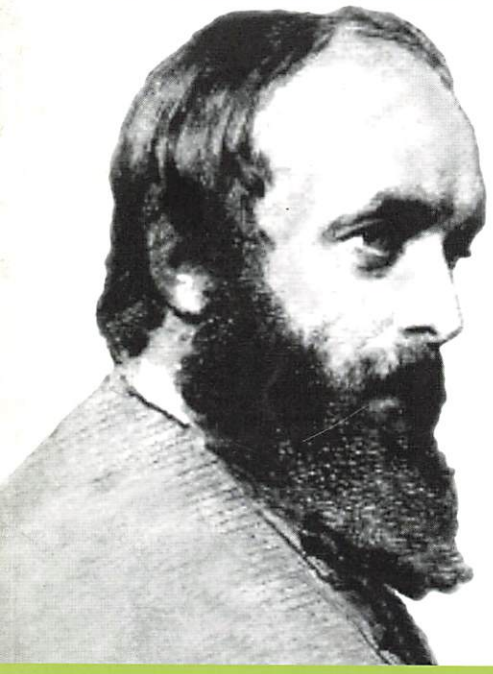
Spring 2006
Vol. 24 No. 3

The Salisbury Review

The quarterly magazine of conservative thought



The 3rd Marquess of Salisbury, 1830-1903

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Don't Mention the War

If David Cameron is to win the next election he needs the votes of the wealthy thirty something middle class. These are people who drive Chelsea tractors, send their children to private schools, have private health insurance and houses in Tuscany. They are important, not because of their numbers, but because of their influence on television. They are not all in the media but have friends who are. The discourse at their dinner parties influences television programmes. Television is as important today as the Catholic Church was in the 15th century. Just as then people believed what they heard from the pulpit — from it a bishop could even take his flock to war — so today people believe what they see on the little chattering pulpit in the corner of their living rooms. Then the church could make or break a king, today it is the TV. Our new clergy, the media folk, liked Tony Blair because he looked good on TV and why, through us, their pliant audience, he was elected.

Being attractive is essential. Up to now Tories have seemed to be bald old men speaking unpalatable truths but Dave Cameron is a young man with a full head of hair whose rhetoric makes people feel good: that the NHS is wonderful, that it is our fault that Africans are poor, that we should let in more immigrants and we should be suspicious of big business.

The thirty somethings David Cameron is wooing are charming, polite and express all the correct liberal sentiments while in reality they are ruthless and greedy. They possess what the philosopher Ivan Illich once called 'Pleonexia' — 'Radical greed'. This is because they have never had to want, nor is their success theirs. It was their parents' money that thrust them into power. To be without it is something they cannot imagine and it frightens them. They do not want to hear that in a few years' time they may wake up to find they have exported all their industries and capital to the third world; that Islam is a dangerous cult that wants to take over their lives and put their women in hejabs, and in five years will be able to back its wishes with Iranian nuclear rockets. They do not want to hear that it is impossible for the poor to have the same sort of health care on the NHS as they get in Harley Street without raising taxes, nor do they want to hear about restricting air travel to save the atmosphere, or if they continue to pursue the goal of an open world economy we will have to replace their frontiers with identity cards. They will stuff their fingers in their ears if they are told that more wind turbines will not supply their power needs, or that if they want anything left of the countryside they will have to stop driving to it in their cars.

Dave will get into power by not mentioning any of these issues. Above all he is not going to mention the Iraq war. Thinking about that war — or any war — only makes them cry. There may be more wars: war with Russia because her oligarchs will hold the West to ransom for her natural gas, a religious war with Iran, war with China because of her deadly stockpile of coal, which she intends to use, so huge she will set the world's climate on fire.

The thirty something TV watchers are not really worried. So far Dave has not really said anything, and they hope it stays that way. Besides Tony likes Dave and his policies and has said so. Secretly Tony hopes Dave, not Gordon Brown, will be the next Labour leader — on a Conservative ticket. So do the greedy thirty somethings.

Myles Harris

The Salisbury Review

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So David Cameron thinks we should be comfortable with the 'Britain that is', does he? Is this by any chance the same British body politic that is suffering from a host of social ills, including ever-rising rates of divorce, out-of-wedlock births, drug abuse and violent crime and ever-falling standards of literacy and numeracy? Moreover, these pathologies have their origin in the very social liberalism which Cameron seems so eager to espouse. He must lead a particularly sheltered life if he really takes such a Panglossian view of our society. Perhaps he should get out more.

Cameron would claim that he is merely reflecting the *zeitgeist*, and what's wrong with that if it goes down well with the punters? Actually, as Myles Harris shrewdly observes (in his piece, 'Don't Mention the War'), Cameron is reflecting above all the views of affluent, middle class thirty somethings, whose votes, and influence in the media, he needs.

What better way to get the polenta-and-sundried-tomato-eating classes on your side than to cosy up with the likes of Sir Bob Geldof? Keith Sutherland sees the co-option of celebrities by politicians as part of a larger trend away from the Burkean ideal of representative democracy. Instead of acting as independent-minded parliamentarians, our contemporary politicians are farming out policy-making as fast as they can to pop stars, business tycoons, focus groups and unaccountable quangos.

However, great political leaders (indeed, it is almost a definition of their greatness) are not invariably carried along by the prevailing currents, like dead fish. Rather, they turn the tide of opinion, as Churchill did in the pacifist Thirties when people did not want to hear about German rearmament. But Cameron seems content to go with the flow, leaving some of us, like Norman Tebbit, with the distinct impression that he is more disposed to build upon the Blairite legacy than overcome it. One of the most unconservative doctrines New Labour has bequeathed to Britain is that of human rights which, as Audrey Parry demonstrates, ought more properly to be called human claims, except it would then lose its halo of right-eousness. No traditional institution is safe from human rights lawyers and their clients, so infinite are the claims for redress of alleged wrongs which can now be laid before the courts by individuals and groups keen to prove their victim status.

On the 'condition of the people' question, Cameron has a point. The Conservative Party does not exist to be the political mouthpiece of Capital. The greatest Conservative statesmen, from the 7th Earl of Shaftesbury to Disraeli, saw that society is not simply the economy writ large and that social reform will sometimes take place only in the teeth of opposition from business interests. Economic as well as social liberty is best practised within a framework of ethical restraints, law, custom and community. It is precisely this civilized framework that Conservatives should seek to conserve: not an easy task, Alfred Sherman reminds us, in a country whose people have all but lost their once-shared Christian and moral bearings — Common Prayer, Common Law and, increasingly, common decency.

So if Cameron is groping towards a renewed sense of social responsibility, whether in the spirit of Tory paternalism or Tory 'localism', that should be welcomed. He must be careful, though, not to draw too freely upon the socialist lexicon. Harry Phibbs is rightly alarmed by the readiness of Cameron to recite the mantra of 'social justice'. No doubt this is all in the cause of making Conservatives sound like the nice party. But it also makes them sound like the 'me-too' party.

Cameron's problem, charitably interpreted, is not so much that he is a progress philistine as a PR man, more obsessed with spin than substance. It is a position that may gain him temporary popularity, but it will lose him any honourable place in the Tory pantheon.

The Future of Conservatism and the Conservative Party

Norman Tebbit

The future does not look good. Let us face the facts — or in this case the numbers. In 1997 the Conservative Party polled less than 10 million votes — its lowest since 1929 when the electorate was less than 29 million against almost 44 million. In 2001 it was worse. We polled 8.4 million — the lowest since 1924. Last year we recovered by less than half a million to 8.8 million. Back in the 1950s we were scoring 13 million plus — and after some dismal votes in the '60s and '70s we hit 13 million plus in 1979, 1983, '87 and 14 million in 1992. Our present performance is depressing stuff. But Labour is in trouble too. They have polled more than 13 million only four times ever, the latest being in their sweeping victory of 1997. Their vote this year — 9.5 million — is 4 million down from Mr Blair's victory of 1997. I will not confuse you with statistics of the Liberal Democrat vote but it is currently 6 million — a level it has reached only twice before. The hard facts of these numbers are being either misunderstood or ignored by most Conservatives.

The future of the Conservative Party must be to be a Conservative Party. That is what dragged it out of the defeatism of the late '60s and '70s. Churchill's victory of 1951 was won on the Conservative cry of 'Set The People Free' — free from Socialism. Heath's victory of 1970 was based on the Selsdon manifesto. His defeat of 1974 came after he had repudiated it. Thatcher's victory of 1979 was based not on 'Building on Labour's legacy' but stamping it out. What is more, her third victory in 1987 was won with 100,000 more votes than her first in 1979 (in contrast to Blair whose vote third time round was down by 4 million). The electors approved of the Conservative policies they saw in action and when the electors still thought John Major — her anointed successor — was a thorough going Tory he scored the Party's highest ever vote (14.1 million) — only to crash when he had suffered the Maastricht Treaty and the ERM — or Eternal Recession Mechanism.

By any standards the present political scene is depressing. The electors this year gave all parties votes of no confidence. Howard's and Blair's combined votes came to 18.3 million. The abstainers were not many fewer at 17 million. In the face of that no confidence vote in both Labour and Conservative parties as they set out their policies in May of this year, it can be nothing less than utter folly for a new Conservative Leader to try to lead the Party into the so-called 'middle ground' of New Labour. First, because it is most certainly not the middle ground — and, second, because it is where neither Conservative voters — nor many Labour voters — want to be. As for winning back to the polling booths the 5 million or so former Conservative voters by telling them that a Conservative Government would build on Blair's legacy in the way that Blair built on Thatcher's legacy that is a double barrelled nonsense. First it is a nonsense because Blair has not built on the Thatcher legacy — he has destroyed it. And, secondly, because the Blair legacy is a poisonous legacy. It is a legacy of power ceded from Parliament and citizens to the authorities in Brussels, and one of vastly increased taxation and regulation. Britain has been losing ground in terms of the world league of table of competitiveness while we are wallowing in debt. The civil service has been politicised; the police force and army are being politicised; promotion at higher levels is open only to the politically correct. Bit by bit our defence forces are being committed to the European Union not to NATO. Our border controls are virtually dismantled and illegal immigration is out of control.

Our city centres have been given over at weekends to drunken yobs — fighting, vomiting, urinating in the streets — and in the worst areas to armed gangsters fighting each other for control of the drugs trade while 24 hour drinking has been introduced by the government. Sinn Fein/IRA terrorists are rewarded with money, power, immunity from prosecution and growing control over the police service in Northern Ireland. We are experiencing rising tides of violent crime, teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. There are falling standards in schools, university admissions based on class not merit, and rising levels of classroom violence. Our armed services are bogged down in a war in Iraq for which there was no exit strategy nor any plan for the post military conflict period. Instead all we get is a string of repressive measures which will affect the law abiding but do nothing to enforce the existing laws against the offensive actions causing concern.

That legacy needs to be overcome, not built upon.

To call that Punch and Judy politics is offensive, ignorant and defeatist. In 1979 we did not accept the Callaghan inheritance — although Jim Callaghan was, in my judgement, a decent and patriotic man. So what should the new Conservative Leader be saying, what policy should he be advocating? After all, it is now fifteen years since the vanity and Euro-fanaticism of Howe and Heseltine brought down the Party's greatest election winner for 100 years. My answer is that the Conservative Party is a national Unionist Party. The English, Northern Irish, Scots and Welsh possess these islands as our national home and have the right to defend them against any who seek to occupy them or restrict our liberty. It is for us alone to decide who may be admitted. At the heart of Conservatism is the belief that, since man is born free, laws can only make him less so. 'Human Rights' legislation, for example, imposes obligations. It cannot give us the rights which we have long enjoyed by *right*. Conservatives hold that people are sovereign. The State exists to serve the people, and is our agent in tasks we cannot undertake on our own behalf ensuring the defence of the Kingdom and our right to go about our lawful business. These, together with the provision of a currency and of civil and criminal law, are the defining aspects of government.

Conservatives respect the right to enjoy the fruits of our creativity, in the form of property. Also, since a society is a community with common traditions and institutions, it cannot embrace widely differing cultures. Hence there cannot be a multicultural society. Our relationships with families and friends are as important as those with the State. All human experience shows the traditional family to be the most stable building block of society, and Tories therefore support economic and social policies favourable to it. To maintain an orderly and prosperous society without excessive coercion, Conservatives believe individuals must be able to act in their best interests, but be held responsible for the consequences. Those given responsibility will generally behave responsibly, whereas adults treated like children will behave like children. It is on these understandings that a Conservative Government should rule. It should regain the power to make our laws and to control who should be admitted here. That would mean a fundamental renegotiation of the structure of the European Union or of our relationship with it.

'Ever-Closer-Union' should be repudiated, along with the supremacy of the European Court, and we should look to normal government-to-government treaties to conduct activities such as cross-border trade, pollution control and extradition. An early exit from the European agricultural and fisheries policies, renewed sovereignty over our coastal waters and an end to the European Court's extraterritorial jurisdiction would be embraced, whilst withdrawal from the European Convention on Human Rights and the repeal of the Human Rights Act would restore the common sense position that foreign nationals do not enjoy the full protection of our law until they are lawfully admitted here. If our partners refuse to return the rights signed away by Edward Heath then we would have no option but to repudiate the 1972 Act of Accession.

The State should tax the minimum it needs for its obligations. We should sweep away the insanely complicated tax/credit/benefit system and minimise the number of people simultaneously paying tax and receiving benefits. The system should be rebalanced to favour, not penalise, conventional families. Business taxation and regulation would be simplified. Companies' compliance with the law would be judged by their actions, not the boxes ticked by compliance officers. Inheritance tax thresholds would be raised towards total abolition, and taxes on the income of the oldest would be progressively relieved. A Conservative Leader should acknowledge the importance of the task of educating our children and of providing high quality medical services — but he should also point out that monopoly or near monopoly state provision has failed to deliver those high quality services. Despite bucketfuls of money being poured into the system, very little is penetrating down to the levels where the services are delivered and the users of the service are offered little chance to influence what they are given. The reason for this failure is that the flow of money is down from Ministers not up from the users. So the signals which direct teachers, doctors, nurses and others come from Ministers. To get money the front line workers and their local management have to please politicians and officials. The views of patients or parents may be heard but they have no force, because he who pays the piper alone calls the tune. A Conservative Government should reverse that flow. The funding can still come from tax revenues. A voucher system and the conversion of schools to charitable companies would be relatively straightforward. A similar approach to the hospital service would be more complex, and a measure of state directed provision (for example A and E) would be needed — but the principle is clear enough.

The thread running through all these proposals is of the subject managing his or her own life. Let me end with a few words on the ethnic cultural divisions in Britain today. It would make life easier if we had a society without ethnic divisions, but in my view there can be a multi-ethnic society. However, since a society is defined by its culture there can be no such thing as a stable multicultural society. A multicultural society is a society in an unstable state in transition

or doubt of its culture and identity. I am now free to state this — the obvious — for during the last decade I have been abused as a dangerous extremist for doing so but now I am joined by Sir Trevor Phillips and the new Archbishop of York. Conservatives would not encourage the creation of ghettoes within which people could live in our territory, but in a foreign society. Clearly that involves the question of language and, of course, civil law and social practice, such as the propriety of forced arranged marriages.

A Conservative Party must be a national Party rooted in our history. It must defend our borders and our democracy. Unless the European Union changes course — by about 180 degrees — then sooner or later any Government will face a decision which could not be fudged. So in the short run I am immensely pessimistic, but in the long run — the facts of life are Conservative even if the Conservative Party chooses to turn its back on them — the facts will remain. The facts will survive the myths. If needs be Conservatism would be well able to outlive the Conservative Party.

This article is based on a speech given by Lord Tebbit last year.

Britain's (Judeo-) Christian Vocation

Alfred Sherman

We live in a largely secularized society, so much so that it takes an effort of will to recall that for the greater part of its history British political and intellectual life was guided by (Judeo-) Christian principles, and that religious doctrinal differences were frequently the main bone of political contention. By now, religion's desuetude is taken for granted and barely remarked on. Not only has Christianity, which provided the sinews of British society, been relegated to the status of optional extra; awareness of the vacuum has been attenuated in the course of time. The militant secularism of a generation or two ago has given way to indifference and unawareness, and to elevation of religious minorities' putative comfort to the main criterion.

This lack of awareness seeps over into treatment of religious issues on a world scale, not least problems generated by Moslem colonization and militancy in Britain and other parts of Europe. Moslem indigestibility, difficulties and travails are put down to the host community's putative racism and migrants' economic grievances, which the authorities are urged to assuage. The French have been blamed for the plight of their immigrant minorities without considering that the latter are largely reproducing their behaviour patterns from their countries of origin. The consideration that the host community might have legitimate grievances has been outlawed *ab initio* as racist. So, for the most part, is inquiry into the previous evolution of modern British political society and into the crucial role of Christianity in the emergence of Britishness.

For most of English-British-Imperial history, the Christian religion was taken very seriously as the spiritual, intellectual and political framework of society, during the Danish and Norman conquests, the Great Schism, the Henrician Reformation coeval with the European Reformation. The Wars of Religion, sanctifying the principle *cujus regio ejus religio*, which Henry had already established in Britain, buttressed the central position of Christianity, as did the English civil war, also a religious war. The Moslems went much farther towards implementing their original vision of a single Caliphate uniting all Moslems, but it proved to be beyond them. The parallel vision of a Holy Roman Empire ruling Christendom exercised attraction for centuries, but failed to overcome the forces of geography, dynasty, nationdom and politicized doctrine.

England was at first the *ultima thule*. As Roman rule and civilization collapsed, Anglo-Saxon settlement and evolution of political identity proceeded under Christian tutelage. In its early days, this entailed a tug of war between the Celtic and Romanised versions, which ended in favour of the latter. A Dano-Saxon Christian polity developed. Under King Alfred, the Middle-English vernacular was codified and given official status as a language of State, literature and liturgy, the first in Europe. The Norman conquest put an end to this development for several centuries. England became an occupied country exploited for the benefit of the Norman-French military aristocracy, and involved in their dynastic conflicts.

Over the generations, as England recovered from the shock of conquest and occupation, national-religious identity developed, in spite of fearsome persecution by the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Translation of the

Bible into English was a major expression of a mood of religious nationalism which took on the character of a Protestant, or perhaps 'Proto-protestant', protest against the behaviour of the Roman hierarchy and its representatives, and a quest for family piety. Henry VIII did nothing to encourage this movement, as Tyndale's fate indicated, but it provided popular backing for his conflicts up and down the country, and played its part in defeating the Maryan counter-reformation, later under-pinning Elizabeth's struggle against the forces of Catholicism fronted by France and Spain. Support for Parliament in the civil war and subsequently in the tug of war with Charles the Second and James reflected this underlying popular Protestantism. A major difference between the English and Continental reformations was that the former lacked an international dimension or pretensions, but was designed from the outset to create a separate national church, which later took on imperial dimensions. (It is now in its post imperial stages.)

Thanks to these developments, Britain emerged from its internal conflicts of the seventeenth century with a powerful intellectual life freed from scientific censorship by the Vatican. The result was scientific and economic progress which in a comparatively short space of time made Britain, a small poor island, the cutting edge of pure and applied science, the workshop of the world and a major empire most of whose subjects were better off under British rule than previously or subsequently, and a model of constitutional liberty. Its Christian faith guided it. The second half of the last century has witnessed the dissipation of this legacy. Britain has largely ceased to be regarded as the mother country by its progeny. Our foreign and defence policies are run by Washington, our economic and immigration policies from Brussels, Commonwealth ties are one-way obligations. While the world-wide Anglican Church loses numbers and momentum in England, it gains them in the third world. The Anglican Communion is deeply divided over the issue of homosexuality; divisions seem likely to come to a head organizationally in the early years of this century. The centre of gravity of Anglicanism may relocate itself outside Britain.

Issues of personal morality, once a religious concern, now dominate secular government social policy. Government intervention, which proved so costly in economic affairs, has taken over the social and personal. The results can be measured. In Wales, the majority of live births are already outside of wedlock, and this is due to become the case in England, certainly as regards English mothers. Illegitimacy and divorce rates create major fiscal, economic and social problems. Sexually transmitted diseases are a major health hazard. Alcoholism, drunkenness and violence are major social issues which governments grapple with unsuccessfully. Earlier, the churches played a leading part in inculcating personal morality, including temperance and family morals, particularly honesty. Christianity was credited with the great advances in personal behaviour from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries. Churches play relatively little part in these endeavours nowadays, and even eschew moral judgment as the pejorative 'judgmentalism'.

The field has been left to the State by default. All parties and most churches seem reconciled to the new division of responsibility, and draw no conclusions from government's failures to fill their shoes. Religion as an issue attracts relatively little attention, apart from praise and exculpation for Islam, insistence on religious minority rights at the expense of the majority's and denunciation of Christian symbolism as divisive or worse, the complaints not coming from ethno-religious minorities but from officialdom. The abdication of the Churches as a pillar of civilization and the apparent inadequacy of its replacement by the State have evoked relatively little comment or opposition, apart from a sense of hopelessness.

The theological dimension of our social and national crisis currently receives relatively little attention.

It is instructive to contrast this state of affairs with the USA, where what is correctly or otherwise called 'the Christian right' has been making headway in its counter-attack against militant secularization and has become a political force to be reckoned with. The force of the counter-attack comes from the heirs of the dissenters who made America their home, not from the Episcopalians, the equivalents or successors of our Anglicans.

The theological dimension of our social and national crisis currently receives relatively little attention. Advances of science have impinged on faith. For most of Christianity's history, cosmology was geocentric, the afterlife was credible. Now our world is known to be a minor planet of a minor sun in a minor galaxy in an alien world. Theology has yet to adapt to this. Should we await the innovative theologians who can challenge the astrophysisists on equal terms, or launch their own theo-physical doctrine? Or should we hope for a new Wesley, since the British tradition does not run to Savonarolas? However, let us bear in mind CS Lewis's admonition not to turn to religious revival for the sake of its intellectual or social benefits, or other side-effects. Faith cannot be constrained.

Sir Alfred Sherman's book The Thatcher Interlude *(Imprint Academic) was published last year*

The Tightrope

Sophie Moate

The difference between Conservative and Labour is as clear today as it ever has been. Those who say there is no choice between them are wrong. There is a fundamental difference and that is the difference in attitude. One says, 'Legislate!' the other says, 'Educate!', and it is clear to any one of us which is which. The most striking example of over-legislation in the past eight years has been the criminalisation of keeping a dirty hospital ward. This should not be a question of crime or legislation, but a question of efficiency and management – both of which come from education.

Ultimately this difference poses a huge strategic gap which exists for us to exploit. Are we to dictate people's lives to them, or enable them to make their own decisions? There is a simple analogy that describes this difference:

Imagine that the path of life is a tightrope. Along the tightrope there are knots and various other obstacles to overcome. The danger of falling is always great, but when you hit an obstacle the danger is at its greatest. So the Labour Party takes one option. That is to provide, at each obstacle, a hand to hold yours and to help you over. Someone is there to guide you throughout, showing you the way and putting your feet in the right places for you. The danger is taken out of the obstacle; the completion of it becomes easy. There is a very small chance of you failing. Does that sound appealing? No risk of failure? Of course it does.

What also sounds appealing is the chance for personal success; the chance to achieve and overcome those obstacles; the chance to take a pride in yourself and to learn more about your skills and talents. Unfortunately these two concepts are mutually exclusive. If there is no chance of failure, there can be no chance of success either. How can you feel pride in yourself when anyone else would have overcome that obstacle in your position? If you cannot fail, then you must succeed, and surely pride in success comes only when you have achieved against the odds. That helping hand is strangling you.

Fortunately though there is another way with no helping hand and the obstacles still in place. The chances of you falling remain as great as when you are aided so when you succeed you can take all the credit and feel that personal pride and sense of achievement. You can take lessons on to the next obstacle and overcome that one by yourself too. You can have success beyond your dreams. Not only have you succeeded in completing the challenge unaided, but you have also taken a risk which must have involved courage, a quality that no society can deem a failing.

There is the chance that you may fall from the tightrope but under this system there is a trampoline below you to bounce you back to where you started. It is a safety net; it catches you and keeps you going and pushes you back to your starting point. You have failed, but you have another chance, and another and another, until finally you succeed. When you succeed, the struggle to get there will make the pride even greater. Along the way you develop determination, the ability to fight, and the sense of strife that only contributes to the ultimate sense of achievement. And, as before, you have gained from the initial risk and taking that risk involved a courage that no society can deem a failing.

So which do you prefer? Would you rather the risk of failing combined with the chance to succeed, or the chance to give up control over your life? To you which is more important? Eliminating the risk of failure, or eliminating the chance of success? Do you merely want a state of mind and the sense of experience, or do you actually want to do something yourself? Who is your master? Shall we equip you with the skills allowing you to overcome the obstacles alone, or shall we do it for you?

If one option is so much more appealing than the other, why is Labour still so far in the lead after eight years? If you have never been trained to look after yourself; if there has always been a helping hand guiding you along the way; if you have always had that guide dog; if you have always had your food, salary, TV, house, heating put into your lap without you having to seek them, are you going to vote for a party which would make you find these things for yourself? Labour has ensured its own continuous victory by creating a dependent electorate. To move forward we need to open their eyes and show them that they are not blind and do not need a guide dog. We must show them that instead there is another way. This is the way to move forward.

Sophie Moate is an undergraduate at Worcester College, Oxford

Made in Broadcasting House

Myles Harris

The tube and bus bombings in London have not altered the view of the political left that Britain is a deeply racist society. British left wingers believe that America brought 9/11 on itself, and we invited the tube bombings by joining the USA in attacking Iraq. They believe that ordinary Britons cannot see this, that when they contemplate the violent politics of the Middle East they have a warped idea of what is right and wrong. This is because most people in the west are racist, which makes it impossible for them to view the 'armed struggle' of 'insurgents' in Iraq with equanimity. What is the difference between a suicide bomber and a US bomber pilot? Only, say liberals, that the latter survives his mission. But it goes deeper than that. The US bomber pilot is wickeder than the suicide bomber because he ought to know better. Killing people is wrong, and those who know it is should set an example to those who do not. Of course it is wrong and tragic that anybody is killed but western society is responsible for almost all the ills of the world, and if we are attacked by enemies we have created ourselves, we have only ourselves to blame.

Nobody shouts this opinion more loudly from the media roof tops than the BBC. As soon as the initial shock of the bombings was over, BBC listeners and viewers were subjected to a relentless apologia along the lines of 'Where did we (the indigenous British) go wrong?' or 'In what way have we provoked disaffected Muslims to attack us?' Disaffected, one might ask, from what? The right not to be beheaded in public for adultery?

This is of a piece with the BBC's asymmetrical reportage of racial crimes. Three weeks after the bombings an *18 year old black teenager was murdered* by a white thug in Liverpool. Dreadful as it was it was given air time out of all proportion to its significance. Even though it came soon after the London bombings, it was instantly elevated to first place in the news. Senior police chiefs talked sombrely of it, pundits were called in to condemn it and the story was kept alive for months. This was in marked contrast to the way the BBC covered the 'ordinary' murder of a 28 year old white man by a black man in the same week and in almost identical circumstances. It was hardly mentioned on the news, no mention of the race of the victim's assailant was made and it was quickly dropped. It took a huge number of protests before the BBC gave the story adequate coverage.

The message was clear. Fifty six Britons may have been murdered by religious fanatics, a young white man of 28 may have been casually *stabbed to death* defending his girlfriend on the top of a London bus, but the murder of a black teenager was far more important. A black man killing a white man or Islamist terrorists killing and maiming people on the tube are crimes but they are not racism. A white man killing a black man is racism and therefore incomparably worse. Racism points to something deeply flawed in a society. So flawed — goes the unspoken message — we can begin to understand how the tube bombings themselves might be 'explicable' or even 'justified' in the eyes of a racial minority such as British Moslems, *(6 per cent of whom thought them justified)*. Once we have accepted our racism we will be able to see our society as morally equivalent to that of the Islamist bombers. This view, that all actions are equivalent, that there is really no difference between our society and any other, has been creeping up on us for years. It is a product of extreme liberalism, and its ultimate consequence is a bestial society in which anything is permitted.

If anybody thought this was too far fetched a conclusion, they only had to turn on their TV a few days after the bombing and listen to a Muslim cleric being asked, if he knew of a plot to cause further bombings, would he report it to the police? The cleric replied it was not his business to report things to the police although he would try and dissuade the bombers from carrying out their intention. This outrageous comment went practically unquestioned. A week before on the BBC programme Broadcasting House a BBC reporter interviewed a family in Pakistan about the London bombings. He began by transmitting the voice of the six year old daughter of the house singing happy birthday to him. (It was the reporter's birthday.) Her childish pipings were then followed by vicious denunciations of the west by her wealthy, middle class, Pakistani parents.

To believe that everything is always your fault, or that bad things only happen to bad people is a psychological disorder known as 'learned helplessness'. Its most common manifestation is among beaten wives, who meekly accept their husbands' beating and remain at home in expectation of more. They feel guilty, are convinced they have provoked the beatings, and

do everything to placate their assailant, even if their actions provoke further violence. The great physiologist Ivan Pavlov demonstrated learned helplessness in a dog in 1908. Since then it has been discovered it applies equally to human beings. A dog is made to salivate by showing him food and then ringing a bell. After a few times he learns to associate the bell with food and salivates when he hears the bell even in the absence of food. If you then confuse him by ringing the bell and giving him a series of electric shocks interspersed with plates of food, his reflexes become confused and he becomes apathetic, lying on the floor of his cage meekly accepting more shocks even if the door of the cage is open and food is placed outside. More and more psychologists recognise that it is just not individuals, but whole societies that have a distinctive psychology. But like individuals, it is a psychology that can be worked on, especially as we have now a single medium, the TV, to carry out the experiment.

For forty years the British — who had always believed to the contrary — have been told they are irredeemably racist as is everything they have automatically thought to be good. We have been told that our police, the army, British tolerance and fair play, our justice system, are all irredeemably flawed. Instead we are constantly reminded that the police suffer from institutional racism, the British army tortures its prisoners, our security service is full of liars, uncontrolled mass migration is beneficial to the country, and America, which most of us thought of as a friend, is a far greater threat to world peace and to our own security than any number of Osama bin Ladens.

The great physiologist Ivan Pavlov demonstrated learned helplessness in a dog in 1908

Softened up by this we are then shown a series of pictures. They are not sequential as in a Pavlovian experiment, but because of the nature of TV they link themselves as surely in our minds as if they were a sequence. A terrifying religious fundamentalist appears on TV threatening to incinerate our cities, which means burning to death *your* children, we try to correlate this with another image of one our most respected army commanders being charged with negligence. We fail. We are then shown clips of a northern city filled with people whom we have sheltered from persecution, housed and fed. The camera then pans to one of the figures who screams into the camera we are all racist bigots. The reception he gets seems to be sympathetic. We become angry. We are shown a picture of a wrecked tube train and read of young men and women being blown to bits. We are then invited to listen to a representative of the Islamic community castigating us for our immoral way of life. A distinguished 'expert' tries to justify this absurd claim. Watching we are overwhelmed with a sense of helplessness. Such news feeds are the equivalent of giving an endless series of paradoxical conditioning signals, food accompanied by an electric shock.

At the moment traditional British society is lying whimpering in the floor of its cage under this assault. And like the battered wife awaiting a violent husband, urged on by the left, we are struggling to discover what it is we must do to prevent further blows. Should we shackle our free press, suppress religious dissent, withdraw from Iraq, further weaken the police, permit detention without trial, even allow the Muslim minority the right to be governed by Sharia law over the will of Parliament? Like the battered wife, the more you appease your violent husband, the more violent he becomes. Fundamentalists dream of a world that many refugees have fled from, where women are made into chattels, hands of thieves are chopped off, homosexuals are beheaded and corruption and violence reign.

When all such possibilities are exhausted — and they always are — those who have learnt to be helpless do not remain passive. The beaten wife takes a knife to her husband, the dog lying whimpering on the floor sinks his fangs into the hand that produces a plate of food. The last time anything like this was tried was in Weimar in the late twenties and early thirties. Marxist activists tried to wrench a deeply conservative, traumatised society away from its roots and point it in the direction of a Marxist Leninist utopia. Instead they conjured up the neurotic, lethal figure of the F□hrer who found a ready following in a nation that felt betrayed by its intelligentsia. In what attic, doss house or campus in Britain is a similar monster being created? Organisations such as the BBC are confident that with their complete control of the media such a figure can be destroyed as soon as he speaks. Yet in the civil anarchy of Weimar few thought that such a laughable figure as a ranting house painter would attract more than a roomful of political lunatics. Who cared what a man in a beer cellar had to say? But as soon as he opened his mouth it was not extremists who flocked to his meetings, but hundreds, then thousands, then tens of thousands of those who felt they were being denied a voice in society. Putting him in prison only increased his popularity. Today the ability to reach millions of people — a modern beer cellar — exists on the internet. And when such a figure stands political centre stage will the BBC take the credit for creating him? Perhaps running a caption underneath his ranting figure. 'Made in Broadcasting House?'

Myles Harris is a practising doctor

Popular Music and Populist Politics

Keith Sutherland

Many readers will have been stunned by David Cameron's announcement of the appointment of Bob Geldof as a consultant to the Conservative Global Poverty policy group. The preceding announcement — the co-option of celebrity environmentalist Zac Goldsmith to the Quality of Life policy group — is easier to understand. After all Goldsmith is a party candidate and shares many of his father's political intuitions, even though his views on Kyoto and nuclear power are anathema to many Conservatives. The idea of Geldof helping to formulate Conservative policy is something of an oxymoron. Sir Bob's decision to exclude indigenous African musicians from the Live 8 line-up symbolises his rejection of the Conservative policy of encouraging self-help as the key to long-term development. Geldof recently dismissed his own Live Aid movement as mere charity that should be supplanted by state action on a massive scale. The eminent development writer David Reiff has accused Geldof of 'collaboration' with the Stalinist Ethiopian regime. Given that Margaret Thatcher was opposed to even waiving VAT on Live Aid ticket sales, it is hard to understand Cameron's claim that Sir Bob will 'bring his influence to bear, in order to help us to go in the direction that he and we both want to go'. The love affair between Geldof and Blair is well documented, so in what sense would a Conservative administration under Cameron mark a *change* of direction? And what has any of this to do with parliamentary democracy?

One thing at least is clear in the aftermath of Live 8 — policymaking is no longer the job of our elected representatives. The Rt. Hon. Hilary Benn may have the grand title 'Secretary of State for International Development' but there is a cross-party consensus that development aid policy is now the business of popular music stars, Benn's title is on a par with ornamental offices such as 'First Lord of the Bedchamber' or 'Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod'. Although his father Tony has spent most of his life arguing the case for 'popular sovereignty' I do not think policy making by pop stars is quite what he meant.

The replacement of elected politicians by celebrities is not just confined to overseas aid — Jamie Oliver is behind the change of policy on school dinners (notwithstanding the claim of the Education Secretary that it was all planned well before Oliver's TV series). Just like her predecessor Estelle Morris, Ruth Kelly has discovered that Lord Adonis (never knowingly elected) is really running education policy. Over at the Treasury we hear that the Chancellor is planning a new apprenticeship scheme based on a speech by Sir Alan Sugar, star of BBC's *The Apprentice*. And not wishing to be outdone on the populist stakes, Health Secretary Patricia Hewitt has recently been converted to 'deliberative democracy' (citizens' juries) as a way of formulating government policy.

Why on earth do we go to all the bother of electing representatives to parliament if policy is made up on the hoof, in response to TV programmes and 'deliberative' focus groups, or farmed out to unaccountable quangos? Gordon Brown's one undeniable achievement is his recognition that elected politicians cannot be trusted with interest-rate policy. Why do we continue with the pretence that the Chancellor is in charge of the economy when in fact it is the Monetary Policy Committee of the Bank of England?

Why on earth do we go to all the bother of electing representatives to parliament if policy is made up on the hoof, in response to TV programmes and 'deliberative' focus groups, or farmed out to unaccountable quangos?

In *The English Constitution* (1867) Walther Bagehot drew a distinction between the 'efficient' and 'dignified' parts of the constitution. The 'dignified' apparatus of state — from the monarch down to the constituency MP — is just a smokescreen to hide the exercise of 'efficient' power by secret Cabinet committee (Bagehot was convinced that most Englishmen believed they were still governed by the Queen). His analysis had a lot in common with that of his contemporary Karl Marx, although the two men differed in their views on the philosophy of history (Marx operated within the tradition of the Hegelian dialectic, whereas Bagehot had a journalist's disdain for all such flim-flam).

It seems that the Cabinet (along with Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition) has also moved to the 'dignified' side of the constitution, and ministers and their shadows are just a smokescreen while real power has moved to pressure groups, lobbyists, the media and celebrities. Writing in the definitive British Academy survey of the British constitution, Anthony Seldon

concluded that the role of the Cabinet under Thatcher and Blair was almost entirely presentational, as the length of Cabinet meetings was dictated by the deadline for the lunchtime news bulletins. One of the handful of decisions taken in Cabinet since 1997 was the policy on the Millennium Dome: the Cabinet decided against it, whereupon Blair and his unelected kitchen cabinet (the real source of power) promptly reversed the decision. The Conservative Party under Cameron appears to be moving in the same direction.

There is a good case for arguing that the party leader himself — the elective monarch of the twenty-first century — is little more than a figurehead. Blair became party leader not on account of his intrinsic merits (he was a mediocre student at Fettes and Oxford and failed to impress at Derry Irvine's chambers), but because of his presentational skills. Blair provided the eye-candy and soothed Middle England with his talk of choice, markets and modernisation, but behind the scenes Brown was orchestrating the biggest redistributive public spending splurge in living memory. The Conservatives are hoping that the cherubic countenance of David Cameron and the co-option of 'useful idiots' like Geldof will serve equally well to mask their real intentions.

why do we put up with a political system that is little more than smoke and mirrors? Voter apathy, including historically low levels of electoral participation, is largely because Joe Public has rumbled what is really going on

Now the cat is well and truly out of the bag, why do we put up with a political system that is little more than smoke and mirrors? Voter apathy, including historically low levels of electoral participation, is largely because Joe Public has rumbled what is really going on. We should revisit Edmund Burke's ideal of political representation, outlined in his 1774 *Speech to the Electors of Bristol.*

According to Burke, parliamentary representatives are not just delegates reflecting public opinion, political dogma, party policy or the editorial policy of the Murdoch press. Parliament is a '*deliberative* assembly' and such deliberation is best left in the hands of independently minded representatives, chosen not just for their political views, but also for their intelligence and moral character. As Burke observed, independence of mind is impossible without independence of means. Modern politicians are professionals, largely without outside occupations, and thereby primarily concerned with holding on to their livelihoods. Their only route to career preferment is up the greasy pole of office, aided by slavish devotion to the party leadership.

Up until the 1960s MPs were drawn from a wide variety of professional backgrounds, including business, law, the armed services and the trade union movement. Nowadays our political class is much narrower — primarily lawyers, the media, the lower ranks of academe, policy wonks, PR consultants and the ever-increasing band of lobbyists and single-issue activists who move seamlessly in and out of government. MPs drawn from such a narrow group cannot represent their constituents in any meaningful sense, and the pool of parliamentary talent and experience from which government ministers are drawn is quite shallow. As a result of this skills shortage there has been a quiet revolution in public administration, starting with the creation of 'Next Steps' government agencies (such as the Prison Service), run by 'chief executives' recruited primarily from business. As these agencies aren't headed by ministers they are not accountable directly to Parliament yet now provide employment for *three out of five* members of the civil service.

More recently McKinsey consultants — the 'Jesuits of capitalism' — have taken over many of the tasks that were once the responsibility of elected politicians. McKinsey partner David Bennett has been put in charge of appointing the new head of the civil service, Adair Turner is in charge of pensions policy and Nick Lovegrove looks after forward strategy, leaving arch Jesuit John Birt (until his recent resignation) with the responsibility of ensuring that the skies remain blue. Granted that a McKinsey associate is likely to make a better fist of transport policy than a failed polytechnic lecturer like Stephen Byers, how is it possible to reconcile these administrative developments with the prevailing democratic rhetoric? The irony is that at the very time we are exporting democracy to 'failed states' in the Middle East our own system of parliamentary representation is being undermined.

How is it possible to bring an appointed, professional government under democratic control without giving in to the sort of 'manipulative populism' outlined by Peter Oborne in the *Spectator*? Conservatives (*sic*) like Tam Dalyell and constitutional experts like Neville Johnson have called for a return to the Burkean ideal but this is not going to happen. Something far more revolutionary is called for, even though I shudder to use such a word in a journal of conservative thought.

Keith Sutherland's The Party's Over: Blueprint for a Very English Revolution *is published by Imprint Academic*

Social Justice

Harry Phibbs

An alarming trend has developed among Conservative politicians to proclaim their commitment to "social justice", particularly since David Cameron became leader. One of his six challenges is Social Justice, while the former Conservative leader Iain Duncan Smith has established the Centre for Social Justice. In a recent lecture to the Centre for Policy Studies, the Conservative Party chairman Francis Maude (incidentally the chief plotter against IDS) proclaimed that he too believed in social justice. The mantra has been repeated endlessly throughout the shadow cabinet. Oliver Letwin, who surely should know better, has joined in.

When I challenged Maude about it during the questions after his CPS talk his response was in line with Humpty Dumpty: 'When I use a word it means just what I choose it to mean, neither more nor less.' Certainly whatever IDS, Maude and Letwin may say they do not really believe in Social Justice. No Conservative could — it is a contradiction in terms. Some may say: 'Why make a fuss. Social justice is a phrase that sounds nice. So what if the Left came up with it. Let's steal it from them and so remove its meaning and thus its propaganda value.' This approach ensures the Tories will continue to be beset by muddled thinking.

Social justice means using the power of the state to enforce equal outcomes. Grammar schools were abolished in the name of social justice. Taxes are raised in the name of social justice. Justice is heavily based on respect for private property, on rewarding success and penalising wrong doing. Social justice is the opposite. Indeed Enoch Powell once broadened the argument by claiming that putting the word social in front of a word produces the opposite meaning. In *The Fatal Conceit*, in an extract reproduced in this journal, Hayek more modestly claimed that social was a 'weasel word' that sucked out the meaning of what followed.

As Michael Novak said of the phrase: 'It is allowed to float in the air as if everyone will recognize an instance of it when it appears. This vagueness seems indispensable. The minute one begins to define social justice, one runs into embarrassing intellectual difficulties. It becomes, most often, a term of art whose operational meaning is, "We need a law against that." In other words, it becomes an instrument of ideological intimidation, for the purpose of gaining the power of legal coercion.'

References to 'social justice' became fashionable after the publication of *A Theory of Justice* by John Rawls in 1971. As far as Rawls was concerned social justice clearly meant redistribution. It was not simply a matter making the poor rich — if the rich got very rich then there would still be inequality or social injustice. Robert Nozick, a colleague of Rawls at Harvard, responded with his libertarian classic *Anarchy State and Utopia*, published in 1974, which called for a minimum state. Nozick proposed an 'entitlement theory of justice' based on property rights. He argued that justice meant that each individual was entitled to keep the fruits of their labour. 'Social Justice' meant using some individuals as means to the ends of others.

Nozick argued that to sustain an egalitarian society required by proponents of 'social justice' means the state would need to 'forbid capitalist acts between consenting adults'. It wouldn't be enough to enforce equality and then allow freedom again. That would soon mean a return in inequality. Let us imagine, suggests Nozick, the egalitarian utopia has arrived, that everyone has the same bundle of material resources. Then imagine one of them is a sportsman in great demand. (He suggested the basketball player Will Chamberlain as an example.) People want to see him play and choose to do so. Supposing a million people do so during a season, each paying him 25 cents. He ends up with $250,000 — far more than anyone else. So, asked Nozick, if the original egalitarian distribution was just and people voluntarily moved towards an inegalitarian distribution is that not also just?

Nozick won the argument. Even the Labour Government is nervous about proclaiming its support for redistribution and equal outcomes. Ministers do not even talk about Socialism much. To some extent they may still believe in it but they are nervous and defensive. Income tax rates remain unchanged — including the top rate at 40 per cent — stealth taxes are preferable. In recent years the Liberal Democrats have been more overtly redistributionist than New Labour. The Lib Dems have called for a top rate tax of 50 per cent although it seems at present that they may ditch the policy. During Margaret Thatcher's final speech

as Prime Minister, the Lib Dem MP Simon Hughes came in with an intervention 'that many people in a constituency such as mine are relatively much poorer'. Margaret Thatcher responded that he would rather have 'a small gap down here' (holding her hands vertically slightly apart down by her knees) 'than a big gap up here' (holding one hand by her shoulder and another above her head.) Unfortunately Hansard was unable to record the hand gestures. 'People on all levels of income are better off than they were in 1979,' she added. 'The hon. Gentleman is saying that he would rather that the poor were poorer, provided that the rich were less rich.'

Lady Thatcher made pretty clear what she thought about "social justice" when she was Prime Minister in 1985 and was giving a speech to the Conservative Central Council.

'We are a people capable of great deeds, blessed with great gifts, who for too long were mesmerised by the socialist mystique,' she declared, 'by the concept that something called "social justice" is more equitable than "individual justice". That "classes" matter more than people. That in some strange way "collective rights" count for more than individual rights.' In later speeches she spoke about what had been done in the name of "social justice" both at home and abroad. 'Take employment laws devised to bring "social justice" to the labour market,' she said in the Nicholas Ridley Memorial Lecture. 'Trade unions were strengthened with special privileges. Employers' rights to hire and fire, or indeed to manage, were subject to a tangle of regulations. And, of course, the effect was quite the opposite of that intended or at least of that proclaimed. Trade union leaders bullied firms into bankruptcy and workers into the closed shop, and insisted on self-defeating restrictive practices. New firms shut down. Large firms would not expand.'

In a speech in Poland in 1996 she declared: 'Sometimes the challenge to liberty came from the Left in the name of equality. Sometimes it came from the Right in the name of order. Sometimes the collectivists promised us a world where "social justice" would reign. Sometimes they promised one in which a race of supermen, genetically determined titans, would march forward to some higher destiny. And without exception they all offered the one fruit which those who value sanity know must not be eaten, they offered Heaven on Earth. The mass graves and gulags of Europe remain as a monument to their lies.'

Harry Phibbs is a journalist with the Evening Standard

Youthful Memories of India

Christie Davies

It was in 1974 that I first really became aware of the Muslims. I was in Delhi as a 'younger scientists' visiting scholar and went to listen to a public lecture on the nature of Indian society by D. N. Srinivas, that most distinguished of Indian anthropologists. There was a large audience of the English speaking Delhi upper middle classes. It was a bad lecture, a great disappointment coming from such a noted scholar. A shrewd and cheerful Indian in a wheel-chair was equally unimpressed. He asked Srinivas bluntly what it was that held India together. Srinivas replied fatuously that it was loyalty to the Indian constitution. The questioner then asked somewhat sardonically whether the solidarity that everyone had felt during the recent, 1971, war with Pakistan had been based on devotion to the constitution. Srinivas was stuck. He had been caught out expressing a politically correct platitude that no one in the audience believed and which one of them had had the confidence to deny.

At this point Srinivas was saved by a Muslim who jumped to his feet and shouted 'I wasn't part of it. I wanted Pakistan to win'. The audience of urbane Hindus lit up by bright saris and of prosperous Sikhs in designer turbans laughed. This annoyed the Muslim even more and he ranted at them with less and less coherence. More laughter. Collapse of mad party. The chairman asked for the next question. Srinivas looked relieved at getting off the hook. I was surprised by the Muslim's reckless willingness to provoke; I would not be surprised today.

It was disgraceful for anyone in Delhi to shout support for Pakistan in the 1971 war which had begun with an attempt to stamp out Bengali demands in East Pakistan for autonomy through mass murder and rape by an army composed of troops from West Pakistan. The number of Muslim civilians murdered and the number of Muslim women defiled was very high. But the perpetrators were Muslims, so that's all right then.

Ten million refugees fled across the frontier into India to escape the depredations of the Pakistani army. It was close to genocide because half of those who fled were Hindus even though the Bengali Hindus were only a tenth of the population. It was a kind of double racism. All Bengalis were to be persecuted but the Hindu ones were to be treated worst.

The Indian government, faced with an influx of millions of refugees trying to escape from very real, not mere human-rights lawyer invented, persecution gave support to the Bengali freedom fighters, the Mukti Bahini. In December 1971 the Pakistani air force which had already been attacking Mukti Bahini bases in India made a pre-emptive strike against Indian air force bases and set off a war. Within two weeks the Indians had over-run East Pakistan and taken 93,000 prisoners. Bangladesh was a free and independent country, courtesy of its secular and plural neighbour. Whereas the Pakistani generals were all Muslims appointed through political influence, the leading Indian generals in the war included General Sam Meneckshaw, M.C. (Britain World War II) the army chief, a Parsee, Lt. General K. P. Candeth, an Anglo-Indian (Western Army), Lt. General J. S. Aurora, a Sikh (Eastern Army) and General J.F.R. Jacob, who was Jewish. The leadership was a proof of the open and tolerant qualities of secular India. There were no Muslims, but would you have trusted a Muslim with such a command? The Mukti Bahini, though, were largely Muslim and it was their help with transport and intelligence that had made it possible to inflict such a quick and humiliating defeat on the wretched Pakistanis.

The Mukti Bahini's success had enraged the uncontrolled Muslim who erupted in Srinivas' lecture in 1974, the year that Pakistan finally accepted the independence of Bangladesh. What mattered to him was not that the genocide, murder and rape in Bangladesh had been brought to an end but that a proud Muslim army had been defeated. It had meant the end of the world's most important specifically Islamic state. Bangladesh remained a Muslim country but its people had defined themselves as Bengalis, as against them, the Punjabi Muslims who, though less numerous than the Bangladeshis, had controlled all political power and used it to oppress them. What was left as Pakistan was a territorial state. The farcical idea that there should be a Muslim version of India in two parts, one to the West and one in East Bengal was at an end. Indian Muslims would now have seriously to consider integrating themselves into secular India.

I now had a completely different perception of the periodic communal clashes between Hindus and Muslims which always ended with many people being killed, a majority of the dead usually being Muslims. We never see other people's conflicts in the way we see our own for we are disinterested but uninterested and in consequence ignorant of both detail and consequence. In countries like Britain where the media has a strong liberal bias communal clashes tend to be reported in such a way as to exculpate the minority, the side that suffered the greater casualties, from all blame. The status of 'victim' had been automatically conferred upon them without reference to the facts and it carries with it a requirement of uncritical sympathy. Hence the Hindus become labelled the bad guys. It was reinforced by two factors. First, India is an open and democratic society in comparison with Muslim societies generally. There are barriers to reporting the persecution of non-Muslims in Muslim countries whether by governments or by mob violence. In India it is easy to find out the scale, if not the details, of an incident and the losers can and will talk to foreign reporters. Second and more important, the Congress Party has controlled the central government in India for most of the time since India became independent and for reasons of both myth and expediency it has not wanted the blame for any failures of secular harmony in India to fall on the Muslims.

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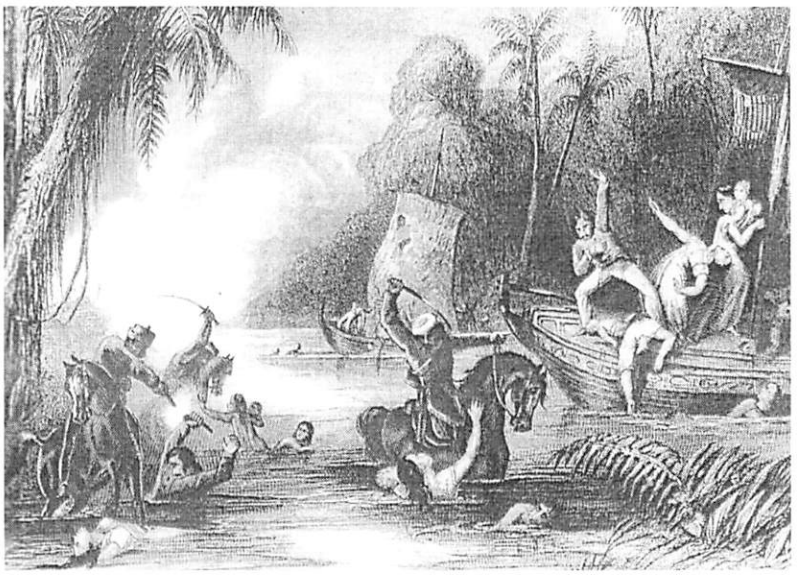
The chief division between the Muslims was between those who wanted partition and a separate Muslim state (which emerged as Pakistan) and those who wanted a mixture of religious apartheid and local cantons based on religion throughout India. Today it is their willingness to place their loyalty to the general community of Muslims in the world before their loyalty to the country, India, in which they live and whose citizenship they hold that is the problem, not their fear of the Hindus. But you can hardly expect the Congress leftists to admit that.

The Muslims showed incurable intransigence in the 1960s and early 1970s in provoking the Hindus even in areas where they were outnumbered, where the Hindus controlled the state and the police and where communal tensions were high. Riots would start because the Muslims would decide that Hindu religious processions with their idols, graven images and icons of innumerable gods were passing too close to their mosque. They would fortify the mosque, take up their weapons, sally forth and break up the procession, injuring the participants and destroying the Hindus' sacred works of art; an alternative was for the Muslims

to sacrifice or pretend to sacrifice a cow for Id, a festival at which it is more usual to sacrifice a sheep or a goat, and to inform the Hindus of their act or intention. This part of the story would be either not reported in the left wing English language press or else denied. What would be reported and would also make the foreign press was the sequel, when the defeated Hindus would retire, regroup, be joined by hot headed communalists and storm the mosque or even attack an entire Muslim community. The story would then be reported as far afield as Britain where the liberals would conclude that the Hindus were a ferocious persecuting majority and the Muslims innocent and downtrodden. The Congress central government of India would then make moral noises intended to appease foreign Muslims who might turn nasty and British leftists whose approval they still court.



I had no doubt at the time but that the Hindus' revenge was excessive and the inaction of the forces of law and order in some states and localities was disgraceful but these are widespread failings in most Asian countries. The difference is that substantial numbers of Muslims, knowing from experience that their actions would bring down ruin on those of their innocent co-religionists who merely wanted a quiet life, still went ahead and set off a conflict. Indian Muslims are also apt to seek conflicts with other non-Hindu groups. In Kashmir at this time the Muslims were in such a frenzy over some incident in Israel that they burned down a Christian church because they had got it into their heads that it was a synagogue.

The Congress Party had other reasons for not wanting to tell the truth about the Indian Muslims. It needed them to vote for Congress in elections rather than for one of the Muslim parties. The Hindus could be taken for granted like the British Labour Party regards the members of the English working classes as a reactionary nuisance who will vote for it anyway but the Muslims had to be both courted and frightened with tales of what would happen if they upset the progressive applecart. The real carrot, though, was providing Muslims with a share of government jobs and contracts in the corrupt, statist world of Nehru dynasty socialism. Muslims in India can only succeed through government patronage because their backward attitudes to the market place, secular education and to the autonomy of women preclude their winning in open competition. Other minorities such as the Parsees, the Sikhs or the Christians are successful because they understand entrepreneurship, modern knowledge and birth control. Parsee women were already commuting by tram to work for salaries in offices in Bombay in the late nineteenth century in garments no more impractical than those worn in London. The Parsees are not an indigenous Indian group but descendants of the wise men of Persia driven out by Muslim invasion and oppression. They have come to the forefront in every branch of Indian life and are living proof that Muslim failure is not a product of Hindu discrimination but of the innate backwardness of India's Muslim communities. The Indian Muslims seek compensation for their failure from government handouts in the form of jobs, contracts and educational places and this was the basis of their symbiotic relationship with Congress, the party of vote and hand-out socialism.

The Congress Party also pursued a pro-Muslim policy abroad, partly lest the foreign Muslims support Pakistan over Kashmir and intensify Islamic terrorism there, and partly to placate the discontented Muslims within India who are perverse enough to tie their very sense of their own worth and identity to the fortunes of some distant group with whom they have nothing in common but a sense of Islamic superiority. Many Congress Hindus will denounce Israel at any international opportunity and seek to get India recognized as being a Muslim state because its Muslim minority numbers a hundred and twenty millions. It is an old and disreputable trick. After the First World war the largely Hindu Congress party backed the Muslim Khilafat movement in India who were concerned lest Turkey's defeat should end the role of the Sultan as Caliph, as leader of the pan-Islamic world. Congress ignored the fact that the Khilafat movement had begun in order to support an oppressive Turkish Muslim colonialism in the Christian

Balkans in the nineteenth century. The attainment of self-government by and liberation of the Serbs, Bulgars and Greeks were seen by the followers of the Prophet in India as a demonic Christian war against Muslims. After 1919, Congress, which was seeking the same kind of national independence as the peoples of the Balkans had achieved, expediently gave its support to the Khilafat movement's wars of religion view of the world in the vain hope of attaching the Muslims to its own programme for a united secular India. How Kemal Atatürk must have laughed.

In India even the past gets rewritten in case the truth annoys the Muslims and gives comfort to Hindu communalists. The history of medieval India is one of Muslim invasions, the slaughter of Hindus on a genocidal scale, forced conversions to Islam of Buddhists as well as Hindus and the savage destruction of their temples and art treasures. Yet the official version glosses this over so that the Empress Victoria becomes a more oppressive figure than the Islamic fanatic the Emperor Aurangzeb. I can see what the official classes are afraid of given the slaughter at the time of Partition and the recent resurgence of militant Hinduism. However, the consequence of living out such a lie is that the Muslims refuse to integrate and cling to a false picture of themselves as an unfairly displaced, benign elite.

The history of medieval India is one of Muslim invasions, the slaughter of Hindus on a genocidal scale, forced conversions to Islam of Buddhists as well as Hindus and the savage destruction of their temples and art treasures.

The other unmentionable topic in the 1970s was the higher fertility of Muslims. The statistics were publicly available but it fell to me the foreigner who was neither Hindu nor Muslim to write about it in India. During the imperial period the Muslims rose from being 20 per cent of the population in 1891 to being 23.8 per cent in 1941. In independent India they were 9.9 per cent in 1951 but 11.2 per cent of the population in 1971. In the earlier period the inability of the Hindu widow to remarry reduced Hindu fertility but in modern times the lower status of the Muslim woman is crucial. If a Muslim husband wishes to boost his importance and influence and that of his community by competitive breeding, her wishes are of little importance. I published my findings in a secular journal in India in 1976. Since then the gap in the fertility of the two religious communities in India has probably remained high and the size of the Muslim minority will also have been increased by both legal and illegal migration from Bangladesh, as Muslim Bengalis pour into Assam, much to the discontent of the local people. In Calcutta illegal Muslim Bengali immigrants even have the impudence to pretend to be resident Hindus. It is sure to lead to a worsening of communal tensions. The figures on relative numbers undoubtedly show that the Muslims in India have not been the victims of any kind of Holocaust. There have been conflicts and killings on both sides much as there have been in Palestine but in either case the Muslim population has steadily increased both in absolute numbers and proportionately. That Muslims employ the word at all is one more indication of their self-centred insensitivity. Can they really be so crass as not to understand what it means when six million Jews are systematically murdered in an attempt to wipe out an entire people?

Going to India in the 1970s was for me an ideal training for what Britain was to become, a country with an intransigent Muslim population containing a substantial faction whose loyalties lay not with the country where they had settled and whose citizenship they held but with an alien religion. When the crude manufacturing industries in which they had been employed closed down they were unable to adapt and looked to the state for handouts. The contrast with the remarkable success of Britain's Hindus, Sikhs, and Parsees could not be greater.

The pressures of political correctness on the part of the left-wing holders of power meant that there could be no plain speaking; the brave and truthful Ray Honeyford was ousted by a conspiracy of Muslims and Trotskyites. To criticise the Muslims' bigotry, their anti-Semitism, their hatred of 'kafirs' and gays, their construction of religious apartheid, their sinking into unemployment and crime and their excessive birth rate, was racism. Brawls between them and the local working class youths in West Yorkshire and Lancashire were always described as 'white racism'. Similar brawls between Muslims and Sikhs did not get reported. Politically correct school teachers never mentioned the Muslim invasions of Europe nor the suppression of the Muslim slave trade by Britain's Royal Navy even though they were obsessed by colonialism and the slave trade.

That was the other thing I learned in India — the mendacity and the closed minds of multi-cultural leftists everywhere.

Christie Davies was attached to and lectured at a number of Indian Universities in 1973-4. For nearly thirty years he taught a course on Hindus and Sikhs to undergraduates at a British university.

France: a Grave Crisis of Identity

Curtis Cate

The handwriting on the wall was already clearly visible to anyone genuinely interested in architectural and sociological problems — or what deserves, I think, to be called the science of 'architectosociology'. I wrote an article eight years ago for an American magazine that was originally entitled, ominously enough, '*France on a Volcano*', and subtitled, '*The Smouldering Fires of Immigration*'. The article reflected my conviction that, if things continued as they were, there would eventually be an explosion. The explosion finally occurred in late October and early November of last year, when gangs of 'hoodlums' — in French *voyous*, the term used by the government's tough-talking minister of the Interior, Nicolas Sarkozy — began using Molotov cocktails and other incendiary devices to burn cars and buses and even to attack schools in the 'slummified' suburbs of Paris and scores of other cities all over France.

Two things in particular prompted me to write this 'doomsday' article. The first was the feeling of profound dismay I had experienced when I returned to France in the early 1960s and discovered that, to solve the housing problems of an expanding population, a number of 'modern-minded' architects and urban designers were demolishing the old *pavillons* (small cottages surrounded by tiny vegetable-gardens and plots of grass) and building high-rise buildings (ten, twelve, or even twenty storeys high) and window-studded slabs of reinforced concrete, aptly named *barres*, which seem to have been designed to scar rather embellish the suburban landscape. The second was the publication of two books written by intelligent Frenchmen, warning starkly of existing catastrophes and others worse to come, books that no one in high office had apparently bothered to read with any care.

During my years in the United States I had read *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, written by Jane Jacobs, a fearless iconoclast who early on had developed a profound distrust of Le Corbusier's visionary schemes for demolishing old, 'run down' areas and for erecting in their place 40-storey skyscrapers surrounded by idyllic patches of greenery, which were, he claimed, sure recipes for communal felicity. Jane Jacobs, after doing some on-the-spot sociological research, discovered that it was in high-rise blocks, where purse-snatchers could quietly lurk in empty elevators waiting for the providential arrival of an unaccompanied housewife who could easily be 'mugged', that the crime rate was highest. On the contrary, it was in supposedly 'run-down' areas in dire need of 'urban development' that the crime rate was lowest — for the simple reason that wherever there are shops and relatively narrow streets the inhabitants naturally develop a sense of belonging to a living community. In the early 1960s, when I did some elementary research on the problems of metropolitan Paris, I went to call on several eminent *urbanistes*. I took with me a copy of Jane Jacobs' vitally important opus. To my amazement, none of these distinguished gentlemen had ever heard of Jane Jacobs nor read a line of her prophetic book.

The other factors that prompted me to write my sombre article were two prophetic 'doomsday' books that were published in the 1990s. The first, entitled *Sauvage Immigration* (a triple word-play connoting 'wild' and 'uncontrolled' as well as 'savage'), was published in 1994 by Michel Massenet, an eminent public servant who for seventeen years (1958-1971) was responsible for formulating policies on immigration for two French presidents — Charles de Gaulle and Georges Pompidou. His indictment of thirteen years of Mitterrandesque *laisser-aller* in the field of immigration, written in 1994, remains one of the most devastating critiques of his regime.

Just to cite one pertinent example — in 1980, towards the end of his first and (as it turned out) only term in office, President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and his foreign Minister, Jean François-Poncet, began to negotiate a deal with the government in Algiers whereby close to one hundred thousand Algerian immigrants were to be peacefully returned home. Nothing came of this well-inspired initiative, for in the presidential election of May 1981, Giscard d'Estaing was unexpectedly unhorsed by his Socialist challenger, François Mitterrand. Immediately the cogwheels of official policy were reversed and the sluice-gates opened. France, the generous, warmhearted France of Victor Hugo, Emile Zola, and Jean Jaurès, was going to resume her traditional humanitarian mission as a *pays d'accueil* (a land of welcome) for the downtrodden and oppressed. To make it clear that this was not just hollow rhetoric, a law was enacted in October 1981 which 'regularized' the existing status of illegal immigrants about (130,000, according to one estimate). Three years

later the Socialist government issued a decree making it possible for any immigrant to obtain a ten-year *carte de séjour* (identity card for foreigners) after just one year spent in France. Mitterrand himself consecrated the new 'Welcome to All' policy by publicly declaring that 'regular' immigrants were, quite naturally, 'at home here'. This policy, Massenet claimed, was one of 'premeditated' anarchy, the diabolical aim of which was to paralyze France's middle-of-the-road conservatives by forcing them either to endorse the 'racist' policies of the xenophobic rabble-rouser, Jean-Marie Le Pen, or meekly to accept the Socialists' 'humanitarian' party line on immigration.

To anyone but a blinkered Socialist, it should have been apparent that such an 'Open House' policy could not long be pursued without building up enormous trouble for the future. The moment the word spread eastward as far as Indochina and Sri Lanka, southward as far as Senegal, Cameroon, and Mali, that the French authorities had grown so tolerant that they were now actually amnestying illegal immigrants, thousands of poor Africans and Asiatics decided that it was worth running the risk of possible arrest as an illegal immigrant, since, if caught, the chances of being released were high and the prospect of being deported back to Ouagadougou, Dakar or Kinshasa, just about nonexistent.

The other book that opened my eyes to what was really going on in France's increasingly congested suburbs was a book written by the well known *Figaro* journalist, Thierry Desjardins. Entitled *Lettre au Président à propos de l'immigration*, it was a long 'Open Letter' addressed to Jacques Chirac, in which it was boldly predicted that if the problems of 'national adherence' and immigration had not been solved by the end of the president's first term in office, Chirac's 'presidential throne' would be made to tremble. The author was only slightly off in making this challenging prediction which was dramatically fulfilled exactly three years and five months after the start of Chirac's second presidential term.

A truly classic example of the 'slumification' process that has drastically altered the character of so many French suburbs is the fate that overtook the once charming village of Montfermeil, northeast of Paris, by whose central fountain Victor Hugo had his hero, Jean Valjean, meet Cosette in *Les Misérables*. Forty years ago, Montfermeil was a peaceful suburban town of some 8,000 souls, full of *pavillons*, each with its tiny vegetable-and-flower garden. In 1963 several ambitious 'developers' decided to 'modernize' the little town's humdrum image by constructing a prestigious complex of vertical high-rise 'towers' and horizontal, low-profile *barres*. The task of designing this twentieth-century marvel, charmingly named *Les Bosquets* (The Groves), was Bernard Zehrfuss, a French architect who had made himself famous by constructing the curiously curved UNESCO building, not far from the Invalides, in Paris. The complex's 1,500 spacious flats were designed essentially for medium-income 'cadres' (managerial personnel) who would feel comfortably at home and happy in this architectural wonderland. Many reasonably well-off bureaucrats and managers purchased apartments in this luxurious *cité*. So, too, did a number of real-estate speculators, who decided that the renting out of these admirably up-to-date apartments would bring them handsome profits.

Almost from the start this experiment in luxurious communal living proved to be a speculative fiasco. Defying Le Corbusian dogma, many of the reasonably affluent purchasers preferred to desert the complex and to relodge themselves in less congested two-storey *pavillons*, where their children could skip rope and turn somersaults on their tiny plots of grass. The swift decline in demand forced some of them to sell their apartments at cut-rate prices, while the real-estate speculators had to make drastic reductions in rental rates to attract new occupants. By 1967, just four years after the 'opening' of this 'model' complex, five per cent of the occupants were already of non-French origin, and some were already beginning to sacrifice their sheep for a *méchoui* feast on the no longer immaculately tended grounds of *Les Bosquets*.

By 1969 the number of foreigners inhabiting the 'luxurious' complex had risen to 15 per cent. Confronted by a steady decline in demand, the frantic speculators began to rent their vacant apartments to immigrants employed in nearby factories and workshops. Four years later (1973) the number of foreign residents had risen to 30 per cent of the total, and the worried prefect of the *département* was ringing the alarm-bell, appalled by police reports of vandalized cars, of pitched battles between rival teenage gangs, of thefts and muggings, and even of firemen being pelted with stones when arriving to extinguish fires.

In 1974, according to Desjardins, there was a

momentary respite, when Giscard d'Estaing's first government, then headed by Jacques Chirac, decided to halt the immigration of foreign workers. But two years later, yielding to the pressure of 'humanitarian' sentiments (popularized by influential lobbies, such as *SOS Racisme*), the same government took the fateful step of allowing foreign workers to import their kinsfolk according to the from then on sacrosanct principle of *regroupement familial.* Offered this bonanza, the foreign inhabitants of *Les Bosquets* at Montfermeil brought in their wives, their children and other relatives precipitating a further exodus of French residents. By 1982 the ratio of immigrants inhabiting the once 'palatial' complex had reached 58 per cent of the total, with families from 28 different countries. Of these the Algerians and Moroccans still formed a majority.

During the next decade things merely went from bad to worse. Rents were no longer paid, scrofulous patches began to sully the unpainted walls of corridors and staircases, everywhere there was dirt and litter. Most of the mail-boxes were smashed or defaced, and outside, on the weed-infested lawns, groups of unemployed youths fought it out with rival gangs, each defending its threatened 'turf' against the predatory claims of hostile drug-pedddlers, motor-cycle thieves, and black-market traffickers in radios and cassette-players, torn from eviscerated automobiles. By 1991 some of the first North African residents had had enough and had moved out, leaving a majority of black Africans to preside over the wreckage.

If what occurred at Montfermeil was an extreme case, it was essentially because the original architectural complex at *Les Bosquets* was luxuriously designed and thus untypical. Most of the brick-and-concrete 'hen-coops', commonly known as HLMs — *habitations à loyer moyen* (low-rent lodgings) — that now deface the suburban landscape of so many French cities were depressing eyesores from the start. Thierry Desjardins' harrowing description of the Montfermeil débâcle, though written ten years ago, could be applied to the scores, indeed to the hundreds of *zones de non-droit* — lawless areas, that had been left to 'rot' by intimidated police forces before the explosive riots of last November.

In a recently published book of reminiscences, Jacques Attali, who for years was François Mitterrand's closest adviser at the Elysée Palace, claims that during his first seven-year term of office (1981-1988) the French president was genuinely disturbed by the conditions of growing violence in French suburbs and that, during the start of his second presidential term, he kept complaining to his prime minister, Michel Rocard, that he was not paying enough attention to this thorny problem. This may well be true, if only because Rocard at the time (1988-1991) had his hands full trying to avert a possible civil war in distant Caledonia. But even Attali had to admit that during his second seven-year term as president, Mitterrand became so engrossed by foreign problems in Europe and elsewhere that he had no time to devote to the simmering crisis in the French suburbs. It is only fair to add that Rocard personally deplored the excessive leniency of his country's immigration policies, declaring: '*la France ne peut pas accueillir toutes les misères du monde*' (France cannot offer shelter to all the poverty-stricken of the world). It was perhaps the wisest word that any Frenchman has so far uttered on this complex subject.

In one of his lucid editorials, Claude Imbert, the editor of the weekly, *Le Point*, had this to say about the riots: 'after all, for the past thirty years the flood tide of an uncontrolled immigration, so alien to our beliefs, to our mores, and to our laws, was bound to compromise the slow working of social biology that is required for a successful and necessary integration. The influx — above all that of black Africa — ceaselessly inflated by family, not to say polygamic, regrouping, far from calmly irrigating the country, has led to the formation of those stagnant pools where nasty fevers thrive. Their future was written in advance...'

The French and particularly foreign journalists have written reams about the ingrained 'racism' or xenophobic sentiments of ordinary French men and women, of frequent acts of discrimination practised by French entrepreneurs who reject job applicants because they happen to have a dark skin or have the misfortune to be named Ali or Mohammed. Most of which, alas, is true. However what almost nobody has pointed out is that, if, on the whole, Americans in the United States have managed more or less to integrate their Black population, it is because for more than a century the country was not exposed, as France has recently been, to a massive influx of immigrants from North and Black Africa.

Of all the accounts I have read of interviews and conversations with the 'misfits' and 'drop-outs' who torched so many cars during those incendiary nights in November, none disturbed me more than a conversation reported in *Le Monde.* These sullen adolescents believed in nothing, absolutely nothing and in no one — beginning with their parents and any form of religion. They were out-and-out nihilists and made no bones about it. 'School?', one of them said. 'What did I learn at school? Nothing, nothing!'

This was and remains the quintessence of French negativism, of the instinct to be initially and critically 'against' rather than 'for' any institution, cause, or tradition, which these young misfits have absorbed

from the general environment of French culture. They are absorbed and tragically magnified into a totally negative way of life. This is not a new phenomenon — which is why it will not be easy to combat. The credo of these young drop-outs and delinquents was formulated more than a century and a half ago by France's greatest anarchist, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon. The man who began his most incendiary work, *Qu'est-ce que la propriété?*, by boldly proclaiming that 'Property is theft.'

Curtis Cate is a journalist living in Paris

Charles Clarke's Credentials as a Judge

Richard Packer

The Home Secretary, Charles Clarke, has proposed a number of measures which it is hoped will protect us better from terrorism though at the expense of some curtailment in traditional British freedoms. Many find the latter aspect worrying. Clarke sees things differently and in particular wants to place himself in an even more pivotal role than Home Secretaries usually occupy. At one stage, for example, he suggested that he, as Home Secretary, rather than a judge ought to be able to decide whether individual British residents, UK citizens as well as foreigners, should be subjected to what amounts to house arrest without trial.

A pertinent question, therefore, is how would Mr Clarke exercise the powers he advises us to grant him? To know the real man it is often helpful to examine the actions of important people before they occupied high office. David Blunkett aside, most are more careful once they get to the top. My experience of Mr Clarke when he was a mere backbencher, detailed below, is not reassuring.

Unfortunately for Clarke the papers showed conclusively that the Permanent Secretary who had supported York and finally recommended in its favour had been my predecessor. Clarke had launched an intemperate tirade not merely without checking whether it was equitable but without checking the most elementary facts.

In 1998 one of my concerns as Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food was the dire financial position of one of our agencies, the Central Science Laboratory (CSL). The sums allocated annually by the Treasury for research and development had been reduced for several years while within this ever smaller total the cost of work on BSE increased annually. Everything except BSE was squeezed. CSL did no work on BSE so it was hard-pressed. Accordingly I had recommended to the Minister, Jack Cunningham, that a small CSL laboratory at Norwich should be closed and the staff relocated to its larger and more modern unit at York. This would reduce overheads, ensure York's facilities were more fully utilised and use resources more productively. Inevitably the staff at the Norwich laboratory were unhappy about this.

Charles Clarke was a backbench MP for a Norwich seat so some of his constituents would have been affected by this proposal. Understandably they complained to their MP. Whenever government proposes to close any of its facilities of course local MPs will object and possibly try to reverse the decision. This is fair enough and is what democracy is all about. Clarke, however, went much further. On 2 April 1998 he sent Cunningham a letter which he copied widely within government and to the media. This was not confined to arguing the case in financial and other objective terms. He clearly misunderstood how CSL's finances operated so his arguments were technically invalid but it was the personal observations that stood out. He urged Cunningham not to accept my proposals '...which I believe are based upon a self-serving desire to justify retrospectively the decision to build the [York] laboratory...' He added that I had '...been guilty of serious sharp practice', suggested that Ministers may have been 'deliberately misled' and ended by urging Cunningham to 'reject the recommendations of your Permanent Secretary, which I believe to be motivated more by self-interest than the needs of your department.'

I sought legal advice and a senior partner at the solicitors Russell, Jones and Walker confirmed Clarke's remarks were defamatory and could in principle form the basis of a libel action. However, for a civil servant suing an MP and a member of the government party to boot is scarcely a viable option. Nevertheless no more serious allegation against a senior civil servant could be made than that he has not operated in the public interest and is instead motivated by self-interest. One would expect anyone minded to make such allegations to look into the facts very carefully before publishing them.

We can piece together how Clarke came to make serious and defamatory allegations without any truth in them whatsoever — though the explanation scarcely does him credit. The whole thrust of his allegation could only hold water if I had been party to the decision to build the York laboratory. Of course even if that had been the case much more evidence would be needed to prove the accusation though it would be more difficult to disprove it — as Clarke perhaps calculated. The suggestion was that having recommended the construction of York, later, when that decision came to be questioned, I would stop at nothing to justify it retrospectively. The difficulty for Clarke was that the department's papers showed conclusively that I had played no part whatsoever at any stage in the decision to build York which had been finally confirmed in 1992, when I was responsible for the common agricultural policy. This was before I became Permanent Secretary in 1993.

Clarke demonstrated a failure to investigate properly claims made to him by interested parties, made reckless and libellous allegations on the basis of inaccurate information for which he had to be rebuked by a Minister from his own party

What probably happened was this. Clarke was lobbied by disaffected staff from the Norwich laboratory about the proposed closure and accepted their wrong account of the financial position. He was told that I was the main mover behind the push for closure — rightly since that was my job — and that the Permanent Secretary had also at some stage recommended the construction of York. He concluded this offered a line of attack which he resolved to exploit without any self-questioning as to whether this would be fair, justified or, indeed, accurate. Unfortunately for Clarke the papers showed conclusively that the Permanent Secretary who had supported York and finally recommended in its favour had been my predecessor. Clarke had launched an intemperate tirade not merely without checking whether it was equitable but without checking the most elementary facts.

Jack Cunningham and I did not always see eye to eye. It is therefore all the more pertinent that having looked into all this very carefully he accepted the advice to close Norwich and wrote to Clarke as follows.

> Your letter of 2 April which you have widely circulated, contains a number of assertions to the effect that officials' advice put to me... had been made on an improper basis. In particular you make a number of very serious allegations about my Permanent Secretary. It would have been more helpful if you had approached me in the first instance with your supporting evidence and without circulating your suspicions and allegations more widely.

After explaining the background to the decision to build York he went on

> Accordingly your central allegation is without foundation.

This was a stinging rebuke from an experienced politician to an MP of his own party. Clarke's party affiliation was probably why Cunningham's letter was not circulated outside government so the large number of people who had received Clarke's original letter probably are unaware to this day that his allegations were totally dismissed.

Clarke made no reply to Cunningham's letter and certainly offered no apology to me for the unfounded allegations he had widely propagated. Nor did I hear that he had taken steps to inform those to whom he had circulated his allegations that they had been shown to be mistaken. Clarke demonstrated a failure to investigate properly claims made to him by interested parties, made reckless and libellous allegations on the basis of inaccurate information for which he had to be rebuked by a Minister from his own party and failed to withdraw or apologise when shown to be misinformed. These do not seem to be ideal attributes for someone putting himself forward as an arbiter of whether we as individuals should have our liberty curtailed without trial.

Sir Richard Packer is a company director

Simone Weil

Michael Tatham

To believe in God is to act correctly

When Simone Weil's writings appeared soon after the end of the Second World War her singularity was an immediate attraction. A young woman who combined religion — especially a type of Catholic mysticism — and left-wing politics; admired England; had worked in London for the Free French and had then suffered a tragically early death, was always likely to be well received. In the shadow of the Holocaust Weil's Jewish ancestry was no disadvantage. There was astonishment that someone so young could display such religious profundity, spiritual precocity and width of learning. By 1952 T.S. Eliot was writing the Preface for *The Need for Roots*. Then, equally naturally, the interest cooled. Much of what she had written was obscure and difficult. She was something of a pessimist at a time when pessimism was out of fashion. It was all very well to applaud Mlle Weil's devotion to the Mass; the presence of Christ in the sacrament; the Franciscan spirit of Giotto at Assisi and the perfection of plainsong at Solesmes; the unfortunate fact remained that she had chosen to die outside the Church. The rare combination in her person of a spiritual Mary and a political Martha made this failure the more distressing. In a letter to Lady Lothian Evelyn Waugh showed his irritation:

> She seemed to accept the main truths of Christianity, but died unbaptised leaving a copious apologia which can be reduced to two themes: a distaste for the exclusive and authoritative tone of the Church and for the unworthiness of some of its members, and a conviction that God would tell her as He had St Paul in an unmistakable and personal way when He required her submission. Some readers, among them the present writer, are unable to silence the suspicion that the apologia could be starkly summarised: 'The Church isn't quite good enough for Me, but, of course, if God really insists...'

Disenchantment continued. In the December 1977 issue of *New Blackfriars* an article by Dr Eric John of Nottingham University discussing the new Petrement biography of Simone Weil claimed that her best known work *Waiting on God* was not 'in any sense mystical'. It was, he thought, '... nearer to Cardinal Heenan — not modest but moralising...' Simone's brave attempt to experience the hardships of industrial life was dismissed as 'a few weeks seeing how the other half lived'. (The actual time was 21 or 22 weeks.) It was a pity, Dr John said, that 'her intellectual vanity exceeded even her considerable intelligence'. She was 'an elitist' and a 'wilful girl' with a 'made-up religion': The nub of his annoyance — as with Evelyn Waugh — was irritation that a 'mystic of such prodigious asceticism should remain outside the visible Church'. Ironically, a more impartial criticism had appeared in 1953 when Victor Gollancz had argued in *More for Timothy* that if God used extreme suffering as a means of enabling the human soul to reveal its capacity for love, then God was little better than a devil. Fifty years on and all this seems very remote. In so far as the Churches have an agenda it is likely to be more concerned with gender and inclusiveness and same-sex unions than arcane questions of souls and divine love.

At the same time, Weil's critics had not been entirely wrong in pointing out that, despite her several heroic virtues, she was not a model of perfection. She seems never to have attempted to overcome her tobacco addiction. She did not like people to touch her. Despite the brilliance of her teaching her students were not always well prepared for their examinations. She did not think about washing her hands very often and she talked far too much. The Resistance movement did not want her in France. She would be a liability they said. That her way of life might seriously inconvenience other people appears not to have occurred to her. Her failure to take any notice of her doctor's advice while occupying a hospital bed was hardly excusable. She also had a habit of holding lengthy discussions with busy priests whose opinions she had no intention of accepting. Slightly more excusably, she was unlikely to have seen the absurdity of envying the crucifixion while at the same time finding it a form of hell to have to share accommodation on the refugee boat with a crowd of superficial, pleasure-loving people. Perhaps the least attractive of Weil's failings was her quasi-parasitic relationship with her parents. Because from early childhood they had always humoured her wishes they created the expectation that she would always get what she wanted. It was the rejection of her scheme to return to France which — more than anything else — appears to have led her to stop eating ... (A bizarre instance of parental indulgence had already taken place at the refugee camp near Casablanca.

There were so few chairs in the camp that her parents occupied her chair for her whenever she was obliged to leave it — 'In the morning they would rise before anyone else and at night they would go to bed last — all because of the chair'.) There were other minor egotistical inconsistencies: it apparently did not occur to her that as a teacher at the lycée her place might not be at the head of a column of out-of-work miners, or that in inviting her to sign a petition the organisers were not necessarily asking her to rewrite it. A little elementary commonsense could have told her that a Lorraine country girl might not benefit from listening to a long commentary on the Upanishads. As a neighbour or colleague, there can be little doubt that Mlle Weil would have been something of a menace — no doubt a well-intentioned one. Happily, it was not in these capacities that she mattered: what mattered about her was her remarkable understanding of the human predicament.

One immensely valuable idea — grounded perhaps in her racial background — was that human beings cannot be separated from their customs and traditions without suffering a catastrophic spiritual loss. It was, Weil said, the community which 'preserved in living shape certain particular treasures of the past and certain particular expectations for the future'. The destruction of the past was perhaps the greatest of all crimes. (It would be interesting to know what she would have thought of the recent attempt to impose a shallow multiculturalism on British society.) At the same time she was only too keenly aware of the immense dangers of joining an organization such as the Church about which it would be all too easy to speak in terms of 'we' and 'us'. In part she was to reject baptism because she did not wish to be drawn into the cosy fellowship of Church patriotism or to have 'any other country here below'. To be true to her vision she had to remain 'beside all those things which cannot enter the Church'. She agreed with her friend and benefactor Gustav Thibon when he said that to act and think in conformity with the prejudices of the multitude was to side with evil. Weil added that in practice it was not necessary for a social group to be of any size. All agreements between several men brought with them a sense of duty and obligation so that any divergence from the group point of view became a serious matter of disloyalty. The crimes of the Soviet Union had sprung — at least in some measure — from just such a mistaken sense of duty.

One immensely valuable idea ... was that human beings cannot be separated from their customs and traditions without suffering a catastrophic spiritual loss

As early as the 30s and 40s Weil had seen that the glossy surface of the new technology could easily conceal moral and intellectual decadence. Even apparently benevolent causes such as an anti-war movement could damage society by encouraging people not to endanger their personal comforts or do anything which might invite retaliation. France, Weil said, had been undermined by just such self-centred attitudes. The concept of social 'gravity' was another useful idea which she never developed. This force was, she thought, the central law of the world. In normal circumstances it was all-pervasive. It had been this invisible 'law' which, according to Thucydides, had led the Athenians to reject the Melosians' plea for compassion :

> Let us treat rather of what is possible ... As touching the gods we have the belief, and as touching men the certainty, that always by necessity of nature, each one commands wherever he has the power.

Much of Weil's best writing was about the Greeks. She believed that it was because the Greeks understood man's position in a world ruled by necessity that their writing had such intellectual rigour and moral strength. The *Iliad* was a supreme example of this ability. Nothing that was good in Homer's world was protected from disaster; at the same time nothing was despised because it was destined to perish. Against this clarity of mind Weil contrasted such commonplace conceits as those which claim that spiritual values cannot be destroyed by force of arms. The fact was, she argued, that a military decision could influence habits of thought for many centuries. Nor was there — in Simone Weil's opinion — any question of a benign providence keeping a friendly eye on human affairs. Providence was the source of order in the world — it was nothing more. Consequently all those forms of piety which saw religion as a source of consolation and miracles as acts of divine intervention were nothing more than childish corruptions. They would benefit from the sort of purification provided by atheism. At a similar level the idea that the Church should be seen as the incarnation of Christ seemed to her nothing less than a highly convenient blasphemy (eg *Aylesford Priory Newsletter* No 42). It was equally mistaken, Weil thought, to believe that even if heaven were a fantasy of man's imagining all would still be well because of human progress. The needs of the spirit were not of that order and in any event barbarity had kept pace with all man's achievements. She was equally dismissive of the currently popular notion of human rights. A right, she said, was not a device for the establishment of justice but a legal obligation in

connection with property and commerce. (She would have liked Dr. Johnson's remark: 'How is it that we hear the loudest yelps for liberty among the drivers of negroes?') No, the eighteenth century Encyclopaedists had been wrong: the Greeks had never spoken about human rights.

Despite what many people — including, of course, Evelyn Waugh — have seen as Weil's intellectual arrogance, she was capable of quite remarkable self-abnegation. Writing to Gustav Thibon as she was leaving France she said that he could use any of the ideas in the notebooks which she had left with him. It was better, she said 'for an idea to be associated with your fortune than with mine ... I should be very happy for them to find a lodging beneath your pen, while changing their form so as to reflect your likeness.' No doubt it was in much the same spirit that Simone Weil had once said that she herself was the colour of dead leaves.

Michael Tatham is the author of Dora Carrington: Fact into Fiction

James Bond and Other Scenes from Academic Life

Jeremy Black

Perhaps I am one of those simple-minded souls who can best grasp an issue only when it affects them directly, but a couple of episodes have led me to think about the issue of how scholars should behave. I am not referring here to relations with colleagues in the same institution, though many years ago, as a young lecturer at Durham, I can remember being unsure how to respond when I went to the bar for a drink during a performance by Scottish Opera at the Theatre Royal in Newcastle to see, at the other end, a senior (married) member of the department holding hands with a student: the University's induction course had provided no guidance on whether to say hello or to pretend not to notice. I dare say it still doesn't.

My concern is the problem of conferences and how to respond to arguments one feels misguided. In November 2004, I was kindly invited to the excellent Mershon Center at Ohio State University to take part in a symposium on how best to teach military history. I gave my paper, essentially on the global theme, and, in the questions, someone said why have you not mentioned John Keegan, and I made a critical remark: *Face of Battle* very anglocentric. The tone of my remark was possibly overly abrasive, but the content was spot on.

Subsequently, a colleague and a good friend wrote to me to say he thought I had been too harsh and to ask would I make my remark to Keegan in person. My response was yes, but, more generally, it struck me as very odd that we feel it appropriate to judge critically students, academics seeking posts and promotion, and other academics in the small-change of conversation, but that there seemed to be a reluctance to make such judgments publicly.

it is not too much to expect us to accept criticism and to realize that part of our duty is to offer informed comments, however much they might prejudice us in the ant heap of egotism that passes for part of the profession

The second episode is one in which I inadvertently fell foul of America's culture wars. In 2003, I was invited to the Ian Fleming conference hosted by the English Department at the University of Indiana. I was to be the keynote closer, speaking on 'Changing views of America in the James Bond corpus'. The quality of the papers alas was very mixed: from first rate to inaccurate and tendentious. I had been given one and a half hours for my talk so thought I would spare five minutes at the start to review what we had heard. Trying to be fair, I remarked, in a light tone, that historians had to offer chronological precision, specifying that it was not very useful for them to talk about the Cold War and Bond, unless they made it clear when in the Cold War they were referring to, while literary critics had to try to anchor themselves in the texts, and that it was of only limited interest to hear lesbian readings of Bond unless it could be shown that lesbianism was an important theme in the corpus or lesbians a key element among the readers.

This led to a furore described by Andrew Lycett in the *Sunday Times* of 8 June 2003. A roundtable in which I was due to talk was boycotted by several participants, I was criticized in a letter from which excerpts were read out in the business meeting next day, and my paper dropped from the proceedings. The organizer refused to show me the letter or to return my calls. *Tant pis* you may well say. I certainly did. The English Department at Bloomington is not exactly prominent on my radar screen of intellectual endeavour, and, anyway, I had a trip that had enabled me to see a couple of old friends. I was reminded of all this when James sent me a copy of part of the recently published book *Ian Fleming and James Bond. The Cultural Politics of 007*, edited by Edward Comentale, Stephen Watt and Skip Willman (Indiana University Press, 2005), and a letter saying that the introduction had misrepresented his paper but he couldn't be bothered to do anything about it. For me, the amusement was to see a section of the letter criticizing me in print and the editors' wonderfully weasely (no that is unfair to weasels) way of getting round the fact, that, in the name of the freedom of intellectual life that I had supposedly violated by my mild criticisms, I had been bulleted from the published proceedings. The latter include such cultural studies gems as the following: 'This "arche" is the sense of an aboriginal empowerment, as if the Bond figure carried with it the momentum of the commencement of the Law of the Father' (Judith Roof, p. 75), 'this, in the end, may be why dykes like Bond: because the man who wears gender as a style rather than an essence, effects conversion to his side through better technique, thrives on heat between equals, and provides women the thrill of sex unprotected by heterosexual privacy and respectability, could, in the end, just turn out to be a woman' (Jaime Hovey, p. 53), and '*Diamonds* is both obsessed by the anal and suffused with a subtle but insistent panic about masculine identity, which are, of course, ultimately related, (Dennis Allen, p. 24). Roof was the key boycotter.

The issue to me was not so much the self-serving pomposity of the editors but rather the extent to which they seemed to believe that criticism infringes academic freedom, the 'unfettered academic exchange' of the letter. At times, this had a farcical quality in the conference. One speaker discussing post-colonialism and the film *Man With The Golden Gun* claimed that most of it had been set in Hong Kong. When I pointed out that, after an opening scene in Hong Kong, most of the rest of the action was set in Bangkok, he retorted that the canals in question were those in Hong Kong. I said that this was inaccurate, that the city was Bangkok, and that Thailand was not a country that could be described as post-colonial; only to be told that I was misguided.

Maybe people lack the confidence to listen to public, or indeed private, criticism, but surely they must realize that such an approach is very constraining. We all offer interim reports, and we are all on the cusp between past and present. We are also very privileged, and it is not too much to expect us to accept criticism and to realize that part of our duty is to offer informed comments, however much they might prejudice us in the ant heap of egotism that passes for part of the profession.

My most fulfilling academic experiences recently have been sitting on a jury in the Sorbonne, as a candidate superbly defended his five volume *dossier d'habilitation* of about 1,500 pages for five and a half hours, and spending a weekend in the sun reading the excellent submission of an American scholar I do not know, who was up for a full chair. Happy to support both, but you cannot do so unless you accept that not everyone is so gifted. W.S. Gilbert of course understood the logical consequence of such a world.

> When every one is somebodee,
> Then no one's anybody.

Well, they can at least be professors of English. *The Gondoliers* is set in Venice and (clearly a Professor of English manqué) I wanted a link to work in one of the more arresting remarks made to me when I was a junior academic on an archive trip to the Archives Etrangères in Paris. After work one evening, I had a drink with the head of a history department from an Italian university. He told me he taught no students, so I asked him what he did. He said he had to keep his department in line, which meant apparently a centre of Christian Democrat loyalty. I said what about Communists, and he retorted that they could get a job in Bologna. He said that once a week he went to the Ministry of Education in Rome and made himself agreeable, and once a month the senior civil servant who dealt with the university visited. They gave him a slap up meal, put him up in the best hotel in town, and secured the services of the most gifted prostitute. The choice too often across the academic world is apparently between the idiocies of political correctness and the dubious pleasures of correcting politicians.

Jeremy Black has recently published Using History *(Hodder Arnold, 2005),* Introduction to Global Military History *(Routledge, 2005), and* A Subject for Taste. Culture in Eighteenth Century England *(London Books, 2005).*

Public Libraries on Borrowed Time

Nigel Jarrett

Not long ago, readers would not dare rustle a newspaper in a public library for fear of being ejected by a phalanx of bibliomaniacs wearing half-moon glasses. Now, librarians are in charge of background *muzak* as well as access to increasing platoons of computers and stacks of DVDs. Noise is also actively encouraged in the Kiddies' Korner, where unruly toddlers are told stories loudly as part of a 'reading scheme'. (Beware mandarins proposing schemes, pilot or otherwise.) Where once you could borrow a score of Josef Forster's opera *Die Rose von Pontevedra* and four hundred other items of equally dim provenance, there are now instruction manuals for mouth organ and rock guitar, and one moribund copy of Handel's *Messiah*. On my next visit, I would not be surprised to find a bar open in the corner, decorated with badly-executed paintings of Shakespeare, Byron and Dylan Thomas by local sixth-formers.

The huge space created by 'modernisation' is actually a swath cut through the library's book stock, millions of volumes of which are disposed of regularly at council sales. The message is clear: books are fuddy-duddy, whereas DVDs, videos, CDs, tapes and computer programs are 'cool', like the lurid paint used to re-decorate the library walls. Why is this when plenitude rather than commercial desperation accounts for the huge number of books being offered cut-price to the reading public? Why are we accommodating the non-literate in havens of the inscribed page?

Discounts and deals in bookshops and advertisements focus the mind much less than the huge volume of titles, and this at a time when more people are reported to be forsaking printed words. All the evidence suggests a bountiful time ahead for readers and publishers. It also runs counter to continuing predictions that books will soon be obsolete. So are we witnessing a cultural shift or the beginnings of its seismic repudiation, and have advocates of the windy library-cum-discotheque got it wrong?

Writers and readers of prose fiction were the first to be concerned about the disappearance of books as carriers of information, people with an interest in perpetuating a seemingly immoveable art form and therefore its traditional means of reproduction. Less distraught were poets and poetry readers, except those who believed that a poem was something that assumed a certain shape and regularity on a page and was not primarily a neat marshalling of words to be uttered in company. To be upset by the idea that books might be permanently replaced by some other method of transmitting narratives and ideas suggests a relationship, possibly irrational, between reader and reading-matter that goes beyond mere function.

The bulk of books today looms much larger as a consideration when trying to make space. The two-volume *New Oxford English Dictionary* weighs around 14lbs, whereas its CD-Rom is small and light enough to be mislaid, perhaps the only reason for choosing the heavier option. Of course, there is the question of vanity. Hardly any photograph of writers in their lairs omits shelves of books, the backdrop that lends them gravity and authority in the same way that being pictured in a smiling group will bestow on loners the gregariousness they possibly crave.

Apologists will adduce half-baked ergonomic theories to support their belief that the smell, the feel and the solidity of bound, printed paper justifies book publishing, while having nothing to say about content, the only reason they want to read in the first place. Despite the weakness of these arguments, heralds of the alternatives seem to be making little headway, suggesting that their promoters and not their inventors are the more zealous in predicting the death of the book. Experts on how to get literary work into print are warning that 'on-line' publishing is fast catching up with small-circulation literary magazines as a means of winning unpaid and possibly short-lived renown for writers of faint ambition.

Not even inferior binding, poor quality paper and atrocious editing — elements of production that might make readers swim towards some other form of processed information — have diminished the appeal of books and printed pages; indeed, the quality of magazines is improving and their number growing. So, whatever happened to the man who invented the handy new-tech volume, a set of plastic covers which, when opened booklike, revealed two phosphorescent screens bearing 'pages' of text, to be 'turned' at the press of a button? If anything could sway the doubters, this was it: a prototype stretched almost to rupture by its scope for easily-imaginable refinement, such as the ability to store the complete works of Dostoyevsky (and offer a bio-pic of the author).

However, technological advance has become

confused with economic opportunity, and the evidence that people are catching on is illustrated by the renewed interest in vinyl gramophone records and the realisation that mobile phones are more destructive than imperative, albeit two commodities that have no place in a library. Small happenings, maybe, but indications that so-called progress is being exposed as simply change. Doubters are even saying that if a computer were asked to come up with a means of transmitting bulk text in manageable form it would deliver a book or a magazine, probably made of paper, and suggest that the user should curl up with it on a settee. Seduced by background music and the relentlessly audio-visual, our library services are unlikely to be impressed.

Despite government spending reviews on the modernisation of public services and their suggestion that Heritage Lottery money might be a useful way of renewing the supply of books and other materials 'following a substantial period of neglect', it is impossible to disguise the changes in what a library is now perceived to be. Libri, a charity which campaigns to improve UK libraries, warned last year that if present trends continued, borrowings of books would cease in the next 20 years. It revealed a halving of visitor numbers since 1984 and recommended a threefold increase in spending on books, the refurbishment of the decrepit buildings that house them and an extension of opening times. Its latest report cannot identify much improvement in the 'dire' situation it described last year and warns of a worrying new trend: the reluctance of some senior librarians and policy-makers (including the Department for Culture, Media and Sport) to regard providing books as their prime responsibility.

The paradox is that reading continues to be popular. The number of books sold in the UK has increased by 20 per cent since 1997. Local council funding for libraries has also risen, but spending on books has fallen dramatically, confirming what any intelligent library member has known for about ten years — the philistine decline of his local library into some vague 'information' service, with books occupying less and less space. Perhaps senior library staff, tied to the printed page but seduced by technological trends the significance or irrelevance of which they only half understand, should attend their sales of discarded books (not all of them foxed and dog-eared beyond redemption) and try to explain the stampede as the doors open. Libraries certainly need shaking up, but books should not be the casualties.

Nigel Jarrett is music critic of the South Wales Argus

The Need to Exclude

Peter King

The advent of New Labour has seen a proliferation of new terms and concepts, many of which merely replace more commonplace notions. So the government no longer spends, instead it 'invests'; it does not implement policies, rather they are 'rolled out'; the government never looks to the future but is instead always 'going forward'. Perhaps the most fundamental shift in terminology under New Labour is the replacement of those socialist bogey-words 'poverty' and 'inequality' with the much politer but also vaguer idea of 'social exclusion'. Instead of being beset with poverty, or suffering from structural inequalities, those at the bottom of society are now said to be excluded from the mainstream of society: they are no longer full citizens who can share in the good life. Accordingly, much government effort since 1997 has gone into dealing with this apparently new phenomenon. The government immediately established the Social Exclusion Unit with a brief to investigate the causes of this problem and propose means of dealing with it. At the same time left-leaning think tanks such as the Institute for Public Policy Research and Demos churned out material seeking to steer the new government's agenda.

There is very little practical difference in government policies aimed at dealing with social exclusion and those old — and failed — policies to deal with poverty and social exclusion. Both sets of policies involve the use of tax-payers' money on large-scale, one-size-fits-all projects for which government ministers can take the credit. We can also predict that the new policies will go the same way as the old, with the result that government will have to invent some new piece of jargon to mask its failure.

Before the notion of exclusion gets abandoned by politicians, I want to try to reclaim it as a term that has an important resonance for the conservative tradition. Instead of exclusion being something to eradicate, or

something unacceptable, we all need to have the ability to exclude unwanted others and we should be prepared to be excluded ourselves, looking at the area where the need is most manifest — where we live.

The aim of much of government policy is to transform things. Current government thinking on housing, much of it aimed to deal with social exclusion, seeks to create a 'step change'. The government's portentously titled *Sustainable Communities Plan*, published in 2003, seeks to radically transform local communities with a conscious shift into a faster gear. This government, like all its predecessors in recent times, wants to change things and make a difference. However our personal experiences of housing are significantly different from the manner in which housing is seen by policy makers. Our housing — the dwelling that we live in — is not something we wish to see transformed and fall prey to radical shifts in policy. The virtue of our housing is that it protects us from change: it allows us to stay put, because that is what we want to do. We wish to maintain what we have, or else to build on it and develop it on our terms and in our time. We seek to be free from intrusion, especially from large impersonal forces that we cannot control or understand.

Housing is the principal means we have of making a boundary against the world. Our dwelling is where we undertake our most intimate relations, where we nurture and protect those we love. The great purpose of the private dwelling is that it allows for what the French philosopher, Gaston Bachelard, termed 'protected intimacy'. When the world outside appears hostile, when we cannot reconcile ourselves to it, we seek to draw in the boundaries, the confines of our world, to what we feel we can be sure of. We want to use our housing to include those we love, to make use of the dwelling's finiteness and enclosure, but to do this we need to exclude others and so prevent them from gaining access. The boundaries of our dwelling work to include our intimates, but to exclude unwanted others. My need for intimacy demands and depends upon the exclusion of others.

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Many on the left might find this argument, particularly as it might mean that some people might not be included anywhere, a craven attempt to justify nimbyism and the attitudes of those who do not want new houses built in their village. However this structure of inclusion/exclusion is both essential and commonplace, for without it we could not maintain our private existence in separate dwelling units. It is not therefore a form of nimbyism, or a hatred of the unknown, but the manner in which dwelling operates, where parents put their children first. Certainly we need to ensure that this insularity does not get out of hand and become unreasonable and that we do not infringe on the rights and autonomy of others. The parochialism of dwelling is not a conceit or a malformation, but is rather its essential prerequisite.

Instead of trying to transform how people live, policy should be about ensuring that households are left alone and can maintain control over where they live. Indeed, perhaps the only successful housing policy of the last 25 years played precisely on this very idea, the Right to Buy introduced by Mrs Thatcher's government in 1980, and which is still in operation, albeit in a somewhat attenuated form.

The Right to Buy allows sitting tenants to buy their current dwelling at a discount, and allows them to keep the full proceeds on resale so long as they do not move within a certain period. Its importance as a policy is that, unlike virtually all other housing policies in the 20th century, it focuses attention on housing as a *private* entity. The Right to Buy alters the relation between an individual household and *their* dwelling by vesting control with the household itself. The policy therefore concentrates on the use which the household can make of the dwelling: it becomes an asset and something the owners can pass on to their children, use as collateral, sell for a profit, and take a pride in owning. The essence of the Right to Buy as a successful policy, therefore, is the fact that it plays on the private relation between a household and the dwelling: it concentrates on the facility with which the household can control their environment. The Right to Buy worked well because it did not change the material day-to-day conditions of the household. What it did alter was the manner in which they could view that particular property, how they felt able to exclude others. They were no longer beholden to a landlord who could dictate how they used the property.

The Right to Buy is one of the most important pieces of public policy over the last 25 years, and has certainly been the most popular with over 1.5 million council tenants who took the opportunity to buy their dwellings. It tells us that there is one piece of New Labour jargon that we need to claim back. The idea of 'exclusion' is not necessarily a term of abuse or something to be eradicated. If we wish to live privately, and presumably as conservatives this is what is most important to us, then we need to ensure that we maintain the right to exclude.

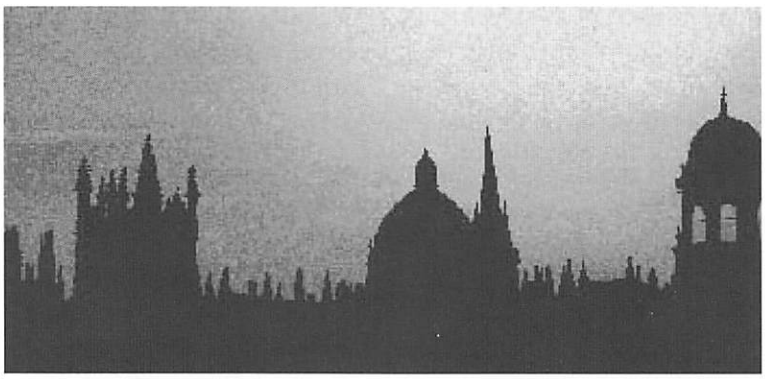
Peter King is the author of A Conservative Consensus: Housing Policy Before 1997 and After *published by Imprint Academic*

Conservative Classic - 21

Dorothy L. Sayers's Gaudy Night

Helen Szamuely

Sayers, as a detective story writer, excites strong feelings of approval and disapproval. There are those who think that no-one has ever surpassed her and there are those who find her writing verbose and tedious, and her main character insufferable. *Gaudy Night* probably excites more of these feelings than her other novels. It is Sayers's attempt, almost successful, of writing a serious novel of ideas in the guise of a detective story. As a detective story it works reasonably well, though it is rather drawn-out, with the slenderness of the crime not really carrying the weight of a rather ponderous book. Despite many criticisms, some waspish as the ones by Q.D. Leavis, some dismissive as Julian Symonds's, *Gaudy Night* is perfectly passable as a novel of ideas and human development, producing in the process, perhaps unintentionally, a strongly conservative view of what life should be like. The twin themes of the novel are the clash between women who choose intellectual careers and women who look after their husbands and children, on the one hand, and the conundrum of whether academic and intellectual integrity is more or less important than personal feelings.



One must admit that, while there is a good deal of discussion of the wonders of academic rigour and honesty that looks unflinchingly at evidence and deduces whatever is necessary, there is little evidence of it in action. The dons of Shrewsbury College, under attack from an unknown source, seem to ignore the simplest clues to the perpetrator. One would think that Harriet Vane, particularly annoying in this book, would have noted the fact that the scurrilous letters always arrive on Monday and Thursday morning. When Lord Peter Wimsey sums up his evidence at the end of the book, before the cathartic confrontation between the perpetrator and her victims, it is quite clear that the academically rigorous ladies had not really been using their brains at all. Instead, they had fallen into the error of believing that the perpetrator had to be one of them, for some reason accepting the rather ignorant notion that women who decide to do without marriage, children, even a sex life, must become hysterical and unbalanced.

The truth of the plot is that it is the 'womanly woman', the scout who is avenging herself on female dons and female intellectuals in general for her husband's death, who thinks that women should dedicate themselves body and soul to their men, who is shown to be unhinged. The other argument is related to the theme. The avenging lady's husband had been forced from academic life because he had suppressed an important document in order to prove his thesis and the examiner, subsequently one of the Shrewsbury dons, had realized this. The man had then taken a couple of teaching jobs but lost them because of drink and eventually blew his brains out, leaving a suicide note, which talked of his persecution by 'harpies'. For some reason nobody at any time makes the suggestion (except for Wimsey indirectly) that the man in question was an unsatisfactory human being who had behaved with some callousness towards his family.

Parallel to all this runs the Harriet-Peter romance that finally comes to a fruition in this book. By this stage everyone is aware not only of the fact that Wimsey is in love with Harriet Vane but that she is in love with him but will not acknowledge it; she is really rather tiresome about that. What one finds behind all these different themes and the endless discussions is the search for balance. Harriet realizes through conversations with Wimsey and by actually doing some thinking that emotional and intellectual life cannot be separated. A balanced person and a balanced union between two people needs both. (One of the best episodes in the book is Harriet's sudden realization that Peter Wimsey

is a man who is sexually attractive to a lot of women. At first this rather upsets her.)

Wimsey — and this makes him attractive to many modern women readers — is very respectful of Harriet's intelligence (over-respectful sometimes) and of her abilities as a writer. He sees her as a professional person, an intellectual, and urges her not to shirk unpleasant conclusions or developments because of misplaced emotion. It is also clear that the lack of emotional understanding that prevents the don from finding out what happened to the disgraced scholar and his family is almost as harmful as the unbridled emotion of the woman who cared too much for her husband and who became unhinged as a result.

There is much talk towards the end of the novel of the need to achieve balance: between intellect and emotion, between male and female, between inner life and involvement in the outside world. There can be no clearer description of what a conservative view of life's achievements must be. It is only when Harriet realizes the possibility of attaining such harmony in life with the man who is her equal and who has also had to struggle to come to that conclusion, that the marriage between Lord Peter Wimsey and Miss Harriet Vane can go ahead. It is a marriage that comes after a long struggle within and between the two partners and one that can surely be applauded by all conservatives.

Reputations – 12

Barry Goldwater

Mark Coalter

For those who take a passing interest in American politics, Barry Goldwater's reputation and legacy are synonymous with electoral disaster and extremism. With the mention of Goldwater's name, his ideologically-charged candidacy in 1964 is cited as damning evidence of a flawed message and campaign, responsible for the Republicans losing the Presidency, shedding seven million votes and countless States to the Democrats, as well as sacrificing numerous seats in the House, Senate and Governors' Mansions. Indeed, the media, in the aftermath of defeat, made ominous predictions for the Republican Party's future, a *New York Times* columnist noting that Goldwater 'not only lost the Presidential election yesterday but the conservative cause as well. He has wrecked his party for a long time to come and is not even likely to control the wreckage.' Why should we be interested in Barry Goldwater when there were earlier Republican nominees who had experienced defeat — such as Thomas Dewey in 1948, who came within an ace of victory; Alf Landon in 1936, whom Goldwater managed to surpass in the scale of his opponent's landslide; or, in 1940, Wendell Willkie who offered a departure from the liberal consensus of the New Deal — all of whom have since passed into obscurity?

Republican occupation of the White House for twenty-five out of the past thirty-seven years proves that the Jeremiahs of the liberal establishment in 1964 could not have been less accurate — a regular trait when one considers their inability to pick the victor in 2000 and 2004. Yet winning elections is only part of the story. After all, it was Richard Nixon who triumphed in 1968, a president whose record was far from conservative. Stepping slightly further back, Dwight Eisenhower, who successfully followed Dewey in 1952, not only perpetuated New Deal programmes but actually strengthened them through federal expenditure on welfare, public housing and education, which led Goldwater to observe, in relation to Ike's 1958 budget, that the administration, 'was demonstrating tendencies to bow to the siren song of socialism'. Goldwater's importance lies in wresting Southern and conservative voters from the Democrats, the former then inextricably linked to that Party since the Civil War, the latter fair-weather friends. This process was aided by Goldwater's message in 1964 which prompted a redrawing of the electoral map and proved a decisive watershed in American political history. For the first time conservative voters, *en masse*, consciously attached themselves to the Republican Party in large numbers, and thanks to the brand of conservatism that Goldwater developed and promoted, advanced and reinforced by Ronald Reagan, the loyalty of this base is still largely secure today.

Goldwater was elected as the junior Senator for Arizona in 1952, the first Republican returned to the Senate in the State's young history. Of Polish and Jewish descent, his forebears settled in Phoenix, by way of Warsaw, London and California, and established a successful chain of department stores. This entrepreneurial and commercial background coupled with the individuality and ruggedness of

the frontier instilled in Goldwater a conservative ideological outlook. His interest in the legislative process proved negligible and as he later wrote, his aim was 'not to pass laws, but to repeal them'. By the late 1950s, he had become an irritant to Eisenhower and 'modern Republicanism', labelling the 1958 budget, a 'dime store New Deal'. His skills, however, lay in campaigning and he served as Chair of the Senate Republican Campaign Committee, touring the country, meeting the Party's grassroots and activists, and preaching the gospel of 'collectivism versus personal faith and large federal bureaucracy versus our individuality'. Like Reagan, in his late 1950s role as a travelling spokesman for *General Electric*, Goldwater reached beyond the Party faithful to address audiences as varied as the *American Legion* to the *Southern Nevada Knife and Fork Club* — thus confirming to the Senator that there was a receptive constituency for his brand of conservatism.

For the first time conservative voters,* en masse, *consciously attached themselves to the Republican Party in large numbers, and thanks to the brand of conservatism that Goldwater developed and promoted, advanced and reinforced by Ronald Reagan, the loyalty of this base is still largely secure today.

The substance of Goldwater's ideas are chronicled in his ghost-written thesis, *The Conscience of a Conservative* (hereafter, '*Conscience*'). It is a work of classical conservatism, much of it transcending national boundaries and political systems to deliver a devastating critique of welfarism and the international liberal consensus; for example, 'the conservative approach is nothing more or less than an attempt to apply the wisdom and experience and the revealed truths of the past to the problems of today. The challenge is not to find new or different truths, but to learn how to apply the established truths to the problems of the contemporary world.' For Reagan in 1980, read Goldwater in 1960, as government was not the solution, but the problem: 'in a country where it is now generally understood and proclaimed that the people's welfare depends on individual self-reliance rather than on state paternalism, Congress annually deliberates over whether the *increase* in government welfarism should be large or small'. Government spending, the pacific direction of American foreign policy aimed at co-existence with the USSR, and the thorny issue of federal curtailment of States' rights received a strong critique in *Conscience*.

Goldwater's observation that 'the conservative looks upon politics as the art of achieving the maximum amount of freedom for individuals that is consistent with the maintenance of the social order', was far from radical, however, he controversially widened the class of these beneficiaries of freedom from federal meddling to include the States of the Union — this, in practice, meant the Southern States where racial segregation was under scrutiny. In *Conscience* he discusses how decisions in areas such as school curricula, nursing home provisions or slum clearances should be devolved to local communities, removing unwarranted interference from Washington. This extended to civil rights: Goldwater considered that the rights to vote or enter into legal or commercial transactions were enshrined in the Constitution. However, within this ambit he excluded racially mixed schools and stated that whilst 'it may be just or expedient' to integrate schools, African Americans did 'not have a civil right' to go to these schools, as this right was not one 'protected by the federal constitution, or which is enforceable by the federal government', though this point, in particular, was certainly debatable. At the conclusion of his chapter on civil rights, he reiterates his support for integrated schooling, but adds that 'I am not prepared, however, to impose that judgment of mine on the people of Mississippi or South Carolina, or to tell them what methods should be adopted and what pace should be kept striving toward that goal. That is their business not mine.'

In advocating States' rights, Goldwater was vilified both by contemporaries and historians, yet he was no George Wallace, his desegregation of the Arizonan National Guard in the late 1940s but one example. However, there was an element of political calculation — with the South, for the first time since Reconstruction, looking promising for Republicans, Goldwater concluded that it would be advisable to go 'hunting where the ducks are'. Indeed, Lyndon Johnson accurately forecast that, in signing the Civil Rights Act in 1964, he was also signing away the South, electorally, 'for a long time to come'. Demographically, the Republican centre of gravity was moving away from New England and Wall Street to the Sun Belt of California, Arizona and Texas. It was Goldwater's aim to accelerate and entrench this shift by tagging on the South to form a geographical Republican monolith. However, in charting this course, Goldwater, in the eyes of 'respectable' opinion, was tainted and his reputation sullied. His chaotic Presidential campaign was to provide the liberals with an unexpected source of ammunition to reinforce this view.

Richard Nixon's defeat in 1960, coupled with little significant improvement for the Party in the 1962 Congressional elections, created a leadership

vacuum. Nelson Rockefeller, the liberal Republican Governor of New York, and for many conservatives the embodiment of the East Coast establishment, was considered the early favourite for the 1964 nomination. Barry Goldwater, the darling of the conservative movement, initially ruled himself out. In 1960 his name had circulated informally before the Republican Convention, with a number of southern States willing to pledge their delegates. In the event, he wisely backed Nixon, the obvious choice, and after endorsing the Vice President, announced from the platform, 'Let's grow up conservatives. If we want to take this party back — and I think we can some day — let's get to work.' With these words, Goldwater created a movement, which, in the aftermath of defeat, rallied to the Arizonan's banner. After an abrasive round of primaries, Rockefeller's well-financed machine proved no match for the zeal of Goldwater's activists — he convincingly won the 1964 nomination.

In Arizona, Goldwater traditionally received a partisan and obliging press, which articulated his occasional mangled syntax, off-the-cuff remarks and throwaway lines. However, the roughshod nature of his primary and Presidential campaigns, plus the attitude of the candidate himself, allowed the American press to grossly misrepresent him. Goldwater voted against banning nuclear testing, arguing America's dominance over the USSR would be undermined, while speaking, with ease, about their possible use, and even proposing delegating control of deployment to the discretion of NATO field commanders, which earned him the sobriquet, *Dr Strangelove*. His vote against the Civil Rights Bill, on the basis that a better solution was rooted in 'voluntarism and not compulsion'— the States' rights pitch — cast him further from the mainstream. After the acrimony of the primaries, Goldwater had the opportunity to heal the rift at the Republican Convention whilst making a direct appeal to the nation. Instead, he used his speech to rouse the faithful concluding with, 'extremism in the defence of liberty is no vice. Moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue.' Whilst the crowd 'loved it' the press and opposition were not so enamoured. California's Governor, Pat Brown, disingenuously complained about the 'stench of fascism', a lie given sustenance by CBS, whose Germany correspondent had inaccurately reported, prior to the Convention's opening, that Goldwater planned to speak in Bavaria, at the invitation of the far right, and to stay at Berchtesgaden. Goldwater did attempt to appeal to the 'silent majority' of law-abiding, family-oriented, suburban Americans — a theme appropriated by Nixon in 1968 — but all this was lost in the charged atmosphere of extremism that the candidate had erroneously created.

Unsurprisingly, Goldwater's campaign and strategy were a fiasco. His running mate, Congressman William Miller of upstate New York, was selected because 'he drives Johnson nuts', Barry also admiring his 'slashing style'. This dire situation was exacerbated by the nature of his opponent, Lyndon Baines Johnson, whose aim was to best FDR and exorcise the presence of JFK from his administration, whatever the cost, the infamous 'Daisy Chain' commercial but one example.

On polling day the Republicans were obliterated. Goldwater carried six States and won twenty-seven million votes to Johnson's forty-three million, losing Republican strongholds from New England to the Mid-West and even Alaska, while barely retaining Arizona. Yet, for all the gloom and despondency of defeat, Micklethwait and Wooldridge, the authors of *The Right Nation*, correctly argue that this was 'the right election to lose'. The ducks in the South were snared and whilst only five southern States went solidly for Goldwater, others gave him a significant share of the vote. Johnson unwittingly contributed to future Republican victory, by fostering the social and political upheaval of the mid-60s through engagement in Vietnam, the backlash against his civil rights programmes, and the government's inability to police the inner cities and deal effectively with spiralling crime and rioting. The activists who had flocked to Goldwater's standard and given him unquestioning loyalty transferred their allegiances to a new champion. They had come too far to throw in the towel and by January 1965 considered courting Ronald Reagan. It is here that Goldwater's legacy deserves full credit. The one conservative highlight of the 1964 campaign was a speech given by Reagan, entitled 'a time for choosing'. The actor's endorsement and manner of his delivery demonstrated his natural political strengths, and according to Robert Goldberg, Barry's biographer, Reagan 'neither alienated nor frightened listeners, a sharp contrast with Goldwater's stridency'.

After 1964 Barry Goldwater's opportunity to shape events was over. Whilst his contribution was subsequently eulogised (even idealised) and his memory venerated, politics proved for him, in the words of the third Marquess of Salisbury, to be 'a cursed profession', as the leadership of the conservative movement now passed, by default, to Ronald Reagan, the smoother and more able operator, who was capable of seizing the centre and implementing a long overdue conservative programme.

ETERNAL LIFE

Anyone wanting to understand a Christian's political responsibility should read a book written nearly 1600 years ago: St Augustine's *City of God*. This is what he says about governments:

> Take away justice, then, and what are governments but great confederacies of robbers? After all, what are confederacies of robbers unless they are small-scale governments? The gang itself consists of men, it is directed by the authority of the chief, it is bound together by a pact of mutual support and they divide the loot. The reply that a captured pirate made to Alexander the Great is interesting. For when Alexander asked the pirate how he could justify making the sea a dangerous place, he answered, with defiant outspokenness, 'In exactly the way that you justify doing the same to the whole world. But because I do it with a single paltry ship, I am called a robber; while you do it with a large navy, and are called an emperor'.

St Augustine said that Christians are forced to live in two cities: the city of this world and the city of God. You cannot put on a mask of holy detachment and pretend to make your life only in the city of God — because you are flesh and blood and you need the material things of this world in order to survive. If men will not control the world's goods according to justice, then the goods will be left to the pirates. Even if you say 'a plague on all their houses' and refuse to vote for any of them, your not voting is a factor in the political balance. You can say *I don't vote — it only encourages them* if you like but not-voting is also a political act.

Malcolm Muggeridge said that with the socialists we get a few moral goodies and with the conservatives we get a few economic goodies. St Augustine would tell him not to be so stupid, for since we inhabit this world of flesh and blood, of houses, farms and lands, all our morality is tied up in the things of this world. You cannot talk about morality without talking about money. Christians need to be reminded of this fact, because there is a recurrent, puritanical heresy which says we can live the life of the spirit without the life of the flesh. However Muggeridge was restating the cliché that, whatever its faults, socialism holds before us an ideal of equality. We feel warm about this, because we like fair do's.

Critics of socialism say that this equality business is precisely where socialism goes wrong: that the attempt to impose equality always results in the loss of freedom. Economic critics of socialism say that this attempt to even things up results in things becoming a lot more uneven as Hayek triumphantly demonstrated in *The Road to Serfdom.*

There is a theological argument against strict socialism: socialists cannot bring about the equality they desire, because the world is not an ideal but an actual place. It is not a world of pure theory but of unpleasant facts. Human beings who are imperfect creatures cannot bring about the perfect society. This is what St Augustine said in *City of God.* Conservatives say that if you work with the grain of human nature and not against it, people will end up better off. The critics of conservatism say this policy promotes obscene riches for a few and appalling poverty for the many. The Christian Faith says that all attempts at the earthly paradise must fail. All our politics are imperfect, because we are imperfect. This is true for the individual and it is therefore true for society. While the ideological socialist might *pride himself* on his atheism, there is a great deal of practical atheism among conservatives masquerading as *respectability*. Conservatives do not think of themselves as sinners in need of God's forgiveness. I have lost count of the number of times conservative friends have confided in me: *The Christian faith isn't actually true, you know — all that miraculous stuff — but it's a good basis for morality.* And I have lost count of the number of times I replied: *But something that's not true isn't a good basis for anything. And without all that miraculous stuff there is no Christian faith at all.*

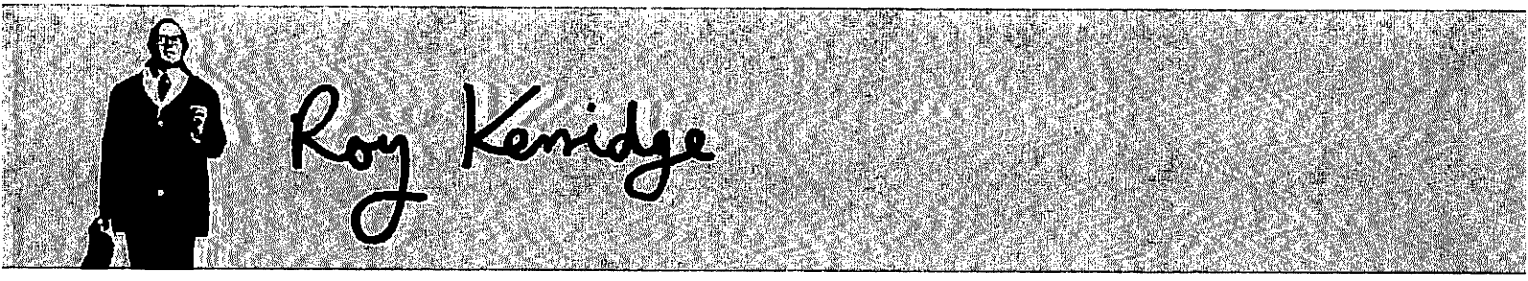
For the Christian, politics is not the ultimate, is not what is most basic. Politics needs faith. Men and women need Christ the Redeemer. *There is no life not lived in community.* But Eliot adds: *And no community not lived in praise of God.* And our lives must first of all actually *be* lives with God. This is forgotten, even in the City which loves to think of itself as traditional. City people love to sing *I Vow to Thee My Country* and *Jerusalem.* They love the prayers for the Queen's Majesty and everything else that goes along with Speech Night, rugger, and the School Song. They believe in making money and then, encouraged by theologically illiterate and politically naïve clergymen, go off to salve their consciences with some extravagant gesture in the East End.

The real duty of Christians in the political world is not such confused gestures. Our whole meaning and

purpose is to acknowledge God as the basis of our lives and thus of our institutions: the church, the law, the university, the monarchy — are beyond party politics. We have institutions so we do not die of politics. If we do not acknowledge God as the ground of all we are, then whether we think of ourselves as socialists or conservatives — or worst of all *respectable* — we shall be like chaff in the wind. We need Prayer and Scripture and the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ. With these things we purify and sanctify our institutions — our lives together.

O dark dark dark. They all go into the dark
The captains, merchant bankers, eminent men of letters,
The generous patrons of art, the statesmen and the rulers,
Distinguished civil servants, chairmen of many committees,
Industrial lords and petty contractors, all go into the dark,
And dark the sun and dark the moon, and the Almanach de Gotha —
And the Stock Exchange Gazette, the Directory of Directors.

Peter Mullen



Many people are misled by the Story of the Three Bears into thinking that European Brown Bears have an idyllic family life. Far from it — long before the cubs are born, a mother fiercely chases her mates away. She fears, with good reason, that he would eat the cub or cubs if he found them. To a male bear, a cub is a most delicious morsel. Mother bears attack male bears so savagely, however, that most males flee as soon as they scent a female with cubs. The original Three Bears story is an English Folktale first written down, I believe, by Southey. In this version, three male bears of different sizes live as friends in the same cottage, and Goldilocks is an old woman. Surprised in the Wee Bear's bed, she jumps out of the window.

Nowadays bears are seldom kept in English zoos, for the New Puritanism decrees Do Not Feed the Animals. A captive bear needs constant amusement, once provided by visitors with buns. When the 'No Feeding' rule was imposed at Colchester zoo, a Himalayan Black bear went insane. Of what use now were its self-taught begging tricks, standing on its hind legs or rolling on its back holding its feet? A bear has a sense of humour and an active imagination.

Dudley Zoo near Birmingham has a large collection of Himalayan Black bears, who enjoy two rocky enclosures knocked into one. Their sanity is preserved despite the No Feeding rule, by the Keeper's expedient of hiding food among the brushwood so that the bears have to hunt for it. They are fed on fish and carrots. As if emulating Bugs Bunny, the bears sit up to eat their carrots, each holding a carrot in its left paw. All bears appear to be left-handed, or left-pawed.

Sparkwell Zoo, on the fringes of Dartmoor, has the

finest brown bear enclosure I have seen since Dudley Zoo gave up keeping brown bears. A sign, 'Bruin Wood', leads the visitor beneath trees along a pathway to a wood high on a rise. Beyond a low wall and a deep ditch, a pair of brown bears amble around the large wood just as their wild ancestors had done, perhaps at the same spot. On my visit last spring, the bears looked stunning in such a natural setting. A magpie flew from branch to branch overhead. Large beasts of prey can often be detected by the angry or curious antics of the crow family above the trees, as Celtic and Saxon hunters well knew. Between them, they wiped the bear out of Britain by the eleventh century as a wild species, though dancing and baited bears were familiar to medieval townsmen. At Sparkwell Zoo I saw the huge dark male bear reclining on a hummock among tall trees and looking out onto the fields. The trees in his enclosure had been ringed with wire netting to prevent the bears from climbing up and eating all the new leaves, an ursine delicacy. Meanwhile, the fawn-coloured female bear rollocked down to a small square pool near the barrier and lowered herself into the water.

Apparently an anti-zoo society had photographed her in the bath and printed a picture that seemed to show the narrow concrete moat as if it were the whole cage. The picture accompanied an article complaining that Sparkwell bears were denied a pool deep enough for diving. The Zoo authorities riposted with a sarcastic notice fixed to a tree: 'Our bear has no webbed feet, nor is it white'.

Brown bears are not aquatic. Although they enjoy a swim in hot weather and sometimes dive clumsily after salmon, they do not need a deep pool for underwater bathing. White bears from the Arctic need large pools in captivity, but where can such polar bears be seen in depleted British zoos?

Rights or Claims?

Audrey Parry

A former President of the European Commission on Human Rights (ECHR) declared that some of the submissions to the Commission and thence to the Court were claims rather than rights. His ire was aroused by the case of some Dutch conscripts who thought it monstrous that they should have to cut their hair. Recourse to the ECHR is only available when all domestic remedies have been exhausted and this case ought not to have survived. In the event a compromise was reached whereby the unscissored locks were encased in snoods. *De minimis lex non curat.* The ECHR was not designed for trivial things.

What is a human right? We think we know one when we see one but there is no easily graspable metaphysical entity. The Founding Fathers of the USA spoke of inalienable rights universally recognisable, and went on to generalize these as life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness the last being substituted for 'property' because this involved awkward problems about slavery. There is something Panglossian, self-indulgent and trivial about the substituted phrase which does not adequately represent the American character. When it came to the actual list of specific rights they have stood up remarkably to the test of time.

In our country until the Convention was incorporated into domestic law the UK had a reputation for being hauled before the Court more than any other member. This was because we had the best record for compliance, which was why British nationals thought it worthwhile to apply. But there were limits to compliance. Since human rights are absolute they should not be subject to temporal influences but of course they are. Myra Hindley, the Moors murderers, considered as did her advisers that she should have recourse to the ECHR after the UK Parole Board had refused her request for freedom after she had served a certain time and was eligible for parole. The Chairman for the Board explained that the reputation and standing of the Board itself would have been threatened if they had granted her release. No government of any complexion could have allowed her out of prison, and Boards and courts can only operate with public approval. In the event no request was made and she was released only by death.

Considerations of tactics, expediency and larger geopolitical factors apply to national players, and their relations with the Courts. In November 2005 the ECHR refused a claim made by a Turkish woman (one of many) against the state. She claimed that she had been denied an education since she was not allowed to wear a head-scarf to lessons. Turkey, a secular state by its constitution, forbids the wearing of head-scarves a traditional religious symbol, relying on its tradition for many centuries of greater religious tolerance such

as it showed to the Jews who took sanctuary after they had been expelled from Spain during the reigns of Ferdinand and Isabella. In Bosnia when it was part of the Turkish Empire imams were proclaiming that the wearing of the headscarf was traditional rather than prescribed. At the moment, and for some time past, Turkey, a Moslem state friendly to the West and a good partner in NATO has longed to be a member of the EU but has been refused because of its alleged abuse of human rights. At the same time its energy supplies give it common cause with Russia to whom it has been drawing closer. No time for the West to be seeking enemies.

The proponents of human rights are well aware that their doctrines are none too popular. A crux came in 2005 after the terrorist attack on London transport. Parliament debated whether there should be available the right to detain suspected terrorists for a period of up to 90 days without charge or trial, a period equivalent to six month's imprisonment.

Ann Widdecombe, MP probably spoke for most when she said that the safety of the majority came before individual rights. A murkier case emerged about the possible prosecution of soldiers in Iraq for their alleged abuse of prisoners. For good measure their officers were included, too, possibly because they bore ultimate responsibility but possibly for political reasons. There were fears that the powers of the military to impose their own codes of discipline were being eroded.

Myra Hindley, the Moors murderers, considered as did her advisers that she should have recourse to the ECHR after the UK Parole Board had refused her request for freedom after she had served a certain time and was eligible for parole.

Three recent cases raised potential difficulties about claims and rights. In one a severely disabled woman denied a very expensive drug on the NHS claimed that her rights were being denied. The issue was fudged because there were doubts about the efficacy and safety of the drug and the central question as to whether there could be upper limits to the money spent by the NHS on one patient was never faced. There could be rival claims about education and still more about defence since some might think the primary duty of the state is the protection of its citizens. In case a woman desperately disabled with no hope of a cure wanted to sue her doctor for not aborting her, on the grounds that the quality of her life was so poor that she was deprived of all human rights save bare existence. The third case is a splendid example of the law of unintended consequences. Children were given the right to trace their natural parent at adolescence partly so that they could know their medical history, to avoid incest and for natural curiosity. The number of sperm-donors has sharply fallen and in some cases clinics have had to close. The losers are the childless women now denied motherhood. Presumably the losers are not the unborn children because unless we adopt the startling theological views of Tony Blair, they do not exist at all and there are no colonies of little souls looking for bodies to inhabit. Sperm donors tended to be students, deemed to be suitable for health, intelligence and absence of ties. They were glad of the money and possibly thought of it as a benevolent action. Men are now reluctant to donate their sperm because in eighteen years time they may feel a hand on their shoulder and a cheery cry of 'Hello, Dad'.

Cherie Blair, the luminary of Matrix Chambers which specialises in Human Rights cases, gave the Hooper lecture on the subject last November. A recent triumph of hers concerned a Moslem girl's case for wearing a head-scarf at a school which imposed a strict uniform policy, less from authoritarianism than a desire to promote a sense of solidarity in pupils from many different backgrounds. Her husband the Prime Minister was trying to encourage 'respect' for the natural leaders of the community which of course included headmistresses. Mrs Blair at least admitted that there were difficulties in the doctrine of human rights and conceded that there would have to be compromises, though not on issues such as torture. But the courts should pay more attention to such rights, keeping them in the forefront of their minds when coming to a decision. With these more modest aspirations the whole matter may become more palatable to the public.

For its part Turkey made a gesture to the doctrine of human rights i.e. free speech. It dropped its prosecution on the grounds of 'insulting Turkishness' against the renowned Turkish novelist, Orhan Pamuk who had claimed that Turkey massacred its Armenian subjects nearly a hundred years ago.

Audrey Parry was a barrister

LETTERS

Sir

I would like to respond to the letter from Hugh Thomas (*SR* Summer 2005) in which he asked regular contributors to 'set out practical ways in which the Gadarene collapse [Western civilisation] can be stopped and reversed'.

Some of the reasons behind this collapse were explained in the 'Great Abdication' by Alex Deane in the Autumn issue. Television and the steady drip effect of over forty years of declining media standards have made us brainwashed into this present passive state. People need to wake up to the damage being inflicted on society and particularly on the young by a self serving and unaccountable media. One practical solution would be to raise public awareness of the problem but the media jealously guard their freedom of expression and the critical voice is seldom heard. It is incumbent on those who are aware and care to get the message over. My own small organisation, mediamarch, has been holding peaceful protests for five years and has raised a Petition of over 121,000 signatures calling on the Government to strengthen the Obscenity Laws and media regulation. Mediawatch-UK (formerly National Viewers and Listeners' Association) struggles to keep the standard for decent values raised. A practical way of halting the decline would be for more people to get behind these two organisations and give them a sporting chance.

Pippa Smith
Great Malvern

Sir,

There is much in what Alex Deane says about the middle-class abdication of responsibility (*SR* Autumn 2005) but he does not mention the political influences which have brought this about. In 1936 Deane's 10 year old would certainly have been told to stop damaging a bus seat by any nearby adult who would be confident of backup by the police and courts if necessary. A violent reaction would have led to an Approved School or Borstal.

Nowadays, as a sad procession of police officers, schoolteachers and others have found to their cost, a plethora of over-protective legislation means a similar scenario would result in the adult being charged with assault and he would also be at risk from a state-funded legal aid action for damages, fairly strong motives for looking the other way.

Politicians have their own pet ideas as to how they spend our taxes and are easily deluded by theories which fit them. If their ambition is to obtain world-wide admiration for 'making poverty history' they are easy to convince that they are actually helping the poor rather than shovelling gold into the bank accounts of corrupt politicians. They are also easy to convince that it is better to raise money rather than building expensive prisons, those 'universities of crime'. It is far better to have thieves out learning on the job, like Fred Barras, the 16 year old with a string of convictions under his belt who was shot by the folk hero, Tony Martin. A cut-price law and order based on a turn 'em loose on any excuse or none philosophy has developed with probation, warnings and suspended sentences. The profligate politician's gain is the public loss in everything from the need for better security to higher insurance premiums, and our masters even profit by putting VAT on locks and taxes on insurance.

Gordon Haines
Woodbridge

Sir,

When Christie Davies (*SR* Winter 2005) referred to 'Britain' he clearly meant and valued a 'nation', not just some geographical zone where capitalists produce commodities. Students of J. M. Keynes will dispute whether his economic theories contributed to the 'death' of this particular nation, just as historians debate whether the 1929 crash resulted from intrinsic flaws in bank lending or attempted regulation.

It would be unfair to saddle Keynes with the Labour Party's post-war incompetence, parasitic aspects of wealth 'redistribution', social-democratic restraints on educational achievement and scientific development, etc. Nor should his proposals for credit reform and public works be dismissed as inflation and hole-filling.

Keynes 'treated the British economy as a closed system immune from the world of international trade'. For decades, our acute reliance on overseas supply and exchange, the unstable 'external factors' of which Labour governments have complained, has indeed been

our fatal predicament, not merely through protection in old markets but because escalating foreign competition from the application of new technology to low-wage populations inexorably undermines our prosperity and national survival.

Keynes did express a 'homespun' preference for maximum self-sufficiency in material goods. Before 1939 a large 'self-contained system' was still possible within a British Empire rich with foodstuffs and raw materials. Economic ideas about 'autarky' and 'under-consumption' then had supporters dotted across the entire political 'spectrum', except its doctrinaire Stalinist and Cobdenite sections. An appropriate combination of international 'insulation' with an internally expansionist incomes policy required some state direction, though not bureaucratic interference in the daily management of industry. This would not have been incompatible with traditional Tory principles, as indicated by Sir Charles Petrie's *The British Problem* (1934).

Instead, a dangerously unprepared Britain went into an unnecessary war. What does it profit a *nation* supposedly to regain 'its own soul' but ultimately to lose 'the whole world'?

J. Robertson
Sheringham, Norfolk

Sir,

In Christie Davies's review of David Conway's book *In defence of the realm* (*SR* Autumn 2005), Davies refers to Kohl and Chirac's claim that the only alternative to the EU is a future war. I agree with them – nationalism ripped Europe apart and if the EU supersedes the nation state thus ending Europe's wars, then surely this is a good thing. However why should the rest of us have to surrender our sovereignty and be part of such a state? Fortunately academics and commentators have been predicting a two tier EU for some time. This would be the ideal solution and if we vote for this presumably democracy will prevail.

William Ballantine
West Lothian

Michael Wharton

1913-2006

Michael Wharton was a long-standing subscriber to the *Salisbury Review* whose values and aspirations he surely embodied, and an occasional contributor, notably an article on Colonel Sibthorp in our 20th Anniversary issue. Unlike most geniuses Michael was a delightful friend full of kindness and good advice if needed. His knowledge of the personalities and intrigues of the political scene was extensive, for he had been around a long time; his judgements were sympathetic but often astringent.

A visit to 'Simpleham' with its retired Guide dogs was a wonderful treat and he and his wife Susan were generous hosts. The official obituaries have commented on Michael's taciturn nature but in private with friends round a dinner table he was a riveting raconteur whose great fund of political and literary anecdotes would reduce you to aching laughter. Particularly hilarious were the tales of the weird people who wrote to him at the *Telegraph* including one infatuated female: 'Does anyone normal read my column?' His reminiscences of vanished times were very funny: there were two characters in Fitzrovia in the immediate post-war period, McBryde and Colquhoun who went into pubs and forced people to have their portraits drawn. If they refused, they became very nasty and threatened violence. Michael remembered upper-class Communists adopting uncivilised table manners for the sake of solidarity with the oppressed. He used to stare at them until they stopped it.

Hal Colebatch in Western Australia has started a Peter Simple Society. I love to think of Michael along with Julian Birdbath in his mine or Phantomsby in the park discussing the competition between the Peter Simple fan clubs and those of Nerdley.

Merrie Cave

ARTS AND BOOKS

Defending the Little Platoons

Ian Crowther

The Morality of Everyday Life, Thomas Fleming, University of Missouri Press, 2004, £31.50.
Dorset Diaries and More Dorset Diaries, David Edelsten, Halsgrove, (01884 243242), £12.95 and £12.99

While reading these books I was reminded of J M Synge's phrase 'the springtime of the local life' which evokes an earlier time of thriving, close-knit communities and the human lives that flourished within them. Not much has been heard since Synge about the virtues of the 'local life'. Instead, modernists have taught a secularized morality of human brotherhood that trivialises local attachments. For these two authors the provincial and the parochial, far from having negative associations, are the foundations of man's moral and cultural life as a 'social animal'. Thomas Fleming's *The Morality of Everyday Life* is a philosophical argument for this unfashionable view, while David Edelsten's *Dorset Diaries* are a personal testimony to its truth. Fleming fastens on a peculiarly modern notion, that the way we live should be governed not by the particular traditions and communities in which we are raised, but rather by universal and abstract principles alone. In so far as we act out of such feelings as family affection, loyalty or love of country, we are not acting rationally as autonomous moral beings, in the way Kant famously told us we should. This idea's Puritan parentage — literally so with Kant, whose father was a Protestant pastor — is easily traced. In the eighteenth century, Reason assumed the office of moral guide formerly performed by the Inner Light or individual conscience. While the Puritan had looked upon human nature as irremediably corrupt, the rationalist looked upon it as irrational. Neither made any distinction between our lower and higher desires, which were alike in being without moral significance.

So all our natural inclinations — and with them all our natural attachments — are devalued. In place of Cicero's definition of morality as 'right reason in accord with nature', we moderns have to make do with pure reason purged of any determination by empirical human motives. There is no room in modern ethics for ennobling impulses. Friendship, for example, is reduced to self-interest and utility, but as Fleming says, 'human affections ... can rise to an appreciation of the other party. As is the case in all human things, there are degrees of seriousness, levels of intensity. Aristotle distinguishes between the lower forms of friendship, in which the friend is valued largely for the pleasure or enjoyment he gives, and higher forms, in which the friend is valued for his own sake.' More broadly, prudence (Aristotelian *phronesis*) is no longer the knowledge of what is good for man (what elevates or perfects his nature) but simply the means of calculating one's own self-interest. The prudent man nowadays is more concerned with getting on than getting wisdom.

We have drained morality from everyday life and replaced it with the individual self or rational will, conceived as the source and centre of our 'values'. The first commandment of this new morality was neatly encapsulated by Leo Strauss (speaking of Max Weber) as 'Thou shalt have Ideals.' These ideals — arbitrarily chosen but for that very reason 'authentic' and therefore moral — abrogate the ordinary obligations of life and vindicate, as Fleming puts it, 'rights to privacy, to self-expression, and to self determination that supersede, for example, a mother's duty to her children, a husband's obligations to his wife, and a citizen's commitment to the broader community of which he is a member'. Today the egotistical sublime has triumphed over both its austere predecessors, Puritan conscience and rational duty. The ethical journey taken by modern man parallels the movement away from a settled existence in small, rural communities towards a more rootless, urban life of temporary attachments and shifting allegiances. This phenomenon, quite as much as the hyper-individualism wished upon us by liberal philosophers, accounts for our acceptance of the idea that to be moral involves distancing ourselves from the particular and the local.

However, it would be an error akin to Marxist materialism to suppose that modernism is all of a piece and that the conditions of our twenty-first century existence oblige us to embrace the dominant ideology of moral individualism. Look just beneath the surface of modern life, as Fleming bids us, and you discover an enduring morality that accords with 'the common sense of ordinary people' precisely because 'on certain points – such as the need for a social order, the importance of the family as an institution for rearing children, and the

significance of kinship and friendship' it is determined not by human history but by human nature.

Fleming's advocacy of a return to an older moral tradition is a perfectly realistic project, since however far we are pulled away from familial and communal attachments we will always seek to return to them. Human beings by their very nature recoil from a world of universal abstractions where the bonds of kinship and friendship make no difference. Aristotle and the writers of the Old Testament were right in thinking that our moral characters are formed by 'an intricate network of peculiar obligations arising from specific circumstances and experiences'. Although the modern everywhere encroaches on the pre-modern, and the liberal mandarins attempt to extinguish patriotism, ethnic pride and local attachments, still we remain stubbornly tribal and domestic in our everyday lives. Fleming rightly observes that 'we devote most of our energies to the same tasks that absorbed our ancestors' attention. We work to provide the necessities of life, we eat and sleep, rear families; and in time grow old; we conceive high hopes, flourish or go bankrupt all within the confined circle of local neighbourhoods ... in large cities, we inevitably search out the little corner that may come to seem as familiar as the village in which our ancestors lived and died.'

David Edelsten's two volumes of *Dorset Diaries* vividly illustrate Fleming's thesis. Liberalism's lofty condescension towards lesser loyalties and petty responsibilities may not have altered the reality of ordinary life, but it has made many dissatisfied with what they have been taught to regard as their 'stereotyped' roles, and desirous of something more 'fulfilling'. Edelsten, with the rich material for reflection and observation that life in his village furnishes him, experiences no such craving to be 'somewhere else'. To the contrary, the enemy is definitely without rather than within: 'We are an old-fashioned lot, not much impressed by urban notions of modernity. The great issues that nightly furrow the brows of television news-presenters, and are presumed to rack the nation, often pass us by. Indeed, the 'forces of conservatism' run deep in Glanvilles Wootton: we expect nothing but foolishness from government or London, nor yet from Dorchester or Blandford, and seldom are we disappointed.'

Clearly Edelsten, a former soldier, has more time for Edmund Burke's 'little platoons' than the big battalions. As he chronicles events in his household and village, he builds up a wholly convincing picture of a real community — as opposed to those ersatz communities (gay, transexual, black etc.) conjured up in the newspeak of diversity enforcers for the purpose (once served by Marx's proletariat) of creating social unrest and resentment. For Edelsten, community is not some free-floating abstraction; it has a local habitation and a name. He writes of gatherings in the Village Hall as occasions when 'the village contemplates itself, everyone mucks in, and to use a word begrimed with bureaucratic fingerprints, we feel we are a community'.

Some might see this lovingly rendered account of life in a rural village — a life punctuated by Sunday matins, lambing, hedge-cutting, point-to-points, hunting and hunt balls — as idealised. If so, it is the ideal embedded in the real, not separated from it. To Edelsten, the small patch of English earth to which he belongs is the seed-bed of much that is valuable, and no doubt much that is petty and foolish, too. He quotes Jane Austen's aphorism that 'there is so much of gratitude or vanity in almost every attachment', but in detachment, there is neither. It is not through behaving as sovereign individuals that we learn to acknowledge the personhood of other human beings, and their claims upon us, but through our daily, face-to-face relationships with them. A parochial morality has this advantage over a universal morality: it can be lived. Edelsten conveys a strong sense of what Fleming's morality means in practice when he speaks of his village as having 'a human heart and spirit that must be enviable. I have often tried to put my finger on the secret of this harmony, and I can come no closer to it than to say that nearly all contribute and join in, and no one throws his or her weight around more than is tolerable. We seem to have a shared sense of propriety.'

This understanding that we discover what is proper to our natures through our particular relationships contrasts markedly with a modern philosophy that excludes the claims of those close to us from the realm of morality. Rather, it is our demands as rights bearing individuals which today transcend our duties towards people to whom we are attached. We make these claims not only for ourselves but also on behalf of oppressed strangers. Either way, whether it be individual or international human rights we are championing, we refuse, as Fleming says, 'to waste (our) moral energies on spouses or friends or neighbours'.

Both Fleming and Edelsten find Dickens' Mrs Jellyby the prototype of the modern moral character, whose 'telescopic philanthropy' assumes responsibility for the 'world community' but not for its own. Writes Edelsten: 'Mrs Jellyby is alive and well, and flourishing in Blair's Britain... Thus today we are subjected to endless green pieties, not least from the young, about the Amazon rain forest, pandas and the polar ice-cap, yet our beautiful country lanes are strewn with hideous litter — crisp packets, plastic bottles, and much worse.'

Happily, Edelsten draws our attention less to the modern world's detritus than to the sights and sounds of the older, rural world he cherishes, for example the courting rituals of pheasants on his land, a blue tit diving through 'a florin-sized hole' in a shut stable door, or an ancient pollard ash 'with stunted and torn stumps of limbs ... a real Arthur Rackham tree (that) somehow clings on to life, year after year reaching out claws of new growth'. Edelsten — like Thomas Hardy — is 'a man who notices such things' with the easy familiarity of someone who has more than a nodding acquaintance with his subject matter. In Edelsten's hands, Fleming's 'morality of everyday life' is tinged with poetry, and an elegiac sense of rural interests no longer represented, as typically they once were by Tory squires, in the counsels of the nation. While the rootless individualism of our times would suggest the opposite, the local life Edelsten depicts is where universal values reside. Otherwise, they exist only in the mind.

The Red Emperor

Jonathan Story

Mao: the Unknown Story, Jung Chang, Jon Halliday, Jonathan Cape, 2005, £25.

Mao Tse-tung's future historians will have to come to terms with this giant boulder of a book. In it, Mao is given no quarter in a remorseless deconstruction of his rule as the world's most fearsome tyrant, who delighted in death, cruelty, and destruction on a scale overshadowing by far the other two monsters of the twentieth century, Hitler and Stalin. Mao is held responsible for well over 70 million deaths *in peacetime*, not to speak of the hundreds of millions of lives he destroyed, the soldiers he sent to their deaths to further his cause, or those he had buried alive.

Chang and Halliday demolish one Mao myth after another. Mao was not present when the communist party of China was founded in August 1920, but he was present at the first CCP Congress in Shanghai in July 1921. Mao was keen on a good salary, and 94 per cent of the CCP's financing came from Moscow, so he supported Moscow's plan to herd the CCP into the Kuomintang. CCP members considered Mao as too right wing, too close to the Nationalists, and too ideologically woolly. He was working in the Kuomintang's peasant affairs department, when Chiang Kai-shek in 1927 declared war on the CCP as too beholden to the USSR, on which Chiang had to rely on as a source of finance, but whose class-war policies he despised, and whose imperial ambitions he suspected. Like Philip Short, in his *Mao: A Life*, the authors show that Mao was the only CCP leader who consistently agreed with Stalin on the peasant's role in China, the importance of a Red Army, and the need to create rural base areas — in an Arabic translation, Al Qa'eda.

Short thinks that Mao's strategy to win power was a meticulous Marxist analysis of class war in the countryside. Chang and Halliday say that Mao was never concerned about the peasants. His report to the Kuomintang was blasted in a Soviet magazine as unsystematic and unscientific. Mao despised the peasantry who were there to be exploited, and to help him conquer power. Once emperor of China, Mao guaranteed food to the urban population, and let peasants starve. 'The state should try its hardest... to prevent peasants eating too much'... In 1955 he introduced the communes, producing a long term collapse in food supply.

The authors demolish the story of key battles that never occurred, with Mao's destruction of troops and rivals for his own benefit, and the leadership being carried by porters during a Long March that was heroic, but only for the long suffering soldiery. The Red Army escaped because Chiang had to keep in with Stalin; he wanted his blood-son, Chiang Ching-kuo, returned from Moscow, where Stalin was holding him hostage. Mao was triumphant apparently because he forged a lean and mean fighting force, inspired by and dedicated to improving the lot of China's working and peasant classes. Not so: the communists were often saved or their passage eased by foreign powers. For example Chiang was about to annihilate the remnants of the communist forces in 1931, when his troops had to withdraw from Jiangxi in response to Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931. Three days after the nuclear bomb fell on Hiroshima, Stalin's armies invaded northern China, opened the Japanese arms depots to the communists, and created the conditions for Mao's eventual triumph.

Chairman Mao arrived with a personality cult — courtesy of US journalists, and a claque of naïve fellow-travellers, with the ears of both Roosevelt and Truman. This accounts for the book's ambiguous reception in the US, where the scars from the conflict of the early cold war over 'who lost China' are still sensitive. Edgar Snow's *Red Star over China* played a major part in swaying western opinion in Mao's favour. Roosevelt relied on information about China from a private network that included Snow. The test for Mao was not victory in war, but success in peacetime. In war, he won; in peace, he failed. For Mao policy was not domestic but about presiding over a military superpower in his own lifetime. This was the theme

of Sebastian Haffner's study on Hitler, whose hubris was to crush his programme for Germany, Europe and the world into his own lifetime. Mao, however, came to power in the nuclear age, requiring a rather clearer division than prevailed before 1945. In a nuclear age, sending troops across international frontiers involved high risks for the perpetrators. The authors are less than convincing about the Korean war. Like others they aver that Mao identified mainland China with the Soviet camp, but then they argue that Mao and Stalin jointly started the Korean war. Stalin was prepared to support Mao and the Korean dictator, Kim Il Sung, because a war would fulfil a number of purposes: it would be a testing ground for new technology, would increase Chinese and Korean dependence on the USSR, it would test US brinkmanship, how far the US was prepared to go to war on the communist camp; and crucially, China had limitless manpower to throw against the UN forces in Korea. Stalin and Mao were not concerned about the prospective loss of lives.

However both Moscow and Beijing were concerned that the US had complete air supremacy over the Korean peninsula, that UN troops were under the command of the victor of the Pacific war, and that the western allies had dropped the nuclear bomb on Japan. Chang and Halliday argue that Stalin both wanted and did not want the war, but this is not easily squared with the statement that Stalin positively wanted the war. If the USSR was to extend air coverage over Korea, would the US extend the war zone to include Russia? If US troops were under too much pressure, would not the US drop nuclear weapons on China, and perhaps even seek to 'roll back' Soviet rule from other territories? Stalin's hesitations are at first downplayed and then emphasised in their discussion. The authors start with a hard hitting statement and then cover their tracks.

Their account of Mao's relations with Stalin's heirs is more plausible: Khruschev did not want to become embroiled in US conflicts with China over Taiwan, but was ready to help China to make the bomb. Despite high risk operations in the Caribbean, Khruschev wished to reach a *modus vivendi* with the West and did not appreciate Mao's not-so-casual statements about China's ability to absorb enormous human losses in a nuclear confrontation. The Sino-Soviet split is well-recorded by the authors, but they do not break new territory. Their analysis of Mao's relations with the Nixon-Kissinger foreign policy team in the years 1969-74 is not convincing. Mao decided to invite Nixon to come to China, after the Sino-Soviet clash on the Ussuri river in early 1969 when it had become obvious that Maoism was unsuccessful in most of the world — the prime supporter of Hanoi in the war against the south was the Soviet Union. The Nixon-Kissinger team gave too much away, were bamboozled by Mao's talk about the shared Sino-US threat from the USSR, and allowed the Chinese regime to indulge in anti-US tirades. This is naïve. Mao hoped to extract nuclear technology from the US by talking about the Soviet threat. He got nothing. His dalliance with Nixon cost him his international reputation and Hanoi chastised Chou En-lai for talking to the US about Vietnam. There was never a chance that the US would abandon Taiwan. By 1973, the Chinese foreign ministry concluded that the world was more than ever divided between the US and the USSR so Mao had to abandon his dream of China as a superpower in his lifetime. The story of Mao's relationships with the Nixon-Kissinger team provides enough evidence to contradict the authors' thesis that Mao took the Americans to the cleaners.

Chang and Halliday present a bleak picture of unremitting warfare launched by the party-state on the people of China, with 27 million people dying in prisons and labour camps. His Great Leap Forward was brought to an ignominious end prompting him to nurture 'volcanic hatred' of officials. The vitriolic Mme Chang became more prominent, and in 1966, Mao launched the Cultural Revolution, in which 3 million people died violent deaths, two-thirds of the Beijing historic sites were destroyed and terrified households destroyed their libraries. Most Chinese families have to support un- or under-educated 50 year old members who could not attend school.

Mao's final years are mired in failure. The one change was the formidable alliance made between Chou En-lai and Deng Xiao Ping, back from banishment, to counter the machinations of Mme Mao and the Gang of Four. When Mao died, China was an impoverished backwater, hundreds of millions lived below any modest threshold of poverty, technology was hopelessly outdated — as the Red Army found in the brutal short war fought with Vietnam. Philip Short in his biography nonetheless tries to be fair-minded: China, under Mao, made the great leap from semi-colony to great power; from millennial autarky to socialist state; from imperialist victim to UN Security Council member. He then makes the fantastic claim — very much like Eric Hobsbawm's apologia for his membership of the communist party — that the overwhelming majority of deaths from Mao's policies were unintended consequences of policy failure, putting him in a different category to Hitler and Stalin.

Chang and Halliday make a strong case, that would take very detailed historical research to counter. Their Mao is one of the characters from Dostoevsky's *Possessed*, a horrendous nihilist who believes in nothing but himself, but this interpretation allows Marxism to get off too lightly. Short rightly takes

Mao's Marxism more seriously, but then lets Mao off the hook by implying that he intended well, but '...oh sorry, millions of people died. I didn't mean it'. Chang and Halliday have no truck with such pusillanimity.

This book is a major challenge for Mao's heirs despite its lack of access to archives. The legitimacy of the present party-state is inextricably entwined with Mao: 'the current communist regime declares itself to be Mao's heir and fiercely perpetuates the myth of Mao'. They demolish the myth, and lay a powerful axe to the roots of the present regime. Mao's ambition to superpowerdom is being pursued by other means, but we are not observing capitalism in China. It is a market-driven Marxist growth engine. Mao immunised the Chinese for generations against ideology, a point made by Short in his biography, but not made by Chang and Halliday. The Chinese people want economic performance of course, but also justice, security, and a degree of equality. Mao's heirs are presiding over a proto-democracy, and it is the Chinese people who are, and will be calling the shots. This book cannot be the final say about Mao, but it is a great book, *incontournable.*

A Life against the Grain

Anthony Daniels

Gentle Regrets: Thoughts from a Life, Roger Scruton, Continuum, 2005, £16.99

There was a time, not so very long ago, when the idea of an intelligent, let alone an intellectual, conservative seemed risible to the great majority of people who considered themselves to be of independent mind. To imagine that we had inherited anything from the past worth preserving, and that reforms that sprang from our own attempts to define philosophical first principles might lead to disaster, was considered pusillanimous, mean-spirited and self-serving. A conservative was either a person with an inherited material interest or social position to defend, or a grasping petty bourgeois afraid of change, competition and expropriation of his miserable little property. It was this idea of conservatism that informed Mr Blair's notorious speech to his party conference about the iniquitous forces of conservatism: as if, before his own advent, Man had discovered and learnt nothing, at least of any value. Roger Scruton, one of the founders of this journal, stood out against this view, correctly perceiving it to be a manifestation of modern self-importance and egotism. While the claim on this book's jacket that he was an intellectual dissident seems to me an over-dramatising one, he nevertheless suffered considerable disdain and even social ostracism from *bien pensants* for his lucid defence of tradition as the guarantor of civilisation.

Gentle Regrets is, as its subtitle suggests, not so much an autobiography as a series of autobiographical reflections. It doesn't quite cohere in the literary sense, but the theme of the necessity of cultural continuity (which is not the same as changelessness, as Blair ignorantly implied in his speech) for there to be a decent human existence runs through it. Like most conservatives of the thinking kind — yes, there are now many, unafraid to acknowledge it, in large part thanks to him — Scruton is capable of genuine, which is to say painful, reflection upon his own experience. His realisation long after her death of his mother's true character is very moving; in the callowness of youth, he had misinterpreted her self-effacing qualities as cowardice and lack of character.

The household in which he grew up he found deeply uncomfortable, in which the expression of any emotion other than his father's inchoate anger was impermissible. One wonders whether this deepened Scruton's character and rendered him more susceptible to the life of the mind. We learn how he came to understand the redemptive quality of high culture, and how, as a result, he became conservative. His experiences in Eastern Europe confirmed him in his conservatism: but there is an unexplained paradox in his account. On the one hand, communism was a vile doctrine and practice that led to fear, material impoverishment, social fragmentation and so forth; on the other, it seems — inadvertently, of course — to have preserved the spirituality of at least some people, who thirsted for a higher existence in a way almost unknown in the free west.

Indeed, Scruton's description of the new Prague after the so-called revolution makes it considerably less attractive, at least to someone of intellectual tastes, than the old. This raises an awkward question to which no answer is supplied: does Man need hardship and suffering in order to develop real character? Elsewhere, Scruton says (and I agree with him) that the modern vision of life as a succession of pleasures without pains makes people shallow; the idea that we can and should go through life without suffering, or even frustration, makes us ungrateful, querulous and aggressive. I cheered his strictures on the psychological consequences of the doctrine of human rights.

Was a shallow and vulgar consumerism the only alternative to totalitarian oppression? Consumption without discrimination or other purpose is very unattractive, as well as existentially insufficient. The chapter on modernist and post-modernist architecture is a devastating and accurate attack on the architecture of the last three quarters of a century. This chapter should

be sent as a pamphlet to every architectural school in the country, indeed the world: but it won't be, of course. Presumably every architectural student dreams of leaving his mark on a city as a dog leaves its mark on a tree. Modern architecture is thus egotism made in concrete, steel and glass. I disagree with Scruton only when he says that modernist architecture was a mistake: it was not a mistake, it was a crime, and someone like Le Corbusier was a vicious criminal, in his field the equal of Stalin.

Scruton's relationship to God and religion, which he tries to elucidate in the book, and which clearly preoccupies him, seems to me contorted. I take all his points about the superiority of a religious outlook to a secular one, but assertions are not true just because it would be pleasant or gratifying if they were. Does he believe that God exists and is the creator of all things, or does he believe that this is a polite fiction to which we should all subscribe for the good of our character and of society as a whole? I am still not sure. Because he has been in a minority for so long, some might think that Scruton is a mere provocateur, a gadfly. On the contrary: gadflydom has now become a mass phenomenon among intellectuals. It is Scruton who defends seriousness — not without humour, of course.

Testament of an Epicurean

Michael St John Parker

The Duff Cooper Diaries: 1915-1951, ed. John Julius Norwich, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2005, £20

'The obituaries treat Duff as a mixture of Fox, Metternich, Rochester and the Iron Duke', wrote Evelyn Waugh on the death of Duff Cooper in 1954. No doubt the hyperbole would have extended to a mention of Pepys, if public knowledge of Duff's diaries had not been limited at that time to the excerpts which he had included in his autobiography, *Old Men Forget*. Now, however, Duff's son, John Julius Norwich, has enlarged our understanding of his father by editing the seventeen handwritten volumes and typescripts which cover the years 1915-33, 1936-39, and 1944-51. The diaries had previously been read only by the publisher Rupert Hart Davis (who had to be dissuaded from burning them), and by a select band of authors who had used them as sources for writing about Duff and his wife Diana. If comparison with previously published sections of text means anything, the work of editing has been carried out with scrupulous integrity as well as loving care. The picture that emerges is revealing a portrait not just of the writer himself, but of much that was central in English society and politics during the first half of the twentieth century.

Even the most startling revelations can make boring reading, as the redtop press proves every day, but Duff is eminently readable, as well as revealing, and while we may be sure that he would have ridiculed any comparison between himself and the great Samuel, there are at least some areas of resemblance. Both men were for many years close to the centre of public affairs while England was passing through stirring and dangerous times; both were involved with the defence of the realm, and especially with the Royal Navy; each combined true devotion to a beautiful wife with an irrepressible disposition towards philandering; they were similarly closely matched in their almost morbid sensitivity to social distinctions; they rivalled each other in devotion to the pleasures of the table; both possessed abnormally acute eyes for the significant detail, and rare instincts for the telling phrase; and neither was quite certain what it was that drove him to record his life in such imprudent, often inglorious, detail.

Comparison also marks differences, of course, and here the most significant might arise from the accident of timing: whereas Pepys bustles hopefully through the doubtful dawn of Britain's imperial day, Duff seems to stroll with cultivated languor into its lurid sunset. In accordance with the spirits of their respective epochs, while Pepys was an unashamed arriviste, Duff had a self-image carefully sculpted to depict the archetypical Establishmentarian — elegant Etonian, dissipated Oxonian, decorated Guards officer, yachting-capped Lord of Admiralty, husband of the fabulously beautiful Lady Diana Manners and lover of as many other women as he cared to pursue, white-tied epicure, admired *litterateur* and biographer of his *alter ego* Talleyrand, suavely persuasive advocate of Anglo-French understanding and ennobled architect of a treaty which he hoped would become the foundation of a new European order.

Duff's true identity was rather more complex. His father had been a fashionable doctor who specialised in the treatment of venereal diseases and piles; his mother, a *déclassé* aristocrat who had been divorced, and disowned by her family, was employed in 'a menial job' at a London hospital when she caught the doctor's eye, and marriage followed. Their grandson records the *on dit* of the time, that together they knew more than anyone else about the private parts of the English aristocracy. The son of this adventurous union, while ever drawn to splendour like a moth to a candle-flame, was fascinated also by risk and loucheness — gambling, wild parties and drugs. His capture of Lady Diana Manners dismayed her ducal

family (notwithstanding that she herself was the offspring of a notorious affair between her mother, the Duchess of Rutland, and the dashing Henry Cust). In the frenzied Twenties, the glamorous young couple's antics with other Bright Young Things (Diana was the model for Evelyn Waugh's portrait of Mrs. Stitch) made it difficult for hard-faced Conservatives to take Duff seriously as an aspirant politician. His dealings with Winston Churchill marked him as a maverick, a reputation which was deepened by his contacts with Edward, Prince of Wales (the Coopers were among the party that cruised on the *Nahlin* in August, 1936). Even when apotheosis had come, and Duff was in his glory as British Ambassador in Paris, putting forward proposals for a new Concert of Europe and offering a Treaty of Dunkirk as prelude to a settlement which should rival that of Vienna in 1815, he was still painfully conscious of being excluded from the true centre of affairs. At the court of the impossible de Gaulle, his Francophilia was passport to no more than a grudging part-acceptance; in England, the same Francophilia condemned him to the status of a Malvolio *vis-à-vis* the powerful Ernest Bevin. In the end, Duff was one of life's outsiders.

An outsider's eye is a great asset to a diarist. He empathises, an intense aspirant, with those whom he wishes to join, even though reality is chary of matching fantasy to the full, and does so only with seeming inconsequentiality, as when the drunkenness of his adjutant places Duff in command of a draft of Grenadiers marching through the streets of London to the Western Front and glory. The observer's temperament is rarely soured by the bitterness of undue self-awareness: 'My life is so continually surrounded by people that it is a pleasure to be alone for once and I enjoyed this drive and this lunch and sitting in the sun. It occurred to me that I was probably an existentialist without knowing it. I have always denounced it and never quite understood what it stands for. Nor am I clear how it differs from hedonism. I resolved to worry less and work less but I fear I shall find it difficult to carry out my resolution in view of the peace conference. I learnt by heart a sonnet of Rimbaud during the drive.' There is a certain catlike quality to his self-possession.

Duff was inescapably a creature of his time. Certainly he suffered from the ailments of that doomed generation which was born in the last years of Victoria's reign. He was haunted all his life by the ghosts of brilliant friends killed in the trenches, where he survived. He was content to substitute aesthetics for ethics, and convention for conviction in matters spiritual (he insisted mildly on his loyalty to Anglican observances — but when he disliked the passage prescribed for him to read as a lesson in church, he discarded it in favour of another of his own choosing). Despite, or perhaps because of, the rigours of his classical education, he failed to perceive the analogies that might have been drawn between the British Empire after 1918 and the Macedonian Empire after the death of Alexander; his contempt for America and Russia fully matched the loftiness of Hellenistic attitudes towards Rome and Carthage.

Duff's 1947 Treaty of Dunkirk is now even more completely forgotten than its inglorious predecessor, the 1670 Treaty of Dover — on which, unfortunately, we do not possess Pepys' opinion. But Duff's diaries may last better than his diplomacy; they lay bare, with a precision worthy of that deft surgeon, Duff's father, the disease that destroyed the British national will in the first half of the twentieth century, and point with clinical certainty to the years of decline. It is sad to reflect that our present ruling class, characterised by the most benighted ignorance of history both ancient and modern, is unlikely to benefit from reading them.

An Unbreakable Spirit

Constantin Roman

My Second University – Memories from Romanian Communist prisons, Dr. Stanciu Stroia and Dr. Dan Dusleag, iUniverse Inc, 2005, $19.95, www.iUniverse.com

Dr. Stanciu Stroia (1904-1987) died only a couple of years before Ceausescu was overthrown in Bucharest and his memoirs have survived because of unusual circumstances. First, there was the author's dogged courage and determination to put pen to paper at a time when he was still under surveillance by the Securitate, the Romanian Secret Services. The author finished the book when he was eighty two, dying a year later. He was aware that he ran a permanent risk and that if the manuscript describing his prison ordeal came to light he would receive a new prison sentence. At his advanced age this would have meant a death sentence. Secondly Dr. Stroia's manuscript eventually made its way to the West. Owing to the love and dedication of his grandson Dr. Dan Dusleag (a paediatrician at Indiana University School of Medicine), helped by his mother, Dr. Lucia Dusleag (née Stroia) of Toronto and author of the book's Epilogue, *My Second University* was translated into English. Both daughter and grandson carefully edited the manuscript as well as compiling one thousand names of political detainees at the Fagaras prison. Thirdly and most importantly we read how medical care was provided in Communist Romania's prisons and the clinical consequences of the prison regime on the detainees, and how food rationing and torture

affected the prisoners' physical and mental health.

My Second University is also a fresco of Transylvanian society in transition from the dawn of the Habsburg empire up to the Soviet occupation of Romania during WWII. This was the point of entrenchment of the Communist system, which came to stay for over 40 years to 1989. The book spans a period of some 150 years and seven generations. It is not only a family history but also a social history of the Romanian professional classes with roots deep among the rural peasantry of Transylvania. These are the people who formed the backbone of 'Greater Romania' (Romania Mare), which came into being after the demise of the Habsburg Empire in 1919. The authors take us back to the first half of the 19th century through the family history in the village of Cacova, near Sibiu, at the foot of the Carpathian Mountains, where the authors' ancestors were farmers and priests or were raising their flocks as shepherds. A new class of educated people arose from this rural population and Stroia represented the first generation with a University degree. He was very proud of his origins and always felt close to the people who tilled the land and raised livestock: odd as it may appear, this would contribute to his downfall and imprisonment by the Communists because of his popularity among the simple folk and all those who met and worked with him. As a high-profile medical doctor Stroia was not politically active against the communist dictatorship and he would have had no reason to fear its wrath were it not for the arbitrary acts of repression that the regime meted out to innocent people: he became one of its victims and spent seven years behind bars from 1951 to 1958. There followed the long trail of notorious prisons (Sibiu, Jilava, Aiud, Fagaras), solitary confinement, torture, humiliations, malnutrition and physical degradation — but never moral collapse because Stroia kept his spine straight and never cowered.

We have already read of such experiences but the difference here lies in the tone of the narrative: it is neither strident nor bitter but is quietly factual, almost clinical, as the medical eye surveys human sufferings and frailties, as well as the medical effects the prison regime has on the human body. Because this prisoner had an enquiring mind he went through a learning curve rather than a Calvary, and he was far too dignified to present it as such preferring to describe it metaphorically as his second university. We read in the chapter on the Consequences of Imprisonment:

> As a result of my severe and prolonged scurvy, I must have lost fifty per cent of my nerve cells through irremediable atrophy, an insult from which I never recovered. Only a detailed post mortem pathological exam could demonstrate the extent of injuries sustained by a scurvy-affected brain. Many intellectuals I met in Aiud (prison), especially those experiencing generalised dystrophic symptoms, lost their short and long-term memory. Knowing that I was a physician, they would ask me if this loss was reversible. Of course I had to encourage them, even if they told me, for instance, that they could not remember the names of their own grandchildren.

Stroia's stamina and moral rectitude helped him survive the seven years spent in some of Romania's most infamous penitentiaries. One of his friends was right when he exclaimed on seeing him during a chance encounter after his release from prison: *Nu mor caii cand vor cainii* (Horses never die when dogs want it — in this context: when hyenas want it.) As one would expect *My Second University* focuses on Dr. Stroia's prison years when Gheorghiu-Dej, the Communist dictator installed by Stalin, ruled with an iron fist. The book describes the broader context of the author's medical career and life-span from 1904 to 1987. There is an Epilogue written by his daughter and an Introduction and Acknowledgements contributed by his grandson, Dr. Dan Dusleag, which bring us to the present day. Beyond this, the memoir encompasses Stanciu Stroia of Zavoi, mayor of Cacova in the Transylvania of the first half of the 19th century. This social backdrop introduces a broad variety of Transylvanian characters from humble herdsmen, village priests and minor country squirearchy, to Hungarian aristocrats, like Count Bethlen, brother of the Hungarian Prime Minister, politicians, Orthodox and Uniate Bishops, and inevitably prison warders and torturers, communist satraps, not to mention informers and Securitate spies of whom there were many. The whole panorama of post-war Romania is unfolded before our eyes. This is a very 'Transylvanian' book, not just for its contents, characters and the situations it describes, but especially for the directness and forcefulness of its presentation. Stanciu Stroia has very precise views which stem from an early upbringing in the care of a young widowed mother belonging to 'Old Transylvania'.

The Enemy Within Europe

Alfred Sherman

Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis. Bat Ye'or, Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 2005, $49.50 hb, $23.95 pb.

While the US Government and its allies make much of the 'war against terror' (which dare not speak its true name, 'defence against Moslem terrorism') claiming on its behalf major exemptions from civilized norms of judicial procedure, the creeping Islamisation of

European society proceeds almost un-remarked, unopposed, and indeed deliberately encouraged. Mass immigration from the Moslem world into Western and Central Europe, legal and illegal, continues unabated. Moslem immigrant communities are permitted to create states within states, receiving the rights of citizenship without its duties or concomitants. Europe leans towards them with increasingly anti-Israeli, anti-Semitic and anti-American manifestations, often downplaying Christianity at home and ignoring the persecution of Christians in the Moslem world while showering praise and privileges on Islam. It is as though Europe is turning its back on itself, just as the European Left did in relation to the Soviet threat for most of the cold-war period.

The process has received little in the way of systematic treatment in the countries most affected, while those who raise their voices against it are cowed by parroted accusations of 'racism' or 'Islamophobia'. Bat Ye'or, who has devoted years to study what she calls 'Dhimmitude', the oppression and often extirpation of Christians, Jews and other non-Moslems in lands conquered and ruled by Islam, reviews the process at length. The study's strength lies in its scrupulous scholarship and intellectual boldness. Its main thesis is that the process of 'dhimmitude', initiated by European governments and European Community institutions, is bringing about major demographic, cultural, political and diplomatic shifts which are wholly deleterious to Europe, as well as to the US, Israel and Jewry in general, against whom they are more immediately aimed.

The concept of a single sphere of civilization, encompassing Christian Europe, Islam and the Arab world, expressed in the one-sided 'Euro-Arab dialogue', backed by para-govermental activity, European funds, fair winds from the defence industries and pressures from oil-producing states and their Western partners, is matched by fierce propaganda against Israel, the Jews and America. Hence the concept of Eurabia, the putative union of Mediterranean lands linking Christianity and Islam, and the romanticising of medieval Moslem society, particularly in Moslem Spain, in defiance of historical fact, which the study demolishes at length. She demonstrates that apart from a short initial period, Moslem rule in Spain was bloody and eventually self-destructive.

The author traces the process of EU cosying up to Islam from the nineteen-seventies, from the Declaration of Venice, its continuation in Hamburg, the 'Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the dialogue of cultures', and a host of successors, embracing institutions of the EC and the Vatican. She traces the links which bind the new anti-semitism, or Judeophobia, and demonisation of the Jewish State, with their pre-war and war-time versions in Europe, both political and clerical, as well as the use of oil as a political weapon by Moslem states. She shows that though Israel, Jews and America are the immediate targets of the Eurabian offensive, Christian Europe is the ultimate target. After the Christian counter-attack which began with the lifting of the Turkish siege of Vienna in the late seventeenth century, the post-war Moslem counter-offensive and expansion has been gathering strength. As the study demonstrates, it can be effective partly because it reaches out to and exploits existing syndromes in the West: self-destructive urges, national self-hate and masochism, expressed *inter alia* in 'third-worldism'. A generation or two ago, the Soviet and Chinese Communist offensives benefited from these syndromes. Defeatism changes its form more readily than its content. Readers of the *Salisbury Review* will not be surprised to find Christopher (now Lord) Patten prominent among the appeasers of Islamist militancy.

A word of caution is needed. As Bat Ye'or points out, anti-Americanism is a fact of European political life. But criticism of or opposition to American policies and practices is not anti-American *per se*. It is possible to be a fierce critic of the Iraq war — in terms of US as well as European interests — without a shadow of anti-Americanism. The most thoroughgoing denunciation of the Arab-Moslem offensive cannot avoid reference to earlier American support for Islamic militancy, which still persists towards the Balkans. It was America which took the lead in the pogrom against the Christian Serbs and Macedonians, to the benefit of militantly Islamic governments and armed movements in Bosnia, Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia. EU appeasement of Moslem fundamentalism has parallels in American relations with the Saudis. Roots of appeasement lie deep in American society. This reminds us that we need a balanced long-term appreciation of the implications of broad-based and long-term engagement with the Moslem world, including its present militancy; this is the context in which her warnings against EU appeasement need to be taken to heart.

Who Desires Peace?

Frank Ellis

Another Bloody Century: Future Warfare, Colin S. Gray, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2005, £20.

If the end of Cold War rivalry does herald the end of major wars between states, as many academic defence professionals seem to believe, then *Another*

Bloody Century is destined to become no more than an academic anomaly. If, on the other hand, Thucydides's view that wars are driven by 'fear, honour and interest', is correct, as Professor Gray believes, then, given that states have shown no sign of abandoning these three considerations, the betting has to be that major interstate wars have not disappeared from history's stage. Indeed, absent some profound change in human beings they are not going to disappear either. Professor Gray's comprehensive analysis is based on a sure knowledge of history. The past offers instruction and a warning of things to come. 'Historical perspective', he argues, 'is the only protection we have against undue capture by the concerns and fashionable ideas of today.'

According to Gray, the core of this historical perspective can be derived from an exclusive group of strategic thinkers: Sun-tzu (*The Art of War*), Thucydides (*History of the Peloponnesian War*) and Carl von Clausewitz (*On War*). Baron de Jomini is also highly regarded as a strategic thinker, though he does not occupy the same exalted status in Gray's pantheon as the other three. 'Indeed, it is only a slight exaggeration to claim that what those three theorists did not say about war and the statecraft bearing upon it — in Thucydides and Sun-tzu for the latter — is not worth saying.' Professor Gray readily concedes that the collective wisdom of Sun-tzu, Thucydides and Clausewitz cannot provide us with the detail of the wars of the mid-twenty-first century and beyond but after three millennia of organised violence it does suggest that war and warfare enjoy a permanent place in mankind's affairs and that general principles can be stated. Whether Sun-tzu merits the same status as a strategic thinker as Thucydides and Clausewitz is doubtful. The Greek and the German adopt a more direct approach to the problem of war, whereas Sun-tzu is more concerned with the aesthetics of deception, the art of deception for its own sake rather than the 'friction(s) of war'. I suggest that *The Way of the Chinese Spy Master* might be a better title than *Art of War*. In any case, *Art of War* is somewhat misleading as a translation, since the Chinese, *Ping fa*, translates as the 'way of the warrior'.

Gray is outstanding on information warfare and space-based systems, and grasps the nature of 21st century terrorism completely. Gray envisages some hypothetical wars of the future: Sino-Russian axis aimed at the USA; China versus the USA; Russia versus China; Russian versus Ukraine; Russia versus Latvia and Estonia; India versus Pakistan; USA and (or) Israel versus Iran; Greece versus Turkey; North Korea versus South Korea and the USA; the USA versus rogue states; a superpower Europe, possibly in alliance with Russia or China, versus a strategically still hegemonic USA and its allies; and, finally, what Gray calls strategic surprises.

The Sino-Russian axis, which might include Iran, emerges as a counter to American hegemony. It is an interesting scenario but the main weakness is the rivalry between Russia and China. Great resentment there is in Russia regarding the loss of superpower status, but worry about China's intentions on Siberia's borders gnaws away at Russia's planners more than resentment towards Uncle Sam. Russia's neighbour is on the move and the Kremlin is anxious. That the two erstwhile partners in communist totalitarianism have fallen out with one another underlines the point about the nature of war in man's affairs. Russia and China, like any other states, have permanent interests not necessarily permanent friends.

China versus the USA is the most plausible prophecy. At present the USA holds all the advantages — an unrivalled military research and development base, dominance in space and IT systems — but these will not last forever. Meanwhile China observes, expands, prepares and, in order to accelerate the day when the USA can be challenged, steals the USA's secrets on a scale never achieved by the Soviet Union. The most likely flash point is Taiwan but the real source of antipathy between the two states is 'over which country is to be the leading organizer and guardian of security in East Asia'. The historical precedents for this sort of mutual enmity are clear: Athens and Sparta; Rome and Carthage; Spain and Tudor England; Britain and Napoleon's France; Wilhelmine Germany and Britain; and the collection of states based on NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Russian interest in Ukraine, Latvia and Estonia is prompted by the presence in each state of Russian ethnic populations which provide an opportunity for Russia to assert an interest in their fate (recall that Hitler exploited the presence of the so-called *Volksdeutsche* in Czechoslovakia for his own ends). The loss of Ukraine is painfully felt in Russia and there is a fear that Ukraine 'might joint an aggressive new European superstate'.

The remaining future war scenarios all stem from established enmities. The wild card is a superpower Europe in some kind of an alliance with Russia and China against the USA. As Gray observes, Britain would be most unlikely to join the Franco-German-Italian triad against the USA. Indeed the former Soviet bloc states are generally pro-American and see the presence of the USA as a barrier to either the return of the Russians or total dominance by a Franco-German axis.

Gray has hinted at but not thought about a war between the European Union and Russia. I recently presented a

paper on this question: the Russian Federation faced two major long-term military challenges. The most obvious one was China. The second stemmed from the aspirations of the European Union to create a new super state, the United States of Europe, which, bringing in many of the former Warsaw Pact states, would be seen by the Russian Federation as an economic and military threat to its interests. Many of the Germans in the audience were outraged that any person could see anything other than good in the EU. Russia has every reason to be suspicious of any military alliance in which Germany could be expected to play a major role. To pretend otherwise is to ignore the history of the twentieth century. Gray is conspicuously silent about the return of war among members of the EU. Can we totally exclude the possibility of armed conflict between current members of the EU? Who knows what will happen when the EU falls apart? How will the French and Germans, the embittered core of a defunct European Union/United States of Europe, behave when the game is up? Continental Europe has been there before. Napoleon, Lenin, Mussolini and Hitler all benefited from political and economic collapse.

There is an exception to Gray's contention that 'technological advantage tends to be fleeting'. From the end of the thirteenth century, when they made their first decisive appearance in the wars against the Welsh, through the Hundred Years War with France, and the annihilation of James IV and his Scottish army at Flodden in 1513, English archers did great slaughter to their enemies. Their 'technological advantage' was far from fleeting. For over a two-hundred year period the English archers dominated the battlefield. Why did their opponents, especially the Scots and French who suffered so grievously from English arrows, not imitate the English longbow, raising and training their own archery regiments to counter the English threat? According to Gray it should have happened, but it did not; probably because the Scottish and French nobility disdained the archers whom they regarded as vulgar and beneath their honour. There are recent examples of culture getting in the way. In the 1930s Thompson sub-machine guns were regarded by many senior British officers as gangsters' weapons, until a sharp lesson in modern war administered by the Wehrmacht brought them to their senses and the British Army got the Sten. Blinded by ideology, the Soviet Union turned its back on personal computers and the IT revolution. Culture can play a major role in inhibiting the spread of technology even when its advantages are demonstrably obvious.

The important lesson of *Another Bloody Century*, Gray's ABC of strategy — signalled by the initials of the abbreviated title — is that Thucydides's triad continues to drive war. There is another fundamental truth which has stood states in good stead according to the degree to which they have heeded it, and which was, appropriately, first appreciated and enunciated by Vegetius: 'Therefore, who desires peace, let him prepare for war'. Has the end of the Cold War really rendered that lesson redundant?

Behind the Iron Smokescreen

Martin Dewhirst

Virtual Politics: Faking Democracy in the Post-Soviet World, Andrew Wilson, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2005, £20.00

The more time that passes since the August 1991 countercoup that enabled Yeltsin to displace Gorbachev, the more inclined I am to talk about the 'neo-Soviet' space rather than the 'post-Soviet' space or the 'former USSR'. Much, of course, depends on how loosely we use the word 'Soviet'. In the grotesquely misnamed Soviet Union/USSR (1922-1991) the Soviets (Councils) had far less power and influence than all manner of councils had in capitalist countries. It is amazing how few intellectuals saw through the carefully constructed Soviet façade to grasp the reality behind all those modernised 'Potemkin villages'. Andrew Wilson's invaluable monograph takes us on an excursion to discover how politics have 'really' (i.e., 'virtually') been conducted in several parts of the 'former' USSR, concentrating mainly on Russia and Ukraine, but also taking a look at several other 'newly independent states'. The well-paid attempts by local 'political technologists' to hoodwink both their own people and foreigners have been breathtakingly successful. Soviet 'administrative resources' are dead, but long live the neo-Soviet, and of course to some extent neo-Russian, 'administrative resources'!

Obviously the post-1991 *economic* systems in Russia and Ukraine are different from the one that preceded them, although the current trend towards the re-nationalisation of major industries does rather recall the 'New Economic Policy' period of the 1920s. However, only materialists, whether Marxist or not, would regard the economic 'basis' as, at the end of the day, more significant than the non-economic 'superstructure'. Putin, given his connections with several dubious business ventures and with equally dubious Russian and foreign (especially German) businessmen, may well be more interested in commercial gain than in any ideology, but it is obvious that he is a much more 'Soviet' person than his predecessor, Boris Yeltsin. It astounds me that Putin's words are taken by many in the West — at any rate in public — even more literally

and seriously than, say, the words of Blair and Bush.

Wilson's sceptical attitude towards recent Russian and Ukrainian politics should not be misinterpreted as cynicism — it is the professional politicians, almost all of them, in those two countries who are the cynics. The author periodically reminds us that there is no such thing as really clean politics even in the leading democracies in the West. In most parts of the 'former' Soviet Union, however, the quantity of political filth has turned into (or, rather, has remained as) something that is qualitatively different from dirty political trickery in all the mature and well-established democracies elsewhere in the world.

Wilson shows, in a succession of densely written chapters, the historical background to Russian and Soviet methods and traditions of deception; the concept of 'virtual politics'; the roles of 'political technologists', to be distinguished from mere 'spin doctors'; the functions of the so-called 'administrative resources'; the creation of politicians' (inevitably false) 'images'; the establishment of phoney political parties with the aim of dividing and ruling; the forestalling and weakening of any genuine opposition; the construction of fake oppositions; the manipulation of various local Communist Parties; and, finally, the prospects for the emergence of genuine, rather than virtual, politics in some, if not all, of the 'former' Soviet republics — a difficult task, given that millions of disillusioned people, knowing at least something about the boundless fraudulence and hypocrisy of most current politicians in their countries, are reluctant to get involved at all in active political life. Unfortunately, the media these states are also corrupt — there are by now hardly any genuinely oppositional newspapers and journals, let alone TV and radio stations, and the few that remain are periodically targeted by the dirty tricks departments with the aim, often successful, of tarnishing the reputation of the real opposition to the old/new Establishment. It should be stressed that today, especially in Russia, almost all the 'political technologists' have been bought by, and are working for, the State and the Presidential Administration, no longer for individual oligarchs, as was sometimes the case under Yeltsin. If we really want to help to 'make' democracy out of 'fake' democracy, this book should immediately be translated into Russian and Ukrainian.

Even those readers who have been following political developments in Russia and Ukraine quite closely may find this volume rather hard going, such is the vast number of facts and details therein — the Devil, not God, is lurking in these details. It is worth persevering, because the trees eventually do come together to make a wood, and one's understanding of political life in these two countries will be changed — for the better — for ever. At the very least, please read the 'Conclusions'. There are some mistakes in the Russian, and in the transliterations from the Russian (Wilson seems to be more at home in Ukrainian), plus a few factual errors (Georgy instead of Grigory Yavlinsky, for instance). And I prefer to talk about 'cliques' in these countries, rather than 'clans', let alone 'elites', as the author often does. Even using 'elite' as a value-free sociological term can seem to ennoble many of the people thus designated, people whom any decent person with good taste would prefer to keep well away from. Much more important than any possible minor defects, however, is the fact that this monograph, like Peter Reddaway's and Dmitri Glinski's *The Tragedy of Russia's Reforms: Market Bolshevism versus Democracy*, represents a real, not virtual, conceptual breakthrough and should be essential reading for all those who want to comprehend what is actually going on behind the smokescreens in the 'former' USSR.

Charity in a Handbag

Myles Harris

The Constant Gardener, Focus Features, Director Fernando Meirellis. Ruth Weisz and Ralph Fiennes, original novel by John Le Carré

In the film *The Constant Gardener*, tipped to win numerous awards for its story telling, acting and visual impact, a British drug company tests an anti TB drug in Africa without telling the patients it has dangerous side effects. In order to persuade Africans to take part in the trial, the company offers free vaccinations to their children for common ailments like measles and whooping cough. On vaccination each child is given a worthless plastic toy. Some Africans who take the anti TB drug die.

Complicit in allowing the drug trial to go ahead even though it is known people have died, are the British High Commission, a senior member of the British Foreign Office, a British businessman and the local station head of MI6. The heroine of the story, the wife of a British diplomat, and a gay black doctor uncover

the story but are murdered before they can make it public. The doctor is tortured and crucified upside down, the woman is raped, shot and her body burnt almost beyond recognition.

We first see her berating a British diplomat in London over Britain's involvement in the war in Iraq at a press conference. She then embarks on an affair with the diplomat whom she marries after which they move to Africa. A type of feminist icon widely admired here in Britain, she is charmless, manipulative and expert at the verbal castration of weak male admirers. She goes out of her way to humiliate and antagonise politicians, diplomatic staff and any business men she meets. She also enjoys grandstanding. She has her baby in an African hospital but it dies. So she nurses the baby of a young mother dying in the bed next to her, (naturally of the effects of the wicked British drug company's treatment). We then see the baby being taken home by the relatives. They are followed by the heroine in a £25,000 pound Land Rover agonising as to whether she should give them a lift, or — I was not sure if the baby was alive or dead — take it home and look after it. But true to her type she drives back to her wealth and privilege alone. Hers is only a symbolic charity, more part of her make-up bag then in her heart.

After her death her husband learns that his suspicion that she was being unfaithful was unfounded but that she was right about the drug. He sets out to avenge her, but not in a John Wayne fashion. Like many liberal men married to viragos, he is a murderee and arranges to be killed so the truth will come out. It does. At his memorial service in Westminster Abbey, in a scene reminiscent of the speech given by Princess Diana's brother at her funeral, the brother of the murdered feminist reads out an incriminating letter from a sinister senior British diplomat ordering she be restrained or silenced. As the letter is read the self satisfied smirk of the senior diplomat gives way to incredulity and then to horror. You see him on his way to professional death, stalking from the Abbey surrounded by jostling cameramen and reporters.

It is a tale that will strike a chord in every western heart. We believe we are rich because Africans are poor, and by the same reasoning, we are healthy because they are ill. There is only a fixed quantity of health in the world and we have taken it all. Therefore multinational drug companies, because they belong to us not to Africa, must be stealing Africans' health. Once you have swallowed this tripe it is not difficult to believe that the staff of the British High Commission in Nairobi and the head of an important Foreign Office desk in London should cover up murder.

In reality drug companies have been of immense benefit to the third world. I worked in Africa and saw thousands of lives saved using vaccines, antibiotics, anaesthetics and anti TB drugs. Multiply my experience in a small area covering a few thousands of people by the millions in the rest of Africa and the numbers saved are astronomical. Against this after an exhaustive trawl of the net, I only came across two cases of serious malpractice by a western drug companies testing drugs in Africa. Both as far as I could tell are unproved. What is true is that local racketeers often dilute or swap drugs for worthless fakes, and African governments and drug companies frequently block the import of drugs — for example to treat AIDS — until they are suitably rewarded. Moreover Africa's health problems are not about the supply of drugs or secret experimentation, but the lack of altruism of African tribal societies. This is the story begging to be told but trendy film directors lack the courage.

This film is not an attempt to remedy the ills of Africa but a childish parade of self regarding western egotism. It will win BAFTAS, actresses in £10,000 dresses will simper on stage about Africa and poverty and many a tear will be seen in the eyes of those sitting at food laden tables. But there will be a ghost at the feast. That ghost will be the enormous damage the film will do to many Africans who will never see it. It will re-enforce the notion that all white people mean them ill, that western drug companies are predatory and their drugs are to be distrusted. It will reinforce an ignorance that kills and strengthen the hands of African gangs who sell diluted vaccines and fake drugs to the parents of dying children. 'Trust us and not the wicked white man.' On behalf of all doctors who work in Africa and whose patients depend on a free flow of drugs from the west, shame on the makers of this film.

Houses, Books and Larks

Andrew Lambirth

Leighton House in Holland Park is one of the most enjoyable of our smaller London museums, just off Kensington High Street, in the heart of what was once an artists' quarter, when such luminaries as Val Prinsep, Marcus Stone and Luke Fildes vied with each other to commission and embellish large private houses to use as display cases for themselves and their work. Lord Leighton's house is all public rooms, with one tiny and spartan bedroom reserved for its lord and master. Sunday was visiting day. As the authors of *Artists' London* (an excellent study of where artists have lived and worked over the centuries, by Kit Wedd with Lucy Peltz and Cathy Ross, published by Merrell in 2001) write: 'In the late 1880s Mrs Fildes regarded as a flop any Show Sunday that failed to attract at least 1000 visitors to her husband's studio.' In an age of 'Palaces of Art', Leighton House was perhaps the most resplendent, with its superb Arab Hall, complete with fountain and decorative tiles, mostly from Damascus and dating from the 16th and early 17th centuries. These were organized and hung by William De Morgan, a great potter in his own right, who effected repairs and faked missing tiles to maintain patterns.

The coolly cerebral Arab Hall is a challenging place for a party. On other visits to Leighton House, I have found myself drawn to its contemplative hub. Perhaps it reflects Leighton's personality — a sensual nature subjected to classical restraint. Painter and sculptor, he was no great master, rather a hard-working professional, who occasionally hit the public pulse — as he did with 'Flaming June', a masterpiece that was exhibited at the Tate in 1996 — it flowers into awe of an almost spiritual intensity. More often, it provides one of the most reliable enrichments of daily life.

The Millais exhibition I saw in April 2005 was a delightful focus display, small, compact and filled with interest. It was curated by Paul Goldman, who has now produced a handsome volume on the same subject. *Beyond Decoration: The Illustrations of John Everett Millais* is published by The British Library, with the Private Libraries Association and Oak Knoll Press, at £35. It is an unusual format for an art book, being tall and narrow like a ledger, but it is not thin. At over 300 pages it is a substantial volume and a welcome addition to the Millais bibliography. The book's argument is laid out in its title: that Millais was more than a mere illustrator, that he went 'beyond decoration' in his investigation of the relationship between word and image. Goldman considers that earlier illustrators, such as Cruikshank or Phiz, were 'more subservient and deferential to the text', their work more 'theatrical' and bordering on the caricatural. Millais, on the other hand, exceeded this brief in his intelligent, sensitive and bold interpretations. The reader may test the argument by recourse to the lavish plates, reproduced in actual size. Each illustration is set within its literary context by quoting the lines of poetry or prose which it refers to.

Millais' range was wide, from children's books to The Bible, from Tennyson to Trollope and Harriet Martineau. His preferred medium was wood engraving (there are some steel engravings illustrated here and a handful of etchings), which was carried out by highly skilled technicians to his detailed designs. He began a drawing with rough studies invariably in graphite, then worked them up in ink. He took considerable trouble over this work, and it paid off. Millais was a subtle and versatile master of black-and-white illustration. Look, for instance, at his renditions of Tennyson's 'Dora' and 'Locksley Hall', or at the etching 'Ruth' to accompany Thomas Hood's poem, or the nun gazing out of a convent window for the unfortunately-named 'Leslie's Songs for Little Folks' (1883). And for the series of 20 plates illustrating 'The Parables of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ' alone this book is worth buying. The sheer quality of draughtsmanship displayed in these images assures us of Millais' genius. My only quibble

is that for what seems to be a good quality paper, the illustrations on the other side of the page are partly visible through the sheets.

Not far from Leighton House is the commercial gallery Piano Nobile Fine Paintings (129 Portland Road, W11), which has in recent months been mounting an impressive series of exhibitions, including solo shows of the realist painters Peter Coker (1926-2004) and Cherry Pickles (born 1950). Both exhibitions were accompanied by excellent catalogues as was the subsequent show by Greg Tricker (born 1951), whose work consisted of paintings and sculpture inspired by the life of Francis of Assisi. This is not the typical subject matter of fashionable or supposedly avant garde artists, and its particularity at once singles it out for attention. Stanley Spencer could make a great contemporary statement out of his painting of St Francis, but Spencer is a far harder act to follow than many realize. The intensity of Spencer's work gives it a structure and toughness that makes nonsense of the cosy dismissal of him as a harmless old eccentric.

Unfortunately, religious art is often made by individuals who may have firm and sustaining religious beliefs but whose work falls well below even the undemanding standards of the second-rate. Faith alone is not enough when it comes to art. Indeed, some of the greatest makers of religious art have been godless unbelievers — such as Caravaggio. Of recent painters who have successfully tackled religious themes, I can think of only two masters: Craigie Aitchison and the late Norman Adams. And neither of these have been conventional believers. There have been other artists, during the last century or so, who made good work that was broadly religious, such as Eric Gill (that most unconventional of men) and Cecil Collins. Tricker's work seems to fall somewhere between the two.

Here is an artist intent on stripping away the seductive accretions of sophistication, and returning to some degree of primitive purity. Inspired by the example of the early years of van Gogh, when the Dutchman tried to be a preacher among the Belgian miners of the Borinage, Tricker worked as a monumental mason as well as a stone carver and painter, experimenting at one point with batik. He even travelled to Assisi to research his subject, following in Saint Francis's footsteps. His search for simplicity has resulted in a great paring down of form, but not in a consequent impoverishment of expression. He carves reliefs in limestone, paints in oil on wood or canvas (sometimes rough sacking), and draws in ink and chalk, or in watercolour. He also uses that unfashionably precise medium, tempera. His imagery has at its best an emotional intensity which carries the impact of truth. At its least convincing, it can approach the fey. Tricker evidently drew immense inspiration from the life and example of St Francis, and has made memorable images about it. I was particularly impressed by 'St Francis and the Dove', 'Friar Ruffino', 'St Francis in the Marshes' (in which the Saint sings God's praises to the birds) and 'Dragged through the Street'. We are told that at the moment St Francis died, a great flock of skylarks rose above the roof of the church that gave him final shelter, an exaltation of larks. Greg Tricker's work seeks to approach a similar purity of image and spirit.

Bach's Mass in B minor

Andrew Earis

In the ten days leading up to Christmas, BBC Radio 3 broadcast the complete works of Johann Sebastian Bach. This huge undertaking covered the composer's entire surviving output and included live performance and some new recordings made especially for the event, alongside other existing recordings, some well known and others recently rediscovered.

Perhaps the highlight of this event took place on Christmas Eve, when the monumental Mass in B minor was played; this was a recording of a Promenade Concert in the Royal Albert Hall in the summer of 2000, performed by the Choir and Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment under Sir Roger Norrington. But the history of the B minor Mass is a great deal more complex than might be imagined when listening to performances today. The work's two hour duration means that it is confined to the concert hall. So why did Bach write a Mass of such epic proportions, and so impractical for liturgical use?

In the eighteenth century Lutheran church, parts of the Latin Mass were frequently sung as well as a variety of other Latin polyphonic music. It is known that Bach had a particular interest in the music of the Catholic church, and during his lifetime he copied and arranged

music by Italian composers including Lotti, Pergolesi, Durante and Palestrina. By the early 1730s Bach had been in the town of Leipzig for a number of years and had already written the *St. Matthew Passion*, *St. John Passion* and a large number of cantatas. On 27th July 1733 Bach dedicated a short Mass (consisting of the *Kyrie* and *Gloria*) — much of which had been written years earlier — to the Elector of Saxony, Friedrich August II. This is the first part of what we now know as the 'Mass in B minor', and was part of a selection of orchestral and vocal music sent by Bach to the Elector in his petition for the honorary title of Saxon Court Kapellmeister.

As well as this Mass, Bach wrote four further shorter Masses which are among the least known and least performed of all his works. All of the Masses are in the shortened 'Lutheran' style, containing only the *Kyrie* and *Gloria*, with no *Credo*, *Sanctus*, *Benedictus* or *Agnus Dei*. Relatively little is known of their origins — the A major and G major works are the only ones that survive in manuscript form and it is thought that they date from around 1735 or 1740. All four of the Masses are parody works consisting almost entirely of movements from cantatas previously written by the composer. They all have the same overall structure — the *Kyrie* and the first and last movements of the *Gloria* are sung by chorus, with three solo movements in between.

The extension of the shorter B minor Mass into the multi-movement work that we know today occupied the composer for some twenty-five years. However, despite much musicological research, there are many unanswered questions concerning the work. It is known that it is made up of music composed between 1714 and 1749 (a period spanning almost all of the composer's compositional career), but its intended final form is unclear. Towards the end of the 1740s, Bach added further material to the 1733 Missa and the work became a full 'Catholic Mass', although some of the Latin texts reflect more Lutheran than Catholic usage. The score of the *Mass in B minor* is divided into four sections. The first, the 'Missa', contains the *Kyrie* and *Gloria*. Following this is the 'Symbolum Nicaenium' (the *Credo*) which is in nine movements. This is followed by the *Sanctus* and *Osanna*, and the Mass closes with the *Benedictus* and *Agnus Dei*. It is thought that at least a third of the material is taken from earlier cantatas by the composer.

It is interesting to note that the title 'Mass in B Minor' was only assumed well after Bach's death. Opinion is divided as to whether Bach intended the Mass to be performed complete — he certainly never heard it performed as a whole in his lifetime — and what precise form this would take. Whilst there are records of the *Credo* being performed by his son C.P.E. Bach in Hamburg in 1784, it was not until 1859 (more than a century after the composer's death) that the work was performed in its entirety.

Despite this long period of composition and the use of much existing material, Bach's skills of parody, adaptation and complication combine to give the Mass a coherent structure and style, making it one of the most celebrated choral works of the baroque era.

The Sage of Simpleham

Roy Kerridge

I first discovered the World of Peter Simple in 1963 when I was twenty two. His *Daily Telegraph* columns helped to wean me away from left-wingery. They not only seemed steeped in folklore, as I was, but created a folklore of their own, the fantasy characters always introduced with the same ritual phrases. Alderman Foodbotham is always crag visaged and grim booted, Sadcake Park is always lovely and sex maniac-haunted and Mrs Dutt Pauker the diehard Moscow Party Line Communist is invariably described as 'a Hampstead Thinker'. The phrase 'Hampstead Thinker' has now become an unthinking part of my vocabulary, and I lost a valued friend by describing her as such. However, I gained a far more valuable friend, Peter Simple himself.

A lesser man than Wharton would have used Arthur Scargill as the model for a comic Communist, not a no-nonsense dowager duchess-type from the balcony of the Unity Theatre. Some say that Wharton lived in a dream world, but he had a sharp eye for reality. So had PG Wodehouse. If Lord Emsworth were really a bygone Duke of Devonshire, then Mrs Dutt-Pauker must surely be the late Kay Beauchamp, an Islington Thinker who at one time seemed to have solved the problem of Eternal Life. In between describing his vaguely fictional characters, Michael Wharton wrote serious pieces, warnings to the Western world that would have done credit to Winston Churchill.

Responding to my penpal letters, Michael Wharton agreed to meet me in the King and Keys pub in

Fleet Street. To my relief, fresh from nerve-racking encounters with Colin MacInnes, he proved a benign, wise, quietly spoken man, young for his sixty five years. This was in 1979. We hit it off quite well, as we shared a liking for George Borrow and corned beef sandwiches. I told him that my great grandfather had been a Customs officer on the border between Russian and German Poland.

'I don't believe you!' he remarked, to my indignation. However it turned out he was right, as further investigations showed me that my grandmother had been told the plot of Gogol's *Dead Souls* without understanding it, and had woven bits of it into our family history.

I met Michael in the pub very often after that. He was often in the company of a trench-coated Northern reporter called Blake Baker and would laugh silently at Baker's sallies. A self-confessed 'state registered melancholic', Michael's occasional bouts of melancholy would be tangible, flowing out of him almost visibly, like ectoplasm, and bumping into people. With an effort, he would overcome the wave of horror and carry on joking and ordering corned beef.

Judging by these pub conversations, Michael was a firm believer in the afterlife, of which he is now a part. His ideas of Heaven were influenced by Tibetan Buddhism as well as by Christianity, but there was nothing vague about his firm belief in Hell. On mention of the word, he would shudder as if he had once looked into the place. 'In my Father's house there are many mansions,' and one of these may be Simpleham, the Great House evoked so well in Peter Simple's column, now prepared to receive its rightful occupant. My favourite part of Simpleham is the Bubble Domain, a summerhouse made not of glass but of extra-strong bubble mixture, with upside down views over the park.

I once stayed at Michael's flat in Battersea, a grandly gloomy place, where to my delight he introduced me to Thomas Hardy's poetry. When the *Telegraph* moved to Docklands, Michael left London for good. He and his wife Susan lived in a beautiful corner of Buckinghamshire. Susan is a gifted artist, particularly good at drawing beech trees.

With a surprising nod to modernity, Michael learned to work a fax machine, had one installed and used it to send off his columns. He held out against computers and internets to the end. As I write this on January 24th, it is a mere thirty six hours since Michael was alive. I feel rather melancholy myself, but I shall have to get used to the idea of a disembodied Michael Wharton, still keeping a watchful if pessimistic eye over England.

Roy Kerridge
This tribute will also appear in Prag

In Short

Everyday Thoughts, Peter Mullen, St Michael's Foundation, 2005. Available from The Watch House, 10 Giltspur Street, London EC1A 9DE, £10 + £2 p&p

Peter Mullen has produced his own contemporary version of Pascal's *Pensées*, and against an endogenous crisis over what constitutes truth, meaning, understanding, knowledge and wisdom. The book may contain thoughts for every day of the year but these are no more everyday thoughts than Pascal's *Pensées* or Wittgenstein's aphorisms. Wittgenstein is an important influence and many of Peter Mullen's incisive paragraphs or aphorisms are directed against (literally) mindless positivism. Though, as he points out, this may be flogging a dead horse so far as philosophy goes, the corpse has an almighty kick when it comes to popularised science.

The thought for January 3rd introduces a key idea where he dismisses as meaningless the question of the meaning of life, given that meaning is contained within particular activities themselves as we engage in them *together* and follow the rules of engagement. On January 6th we encounter another key idea about the contradictory determinisms constantly promoted on scientific grounds, by Marxists, Freudians, Darwinians or whatever. Peter Mullen asks whether it is a Freudian determinism that makes you a Marxist or vice versa — or do you choose your own determinism on the ideological free market? People with pet determinisms are often also proponents of the equal and opposite superstition of individualism and self-expression, above all in education. On January 8th Mullen turns the notion that science is true and myth false on its head. For him a myth can be forever true provided there is a cultural context for understanding it, whereas science has been mostly shown to be false, and is by definition provisionally true and falsifiable. The brief thought for January 9th emphasises how people need to learn the language of myth just as they need to learn the language of science. 'Awed silence at the end of *King Lear* ...

is a sign they have learnt the language.'

On January 22nd Peter Mullen deconstructs the notion among researchers that they can uncover the causes of (say) paedophilia without taking moral choice into account. This demoralises the issue, yet researchers claim they are motivated by the moral aim of doing good. As Peter Mullen remarks (for January 23rd) in 'a sentimental age' we 'hang on to the vestiges of mindfulness to account for our "good" actions but we employ the material causes vocabulary to explain what we used to refer to as our misdeeds or sins'.

I have only selected some days in January. This book will not be discussed on *Start the Week* for the self-same reasons cogently argued by Peter Mullen for every day of the calendar year.

David Martin

Froude Today, John Coleman, New European Publications, 2005, £11.95

Can any practical use be had from the study of history? This book proves that it can. History is our collective memory; any life, however long, encompasses a fraction of time, so history helps us to expand our view of the world and comprehend our own times more clearly. John Coleman has devised a ruse through which we can view our own political landscape. First he highlights the thoughts of a distinguished Victorian and then applies them to our present predicament. He takes us in the imagination to Oxford to meet his old friend, the nineteenth century historian, James Anthony Froude, to eavesdrop upon a conversation between the two men, and listen to Froude commenting upon things as they might appear to him today.

J.A.Froude (1818-1894) is best known for his twelve volume series on English history, from the fall of Wolsey to the defeat of the Spanish Armada. During his historical researches into the Tudor period he discovered material which gave new insights into the threat from Spain. *Froude Today* is about his personal observations on education, religion and economics. Froude's own lectures are also included, the one given to the students of St Andrew's University on Calvinism in 1871 being reproduced in full.

He was a Fellow of Oriel College when in 1849 his novel *Nemesis of Faith* was published. This had the distinction of being publicly burned, with the then Regius Professor of Modern History, Dr Freeman, attacking him for being 'constitutionally inaccurate'. Froude then moved to Manchester where he became tutor to the son of a successful solicitor through whom he met a number of distinguished people and businessmen who were to influence his views on economics. He travelled much and studied the world's main religions in an attempt to 'peel away all the falsehood that had become attached to religion'. He thought the Reformation was justified but attacked both the idolatry of the sixteenth century Catholics and the bibliolatry of the evangelicals; he also believed that a 'shallow cosmopolitan secularism will never be enough to curb the arrogance of the human will'. A practical kindliness for the poor shines through his writings and he constructed an ideal world where education could be given to the urban poor who could then colonise the world's empty spaces taking with them a love of their country. Froude well understood that the most important ingredient within a community was the quality of its individuals; and like most Victorians realized the need for education not least because of the extension of the franchise.

On Dr Freeman's death in 1892, Froude returned to Oxford as Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford, his name having been submitted to Queen Victoria by the then Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury.

Charlotte Horsfield

The Rule of Law and other Essays, Kenneth Jupp, Shepheard-Walwyn, 2005, £14.99

On of the most striking aspects of the social and moral revolution since the 1960's is the change in the type of person who becomes a High Court judge. In the 1960's the Bench was still predominantly of a Victorian cast of mind. By the 1990's many judges were spouting the silly liberal nostrums so widespread elsewhere. Whatever their outlook, very few judges have written about their thoughts on the law.

It is therefore good to see these essays of Sir Kenneth Jupp who served as a High Court judge from 1975 to 1999. The focal essay, the Rule of Law, emphasizes that law should properly be rooted in the moral law. State *fiat* alone is not enough to make a viable legal system. Nowhere in this collection will you find any reference to the fad for Human Rights but it would have been interesting to have his opinion on one of the major delusions of our time. The essays conclude with an appendix which sets out Jupp's judgement in Udale v Bloomsbury Area Health Authority (1983) where a mother following a failed sterilisation operation sought compensation for the cost of bringing up the healthy child. Jupp gave her short shrift, a line which was not followed by the Court of Appeal in subsequent similar cases. Only in 1999 did the House of Lords bring this particular piece of 'compensation culture' nonsense to an end by following the principles in Jupp's original judgement. Unfortunately this book is marred by Jupp's

obsession with the teachings of the nineteenth century radical Liberal, Henry George, who believed that private land ownership was the root of all social evil. Surely the author would have baulked at the socialist interference involved in reallocating property!

Angela Ellis-Jones

Talk to the Hand, The Utter Bloody Rudeness of Everyday Life, Lynne Truss, Profile Books, 2005, £9.99

The Queen of Punctuation — in itself a branch of manners — has now written about the decline of English civility which was once common among all social groups. The blurb admits that 'it's a big rant' but it is a very amusing one with instructive anecdotes and interesting information: when Janet Street Porter asked a school assembly which was the word ending in 'y' which families found it hard to say to each other, someone called out 'buggery'. Theodore Dalrymple notes in *Life at the Bottom* that 'Eff Off' is a favourite tattoo among his patients. Truss remarks that the destruction of deference is a glaring instance of throwing the baby down the drain and lists twenty reasons for its restoration that have nothing to do with class. She also deplores the missed opportunity that could have made modern manners, not based on class or snobbery, so superior to the old ones with its slavish adherence to antiquated etiquette. Perhaps my exposure to the modern world has not been as extensive as the author's, but I am not wholly pessimistic; I still meet many examples of kindness and consideration and think that ignorance explains many examples of gaucheness and rudeness. Family breakdown as well as the boorishness of many television programmes has also contributed to this debacle. Instruction could help; have you ever noticed the difference in service in shops where training has been given? How about abolishing sex education and replacing it with instruction from people like Lynne Truss. A few schools should try it and see what happens. It might even begin a return to chivalry.

Merrie Cave

A Little History of the World, E H Gombrich, Yale, 2005, £14.99

'The history of the world is, sadly not a pretty poem. It offers little variety and it is nearly always the unpleasant things that are repeated, over and over again.' The celebrated author of *The Story of Art,* as an unemployed post graduate in 1935 Vienna, responded to a challenge to write a history for younger readers. 'The true fairy tale of the evolution of mankind' (*Die Zeit*) was an instant success being translated into many languages but not into English until Gombrich himself did it at the end of his life. It is easy to understand its appeal to young and older readers for Gombrich's engaging narrative captivates but never confuses. His skilful compression of the material never leads to distortion and like many of the best writers you feel that he is talking to you personally without a hint of condescension or pomposity. Forty concise chapters covers mankind's journey from the Stone Age, 'the greatest inventors of all time', to the Atomic bomb. The ideas of philosophical giants like Confucius and Aristotle are described with colourful freshness while Man's achievements as well as his wickedness is handled in a generous but realistic spirit: '.... I could write many more chapters on the wars between Catholics and Protestants. But I won't. It was a dreadful era'. Charles I and Louis XIV are contrasted: an unlucky king and a lucky king. The ceremonies of the Sun King's court is among the best I have read but he reminds us of Louis's residual realism: 'never favour who flatter you most, but hold rather to those who risk your displeasure for your own good'.

Merrie Cave

England, My England, an anthology compiled by Gerry Hanson, Robson Books, 2005, £9.99

The law is quite clear about who is English: it is anyone who looks upon England as the country where he is settled, whatever his racial origin. That is the answer to the P.C. world which has been trying hard to suppress the word, which in this context has sadly included the *Daily Telegraph.*

Needless to say the media has ignored this anthology. The most august of the literary journals, however, referred to it as a textbook for the BNP, notwithstanding the compiler's introduction which drew a distinction between patriotism and nationalism, unfavourable to the latter. It was also rather an insult to John Mortimer, Melvyn Bragg and other living writers who are represented in the book.

Along with the familiar are blended the humorous, philosophical, sentimental, satirical and descriptive to make a rich mixture; some two hundred entries in all, and as a hardback alternatively produced, a bargain at the price. It can make a good present; and it is also worthy of a place in bookshelf as a reference. Above all, it is a bedside book to dip into before nodding off, persuaded that England, despite Mr Blair, is not such a bad place in which to live.

Richard Body

Terrorist and Extremist Activity on British Campuses, Anthony Glees and Chris Pope, Social Affairs Unit, 2005, £10

Something is rotten in our universities. That much is clear from this frightening paper, which details methods in which extremist organizations — some but not all Islamic — move through the student body, recruiting potential bombers and terrorists. Not least has been the reaction from the authorities. Professor Glees has said that, while he had expected to be attacked by Islamic organizations, the BNP and the Animal Liberation Front, he had not quite expected that Vice-Chancellors of the universities he names and shames to react with threats.

In order not to have to admit that their universities recruited students who could not really produce academic work but were open to persuasion by superficial and seemingly coherent systems of thought; that they were not paying enough attention to the various societies and associations that had been breeding in the university body; that their own political attitudes meant that they considered the police and security services to be the real enemy; rather than admit any of this several Vice-Chancellors attacked the messenger. Indeed, some demanded that he should be sacked from his academic position. So much for the idea of free speech but it is unlikely that anyone really thought universitites believed in that.

The paper deals with a particular aspect of the trauma this country has been facing (or, to be quite precise, refusing to face) since July 7 of last year. In fact, much of what shocked people then — the number of British-born and British-bred young men who are prepared to kill their compatriots for some perverted religious ideal — was known before. Too many British youngsters had been picked up with the Taliban in Afghanistan or Palestinian terrorists in the Middle East. The whole problem is wider than that. It concerns people who, having lived here all their lives or, even, having arrived here as refugees, have not shown themselves prepared to accept the basic tenets of our political and social structure. But it also concerns the country as a whole: the need to define those ideas and structures and to ensure that people have something to adhere to. Then we can start ensuring that they do so.

To put it in a nutshell: we need to define the 'British dream'.

Helen Szamuely

We welcome letters but would appreciate receiving them as early as possible

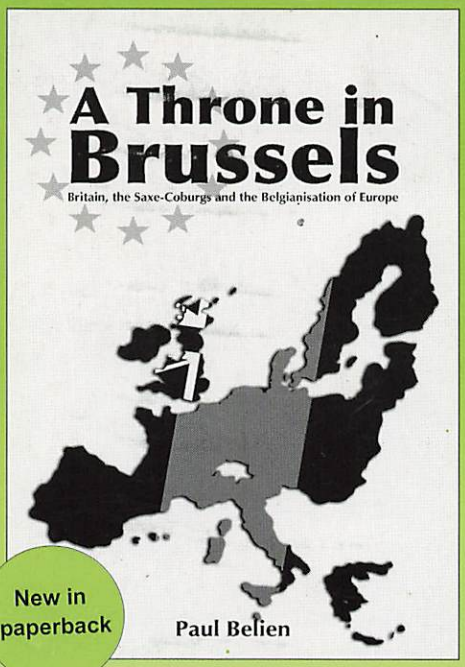
The Salisbury Review

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

Published quarterly in September, December, March & June, volume commencing with September issue.
Annual subscription rates: £18, Europe/surface rest of world £20.
Airmail rest of world; £25, Single issues: £4.50
ISSN: 0265-4881. North American subscription from ISI, 3901 Centerville Rd., PO Box 4431, Wilmington, DE 19807-0431, USA.

Printed in the UK by The Warwick Printing Company Ltd.
Typesetting — DASH
Design — Jessica Chaney

Web site: http://www.salisburyreview.co.uk



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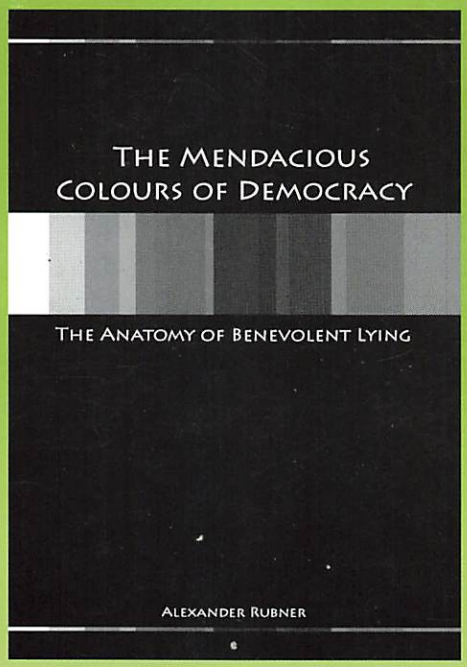

ALEX RUBNER

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The Anatomy of Benevolent Lying

Books such as Peter Oborne's *Rise of Political Lying* have deplored the machiavellian trend in modern politics. The focus used to be on Blairite 'spin', but now Cameron's Conservatives appear to be up to the same tricks. Alex Rubner, however, thinks Machiavelli has had a bad press:

'Politics is a noble, but also a dirty, business. To gain election — and retain office — in a democratic system, politicians are frequently compelled to be dishonest. They engage in benevolent lying because obstruction by stupid voters will otherwise stop them advancing the national interest as they see it.'

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The author is a business economist who received his PhD from London University. He has lectured widely at business schools, universities, and management seminars, and has written eleven books, including *The Ensnared Shareholder: Directors and the Modern Corporation* (Penguin) and *The Might of the Multinationals.*

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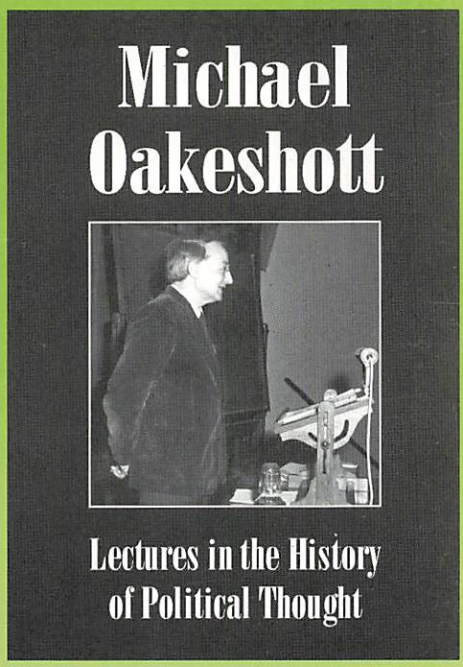

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