses through sheer exhaustion or is battered into submission or unconsciousness. Indeed, until one has been involved in the sport, it does seem that this is the case. In actual fact, it isn't.

Is it true to say that boxing is about hitting and being hit? This would appear to be a rhetorical question. Boxing without the two participants trying to hit each other would probably appear as a grotesque form of Come Dancing. Actually, boxing is about hitting one's opponent, whilst at the time avoiding being hit back. Not easy. Hence the expression 'The Sweet Science', a phrase used by Jack Brougham (the first British heavyweight champion), as the title of his book on boxing, published in 1848. The most criticised aspect of the sport is, of course, the professional side. The ruling body of the professional side of the sport is The Boxing Board of Control (The B.B. of C.) This board controls the sport with an iron fist. Safety precautions are taken, from controlling conditions whilst boxers are training, up to doctors and medical teams being at ringside during the contests. On the rare occasion that a major injury is inflicted on one of the boxers during a bout, the same hackneyed arguments are trotted out: 'This dangerous sport has claimed another victim.' 'Boxing is brutal.' 'Ban this thuggish sport.' And so on. Yes, boxing is dangerous, so is motor racing and rock climbing. More fatalities occur in fishing than in boxing. I have no intention of getting bogged down in a welter of statistics. Let the critics and defenders of boxing do that. However, I do take issue with the expressions of 'Brutality' and 'Thuggery.'

Strange as it may seem to the those not closely connected to the sport, boxing is not a brutal sport. No boxer has any wish to 'hurt' another boxer. In boxing, for example, kicking an opponent would bring instant disqualification. (And goodness knows what recriminations from the media!) In football, no points are gained from 'hurting' an opponent, whether purposely or not. Yet footballers are consistently trying to 'hurt' their opponents. And by 'hurt', I mean to incapacitate their fellow players, sometimes badly enough to ruin a career, and very often, enough to have a footballer miss many games.
Never kick a man when he's down? That's one of the rules of life, but not, apparently of football. No boxer would dream of trying to hurt a fellow boxer that badly.

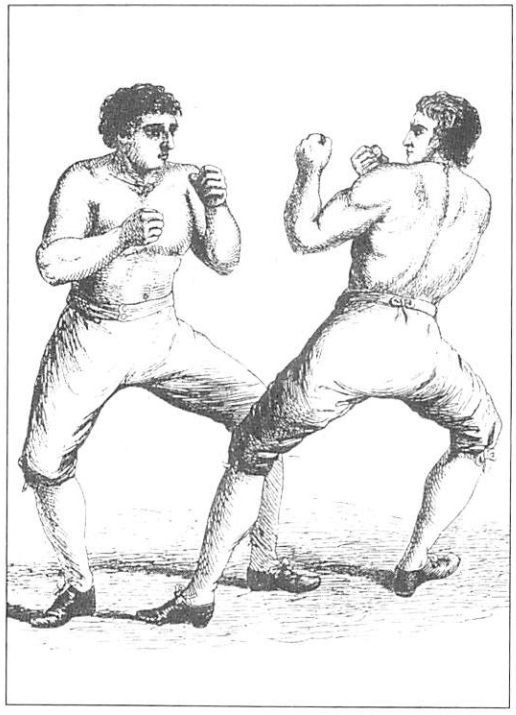
Even in rugby, and I am a great admirer of this very manly sport and its participants, players seem to want to hurt their opponents, at times even stamping on another player's face. The fact that this extreme behaviour doesn't occur often does nothing to lessen the brutality shown by the miscreants. These are examples of 'Brutality', 'Thuggery' and 'Hurt'. When it comes to this sort of behaviour, boxing is in the rearguard. Boxing teaches young men how to be sportsmen, unlike, it would appear, other less 'violent' sports. Cricket at one time was held up as the epitome of English sportsmanship. In view of the safeguards that have been imposed on cricketers (face visors etc), that make one wonder if they are participating in jousting, not cricket, and the far from gentlemanly behaviour by many of the players, one begins to wonder if we should replace the old adage 'That's not cricket' with 'That's not boxing.'

The Amateur side of the sport is ruled by the Amateur Boxing Association. (A.B.A.). This august body, like its professional counterpart, runs this side of the sport with a diligence that is hard to criticise. Not only the safety of amateur boxers is addressed, but the well-being of the young men who participate is also of prime concern. Amateur boxing clubs are to be found in almost every part of the country. These clubs come under the auspices of the A.B.A., and all the coaches have taken a course run by the A.B.A. The gyms are equipped to the highest standards, all apparatus is tested for safety on an annual basis, and safety and cleanliness is adhered to throughout all training sessions.

These precautions are taken on a general basis, and are part of the general routine of any and every club. However, there is an overwhelming sense of personal involvement between the trainers and the young boxers which I doubt exists in any other sport. This bond starts almost from the first training session and grows stronger over the weeks and months that it takes for a young boxer to take place in his first contest. Boxers are referred to by trainers as 'my boy'. The first few training sessions in a club are run on a general basis. Every member of the club warms up, skips, and is put though a training routine as a team. Boxing skills, however, are taught on a 'one to one' basis. It is during these training sessions that the rapport is built up between boxer and

trainer. Each boxer is bought along slowly and steadily, trainers discussing with each other the ability and merits of 'his boy' with other trainers and 'their boy'. The final part of any training session is a training circuit in which all the young boxers participate, again as a team.

Eventually the time will come for the aspiring boxer to put what he has learnt to the test, and he will be allowed to spar (practise boxing) with an experienced member of the club. It is during this session that the novice will receive his first blow. This is usually on his nose, and will make his eyes water. This will probably come as a shock to him, but most young men would consider it a blow to their pride to allow this to stop them from continuing the session. The trainer will, of course, be aware of this and stop the session for a moment or two on a pretext of giving advice. Usually this first sparring session is to allow the boxer to use the techniques he has learnt in the previous weeks. The more experienced boxer is able to work with the trainer in honing up the tyros' skills. In amateur boxing these sparring sessions are referred to as 'moving around' and the boxers in the club will have moved around with each other learning different aspects of the skills of boxing.



They will learn how to remain unruffled whilst under pressure. How to react efficiently when an opportunity arises, to change a disadvantageous situation into one that will enable them to regain the initiative. How to pace themselves enabling them to last the course. They will learn the meaning of true sportsmanship, and this is but a short step away from common courtesy. They will realise that saying 'Please' or 'Thank you' or 'Sorry' are not weaknesses but strengths. This will occur without the young men realising. Whist training they will learn discipline, not the type of discipline one associates with the armed forces, but a controlled discipline that comes from within, the kind of discipline that that enables them to keep their temper when provoked. They quickly learn that losing their temper in the ring means losing control, and that losing control can often lead to losing a contest. They will learn respect, not only for their trainers and their fellow boxers, but for themselves. They will become proud, in this case, not only of themselves but of their club and all it stands for. They will learn good humour. After taking a blow during a sparring session, it is not uncommon to hear the recipient congratulate his opponent He will nod his approval and say 'Good shot.' They will realise that picking on someone weaker than themselves is a weakness in itself. They will learn to avoid trouble, not make it, and, perhaps, even more important, be able to quell trouble if the needs arise. Walking away is not a sign of cowardice but a sense of wisdom. They will become fit. In my opinion far fitter than in any other sport. They will feel good, and strange as it may seem to an outsider, they will be having a good time. Learning to box is a long hard road, but it is fun.

On top of this they will learn courage. Not 'Gung Ho' courage, but the quiet courage that it takes to get into a boxing ring to face an adversary on a one to one basis. The boxing ring has been called the loneliest place in the world. Entering it just once is a nerve-racking experience, yet boxers enter it many times over the course of their boxing careers. That takes not only courage, but determination and character. The fitness aspect of boxing I find very satisfying. Whilst training, boxers use techniques not used in other sports. Skipping is one and learning how to use a heavy punch bag is another. They do, however, use techniques of other sports, circuit training, running, and, up to a point, athletics and weight lifting. Many boxers participate in other sports, often at club level, especially football (where they often get hurt!). I doubt very much if the protagonists of other sports could indulge in boxing at any level. When one looks at these attributes one realises that boxing is more than hitting and being hit. These are also the rules of life, and, I am pleased to say, most boxers use these rules outside the gym, and outside the ring.

One of the casualties of the bias against boxing is the complete absence of teaching boxing in schools. This is, of course, not only because of the 'Political Uncorrectness' of boxing, but of lack of funds available to bring in a specialised instructor. This is a pity.

Bullying in schools seems to be far more prevalent now than it has ever been. Whether this is because more attention has been drawn to this blight or whether bullying is getting more serious, I don't know. However, it would appear that the consequences, in many cases, are disastrous, even leading to pupils committing suicide. Whilst I am sure that the problems of bullying are being addressed by the authorities, the problem still appears to be undiminished. I believe that teaching youngsters to box would go a long way to help eliminate this problem. One doesn't often hear of boxers being bullied. Being able to box would make the bullied less likely to be bullied, and the bullies less likely to want to bully. I have seen this happen on many occasions. Considering

the lack of funds available to schools, one solution would be for the school secretary to approach the local boxing club and discuss the problem with their secretary. More members are always welcome at Amateur Boxing Clubs, and I am sure that any discussion would be of advantage to both parties.

Whilst training young boxers at a club in Islington, which is still going strong, we were often approached by parents worried about their children being bullied at school. The father's attitude would often be a simplistic one: 'Join a Boxing Club, and learn to look after yourself'. The solution is not that easy. Boxing won't immediately change a timorous boy into a playground hero. It will teach, over a not too long period of time, self-confidence. This will enable the youngster to discuss his problem with his peers at the club, because under the umbrella of boxing camaraderie these other members will be his 'mates'. (Some of whom may have suffered the same humiliation of bullying.) This a side of boxing that its detractors will never see. I call it the 'Compassionate Face' of boxing. One doesn't have to try very hard to see that, under the sweat of boxers punching the heavy bag, honing their skills on the pads with their trainers, 'moving round' in the ring with each other, laughing and joking after training, that this compassionate face is there, not too far under the surface.

I have trained, over the years, the bullies and the bullied. I have seen former bullies moving round in the ring with their former victims, taking and giving punches, not in animosity, but in friendship. After the sparring session is over the boys shake hands, or touch gloves as it is now called, and just carry on training.

In my time spent as a boxing instructor, I have trained young men from all walks of life. Petty criminals, (and some not so petty!), policemen, soldiers. Businessmen and labourers, even a barrister. The advantages of boxing training have been seized upon by the Personal Training Profession. The routine has been modified slightly, and now is marketed under the title of 'Boxercise'. It is the fastest growing element in the world of physical self improvement, suitable for both men and women. This perhaps over emphasises the 'compassionate' side of the sport, there is, of course, no physical contact. Over the last few months, boxing seems to be getting a revival of media popularity. This may be due to the fact that Britain now has not only a world heavyweight champion, but also an Olympic heavyweight champion as well. Many professional boxers are also in the headlines for reasons ranging from their charisma inside and outside the ring, to the purses that are available to those boxers who reach the top flight of their profession. Whatever the reason, one sees pictures in the popular press of pop stars wearing boxing gloves, although it has to be said that these photos are of girl singers.

There is one aspect of the sport that has emerged that I am not quite comfortable with, and that is women boxing. Whether or not this side of the sport will grow in the U.K I do not know. Women boxers are sanctioned not only by the B.B.B of C., but also by the A.B.A. There are several home-based professional women boxers, but the amateur side, apart from the initial publicity, seems to lack support, both inside and outside the ring. Women using boxing techniques to keep and stay fit, I feel, is fine. But woman hitting each other — ? Unfortunately, this also brings me to the problem of girls bullying girls. Let's hope that with the fairer sex, kindness and understanding will prevail. Boxing is a masculine sport, pursued by real men. Long may it flourish.

Norman Yearley is a market trader.

Toulouse 21 September 2001

A huge explosion at the AZF fertiliser factory in the outskirts of Toulouse on 21 September 2001 (ten days after the World Trade Center events) caused 29 deaths and 2442 injuries. The French authorities quickly announced that it had been an accident. On 26 October, Le Monde reported that 11,000 families were still homeless. The explosion was of 200 to 300 tons of ammonium nitrate, which has been commonly used as a nitrogenous fertiliser, since early in the 20th century. It is also used in explosive compositions, and can be made, with some difficulty, to explode on its own. In 1921, at Oppau, near Mannheim in Germany, BASF had a dump of about 4,500 tons of a 50/50 mixture of ammonium nitrate and ammonium sulphate. The storage piles had caked hard, so they broke them up with explosives. On 21 September the whole dump blew up, and 430 people were killed. On 16 April 1947, in the docks at Texas City, a fire broke out on the freighter, Grandcamp, which had been loaded with 3,130 tons of ammonium nitrate. The captain decided to smother it with steam, causing the whole cargo to blow up killing 576 people, and destroying Texas City. Clearly the likely behaviour of ammonium nitrate is not mysterious.

The explosion at Oppau is believed to have been the biggest man-made (non-nuclear) explosion ever. At Messines in 1917, the Allies used about 418 tons of high explosives beneath the German lines. The AZF factory was opened in 1924, and has probably been producing ammonium nitrate since the 1950's or earlier. It is hard to see any reason for an accidental explosion. It has been reported only briefly in the British press, but in France many suspect a connection between September 11th and September 21st.

Robin Cave

LETTERS

Sir,

Abbas Zaidi's presentation (SR Autumn 2001) of the 'very detailed' human rights set in the Koran is not the impression this infidel ex-teacher has obtained from reading four different translations; and his presentation would hardly have been shared by most Muslims from its compilation to present times. Certainly the final judgement on each soul belongs to Allah, but how can believers carry out the Koranic injunction, for example, not to befriend either Jews (corrupters of the earth) or Christians (blasphemous trinitarians) without making a civic identification that they are not Muslims?

Encouraging the permanent settlement in the land of Bede, Hooker and C.S. Lewis of unending numbers of Muslims has been a myopic folly by anti-'racist' Christians, Jews and Humanists, but at least they too must 'live' with the disastrous results, especially in education. Both 'multiculturalism' and 'Islamic schools' are additional burdens deriving ultimately from what Michael Tatham calls the mistaken 'thrust of modern education', but his simple generalisation that 'the teachers' got themselves into the currently accelerating indiscipline 'mess' just adds yet another ignorant insult to many cumulative injuries to the lesson-giving professionals that have resulted in an unprecedented and insuperable retention and recruitment catastrophe.

The abolition of the cane – like the imposition of botched comprehensives, multicultural and 'gay lifestyle' ideology, on-site social work, burdensome administration and ridiculous exam processes, etc – was forced on most classroom specialists by local and national politicians; and even now teachers have to put up with government 'advisers' denying they are 'ofstressed', overworked and underpaid, 'conservative' professors telling them that large classes learn better than small ones, letter writers still complaining that teachers 'finish' at 3.30, and parents abusing and assaulting them as violently as some outpatients attack their medical counterparts.

Even the most pupil-experienced graduates have had enough. Perhaps their critics, who think they know so much better, should take their place at the 'chalkboard'. But who would want this always tiring, very difficult, increasingly thankless 'career'– for love or money? Let those really responsible for over thirty years of wrecking both state education and the national culture it depends upon lick up their own 'mess'.

E.L. CASEY, LEICESTERSHIRE

Sir,

I was interested in David Lee's article in your September issue. Last year I visited a small exhibition at Essex University on Constable. It included his painting of Wivenhoe Park, now in the USA. It seemed to me to have an odd appearance and I was told it had been cleaned. I thought it was ruined (I am not in any way an expert on art)

ANGELA GREEN, ALDHAM, ESSEX

Sir,

In his excellent and thought-provoking article (June 2001), Tobias Lanz is surely correct in classifying capitalism as an ideology, and a conservative one at that; but I wonder how much of this combination can be attributed directly to the Enlightenment. In her recent book, *Economic Sentiments: Adam Smith, Condorcet and the Enlightenment* (Harvard, 2001), Emma Rothschild notes that in the 1770s and 1780s market freedom and political freedom went hand-in-glove; but the seismic shock of the French Revolution meant that liberal advocates of moderate and measured reform were repelled into the reactionary camp, thereby forging two centuries of coalition between the forces of laissez faire and political conservatism. Nor did it take the Industrial Revolution to standardize and centralize economic production, as Colbert's mercantilism in the 17th Century demonstrates. As early as 1215, Magna Carta called for free trade and denounced protectionism, demanding the removal of 'evil tolls'. So perhaps it is more accurate to say that capitalism became an ideology when the Enlightenment codified a human constant.

SEAN MCGLYNN, BRADFORD ON AVON

Sir,

Peter Mullen thinks that the church will be revived if we all return to the 1662 Prayer Book *(SR Summer 2001)*. He wishes to worship God in Elizabethan English which was the lingua franca of Cranmer's day. Cranmer would turn in his grave if he knew that the church was still using 17th Century language in

services 350 years later. Peter Mullen forgets that the meaning of words has changed – most associate the word 'Trespasses' with prosecution. Cranmer didn't use Chaucerian English for his prayer book, he used the language of his day. He was concerned that congregations understood with heart and mind what was going on. If Jesus Christ is to be immanent among us then he needs to be recognised and not occluded by obscure language. As Dorothy Sayers succinctly put it: 'The Bible is appointed to be read in churches, where the voice struggles helplessly against the handicaps of an Elizabethan vocabulary.' *(Unpopular Opinions,* 1946) In a church service I want to understand what is being said by those who lead and to join with others in the liturgy in a language that I use daily. Jesus Christ who intercedes for us and the Holy Spirit knows our hearts and hidden motives, so the means of communication needs to be simple and straightforward, not distorted by a convoluted means of expression.

ALAN M PARDOE, MALVERN WELLS

Sir,

The significant part of Ray Honeyford's story, (September 2001) is that it was a Conservative government which abandoned him to his fate without even kick-starting any of the various expensive publicly funded allegedly anti-racist bodies who would have been screaming the heavens down if the colours had been reversed. The incident served noticed throughout the public service and elsewhere that conformity was the price of a job and career. Since then racist anti-white politically correct attitudes have taken over in every aspect of society.

This was not the first example of Tory cowardice over racial matters. Enoch Powell had the courage to break the undemocratic Heath-Wilson compact to keep the subject out of politics – though unfortunately his fondness for classical quotation laid himself open to attack. Lately the party has rushed to join the left in endorsing the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry and the McPherson Report.

Why are they reluctant to tackle anti-white racists? The left has to kow-tow to black activists and white hangers on because they depend on their support to keep power in their inner city strongholds. The right has no need to compete in a bootlicking competition. They have won elections before without the votes of such people and can do so again. By sucking up to them they justly earn the contempt of their friends as well as their opponents – so why this whey-faced trembling at the P.C. frown?

G.E. HAINES, WOODBRIDGE, SUFFOLK

Sir,

Roger Scruton laments that universities no longer train an intellectual elite.(SR Autumn 2001) Still the mechanisms of society have their logic, and with their expansion the universities are taking on the role of social control. If parents have to work harder – biting further into what should be their retirement assets – to support their children in universities to get the paper credentials needed for a good career, then society has in university expansion a mechanism to make more people work hard. This has long been the North American experience but British families now find themselves in this plight as the burden of university support shifts from the state to the individual family. The new system is useful for certain elements: businessmen, tax-gatherers, mortgage-vendors, the aficionados of economic growth, and all those people who have resented the apparently irresistible growth in working class incomes and luxuries in the past half century, and now face the delicious prospect that the university system will mop up more of that over-available income.

Only those who think the new situation is a bad one will want a remedy, but since I am in that category, I suggest that sooner or later universities should be cut back. Employers could favour knowledge and ability first rather than paper qualifications. The mechanism used could be similar to that used prevent employing people with disabilities or the wrong race. The universities would then be free for the kind of personal development Roger Scruton recommends .

ROYCE MACGILLIVRAY, ROMFORD, ESSEX

Conservative Classic - 4
Koestler's Darkness at Noon
David Marsland

The dream of socialism was always a nightmare. Consider these laughable words by that redoubtable British socialist James Maxton from his biography of Lenin, published in 1932: *Today, while the rest of the world sends out cries of despair and discusses the possibility of bankruptcy, from Russia there come confident reports of great industrial and agricultural developments, the organisation of huge farms with all the finest mechanical aids, the rapid spread of literacy among a previously illiterate population and the development of technical skill among an unskilled people.*

Equally absurd adulation of socialism continued strongly right across the world for another six decades. Leading intellectuals, influential trade unionists and powerful politicians all remained deceived and selfdeceived about the promise of socialism and the presumed deficiencies of liberal capitalism. Many rooted their dream in the Soviet Union, some in China, some even in Cuba, others in a fantasy world of a fictional utopian future.

When I wrote my book *Seeds of Bankruptcy* in the late nineteen eighties, British students of the social sciences were still being taught the same old socialist orthodoxy. Even as the twenty first century begins, its poisonous mixture of utopian idealism and cynical nihilism animates every destructively mischievous action of our precious antiglobalists, Greens, civil libertarians and poverty lobbyists. Its values reverberate even in the Prime Minister's recent Labour Party conference speech, with its unthinking invocation of a 'new world order', 'solidarity' and 'justice'.

Yet the basic intellectual and moral flaws of socialism had been identified and displayed definitively and from the inside as early as 1940, when Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon* was first published. Less well known than *1984*, or *Brave New World*, it is better written than either, and more penetratingly accurate in its political and psychological analysis. In its sharp focus on the destructive power of socialism as such, it surpasses Solzhenitzyn. In its investigation of the weaknesses of the human soul which permit and encourage enslavement by state bureaucracy, it rivals even Kafka.

It is a short novel of some two hundred pages, and examines the fate of Rubashov – an Old Guard Communist, a Commissar of the People and a member of the Central Committee – from arrest through imprisonment and interrogation to trial. Its content is provided by his interrogation by Ivanov and Gletkin a police doubleact as memorable as Dostoevsky's solo Grand Inquisitor; by his conversations with fellow prisoners tapped out on the prison's water pipes; by his prison journal; and by his narrator's flashback reminiscences of a life as a man and as an agent of revolutionary socialism.

From this meagre and almost hackneyed material, Koestler constructs the lifehistory of a modern soul and a crushing indictment of revolutionary socialism. With unerring precision he has identified the show trial and its insistence on a willing plea of guilty on the part of its innocent victims – as the keystone institution of socialist governance. From Rubashov's expected arrest – he has dreamed of it many times before it happens – to his ultimate and inevitable guilty plea and the routinised triviality of his execution, we are shown in concrete detail his gradual realisation that misplaced faith in humanity and excessive trust in merely human knowledge lead on inescapably to despotism and savagery. *Darkness at Noon* is at the same time a pageturner, a masterpiece of plotting, characterisation, psychological investigation and political analysis. If only Koestler rather than Orwell figured in school curricula! Where Orwell is merely and loosely antiauthoritarian and thus available for casual use and abuse by socialists and left-liberals, Koestler is specifically and definitively antitotalitarian and antisocialist. His truth cannot be blurred.

In many respects Arthur Koestler (1905-1983) seems to have been a horrid person – narcissistic, domineering, and brutally cruel to women. At the same time he is a brilliantly original thinker, an implacable hunter for truth, and an awesomely masterful writer. *Darkness at Noon* is closely grounded in his own extraordinary experience as a communist zealot and professional agent between 1931 and 1938. He served the modern lie enthusiastically and energetically in Hungary, Russia, the Far East, Spain and France. His gradual realisation of his absurd – and absurdly widely shared – selfdeception in this period is minutely recorded and transfigured into symbolic form in *Darkness*. Of all his voluminous writing novels, essays, and autobiographical work – this is his masterpiece. His books were ceremonially burned first by Hitlerites and later by Stalinists. Proof positive that he had spoken the truth – and in *Darkness at Noon* speaks it still – about socialism in any and all of its variegated forms.

Darkness at Noon demands that we should give up, in Koestler's words, 'the phantom chase after the arrow in the blue, the perfect cause, the blueprint of a streamlined utopia', and return again to real life and its complexities, contradictions and mysteries.

BOOK REVIEWS

Among the Theory Men

Michael Wharton

England and the War of Ideas,
George Watson, Lutterworth Press,
2000, £15.00

While I was reading this book, I asked a friend who teaches English literature to give me a succinct definition of literary theory. She replied: 'A load of old rubbish'. This is the robust, no-nonsense attitude implied in Iris Murdoch's remark that the British 'were never ones for theory'. George Watson's aim is to refute this somewhat complaisant attitude and to show that England (or Britain) has a tradition of critical theory all its own and second to none.

He makes a firm distinction between British Literary theory and Grand Theory, the monopoly of the French thinkers who emerged in the Fifties and Sixties from the ruins of Marxism to assert the great principle of non-meaning; to insist that 'all claims to knowledge are an illusion and that all those who claim judgement in morality or the arts are no more than self-indulged absolutists, or, worse still, false prophets bent on deluding the world to their own advantage'. Foucault, Soupault, Saussure, Fissure, Lacan, Clachan, Derrida, Horrida, Althusser, Alzheimer (is this quite right?) – these monster philosophers, formidable even in their silliness and backed by the terrifying force of French intellectualism, seemed for a time to have driven English theorists off the field altogether.

Watson will have none of this. He is staunchly determined to put English theorists back in their rightful place, and be damned to foreigners and their Frenchified notions. Above all, he holds, English theorists were champions of morality and of meaning. In reality, it is they, not the French, who 'stand at the source and fountain-head of modern theory'. Watson himself is certainly one for theory and no mistake. He even compares it to champagne, and refers warmly to its practitioners as 'theory men' as if they were engaged in some kind of collegiate sport and might be seen together in a college group photograph, hanging on some common-room wall, with a convenient key below: Eliot TS; Richards IA; Leavis FR; Empson W; Lewis CS; Thompson EP, Murdoch I; Williams R; Berlin I; with the ghost of Coleridge ST, founder of modern literary theory, theorising unstoppably away in the background.

A lecturer in English at Cambridge, Fellow of St John's College, Watson knew most of these theory men personally, though, as he says modestly, only as a junior to seniors. His vivid and witty sketches of their personalities and idiosyncracies (of which they had plenty) alternate, sometimes rather confusingly, with assessments of their place in the history of theory. It is not always clear that they were engaged in literary rather than political or social theory or all three together. And really, it is the personal impressions and anecdotes that make this such a enjoyable book to read. We start with Yeats and Pound sitting in a cottage in Ashdown Forest before the First World War, working at the birth of modernism and already showing the hatred of rationality that led both to sympathise with fascism later on. Then we observe Eliot as a lecturer at Cambridge, nervous in manner, holding his papers in a shaking hand and 'difficult to hear because of his very low voice'. By way of contrast is I A Richards, of whom 'it would make little sense to say he flowered on a platform, since he never quite seemed to be off one'. Richards is best remembered now for his invention, with CK Ogden, of 'Basic' English, a would-be world language constructed out of about 800 words, and like all such artificial languages, speedily defunct.

Next on the list comes William Empson, of all the theorists, perhaps, the one most likely to be influential in a hundred years' time. 'Of all the beings I have ever known', says Watson 'he was the most utterly alive, and you were at once quickened and nervous in his company'. His first book, *Seven Types of Ambiguity,* mostly written when he was still an undergraduate, is a truly 'seminal work', a subtle and complex investigation of the inmost workings of poetic language. With his impressive Chinese sage's beard, his radical views, his fervent hated of Christianity and all monotheistic religions, his Bohemian habits, his addiction to paradox, whimsy and sheer mischief, he was a puzzle to many people. Watson admits he was sometimes rather afraid of him. He loved to shock and once, invited to deliver an address at the funeral of a friend in the presence of his widow, he declared of the deceased: 'I first met him

in a brothel – he took a very sporting view of brothels'.

How very different from FR. Leavis, the legendary messiah of modernism, a man of unyielding seriousness and severity. 'I could not confidently say that I ever saw Leavis smile', says Watson, 'and his narrow features looked ill-constructed for the purpose'. With his demand for unconditional loyalty from his disciples and his conviction that enemies were continually plotting against him, Leavis suffered from a majestic persecution mania, abetted by his fearsome wife Queenie, of whom Watson believes, Leavis was not surprisingly afraid. It is easy enough to make fun of Leavis, but for all his absurdities he should be honoured, now more than ever, as a true defender of western civilisation and of what he called 'the Great Tradition', that 'minority culture' which now, 23 years after his death, seems irrevocably doomed.

Then we have CS Lewis, the anti-modernist partisan of Romance, the Christian polemicist who held that 'stories were knowledge', representing the abiding aspirations of mankind – the search, the chase, the homecoming, typified equally by Ulysses, Don Juan, Faust and Cinderella. On his heels bustles Isaiah Berlin, a prodigy of learning whose life seems to have been spent mainly in talking; he has even been described as 'the Great Chatterbox of the Twentieth Century'.

Iris Murdoch gets into the list as a refugee from Theory who regarded it as an imprisoning net. Two Marxist theorists follow – EP Thompson, author of the justly celebrated *Making of the English Working Class* and Raymond Williams, best known now, if at all, for his *Culture and Society*. Watson is particularly entertaining on the contrast between these two pundits: Thompson with his distinguished appearance, aristocratic airs and overpowering charisma; Williams with his 'large face and figure rather shorter than the face implied' and, in spite of his humble origin, with 'a manner unremittingly affable and confident' and a 'glowing pride' in his own capitalistic success and its pleasures combined with a deep hatred of capitalism. Both these thinkers began with an unshakable belief in the virtues of the working class and its eventual triumph. Both lived to witness, in growing bewilderment, the beginning of the total collapse of all such notions.

What does it all amount to? The last word is given to the hero-philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, who never wrote a book of literary theory and at the end of his life seems to have repudiated all theories about anything. Was my English teacher friend right after all? That would be a lamentable conclusion.

More Reich than Right

David J. Levy

The Enemy: An Intellectual Portrait of Carl Schmitt,
Gopal Balakrishnan, Verso, 2000. £27

When Carl Schmitt died in April 1985 he was nearly ninety-seven years old. Few in the English-speaking academic world at the time would have noticed his passing and fewer still have mourned his death. Though in his lifetime Schmitt had been the subject of two significant intellectual studies, George Schwab's *The Challenge of the Exception* (1970) and Joseph Bendersky's *Carl Schmitt: Theorist for the Reich* (1983), and several of his early works had appeared in translation as part of MIT Press' series of '*Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought*', his writings could, in 1985, scarcely be said to have had much impact on either British or American political and legal thought. Insofar as people were aware of Schmitt's life and reputation at all he was remembered preeminently as the man who had once prided himself on being the 'Crown Jurist' of the Third Reich, a disreputable figure whose record was indelibly marked by his ill-fated attempt to provide an intellectual and juridical justification for the aggressive and murderous policies of Nazi Germany.

Today matters are somewhat different, for one of the curious things that has occurred in the subsequent decade and a half has been the extent to which Schmitt's ideas have come to be regarded, in certain circles, as an important and presently relevant reference point for a number of notable writers on both the Left and Right of the political spectrum. Though even now Schmitt is less widely studied or esteemed in the Anglophone world than he is in much of continental Europe, he has become, for many, something of a cult figure, widely perceived as the source of some of the twentieth-century's most significant insights into the endemic tensions of liberal democracy. Given this, Professor Balakrishnan's scrupulous portrait of Schmitt and his writings is doubly welcome, both as a contribution to the intellectual history of the past century and as a significant clue to why, at a time of almost unprecedented political complacency among the devotees of an increasingly globalised liberal democratic order, the work of so implacable a critic of its native assumptions and sentiments should be considered as of continuing importance by such an

ideologically diverse collection of commentators on the politics of our time.

The Enemy is a thorough analysis of what is, by any standards, a major body of writings by a brilliant if morally flawed theorist of political life, and one who, despite his failings, was capable of insights into the events of his age that few even of his wiser contemporaries can be said to have matched. Of these there are three on which Schmitt's current reputation most securely rests. The first is his appreciation of the extent that all political communities tend to define their identities less in terms of their own substantive and positive goals than with regard to whom they define and treat as their enemies. The second, is his analysis of the extent to which the governing concepts of contemporary politics, especially though no longer solely in the ancestrally Christian West, adapt and make their own ideas, like sovereignty, that have their origins in the realm of a monotheist theology and an ethically normative religion. And the third, which explains Schmitt's otherwise apparently paradoxical appeal to certain circles on the Left of politics, is his insistence that even the most apparently consensual political order rests on a real, if often now covert, asymmetry of power, that always serves the interests of some at the expense of the exploitation of others.

In the wake of the intellectual collapse of Marxism, this Machiavellian perspective provides a convenient, though hardly altogether reassuring, reason for their own continuing existence among would be radical critics of a social and economic order that, in the developed world at least, seems to command near universal assent within the broader population. The goal of revolution may have withered on the vine, but there is always some residual psychic comfort to be had from giving that traditional enemy of revolutionary elites, the 'false consciousness' of the masses, another bash about the head, while the enlightened few congratulate themselves that they, at least, that were not so fooled. Unfortunately for them, the Schmittian premises of this new breed of 'critical theorists' suggests that, one way or another, if Schmitt is right, the bashing will have to continue indefinitely in what can best be described as the eternal Punch and Judy show of life. As a member of the editorial committee of *New Left Review,* Balakrishnan is, on the basis of the evidence of this scholarly and remarkably measured book, at least in a privileged position, to tell his more integrally Schmittian colleagues why this may be so. He does not claim to add to what those interested in Schmitt may already know of his life. Rather he draws skilfully and with a fine eye for detail on the biographical research of others in reconstructing the circumstances in which Schmitt composed the body of work on which his inevitably dubious reputation rests. And this is important because, though one can make a case for regarding Schmitt as a consistent analyst of the conflictual elements in human life and the role that power must play in sustaining political communities, most of his works are relatively brief, topical writings, occasioned by the particular events of his troubled times, at first under the Weimar Republic and then during the years of Hitler's dictatorship. Schmitt was primarily neither a philosopher nor a political anthropologist, concerned as his one time hero Hobbes had been with articulating, for all time, a system of political thinking, derived from a foundational theory of human nature, but, by formation and inclination, a jurist schooled in the niceties and casuistry of constitutional law, and always anxious, at times obsessively so, to contribute to the immediate outcome of events, as lawyers are trained to do. This is both the strength of his writings and a major source of the dubious positions that, at a crucial period of his and his country's history, he saw fit to adopt.

Though Balakrishnan's text is peppered by recurrent denials that Schmitt was ever a merely opportunistic writer prepared to grovel to the demands of whatever happened to be the dominant power at the time, there was, in his character, a notable opportunistic element that made him, under the Weimar Republic, a redoubtable defender of the constitution, and then, under the Third Reich, an apologist even for The Night of the Long Knives, in which not only the thugs of Ernst Röhm's SA but Schmitt's old political associate General von Schleicher were butchered by the legions of the SS. It is this element of opportunism that largely explains the enthusiastic way in which, in 1935, he organised and directed a conference with the purpose of eliminating all remaining vestiges of supposedly Jewish influence from the body of German jurisprudence. Given that Schmitt had never before shown much sign even of the pervasive Anti-Semitism common enough in pre-war Europe but especially virulent in the minds of his more völkisch-minded academic colleagues of the time, it is hard to attribute the fervour with which he undertook this task to anything other than a shameless, if ultimately vain, endeavour to ingratiate himself with the ideological high-priests of Nazi orthodoxy. And the same disreputable reason goes far toward explaining the anti-semitic slant that he gave to the shrewd but tendentious study of Thomas Hobbes that he published in 1938.

As Balakrishnan notes, Schmitt's 'intellectual strategy under the Nazis was always to find the point of fundamental philosophical agreement between himself and the movement, and to present this point of contact as its historic mission.' That surely was opportunism of a high order, compared with which even the most notorious pronouncements of his contemporary, Martin Heidegger, seem to pale into relative insignificance.

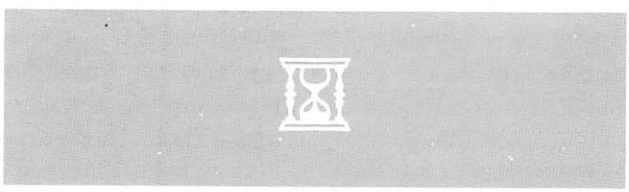
Nor can one excuse Schmitt, as some have sought to do with Heidegger, by treating him as a political *naif* innocent of the strategies and implications of political existence and action. Throughout the Weimar years Schmitt had not only been an insider in the corridors of

power, but had persistently warned against the perils of allowing rulership to pass into the hands of the sort of political low-life who led the Nazi Party. Indeed the last book he published before Hitler's assumption of power, *Legalität und Legitimät* (1932), was centrally concerned to argue that even a liberal constitutional state had not only the right but the bounden duty to proscribe and act decisively against any organisation which, like the National Socialists, sought to overthrow its legally constituted order. And yet, despite this, Balakrishnan is both correct to argue that there was more than opportunism in Schmitt's subsequent embrace of the Nazi cause and to claim that there was something else in this giddy shift of allegiance than a newly acquired belief, common enough among contemporary German academics, that in Hitler's New Order Germany might find a way to overcome the distasteful legacy of her defeat in 1918. For Schmitt, the consumate jurist, ever ready to deploy a subtle legal opinion, was also, throughout his life, an astute analyst of the role that power must play in assuring, if only in the last resort, the endurance even of the best ordered and secure political community. And, as Balakrishnan notes, it is just his clear grasp of that uncomfortable truth that may justify Schmitt's surest claim to our continued attention.

Nor was his political instinct, unlike his moral sense, blunted by the experience of Nazi rule. Indeed, one of his more interesting insights, is his theory of what he called *Grossraumen,* which he developed precisely under the impact of a situation of global war. This concept articulates Schmitt's shrewd suspicion that, under contemporary, emerging and probably irreversible, conditions of communication and technology, the single, autonomous nation state on the historic West and Central European scale might simply have become too small an economic and political unit to continue to fulfill all its traditional functions in assuring either the security interests or the continued material well-being of its inhabitants. And while the present European Community project is very different from the sort of a continental power bloc, under German hegemony, that Schmitt had in mind in the 1940s; some of the underlying considerations that seem to have prompted Tony Blair's recent remarks about Europe's need to become, if not a super-state, then, at any rate, a super-power, will raise familiar echoes in the ears of anyone who has, even vaguely, encountered the arguments deployed by Schmitt. Whatever may have been Schmitt's motives when first he formulated the notion, it would be foolish to deny that with the idea of a necessarily Europe wide *Grossraum* as providing an optimally scaled entity within an increasingly globalized world of similarly sized and already existing units, he hit upon a significant insight into the historic limitations of the wholly autonomous nation state; and, in doing so, gave, though in a very different ideological climate, many of the same reasons that have subsequently informed the direction of the post-war history of the continent. Where Schmitt's own political vision was itself historically limited was in his not seeing that, given different economic conditions from those he knew, such a bloc might effectively embody, albeit on a larger scale, many of the same institutional characteristics and ethical as pirations that seemed, in his own day, to belong only to the outdated model of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century liberal constitutional state – the very *Rechtsstaat* he had been educated to serve and which, effectively if with some subtlety, the Nazis sought to destroy. Where however, and here much more seriously, his moral vision reveals its limits is when we consider, as inevitably we must, his actions during the period for which he is best and, in terms of subsequent reputation, worst remembered – the years between 1933 and 1945.

In 1933, in the wake of economic depression and faced with the inability of the established elites to resolve the constitutional impasse in which Germany found herself, the Nazis seemed to Schmitt, as to many others, to offer a chance of cutting a Gordian knot of politically and economically crippling circumstances that could no longer be undone by hands that were more refined. To this extent, Schmitt was hardly unique in imagining, at the time, that he and those like him would be able to guide the Nazi movement into safer waters than its leaders promised. However if, as things turned out, history has tended to judge Schmitt more culpable for what subsequently occurred than many of his fellows – and, on this occasion, I think history, for once, has got it pretty right — it is not so much because of the initial choice he made in 1933, as because of the extent to which, over the following years, he let his thought be contaminated by his ambition to justify, with his legendary gift for legal casuistry, and in a nakedly self-serving way, the conduct of an increasingly genocidal and substantively lawless power.

In acting as he did, Schmitt betrayed that clear-sighted appreciation of the legitimate ends of political power on which, in earlier years, he had always prided himself, and so made himself, in the eyes of history, though never in his self-estimation, his own worst enemy. This, I hazard to guess, is not an error that old Hobbes would have made. But then Hobbes was a political and philosophical anthropologist who, unlike Carl Schmitt, never forgot that the role, even and especially, of the Leviathan state was to prevent and not promote the murderous war of all against all.



When is A Mystery Not A Mystery?

Dennis O'Keeffe

The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else

Hernando de Soto, Bantam Press, 2000, £7.99

This book has received extraordinary acclaim. In some ways this is odd, not because the central thesis is wrong but because it is not original. Its essence is that property rights are the key to economic modernity. This proposition has been a staple of good writings in economic history for more than a century. Indeed, even Marx's perverse account of the genesis of capitalism, a century and a half ago, featured the alienation of land as a crucial variable. Property rights permit those with economic assets to realise them, to convert them into capital. Security of household tenure, for example, is a key variable in collateral for financing new investment in all rich countries. In the most truly modern of economies, the United States, as de Soto observes, half the private businesses are based on the collateral of private homes.

Nearly forty years ago when I was just beginning my life-time study of social science, I understood precisely this process of the capitalisation of assets to be the financial 'secret' of the British industrial revolution. De Soto gives dramatic examples of the lack of the process in poor countries. He rightly notes that there are vast savings in the Third World, and that were these to be capitalised their effects would dwarf any incoming foreign investment Third World countries might conceivably receive, let alone any aid from the advanced nations, though this category of fund transfer is of most dubious value.

De Soto's book is really only a clever expansion of an old theme. Truths are better the older they are; but it is the expansion of the story, the empirical scale, the financial backup and a certain presentational brio which are notable here, not the thesis itself. There are other faults surrounding de Soto's presentation. First, the process of capitalist development is not failing ubiquitously outside the West, taken to mean a handful of European and North American type economies. Many countries in de Soto's native Latin America have made considerable strides in the last decades. Chile and Argentina have pulled back from the brink. Mexico too is now regarded as a potential major economic player.

Parts of Asia are also on the move; the West is an idea and a set of practices, not a geographical location. It no longer means European or American. Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea and Malaysia, fifty years ago were all what would today be considered very poor. Japan, the world's second largest economy, for all her present travails, made her journey to economic modernity with astonishing swiftness. It does not take centuries to get capital accumulation going, as though it were something arcane and incomprehensible. Having partly industrialised before her brutal participation in the Second World War, Japan rose swiftly from her ruins afterwards and became an economic giant in two or three decades. She did this mostly by following the lead of Western societies.

It is true that Japan has lost her way, economically, for a decade. This can hardly be thought of as a failure of capitalisation; it is rather something to do with the still only inadequately explained relationships between political and economic élites. Moreover, it is clear that the very core of the European project, the German economy, is in much the same condition as Japan. The sclerosis affecting the European Union joins with the Japanese version in upholding, once we engage in the necessary sober counter-reflection, the long-run superiority of polities like those of USA and Britain, where the government is permanently kept at something like an arm's length, or at least half an arm's length, from economic life. Is de Soto's thesis only the Anglo-American limited government model in another guise? He does not tell us unfortunately.

In important respects, the Indian 'giant' rebukes de Soto's insistence on confining 'success' to a few Western societies. For all her poverty India is a success story in many ways. Her vast middle class now lives a more or less Western life-style, and — crucial to questions of property rights in the long run — she has maintained, more or less, the rule of law. It is India, not China, which must be regarded as the semi-successful Asian giant of the last four decades, because the Chinese performance has to be set against the continuing despotism of that country, the worst in any important contemporary society. Indeed, David Marsland has stressed that we have no constitutional guarantee that China will not lapse back into Communism, in a huge and hideous rerun of the reversal of Lenin's 1920s New Economic Policy in Russia.

What followed, let us not forget, were the worst episodes in human history, in the decades between the 1930s and 1970s, when in the totalitarian societies assets were squandered, not capitalised, and the rule of law trampled under foot and derided. China has now pulled back from the worst of the economic nonsense in her modern history, and she has clearly found routine market ways of levering the capital formation process upwards, but with none of the civilisational guarantees we take for granted in Western societies. In other words, though de Soto's capitalisation thesis is true, it is not the whole story and is therefore not enough.

There is some deep moral difference between Asian political élites and those of America or Britain which impedes recovery from difficulties, whenever the going gets rough, even when assets have already been accumulated and put to work productively on a gigantic scale. It seems improper to overstress these, unless the clear possibility of political despotism looms over the societies concerned. Certainly many Asian countries now have Western economic profiles, more or less, and it is simply unjust to count them as general failures. The difference for them is not that their property is mocked, derided or overlooked in periods of difficulty. It is that a kind of pessimism spreads from the élite to the masses, paralysing the sources and inspiration of economic recovery. This political difference itself is not stressed by de Soto, which must be deemed a fault in very basis of his thesis.

Capitalism is scarcely stirring at all in Africa and not much in the former Soviet Republics. This is clearly a question of endemic political corruption and defective moral consensus among the populations involved. Africa is probably the only basket case, however. The Dark Continent would be in far better shape if Britain, France and Portugal had kept their imperial possessions in Africa, and sooner or later the rich world will have to engineer a return to some kind of foreign control there. Human pity and common sense both point to this outcome. The capitalisation process by which de Soto rightly sets so much store needs regularity under the rule of law.

Some countries of the former Soviet bloc, however, are doing well — Poland, Hungary, the Czech lands are clearly on the road to economic success. Furthermore the promised attempt at monarchical restoration in Bulgaria may turn out to offer some very useful pointers.

Where the book really exasperates is in its appeal to French antinomianism. Both Foucault and Derrida make lightning raids into de Soto's text. These are enough to rouse the deepest doubts in conservative readers. Only those in Western countries who hate their civilisation have drawn any inspiration from the late Michel Foucault or the all too living influence of Jacques Derrida. Foucault loathed all Western institutions and his main intellectual aperçu was to the effect that there is no such thing as the individual person, since we are all nothing more than assemblages at the intersection of various power-structures. Quite how the dynamism which has taken man from the caves to space-travel is supposed to have sparked in the conditions of such inauspicious clay, is a question Foucault did not put, let alone answer.

As for Derrida, insofar as he has any convictions at all beyond the destruction of intellectual exchange, they would seem to be residual Marxist ones. In the days of Apartheid in South Africa he identified that country as the absolute nadir of political ill, a puerile judgement. In this respect de Soto's book is like a PhD thesis one might pass with some reluctance, on the grounds that the candidate, though manifestly brilliantly talented, has failed to sort out the good guys from the bad, in giving the latter any press at all. It is as if de Soto had no knowledge of the war for and against the free civil order, which has raged now for decades in Western academia. The likes of Foucault and Derrida are not jolly mariners, as de Soto is, on the good ship Modernity, but on the contrary part of the revolt against all things new and liberating, a revolt which cost countless millions of lives in the last century. Today fundamentalist Islam now wages the same war against the rule of law and the free and affluent society. It is a wonder de Soto did not give bin Laden a few friendly paragraphs.

New Dawn for England?

Paul Thomson

Nor Shall My Sword: The Reinvention of England
Simon Heffer, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999, £12.99

Nationalism is a potent, visceral force. Denying it is like denying human nature. This seems to be Simon Heffer's answer to the general climate of doubt afflicting many group identities today. The British identity, its imperial zenith long past, will surely fade, leaving the English, however slow and passive they tend to be as political creatures, with no option but to confront the question of who they are (and where they are going). Heffer is clear that nationalism can be a good thing. After the dismantling of the Soviet Empire nationalism has attracted positive associations: 'liberation from foreign control, social and economic freedom, decentralisation and cultural diversity'. Unlike Sir Richard Body, for whom nationalism implies aggressiveness towards others. Heffer affirms that English nationalism can and should be defensive. Its purpose 'is to preserve a culture and a way of life that is understood by and familiar to those who are, or consider themselves to be, English '.

The most immediate threat to the more familiar *British* identity comes from the Scots. Somewhat in the unamiable mode of the jilted (or about to be jilted) lover, Simon Heffer stresses that England 'as a liberal nation' must respect Scotland's wishes 'however costly a mistake it might prove for them'. He protests against the English 'accepting the role of the completely passive partner', and even suggests that a referendum be held in England to decide (pre-emptively it would seem) whether England should separate from Scotland. In any case, like Body, he seems to consider the eventual political independence of Scotland to be a foregone conclusion. One however to be welcomed as potentially a

'new dawn' for England. Not only would the international stature of London not suffer, but England would – no longer have to subsidise those north of the border, and would probably be able to siphon off attractive human and other resources from Scotland thanks to a more favourable tax regime. Scotland might face the prospect (apparently deeply satisfying to the author) of becoming 'the Greece of the north' or a 'cold-weather theme park'.

The Scots (and more particularily the SNP) do however, earn praise for their greater political consciousness and their deliberate political aim of heightening identity through history, culture and the arts, so that their people, inspired by past and present, are moved to project themselves as a people into the future. The English should follow this good example.

But who are the English ? Various, not necessarily consistent, answers are attempted. The English are close to but not consubstantial with the British. Though the come-back of the flag of St George is to be welcomed, 'chocolate box representations' (eg Big Ben) are best avoided. Englishness is 'a metaphysical concept [...] a sense among the English of knowing what is theirs'. The English are essentially Christian and mainly Protestant. While ethnic minorities should not only partake of Englishness but also make 'their voice heard in the independence movement'; 'England is not a multiracial society in the way the race relations industry would like to pretend it is'; rather the English are mainly Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic but with significant minorities also resident in the country. At one point he comes close to a more typically French approach (*cf* E Renan: 'the English identity [...] is present [...] in the consciousness of everybody who is English, whether by descent, birth or by the conscious act of self-identification as a resident'.)

Though excited by future prospects, Heffer worries that the political class might spoil it all. The Labour Party clearly has every reason to resist the break-up of the United Kingdom: all those Scottish ministers and MP's would have to parachute themselves somewhere; and Labour has traditionally been weaker than the Conservative Party in England. On the other hand too many Conservatives are blinded by sentimental attachment to the Union. Such shackles are to be cast off: 'The new English nation [...] must [...] be [...] as free as possible from the meaningless trappings of sentiment'. The Conservatives are exhorted to reinvent themselves as 'an English nationalist party'. But should they fail to exploit the opportunity which Scottish independence would provide 'then it [the Conservative Party] might just as well pack up and let some one else organise on the right'.

Though the jarring and sometimes crude tones can only be regretted, this is a thoughtful, heart-felt book, which deserves a close read from anyone interested in the future of England or the Union.

Paradise Regained?

Merrie Cave

England for the English,
Richard Body, New European Publications, 2001, £13.95

Sir Richard Body, who retired at the end of the last Parliament after forty years, exemplifies the virtues of a traditional Englishman. However, unlike many of them, he has also shown considerable independence of mind and the courage to express and stand up for his convictions. Such qualities are in short supply in politics these days. Many of his ideas have been ahead of the time. In the seventies, he was among those who argued that inflation resulted from an excessive expansion of the money supply. He wrote the first analysis of the Common Agriculture Policy and prophesied only too correctly that modern farming methods spelt disaster for the environment and consumers' health. In *Europe of Many Circles* he maintained that the end of the Cold War gave European nations for the first time in history a chance to unite but this could not be achieved by an authoritarian bureaucratic superstate.

There have been a number of books on England published recently. They have reflected and responded to a general anxiety about our future: the threat of a European superstate, Scottish and Welsh devolution, and the worrying social trends in our large cities. Unlike Christopher Hitchens and Roger Scruton, Richard Body is much more optimistic. He eschews nationalism in favour of patriotism: 'I love my homeland', said an Italian, 'because I love all homelands'. Nationalism may indeed be a response to suppressed patriotism.

Richard Body's elegant exposition of the distinctly English form of European civilization and the English experience would be a useful introduction for children of all ethnic groups who have been denied any proper information about the English heritage. The ignorance extends even to the universities. You can get a history degree, even at Oxford, without knowing anything about Magna Carta, the Reformation, the Glorious Revolution or the Reform Bill of 1832. He enumerates the differences between ourselves and our European neighbours: geographical separation from the continent ensured our protection from bloody continental conflicts and an earlier transition from a feudal to a capitalist society. Primogeniture dispersed people and enhanced individualism, making it essential to develop laws to protect men from each other. Indeed our rights since the Middle Ages resided in the individual; only in Scandinavia,

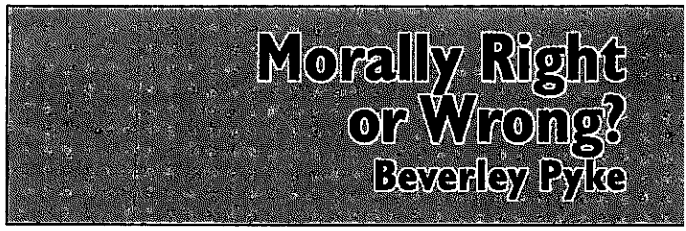
Switzerland and in lands with English traditions is the individual put before the state. Unfortunately Europhiles do not seem to understand the notions of the rule of law and sovereignty, peculiar to the Anglo-Saxon tradition – we fought a civil war to preserve them. Would they notice the disappearance of habeas corpus and trial by jury? In religion the English found that Protestantism suited their temperament and thanks to the Book of Common Prayer the Church of England developed into a distinctive English compromise.

The growth of the Empire coincided with the Industrial Revolution and the making of the Union. In historical terms it was only an interlude; we need to reconsider our situation at the beginning of a new century but *not* to find a new role in Europe. The Empire's disappearance has brought some positive changes. Remember the jibe, 'the land without music'; the arts denigrated in many circles years ago are flourishing even if some of them are going in directions some of us dislike. The changes in the English character are reflected in our more informal modes of dress and manners and the fading of the public school and 'stiff upper lip mentality.' As for the Celtic fringe, sooner or later, Body believes, Catholic nationalists will outnumber the Protestants and the English will be relieved of the burden of supporting Northern Ireland. The English electorate may well come to resent the Scottish enjoying better public services at their expense and decide that their taxes would be better spent on themselves.

Body believes in the precept – 'when in Rome': cultural diversity, though defensible as a private cultural arrangement, becomes dangerous when the state attempts to impose the customs of different cultures on the indigenous population. When an Englishman finds himself in the dock for selling a pound of apples, then surely it is time to call a halt to European infiltration. When a Muslim Parliament is created, it is time to stop the ghettoization of our towns and cities. The malign influence of the Commission of Racial Equality and the refusal of a succession of weak and cowardly governments to confront multi-racial realities has led to worse not better racial harmony.

Can pride in Englishness be revived? After some muggers had emptied Richard Body's pockets, he asked them for some help with this book. They rejected the idea of Britishness but these spokesmen of the underclass were attracted to the thought that they could become English – indeed immigrants have settled in England not the Celtic fringe. To bring about a new England, schools must start teaching English history. The pernicious influence of the 'useful idiots' of the 21st Century from the race relations industry, who actually foster hostility among different racial groups, to the 'chattering classes' who unlike their French counterparts despise the achievements of their own countrymen, must be curtailed. The BBC could be de-nationalised, so that the denigration of 'Englishness' could cease at least to be 'official'. Perhaps we could all celebrate St George's Day and Shakespeare's birthday without being sneered at. England has amazing assets: the City of London is still pre-eminent and could become an exclusive centre for the management of pension funds. English is a world language and the vehicle of global commerce. However these advantages will not be very much use if we persist in remaining in the European Union.

'A society is, by its nature, a people united by a common culture: a collection of mutually mistrustful subgroups is not a society at all'. England has 'a culture with a great past and it can have a great future. In the world today there is an honourable and important place for England'. If these sentiments were translated into Conservative party policy it might have a chance of restoring its fortunes.



Morality & Architecture Revisited,
David Watkin. John Murray, 2001, £13.99

This new edition of *Morality & Architecture* is indeed welcome, and how good it is to see John Murray return to architectural publishing. There is a serious need to engage both public and students in debate about the meaning and value of the arts to a civilised nation. The last century of cultural turmoil now appears to have been the awful necessity for transition to our 'brave new world' of technology. That period of the restless quest for change, a natural obsession of the human condition, had produced the new and aggressive 'religion' of humanism, and the arts, like the Church, has become politicised. For the detail of how and why the once noble profession of architecture has come to be held in such low esteem, this comprehensive historical account will be invaluable.

Dr Watkin, with the assistance of over 300 references, traces the awesome catalogue of mischief wrought by many influential architects and critics through their crusading zeal for political change and half-baked theorising about the purpose and future of architecture. From Pugin, Viollet-le-Duc and Lethaby, down to Furneaux Jordan and Pevsner, the castings about and flounderings for justification of what may be called architecture are here assembled and should be required reading for all students. For unless battle is joined the prospect is bleak. Watkin tells us he 'was educated in an architectural context coloured by relentless pressure for modernism and total opposition to any continuation of

traditional design' and became 'increasingly to question the intellectual foundations....' on the supposedly ethical grounds that it should be 'truthful' and should be an 'honest' expression of 'the spirit of its age'. I recall how, in the second year at The Northern Polytechnic, (in 1948) students were confronted with a wall of cuttings from architectural magazines and told to acquire a vocabulary of the 'style' of the Modern Movement. Even at that tender age I was appalled. This was not what I had ever understood to be Architecture. Fifty years on, it still isn't. The sterile and meaningless buildings that were being produced in the fifties by the avant garde are here rightly unearthed and put into perspective by David Watkin.

One great virtue of this book is the number of quotations of those opinionated evangelists of architectural expression who so influenced the thinking – such as it was – of the practitioner. A second and greater virtue is the sound debunking of the tangled theorising upon style which those writers had produced. Thus we can begin to see why so many architects appear to be wallowing in such confusion of purpose that their public cannot understand what they think they are doing. Watkin describes the progress of the 'new age' zealots who vilify all who do not toe their political line. As we who are left grow old it is fascinating to put in perspective our humble contribution and many a post-war architect will now admit that he does not know how he could have produced such horrors – 'it seemed all right at the time' – what an indictment. For architecture is an intellectual art requiring deep contemplation and scholarship that depends upon study of what went before in order to feed the imagination and provide answers to the complex art of problem solving. This is all terribly unpopular with those wedded to computer-aided design in a machine age. 'History is bunk' seems to describe the attitude. Thus there is a great divide between those who think that 'anything goes' and those who believe in inspiration drawn from the experience of the masters.

Watkin dwells at length on the Zeitgeist, that expression of the age which so many practitioners seem to believe they should strive to produce. This shorthand 'tool' of the historian can of course only be seen *after* the event; the dreadful examples of fashionable experimentation with the journalists' 'shock, horror' tactics to draw attention to their temporal flights of fancy, betray the immature *prima donna.* Architecture may involve the representation of social, political and religious purposes, and express unconsciously the spirit of the age, as well as a purely rational and technical interpretation, but without harmony, unity, scale, proportion, character, taste, imagination and scholarship it is nothing.

There is no need to reinvent the wheel. The traditional forms of expression are the time-honoured 'language' and the classical tools of the trade, which in the hands of the master are always adaptable to the particular circumstance. Yet the new political levellers would 'forget everything and begin afresh' and 'insist that modern design must always be doing something totally new'. Watkin exposes the intemperate proselytising for the 'process of social regeneration' by 'the godless liberated humanist' who trumpets the coming of a new totalitarian collectiveness. Persuasive Pevsner is carefully taken apart, revealing the damage he wrought with his view that where 'every trace of ornament, every echo of association, have been eliminated' would be produced '"honest", uncontrived, and authentic' architecture. Those who reject 'all that has been achieved in the past', who 'draw on the tradition which seeks to establish a collectivist religion of humanity', who peddle a '"reality" of the people', who seem to think that '"real" architecture will... be essentially socialist in character, so as to fit exactly the image of "real man" as he finally emerges in the twentieth, the "real", century', have created the Blairite myth of 'real people' with all 'the prejudices of the collectivist, anti-artistic, ideological viewpoint'.

Architecture is not some higher 'moral' form of building. There is plenty of good honest building that perfectly expresses its purpose and truly reflects the 'spirit of the age'. Architecture is *sui generis* because it possesses a sufficiency of properties of justifiable significance – more simply, is evidence of 'a mind at work' – for architecture is order. It is also a disciplined intellectual art requiring scholarship. The attempt to interweave it with agreeable notions of 'morality' certainly produces a fascinating minefield for misunderstanding. David Watkin has given us much cause for serious contemplation.

NOTES ON REVIEWERS

Merrie Cave is our Managing Editor

David J Levy is the author of *The Measure of Man* (Claridge Press)

Dennis O'Keeffe is Visiting Professor of Sociology at the University of Buckingham

Beverley Pyke is an architect and author of *The Art of the Architect*

Paul Thomson is a lawyer

Michael Wharton is Peter Simple of the *Daily Telegraph*

PLATFORM
Remembering All The Victims

Soon after the defeat of Nazi Germany, Lord Hailsham (then Quintin Hogg MP) wrote memorably in his *Case for Conservatism:*

Belsen and Buchenwald are no isolated phenomena, no absurd anachronisms, no strange monsters born out of time in a generation of humanitarianism.... The [so-called] century of the common man is the century of his crucifixion... In numberless and nameless places he lies forgotten except by those who loved him, and his survivors still pursue the unending struggle for power in the name of some race or ideology.

According to Lord Bullock's *Hitler and Stalin,* the addition of the Bolshevik and Spanish civil wars to the two World Wars would amount to around 58.3 million killed, never mind the huge losses from Soviet 'collectivisation' and those 'executed in the purges or dying in the Gulag'. Some global computations of premature mortality over the past hundred years – from aggression, state-starvation, ethnocide and communism – claim nearly 200 million men, women and children; and the 'crucifixion' continues into our present century, from Nigeria to North Korea, unabated and sometimes almost unknown.

Too many Unknown Civilians have perished without documentation, let alone movie and TV coverage, still less a cenotaph somewhere to mark their disappearance.

Though it should be noted that 'liberals' are still more perplexed than moved when told that the innocent victims of Stalinism seem actually to have outnumbered those of Hitlerism, the prime consideration in this context is not the precise determination of statistics in either specific cases or aggregation. The important point is that most victims world-wide were relatively harmless and helpless individuals attached to their homes and the legitimate pleasures of everyday life. Too many Unknown Civilians have perished without much documentation of their experiences, let alone movie and television coverage, still less a cenotaph somewhere to mark their disappearance.

In his *Intelligent Person's Guide to History* Professor Vincent argues that their own insular fortune in escaping political catastrophe has obscured for English observers the 'normality' and multiplicity of massacres overseas, the uncertainty of the borderline between extermination and warfare, the Polish and Yugoslav understanding of their own national destruction, and extra-European ethnic cleansing, as in the Sudan and Indonesia. Where China stands in the extermination league tables at any point is not a matter of wide present curiosity, Tibet apart, but were it to become so, the numbers involved would necessarily be large indeed by any western standard.

His suggestion, however, that such domestic detachment was a major factor in 'Anglo-Saxon' assertion of the 'primacy of the Jewish holocaust'is disputable, but the comparative ignorance of other mass deaths, or selective indifference towards them, is a matter of regret and concern.

Media minimisation of communist crimes is only one example in modern times of the obliteration of human life being accompanied, and followed, by the attempted obliteration of public record, but it deserves mention as the most seriously instructive. When American academic Owen Lattimore, for instance, after a guided tour in the USSR, praised the Kolyma concentration-camp complex as an industrial concern operated by 'pioneers' even better than the Hudson's Bay Company, a survivor named Elinor Lipper asked who would accept responsibility for such statements if ever such camps were 'thrown open to the inspection of the whole world, as the camps of Dachau and Auschwitz were opened,' and their 'mounds of frozen corpses' were disinterred to testify to the truth. But US 'liberals' proved more anxious to protect Professor Lattimore from Senator McCarthy than to protest against the slavery and slaughter of the 'common man' in eastern Siberia.

This nation has Armistice Day services with televised explanation for its own UK and Commonwealth war dead. Is there not also a case for regular commemoration of non-combatants in other lands who were eliminated in living memory by what has been defined

as democide, i.e. the destruction, comparable to total war, of people targeted wholesale by ethnic, social, political or ideological categories?

The Government has already established a high-profile 'Holocaust Memorial Day'. Obviously its primary focus is the Jewish experience, though secondary references to the imprisonment of homosexuals, communists and other groups have been worked into official material designed for intensive nationwide application. The Nazis are presented exclusively as the 'archetypal' perpetrators of evil. The Marxist-Leninist democides across four continents, of course, are not mentioned at all.

There is neither space nor necessity here to discuss the complex questions about the nature, singularity or implications of the *Endlösung* itself, or any pressures leading to Tony Blair's innovation over half a century after that event. The HMD Steering Group's substantial school pack entitled 'Remembering Genocides/Lessons for the Future' clearly displays an intention to use the annual occasion for the extensive and continuous re-education of British society out of its alleged 'institutional racism', inoculating successive generations against 'bigotry' and 'antisemitism'.

it should be noted that 'liberals' are still more perplexed than moved when told that the innocent victims of Stalinism seem actually to have outnumbered those of Hitlerism

What then of other 20th Century atrocities? Should not their numerous victims also count in the calendar and curriculum of our 'democracy', especially perhaps if it purports to be 'multicultural'?

Holocaust Day, which in original conception may or may not have been misguided, will not be cancelled; and any idea of a second memorial day just for the Gentiles would be invidious nonsense, tantamount to an anti-semitic practical joke on a grand scale.

The initial service in England's capital city, attended by the Prince of Wales and the Chief Rabbi, was understandably Jewish in its distinctive core programming, though several contributors spoke movingly about various massacres in different regions in recent years. My proposal is that as a high-profile 'state' occasion, the content and commentary should now be extended in comparable detail to the other massacres of our era, including not only the Khmer Rouge Year Zero (as rightly occurred at the 'launch' event) but also the Stalinist and Maoist carnage. Jews already hold their own collective Shoah remembrance on another date which would remain unaffected in its private dignity.

Far from diluting or detracting from the essence of the existing memorial, whose interest needs to be sustained and whose 'never again' aspect may need variation and broadening as time goes on, this proposed development benefits Jews themselves. It enables reference to be made, for example, to such events in the Soviet Union as the liquidation of old Bolsheviks before the Great Patriotic War, and of so-called 'rootless cosmopolitans', 'economic criminals' and 'prisoners of Zion' afterwards.

Full representation on an equal basis of different colours and creeds obviates absolutely any 'racial' discrimination paradox, whereby a particular group is suspected of expecting preferential attention, exerting undue influence, or claiming a virtual monopoly of suffering. It would raise the compassionate respect for all victims and judicial indictment of every democide above any controversial contention over the so-called 'reparations industry' or the partisan propaganda on opposite sides of the Palestine conflict, thus averting the unintended outcome of a revived and aggravated antisemitism at a dangerous period. It would give Jewish organisations previously responsible for Holocaust Day advice and planning credit for a generous internationalism rather than a reputation for persistent self-preoccupation.

An extended multi-ethnic annual commemoration, especially for the often overlooked victims of communism, would have a powerful educational impact of reinforced legitimacy. It is rationally justifiable and politically practicable. Is it not also ethically imperative?

Camile Watson

IN SHORT

A Guide to Customary Weights & Measures, British Weights & Measures Association, 45 Montgomery St., Edinburgh, EH7 5JX, 2001, £7 post-free (3 copies £18),

Vivian Linacre possesses the rare talent of being able to breathe life into a railway timetable. Every chapter of *A Guide to Customary Weights and Measures* reveals new and intellectually stimulating information to the reader. Not only are Imperial Measurements explained simply with a wealth of tables and notes but things that we have learnt parrot fashion at school are shown to have a logic that goes back to the beginnings of human society: terms which when we were children seemed as arbitrary as school rules are shown to originate in the daily life of men struggling millennia ago, to understand their place in the universe. The metric system by contrast, as Napoleon himself said, is contrary to the organization of mind, memory and imagination! 'it is just tormenting the people with trivia.' There is a mass of fascinating detail in this 75 page pamphlet: the reason why the nautical mile is more useful to seafarers, the reason why the financial year begins on the 5th April – a survival from the old Julian Calendar, which we gave up in the 18th Century – but none of it is trivia. Vivian Linacre has the knack of not only transmitting knowledge in a compelling manner but also of demonstrating its importance.
Michael Strawson

Is a Mast a Must?, How to fight off intruders. Barry Bracewell-Milnes, The Book Guild, 2001, £12.95

A forest of telephone masts has been appearing in many parts of the country recently and most people would agree that they are an eyesore. There is growing concern about the health dangers of these masts apart from the mobiles themselves. The risks have not been disproved in spite of the soothing noises of the telecommunication companies and only time will tell. Remember asbestos? This book describes a successful campaign in Banstead, Surrey to call a halt to their insidious growth. It is a splendid demonstration of how it is still possible for a small group, with sufficient courage and conviction, to take on big brother in business or government and win.

The author explains that they won not by recourse to 'Swampy' tactics, but by writing letters, which are all are published in the book. There is much useful advice: how letters can be effective or not, being prepared for the indifference or hostility of politicians, local councils and environmental bodies, you usually end up on your own. The text is exceptionally well laid out making it an invaluable vade-mecum for all campaigners against masts or anything else.
Merrie Cave

Welcome to the Asylum, Immigration and Asylum in the UK, Harriet Sergeant, Centre for Policy Studies, 2001

This well-researched paper is a horror story of Augean proportions. Harriet Sergeant has unearthed all the confusion and corruption in the asylum business and predicts future racial tensions, the result of previous and current political ineptitude. There will be racial violence on a larger scale because of the present asylum situation and it will not be avoided by Home Secretaries sweeping the salient isssues under the carpet.

Recently the BBC ran a tedious and sad series of television programmes on the work of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND). This portrayed a politically correct, over-sensitive outfit that is not equal to coping with this mammoth challenge. They must do the most difficult thing of all and seek a true consensus on issues riven with prejudice and emotion. That, of course, requires real leadership.' Alas, Miss Sergeant, the Blair leading the bland that has sustained the Asylum and an ineffective IND will not do your bidding. The issues you have raised are no slippery slope; we are full pelt on the Cresta run.

I would have liked more information on the legal system that allows and aids appeals by those claiming refugee status after they have been informed they do not have refugee status. It is a strange system that allows a Tamil from Madras, who arrives in the UK in the back of a lorry, to claim that both the rebel and military Sri Lankan (Colombo) authorities persecuted him. The refugee seeker's pre- and post-arrival briefings have taken place: 'just tell them the scar you got when you fell off your bicycle was a result of torture', you'll

be believed and certain people are highly paid to believe you! The Albanian will claim to be from former Yugoslavia. The individuals and families who arrive in the UK find a great benefit-orientated society but we who pay for it are being exploited. This study is a highly recommended read, en route to Australia!
Duncan Hamilton

The Case for an Independent Pound,
Congress for Democracy, 58 Keswick Rd., Great Bookham, Surrey, KT23 4BH, 2001, £5

The Congress for Democracy is a cross-party forum which was set up to provide an 'umbrella' for all the different anti-Maastricht groups from across the political spectrum campaigning for the pound in the run up to a referendum. It meets twice a year and provides an opportunity for people to exchange views and possible tactics. Some of the best people on our side preside: the late Lord Shore, Austin Mitchell, Frederick Forsyth, the Lords Stoddart and Pearson, and in addition it has established valuable links with our soulmates across the Channel and in Scandinavia where it supported the Danes in their successful campaign to keep the Krone. Thus the Congress has been addressed by politicians from Denmark, Malta, Ireland, France and Malta. The former Ambassador to the United States and Germany, Sir Oliver Wright, recalled Mr. Heath's instructions to our chief negotiation in 1973: '*Swallow the lot and swallow it now.*' Senator Gordon Smith, the US Senator for European affairs, told us that Americans were as fearful as Britain of encroaching Brussels' powers. He was particularly concerned that the drive towards monetary union was about politics and not about economics.

This booklet brings together all the speeches over two years. They are published as delivered and provide a good source of witty and informed arguments and observations for believers to regale the non-believers and the indifferent.
Merrie Cave

Sail The Fierce Wind,
Margot Lawrence, William Sessions of York, YO31 9HS, 2001, £18.95

Most of us associate Samoa with the last years and death of Robert Louis Stevenson, a favourite author of English-speaking peoples. However this book is the tragic story of a paradise lost and no happy ending. The first missionary in Samoa – and unfortunately missions paved the way for great power interference, (Great Britain, the United States and Germany). Captain Cook, whose murder inhibited European contact in the South seas for forty years, had understood that the impact of the white man in the south seas would be fatal and although the Samoan islands were some of the first to be discovered, they were the last to be developed and quarrelled over. An earthly paradise was destroyed by commercialism, gunpowder and guile. The worst time came in the 1880's when Germany declared war on the reigning King of Samoa, deposed and deported him and set up her own nominee in his place. The natives rose up and ambushed the Germans who insisted that America was behind the revolt. Eventually the Samoan islands were placed under the joint control of America, Britain and Germany. The arrangement did not work and by 1899 Samoa was divided between Germany and the US. No wonder that the islanders appealed to 'the great white queen' to help them but by then Britain was far too overstretched and indeed Stevenson's well intentioned intervention on their behalf was a failure.

Western (German) Samoa was taken over by New Zealand in 1919 when the world- wide flu epidemic resulted in the deaths of more than one in five of the population, and became the first republic of the Pacific in 1962. Eastern (American) Samoa became a film set for *South Pacific* type musicals and films. Margot Lawrence's account reads like a tragic thriller with careful references to primary sources and copious quotations. There are ten pages of excellent maps and prints.
Merrie Cave

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33 Canonbury Park South, London N1 2JW
Tel: 020 7226 7791 Fax: 020 7354 0383
E-mail: salisbury-review@easynet.co.uk

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