

The

Salisbury Review



Absolutely the wrong opinion on everything

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It is hard to imagine two more unsuitable candidates for Prime Minister than Rishi Sunak or Liz Truss. Both were members of the last government which instead of governing the economy with judicious rises in interest rates sat back and oversaw the biggest money printing splurge in our history. True, neither could have foreseen Covid or the Ukraine war, but had we set responsible interest rates before, the pound would not be facing a catastrophic fall and we would be in a much better position to weather the coming storm, one which could bring trouble on our streets.

To pay off this Everest of a debt Truss wants us to get into even more debt, she must be insane. While Sunak, who as Chancellor of the Exchequer threw money around like confetti, is now talking about a 'responsible' fiscal policy of holding interest rates and taxes where they are.

Low inflation followed by high inflation, we are seeing the latter now, has been deliberately built into our system for the last twenty years. Ever since Blair, and then by Cameron, both Labour and Conservative governments have embarked on a reckless policy of uncounted population expansion. Thus, our cheap (virtually free) money policy to pay for it. The idea was to bring in as many people from abroad as possible to stoke the economy and provide a new younger generation to replace a falling white population.

So fixed has this idea become in the media that Sky News viewers were shown a typical 'British' victim of inflation. Not as you might think a poor white granny unable to pay her fuel bills but a white Englishwoman in her twenties dressed in a hijab worrying about the rent, nursing a baby of Middle Eastern origin, all part of the 'normalisation' of immigration. On the same day another 650 illegal migrants, nearly all young men, were towed out of French territorial waters by the French Navy, to be picked up by UK Border Force and the Royal Navy and brought ashore here. More will be here tomorrow.

Has either candidate made more than a mention of this or resorted to anything more than clichés about how to stop it? No, because at the next election

whoever is prime minister will need the votes of this replacement population to win.

How serious is this problem? In 1950 the population of the UK was 50 million. It is now 75 million, some say 80. While the average population density in Europe is 34 people/sq km, in England it is 426 people/sq km. There are not enough trees, flowers, wildlife, grass or moorland that can sustain such a vast population squeezed on such a small island. As a result, Britain is one of the most biologically depleted countries on the planet with an average 40 per cent loss in animals and plants.

There is no health service in the world that can pay for all these people, no road or rail system that can carry them all, no national agricultural system that can feed them all. To serve such an increase an extra 750,000 school places will be needed by 2025, plus 300,000 new houses a year. We now import a large proportion of our food and fuel from abroad, all at ever increasing prices, prices that will double and then treble this winter.

Raising interest rates or cutting taxes will not solve this problem. On the other hand, sending a signal that we intend to stabilise our borders and no longer play host to other nations' unemployed and surplus populations will show we have come to our economic senses and will go a long way to boost confidence in Britain among overseas investors.

Ordering the Royal Navy and the Border Force to tow immigrants and their dinghies back to France is a priority. Making it obligatory to show a letter or form from the Inland Revenue to show you are a contributor to our tax system before getting treatment on the NHS is another. Denying legal aid for immigration appeals after the first one is unsuccessful and capping those fees is another. Pressing on with the Rwanda scheme is essential.

True, we will never get back to a population of 40 million, that idyllic English world of tradition and history, of small villages, quiet lanes and comprehensible cities. But if we go on as we are, we face extinction as an economy, a people and culture.

On the National Death

MYLES HARRIS

In the past, medicine was regarded as an art rather than a science. These days it's an advanced technology that has outstripped the NHS's ability to deliver. More so because since it was founded in 1948 its customer base due to immigration has doubled even though it remains 'free'.

Fifty years ago, when Grandpa had a stroke, Dr Finlay was called who confirmed the diagnosis, advised the family to make him comfortable and to call him if he got worse. Grandpa lingered on for the summer but that winter he caught a chest infection, the old man's friend, and despite antibiotics and medicines for his heart failure, died.

Today, an ambulance would be at Grandpa's door within 30 minutes, equipped with the very latest in ventilators, ECG machines, oxygen and defibrillators, with two highly trained paramedics in contact by two-way radio with the on-call cardiologist at the local hospital. After being resuscitated Grandpa will be inside a scanner within the hour with an interventional radiologist peering inside his brain for the bleed or clot that has caused the stroke, and if it is a clot administering a clot buster to break the latter up. Weeks of intensive physiotherapy will follow.

Progress brings problems of supply and demand. Dr Finlay was cheap. Grandpa stayed at home, ate the same food, slept in the same bed and died in it. Modern grandpas have different expectations. Forty years ago, replacing a heart valve in an 80-year-old patient would be highly risky but I know of a case who a month after his operation was scuba diving in the Maldives. Where can we get the staff and money to treat everybody for an ever-growing list of treatable diseases? The number of patients who failed to get an appointment after being referred by their GP has almost doubled in a year from 220,000 between January and June in 2102, to 400,000 for the same period this year.

What's in the way of getting people seen quickly? Bureaucrats certainly, but what about doctors? We

need highly skilled doctors in surgery and research. But do we need to train somebody for 12 years just to direct patients to established treatments that can be administered by technicians or machines.

One way of cutting down queues to the A & E is for the NHS to distribute a nationwide mobile phone application for anyone wanting to go to A & E. If the machine decides their symptoms are serious, it will alert the local hospital where the patient will be seen by paramedics and inserted into a treatment programme: strokes to a scanner and radiologist, pneumonia to

a respiratory unit, heart attacks to ICU and so on. Machines are really good at this type of assessment, far better than harassed receptionists, doctors or nurses. Patients who turn up in A & E in defiance of their mobile phone's advice will pay £100 for the privilege. (In Ireland if you turn up at A & E without a GP's letter it costs 100 Euros.) One huge advantage of such a system in the babel of

tongues that is modern Britain, is that it can be written in any language.

The drawbacks? While 84 per cent of the population under 65 years of age own a smart phone and can use it, only 53 per cent over 65 have access to the Internet and use it. They will have to rely on the traditional way of either ringing the emergency services or their GP. Nevertheless, such an application would make inroads into patients waiting in A & E, as those who can use mobile phones find they get an almost instant diagnosis and can avoid the long wait.

A dream? The Cwm Taff Morgannwg University Health Board in South Wales provided heart patients with an app which allowed them to send details of their heart rate, blood pressure, oxygen levels and symptoms to a central collating unit. The trial recorded a 19 per cent drop in face-to-face appointments and a 10 per cent drop in readmission to hospital while others were discharged earlier than before (*The Times* August 2nd 2022).

Those who don't need to go to A & E can visit



a private GP, his fees covered by subsidised state insurance. State backed medical insurance schemes covering private GP and hospital care are compulsory in most European countries, often with a choice of cover. If you are so poor you cannot pay, your premiums will form part of your social security package.

Having to buy medical insurance and choose a level of care gives people a feeling of control over what they are getting. In the UK system your payments to the NHS are concealed in general taxation to make it look as if it is 'free'. Using the pretext of being free has enabled the left to capture the NHS, enabling them to shut down all criticism by asking, 'What could be better than free?' 'Free' also introduces a new currency into manipulating your place on waiting lists. A well-educated member of the middle-classes can force her way up a waiting list by virtue of her position, contacts, accent, education and confidence, often impossible for working class people who not only lack the confidence but believe it is not their place to challenge authority. As a result, 'Our NHS' means 'Our middle-class NHS'. Statistics show class and survival rates from cancer, diabetes, heart disease and dementia are intimately related. The poor get sicker the middle classes healthier.

State run organisations almost always develop into unapproachable, unresponsive monoliths. Tried ringing the appointment booking office of your local hospital? How long do you have to wait on the phone to get an appointment with your GP? In the sixties the philosopher Ivan Illich described convivial and un-convivial societies: Friendly and approachable, or remote and unapproachable. Notwithstanding the dedication of NHS front line medical staff, who act according to their ethical instincts and are often remembered for their acts of kindness, they remain prisoners of a ruthless, self-serving bureaucratic machine. Socialist organisations are by their very structure often remote, unconvivial and authoritarian, claiming there is no alternative that is better and anybody who says so is undermining people's health. Politicians are terrified of this accusation, and know that to propose any radical reform is political death. Instead, we mindlessly worship the NHS, 'Queen awards NHS George Medal', clap it outside our gates while politicians drool phrases like 'Our NHS'. These are signs of a cult, not a service.

Cults do not care about their victims.

Myles Harris is a doctor.

Putting Beauty back in her Rightful Seat

MARK MANTEL

An idea clutched hold of me a few months back that positively won't let go. Of course, it is a completely quixotic sort of idea, likely to invite more ridicule than I care to endure. But there's no help for it. I am a very stubborn man when something perfectly frivolous is on the line. However, even by my standards, the fact that it was a *ghost story* that first did the dirty is just downright discreditable. Still, I have the conceit that there's something of general import to all conservatives everywhere in it. And so I will hazard to describe it all.

The story that first set me going was *The Phantom Coach* by Amelia Edwards. I cannot say that the tale itself is especially remarkable. And I cannot even say that it is to blame for what followed. Indeed, had I left it at that, I would still be the same as before, give or take. Yet the literary peregrinations that it enkindled launched me to my idea. The tale itself is simple enough: a hunter, lost one wintry night in the great English moorlands, happens upon a lone cabin. He gains admittance and meets with the master, a reclusive scientist. They break some farmhouse bread together and talk for an hour. And then the hunter, eager to get

home to his young wife, is given directions to a coach that happens to be piloted by ghosts. I think that is pretty much the whole plot.

But it was the scientist's talk that drew me in. They were in a room with a fireplace, a bookcase filled with dingy folios, a small organ, carvings of medieval saints and devils. There were also 'geological specimens, surgical preparations, crucibles, retorts, and jars of chemicals The very floor littered over with maps, casts, papers, tracings, and learned lumber of all conceivable kinds...' In short, the kind of atmosphere to warm my heart.

And the recluse was of a sort entirely congenial to my cast of mind, saying things like:

The world grows hourly more and more skeptical of all that lies beyond its own narrow radius; and our men of science foster the fatal tendency. They condemn as fable all that resists experiment. They reject as false all that cannot be brought to the test of the laboratory or the dissecting-room....

Basically, all the secret chords of my breast were duly plucked, one by one.

From there, one book suggesting another, I came to some essays and tales of Arthur Machen, a Welsh author and mystic of the 1890s and early 20th century. Beside ghost stories, his themes are Celtic Christianity, the Holy Grail, King Arthur, and all that. Probably most English readers have long known and long forgotten Machen, but he was new to me.

Anyways, after reading about these kinds of themes, I finally came upon a book called *Theopoetic: Theology and the Religious Imagination* by Amos N Wilder. Theopoetics is a movement of contemporary poets and believers who aim at giving world-old myths and sagas living power. As Wilder writes, 'Before the message, the vision; before the sermon, the hymn; before the prose, the poem.'

Well, sneer if you like, but this is what set me all aflame. Yes, Theo-poetics! A name for what, all my life, I have longed to do. O, when I learnt it had a name! I cannot express what singular rapture and pure bliss swelled inside. It was like the transports St. Augustine described at reading Cicero's now lost *Hortensia*. And like a feverish madman, I read all I could devour: Malcolm Guite's *Faith Hope and Poetry*, Sir Roger Scruton's *The Soul of the World*, Douglas Headley's *Living Forms of the Imagination*, Kathleen Raine's *That Wondrous Pattern*, Geoffrey Hill's *Style & Faith*.

Theo-poetics, in short, is Platonism for our time. (Not the Plato of the Republic who banishes the poets, but the Plato of the Timaeus and Pheadrus) And Platonism is the thread that binds Ficino, Sir Philip Sydney, Spencer, Henry More, the Metaphysical Poets, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Charles Williams and many others, Theo-poetics draws on this tradition. And it draws on linguistics, theology and philosophy in an attempt re-enchant modern life. I would also venture to add that its Logos, binding together all the world, explains quantum entanglement more parsimoniously than positing multiple universes, which is what our physicalists are increasingly reduced to. (See, *Cosmos & Transcendence* by Wolfgang Smith).

But what interest might all these somewhat shameful rhapsodies have for anyone else?

Conservatives, perhaps, can safely dispense with ideology. But we can't do without ideas and images and living symbols. And even more, we need a compelling portrait of the Good Life. The young person today, however unlettered, at least gets a vision of an ideal world from the Left. A 'social imaginary,' to use Charles Taylor's term. What social imaginaries have we had on offer lately? Not many. But it need not be so. I believe, dear reader, with every fiber of my being, that conservatism has an infinitely richer texture than anything the mechanistic materialists can muster.

Do these gender hermaphrodites want to slap our

faces with their 'dysphoria?' Try to explain how every cell in the human body is this or that sex. You will not go far! Better to whip their tender backs with Homer's golden chain, which God 'bade hang down from heaven to earth'. We must learn a way of talking that that puts Beauty back in her rightful seat. Would you debate with someone who ventured to hoist an ugly wife on you? Why then do you debate about an ugly educational system? Or an ugly definition of family?

Progressivism, I heard someone say, relies on 'Nothing but-ism.' Love is 'nothing but' sex. Sex is 'nothing but' orgasm. Orgasm is 'nothing but' chemistry. And chemistry is 'nothing but' physics – which can be described mathematically. We must reply with nothing less than the harmonious unity of the cosmos. It has come to this.

Some may think all this but trifles in our dangerous world. I do not think so. Recently, our congresswoman Nancy Pelosi travelled to Taiwan, a gratuitous provocation. Debate all you will its geopolitical merits. It was an ugly indelicacy that would be readily plain to any cultured person. Metternich or Castlereagh would recoil in horror. What else will come if we lose Beauty as a guide forever?

We cannot continue to answer discursive reason with discursive reason. But I do not propose abandoning reason. I simply answer with Wordsworth: 'Imagination is reason in her most exalted mood.'

Mark Mantel is an American lawyer



Venus by Botticelli

Nuclear Power versus Windmills: How the Greens will ensure you shiver this winter, even die

CRAIG MILNE

Three hundred and ten years ago an atmospheric heat engine invented and developed by Thomas Newcomen, a Devonshire blacksmith, ironmonger and lay preacher, was erected to pump groundwater from the shafts of the Coneygree Colliery in the English Midlands. This event, usually treated as a footnote in a summary of the intellectual, scientific causes of the Industrial Revolution, should not be underestimated; it was an Archimedean point in human history.

The particular significance of Newcomen's engine was that it demonstrated, for the first time, that an apparatus designed to convert heat from a chemical reaction such as burning coal into useful mechanical work could be operated on an economically viable basis.

Rudimentary heat engines and pneumatic pumps had been documented in Graeco-Roman antiquity by Ctesibius, Vitruvius, Hero of Alexandria and others and various iterations had appeared over the subsequent centuries. All of these were mere novelties however; their low thermal efficiency – they used an enormous amount of fuel to produce very little power – meant that the quantity of fuel required for their operation, and the difficulty in obtaining it, ruled out any economically useful application.

The thermal efficiency of Newcomen's engine was very low; initially it converted just 0.5 per cent of the heat applied to it into mechanical work and, as a result, it consumed prodigious amounts of coal. In order to deliver one horsepower for an hour, the first Newcomen engines could require upwards of a hundred pounds of coal. A horse, on the other hand, could do the same work on five pounds of oats and hay. Such substantial diseconomies of comparative fuel consumption ruled out the use of Newcomen engines anywhere but on the top of collieries, where the principal inputs, mainly

unsaleable coal refuse, water and a labourer to tend the furnace, were in abundant supply. The Europeans looked on with interest, and even copied a few engines for themselves, but only in coal-rich England, and for the rest of the eighteenth century, did these early engines make economic sense.

James Watt changed that. An instrument maker with an aptitude for mathematics, Watt closely studied the Newcomen engine and subsequently applied many improvements to its design. Instead of relying on the weight of the atmosphere bearing down on an induced vacuum, Watt substituted steam at gauge pressure and applied it both to the top and the bottom of the piston. Newcomen engines condensed a low-pressure wet steam charge via a jet of water into the cylinder on each cycle. The massive thermal losses that this entailed were vastly reduced in Watt's redesign by the incorporation of a separate condenser. More than that,

the claim that current atmospheric carbon dioxide levels are problematic, despite their being close to the lowest they have been in the three and a half billion year history of life on earth, is to treat our good fortune with contempt.

he replaced reciprocating with rotary motion (better for driving machinery), included a governor to closely regulate the engine's speed, and later added compound cylinders to further exploit the expansive properties of steam. Watt's changes revolutionised the economics of the original

engine by reducing its coal consumption to about twelve pounds per horsepower per hour.

Watt's improvements were enough to enable the steam engine to leave the collieries and assume a principal place in the factories. By the end of the eighteenth century the steam-powered heat engine was ready to drive forward the greatest transformation of human prosperity in history. Although many production machines, such as Richard Arkwright's water frame, had been developed by this time, their dependency on intermittent and unreliable renewable energy sources, like wind and falling water, severely limited their economic potential. Watt's engines changed all of that. Spinning mills could now be brought down

from their streamside sites high up the Peak District to Manchester, and be driven, without rest or natural interruption, by James Watt's new coal-fired steam engines.

In time, and with further continuing improvements, heat engines transformed transportation on land and sea and, when vectored through electrification, provided the power source that has enabled the progress and convenience of modern technical civilisation.

The point to be taken from this is that while the heat engine is obviously not the only explanatory factor to account for industrial modernity, it is its prime cause and enabler; without it the modern world simply would not exist. It is important to understand this and consider the best steps to take for the future, because there are powerful forces seeking to circumscribe the heat engine's vital contribution to our material lives, our ease of working, our health and general wellbeing. To believe, as many people do, that renewable energy sources can support the way of life that we have grown accustomed to, is akin to imagining that sunbeams can be extracted from cucumbers.

The application of chemical energy to mechanical work via the invention of the heat engine has served humanity wonderfully well. It has powered and underpinned the development of the modern world. Without its millions of heat engines, large and small, fuelled by lignite, coals, petroleum products and natural gas, the modern economy would not exist. The heat engine, more than any other factor, technical innovation, economic dogma or organising ideological principle, is the source of the great prosperity that we now enjoy. The energy at hand that the heat engine provides is a fundamental measure of wealth, the foundation upon which all modern technical civilisation rests.

Rich nations can be defined as those that have a large quantum of energy at hand, poor nations as those that do not. In the face of such global energy inequity, the idea of closing down perfectly good coal-fired power stations on the claim that current atmospheric carbon dioxide levels are problematic, despite their being close to the lowest they have been in the three and a half billion year history of life on earth, is to treat our good fortune with contempt.

The technologies applied to exploit chemical energy have been developed over three centuries and are now

all thoroughly understood. There are few efficiency gains left to be extracted from heat engines fuelled by compounds of carbon and hydrogen such as coal and oil.

Nuclear power, on the other hand, offers many opportunities for improvement. This is because the current nuclear plants, mostly light water reactors (LWRs), are relatively crude designs conceived in a hurry during the 1950s as spin-offs from nuclear weapons and naval reactor programs. Never the best design approach for civilian power generation, Light Water Reactors were deployed in the expectation that something better, the fast breeder reactor (FBR), would soon become available. But for reasons that made sense at the time, the nuclear industry picked the wrong technology and the FBRs were never widely adopted.

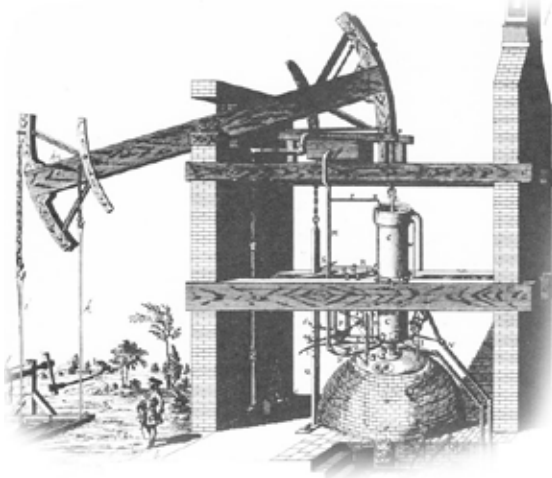
Between then and now the left and the environmental movement got organised. From their positions in politics, the bureaucracy, the media and the streets, and for various motives, they agitated against nuclear power. The effectiveness of green left activism has, until recently, marooned the nuclear industry in a technological stasis, with old reactor designs that demand stringent management regimes, waste most of the fuel that goes

into them, are prohibitively expensive to build and are thermally inefficient.

Yet despite these shortcomings, existing nuclear plants, unlike any of the renewables, with the exception of hydro, are cost-competitive with coal-fired generators. The explanation lies in the physics; fissioning (splitting) an atom of uranium 235 releases about 200 MeV, the oxidation of a carbon atom just 4 eV. This means that the thermodynamic potential of a nuclear reaction is millions of times greater than a chemical reaction for an equivalent fuel mass and this is why even inefficient reactor designs can still make cheap electricity.

(Editors note: The fission of 1 g of uranium or plutonium per day liberates about 1 MW. This is the energy equivalent of 3 tons of coal or about 600 gallons of fuel oil per day.)

That innovation aimed at raising energy productivity favours nuclear over renewables is a fact so obvious that it is an irritation to have to write it down. In the case of the favoured renewable alternatives,



Picture of a Newcomen Engine

wind and solar, engineers can already approach the theoretical performance limits of the aerofoils, geared transmissions, alternators and photo-voltaic cells that enable these technologies.

Unlike renewables, however, the potential productivity gains from nuclear technology are stupendous. As an example, and there are several, a fourth-generation liquid fluoride thorium reactor (LFTR) could improve fuel utilisation over the LWR from less than 1 per cent to close to 100 per cent. The design of the LFTR operates at higher temperatures than a LWR and this enables better Carnot efficiency (Carnot was 19th century engineer who described a near ideal 100 per cent engine, Editor) on the generating cycle, up from 35 per cent to 45 per cent. A LFTR is safer to operate, cheaper to build, produces a fraction of the waste and is unsuited to the production of weapons grade materials. Reactors like the LFTR, initially developed in the United States in the 1960s and now being commercially trialled in China, would enable a giant leap forward in nuclear productivity; a one-step improvement over the LWR equal to that achieved by the chemical heat engine over its entire history, from the first Newcomen engine of 1712 to the most modern diesels, gas and steam turbines.

If those people fretting about carbon dioxide emissions want to be taken seriously, they should be demanding the construction of nuclear power stations now, while calling for research projects to develop better reactor designs for the future. That mostly they are not, suggests either an inability to follow a train of thought to its logical conclusion or that some other agenda is in play.

In due course we can hope that anti-nuclear sandbagging will be overcome, innovation will proceed and the superior energy productivity inherent in nuclear technology will be realised. When that happens, coal-fired power will enter a period of natural decline, eventually going the way of the water wheel and the horse gin. We don't need to rush this; just enable the replacement of coal plants with nuclear as they are worn out. We don't need any more bureaucrats, carbon taxes or contrived 'market' schemes either. We just need to get the green left, rent-seekers and scoundrels that profit from dubious ideas, out of the way and let the natural progress of technological innovation and entrepreneurship take its course.

Craig Milne is the Executive Director of the Australian Productivity Council

The Transgender Madness

THEODORE DALRYMPLE

The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association*, 5th Edition, published in 2013, which is regarded with superstitious awe by doctors and lawyers alike, gives the prevalence of the various diseases or conditions that it enumerates. That for what it calls *gender dysphoria* it gives as between 0.005 and 0.014 per cent for males and 0.002 to 0.003 for females.

The *DSM-5* does not generally err on the conservative side in its estimate of prevalence. For example, that given for *Dissociative Identity Disorder*, which used to be known as multiple personality (it is easier to change names than things), is given as 1.5 per cent, that is to say one in 67 people.

As far as gender dysphoria is concerned, 2013 might as well be thousands of years ago, for the prevalence in the population now commonly given is 0.6 per cent, that is to say an increase (if we take the higher figures given in *DSM-5*) of approximately 7000 per cent in

eight or nine years. Moreover, a condition that was then 2–4 times more common in males is now more common in females.

What accounts for the phenomenal increase in prevalence and change in sex distribution? More than one possible explanation springs to mind.

The first is that there is, at last, a recognition of what has always been there, but hidden by the prejudices of society and the shame attached to the condition. According to this explanation, the demand for sex-change has been pent up all this time, and the dam has now broken, as it were. And certainly, it is true that there have always been at least a few individuals, across many cultures and societies, who have wanted to change sex.

A second explanation is that there has been a real increase in the prevalence of the condition or state of mind, brought about by some as yet unknown cause, physiological or psychological. One of these might

be something akin to fashion, for there are fashions in strange or deviant behaviour, as there are in many other things. There have been episodes of mass hysteria; multiple personality was more fashionable, or at least common, a few years ago than it is now. Hysterical conversion, in which a part of the body seems paralysed or anaesthetised, is now rare, though it was once common (and could one day return). The prevalence of psychological disorders, and the explanation of variation over time, is not a straightforward matter.

Psychiatry does not have an altogether happy record when it comes to the drastic physical means it has employed in treating conditions with no known physical pathology – such as gender dysphoria. In mitigation it *has* had to do *something* to alleviate conditions that cause profound misery, both to the patient themselves and to those around him. The mad and the very distressed have been spun round on suspended chairs, doused in cold water, purged to within an inch of their lives, shocked, rendered dangerously comatose and operated on, all in an attempt to improve their state. Dr Henry Cotton, an American psychiatrist, convinced himself that focal infection of the teeth and intestinal tract was the cause not only of insanity but of much bad behaviour, and pulled out teeth and cut out appendices by the hundred. Cutting out the colon of a six-year-old boy was followed several months later, he wrote, by such an improvement in behaviour that the boy was able to return to school, where he had previously been unmanageable, his conduct now giving no cause for concern. Pulling out all the teeth of twenty-five juvenile delinquents, eight of them improved in their behaviour.

We laugh now – how could intelligent and probably well-intentioned people have believed such things? When people look back in 100 years' time (Cotton's book, *The Defective Delinquent and Insane: The Relation of Focal Infections to Their Causation, Treatment and Prevention* was published in 1921), will they not stand amazed by the follies of the trans-gender movement, and even more by the astonishing ease and speed with which this movement, with its scarcely quarter-baked ideas, was able to influence the policies of large and powerful, or at least bloated, states,?

A huge rise in demand for gender reassignment, seemingly at an ever-earlier age given that its efficiency was judged by the length of its waiting lists led the Tavistock Clinic to a production-line approach to what is a problem of great personal and individual delicacy. It also allowed itself to be infiltrated by monomaniacal pressure groups, like the Mermaids, that use moral intimidation to attain their ends. It would have taken intellectual force and moral courage to face them down, and appeasement was by far the easiest way out, at

least initially.

Some people seem to benefit psychologically from the prescription of sex-changing hormones and surgery, and are happy with the result; but unfortunately, many do not, and they are likely to attribute all their subsequent miseries to the failure of the assessment of their cases before their treatment. They should have been warned more forcefully that the outcome could be bad, that a longed-for state of bliss might not result in return for all the considerable hardships experienced during the transition period, quite the reverse. The decision to go ahead should have been a deeply considered one, rather than rushed because of the pressure of a waiting list. All the more likely is this to be so when transition is offered to adolescents, likely to have been influenced by a zeitgeist that seems to regard sex-change as almost laudable or even heroic, and whose capacity to make momentous and irreversible decisions about something as fundamental as their sexual identity must be very doubtful.

If I were a malpractice lawyer, I should have been rubbing my hands with glee for several years in anticipation of the bonanza to come. Here would be another great opportunity to divert funds from the public purse into lawyers' pockets, this time with some justification. Not, of course, that such litigation will repair the damage done by negligent or hasty gender reassignment, indeed it may well add to it, insofar as litigation usually adds the law's delays to the miseries of the original injury, and no monetary compensation can turn the clock back and restore the maimed and mutilated to what they would have been without such maltreatment. Again, it is not those responsible for this debacle who will pay for it, but once again the taxpayer, the costs of the litigation either subtracting from the funds available for medical care or adding to its cost of such medical care.

The madness prospers in all sorts of ways. Universities forbid their staff to address meetings by the customary *Ladies and gentlemen*, as being exclusionary of those who are neither. Schools teach the wonders of transgenderism to children of five and six. For the monomaniacs, their cause is all, the very purpose of their existence; for the rest of us, it is just one thing among many other things, so that we do not resist with anything like the fanaticism that the monomaniacs can muster.

The question is, 'What will be next?' in the search for 'liberation', after the victory of transgenderism. My money is on incest, but there is a panoply to choose from.

Theodore Dalrymple's latest book is In Praise of Folly, (Gibson Square).

People-Smuggling Matters

DARYL MCCANN

The rise and fall and likely rise again of people-smuggling into Australia tells us two key things about this latter-day phenomenon. Firstly, it is possible to reduce the flow of illegal immigration – ‘irregular maritime arrivals’ – when a comprehensive and effective set of policies are put into place. Secondly, it is unlikely that the global people-smuggling industry will ever be permanently defeated. When an island nation such as Australia – or Great Britain – implements effective measures to counter illegal immigration, the people-smugglers simply look elsewhere to ply their lucrative trade. Not so different from the drug-smuggling industry. Indeed, the business of people trafficking and drug trafficking often overlap on the US-Mexico border.

We can speak confidently about the efficacy of Australia’s anti-people smuggling formula because it worked on the two separate occasions it has been implemented, first under the prime ministership of John Howard (1996-2007) and then under Tony Abbott and his Coalition successors (2013-2022). In contrast, between 2007 and 2013, when the Australian Labor Party (ALP) governed, the people-smuggling industry thrived. It was a nightmarish business. On December 10, 2010, for instance, Australians watched in horror the televised account of a leaky Indonesian fishing boat, with its human cargo of 89, break up on the rocks of Christmas Island, a small Australian territory to the north-west of the mainland. That morning fifty souls, despite the valiant effort of the locals and the Royal Australian Navy (RAN), perished. The Indian Ocean is infamously treacherous; the waves sometimes 5 to 6 metres high and on occasion as much as 12 metres. The single greatest disaster during this period occurred in December 2011 when as many as two-hundred people drowned after their boat capsized in the waters off East Java.

The key to success for both Howard’s Pacific Solution (2001-07) and Abbott’s Operation Sovereign Borders (from 2013) was to convince prospective illegal migrants that the chances of permanently settling in Australia were negligible, making the expense and risk of engaging the service of the people-smuggling industry a poor wager. The Pacific Solution involved a number of initiatives, including excising thousands

of outlying Australian islands from Australia’s official migration zone and territory. Moreover, the RAN was tasked with intercepting people-smuggling vessels and towing them to Nauru and New Guinea. Operation Sovereign Borders instituted similar and additional protocols including the temporary transit visa, allowing Canberra to treat illegal maritime arrivals as foreign nationals or aliens rather than as asylum seekers.

Australia, like 149 other countries, is a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention, originally intended to safeguard stateless people because of the chaos from the Second World War. We are now a long way from that war, though people seeking asylum abroad has been a genuine factor in the massive movement of people over the past seventy years. Australia granted sanctuary to Jewish refugees in the immediate post-war years and, latterly, to East European, South Vietnamese, Chinese, South Sudanese, Lebanese, Afghani, Iraqi *et al* asylum seekers. Excluding the Covid era, when very little immigration of any kind has occurred, there has always been a quotient of our migration intake based purely on humanitarian grounds. Since the early 1970s, and unofficially even before then, migrants – including asylum seekers – have been welcomed to Australia irrespective of ethnicity or religion. Nevertheless, a majority of Australians disapprove of foreigners who pay many thousands of dollars to people-smugglers who help them evade the strictures of Australian law – ‘queue jumpers’ as we refer to them.

The people-smuggling business is an anathema to most Australians on two fronts: hundreds of people, many of them children, drowning on the high seas; and the circumvention of the rule of law. For the Australian Greens and the left-wing faction of the ALP, on the other hand, compassion demands that we ignore such things. This explains the one-time popularity of Scott Morrison, Minister for Immigration and Border Protection at the commencement of Operation Sovereign Borders (2013-14) and Prime Minister of Australia from 2019 until the Coalition was defeated by the ALP at this year’s May 21 federal election. Paradoxically, perhaps, the Coalition’s successful border protection policy was so expeditious in shutting down the people-smuggling industry, almost a decade ago, that many Australians have by now forgotten how

amateurish Labor proved at defending our sovereignty in the years 2007-13. Apart from all the drownings in the Indian Ocean, the faintness of the previous Labor government resulted in an astonishing 50,000 irregular maritime arrivals turning up on our northern shores.

Back in 2013-14, Immigration Minister Morrison not only enforced a turn-back-the-boats protocol and the transfer of queue jumpers to destinations outside of Australia. He also implemented the temporary transit visa scheme. This innovation meant that any irregular maritime arrival who makes it to ashore to Australia cannot automatically claim the gold-standard status of an asylum seeker. An asylum seeker, thanks to the 1951 Refugee Convention, is more or less home and housed when it comes to obtaining permanent residency in Australia. Fair enough, you might say, but only if said irregular maritime arrival is an actual *bona fide* asylum seeker. Experience tells us this is not necessarily the case at all. One of the ironies of progressive ideology, as delineated by Douglas Murray in *The War on the West*, is that the West is denigrated as a white supremacist hellhole, and yet hundreds of millions of non-whites from around the world dream of nothing more than relocating to a Western liberal-democratic nation. The Commonwealth of Australia, along with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, is one such Western liberal-democratic nation.

Millions upon millions of non-Westerners would likely descend upon Australia, one of the most idyllic countries in the world, were we to open the sluice-gates. The 50,000 irregular maritime arrivals that turned up here in the years 2007-13 are only a taste of what will befall us if we do not enforce our sovereignty. The current misfortune for Australia is that once again we have a Labor government in Canberra and its politically correct cravenness, in addition to pressure from the Australian Greens, will likely wind back Operation Sovereign Borders, just as they previously rescinded John Howard's Pacific Solution. Already members of the new Albanese Labor administration talk disparagingly about the temporary transit visa scheme. The outlook is even more dire; Andrew Giles, the new Labor Minister for Immigration, has in the past been an advocate for irregular maritime arrivals or what he, as an activist, would call asylum seekers.

The truth is that the likes of Andrew Giles have no idea if an irregular maritime arrival in Australia is an economic émigré or a genuine asylum seeker because the people-smuggling mafia instruct clients to destroy their identity documents in order to deceive Australian authorities. Andrew Giles, being a progressive, will invariably opt for the 'moral high ground', even if that means hundreds and hundreds of children will drown on the high seas. Don't expect 'humanitarians'

like Giles to feel any guilt about those deaths. In 2011, Senator Sarah Hanson-Young, an Australian Greens senator, who to this day advocates open borders, was asked by a reporter if she accepted any responsibility for the deaths of wannabe immigrants in the Indian Ocean: 'Of course not. Tragedies happen, accidents happen.'

The people-smuggling gang are not stupid. They would have registered the May 21, 2022, electoral victory of the ALP on their inventory. Already, as early as July, The Australian newspaper has noted that three Australian-bound people-smuggling boats have been identified. Not a few conservative pundits over the years have argued that if a country cannot guarantee the integrity of its borders – that is to say, its sovereignty – then said country is not, strictly speaking, a nation.

If the Commonwealth of Australia, or the United Kingdom or the United States or the Dominion of Canada, cannot say who – or who cannot – immigrate, then in what sense are they genuinely sovereign entities? What was the point of Brexit if the British cannot be truly self-regulating? The UK, an island nation like its protégé Australia, might be well advised to contemplate our Operation Sovereign Borders. Westminster's Operation Rwanda is not a bad place to start.

Daryl McCann is an Australian journalist. He has a blog at <http://darylmccann.bigspot.com.au>.



The full archive of *The Salisbury Review* will be available on the website at
www.salisburyreview.com
from 5th September

Once upon a time we had Freedom of Speech

TOM FLOWER

I naturally disdain the current trend in our universities for cancelling and no-platforming persons who may at some point have questioned Trans Rights (whatever they are) or failed to denounce the British Empire with sufficient venom.

When coming across these stories I instead recall with both amusement and fondness an event in a chilly February of 1979, when I was a first-year undergraduate at Oxford. It was mentioned to me that the OU Conservative Association had made a bit of a cock-up by inviting the Dowager Lady Birdwood to address a meeting. At that point I had not heard of Lady Birdwood, and of course Google did not exist in those strike-filled, bleak years. For all those who have also not heard of her, she is well worth looking up. Such personalities will not be seen again, probably fortunately. A highlight of her multitude of racist campaigns was when she called for the re-enforcement of the Edict of Expulsion against English Jews in 1290 by King Edward I, on the grounds that the edict had never been revoked (in fact it had, by no less a person than Oliver Cromwell, about whom I imagine the Dowager would have had a thing or two to say). She was a supporter of Yaroslav Stetsko, a raving Ukrainian nutcase who was fond of killing Jews and, according to Wikipedia, when she visited South Africa, she praised apartheid as an ‘inevitable and a social necessity’.

The Chairman of the OU Conservative Association was at the door of the meeting in the Oxford Union, looking more sheepish than if he were on a Welsh mountainside. He had managed to suppress almost all publicity for the event and there was an audience of only perhaps 40 persons. We were treated to an address of great breadth, for Lady Birdwood was a person of trenchant views; she was opposed to almost everything. As her speech progressed and she became increasingly heated, she began to digress into examples of places where non-white persons may be encountered (‘Rye, that lovely town – they’re there too’). Lady Birdwood was a superstar of racism so vicious that even in the 1980s, she ended up in Court, though she narrowly avoided prison.

In the Oxford Union there were glances exchanged,

and eyebrows raised in astonishment, as we listened to her remarks. Nevertheless, Lady Birdwood was rightly afforded the deference due to an older person and the courtesy due to a guest.

At the conclusion of her speech an undergraduate, later to become President of the Union and one of the Great and the Good in the City and the BBC, rose to speak. He felt we would all agree that it was a most excellent thing, in the cause of free speech, that our guest should thus address us and espouse her views. Freedom of speech, he noted, is a cornerstone of democracy. Equally, he observed that he was certain that every one of us would utterly oppose the views Lady Birdwood had espoused – and in this he was almost certainly correct.

Lady Birdwood held some pretty odd views. It was undoubtedly a blunder on the part of the OU Conservative Association to invite her to speak.

On the one hand, in 1979: ‘I have listened to your opinions, I fully respect your right to express them, and I utterly oppose them’. Not a novel point, of course, but in that room on that day, an entirely apposite one.

By contrast, today’s students... I cannot begin to think of the reaction. One hopes that Lady Birdwood would not have been physically assaulted. I’m pretty sure that lawsuits would have been brought against both the Conservative Association and Lady Birdwood herself by numerous persons on numerous grounds, spurious or otherwise. The newspapers would have followed the story for months. Demonstrations, speeches, resolutions in Student Unions, disaffiliations, demands for the Dowager Lady Birdwood to be stripped of her title (obviously not possible, since it devolved through her late husband) and, of course, widespread calls for Police investigation into her views. Most politicians would join with this, not because they care but because they must pretend to care.

She had a point of view. I don’t agree with it. But weird views are not a crime.

Tom Flower has a seven-year-old daughter and he runs a small artisan business in Gwynedd.

The Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Act

PERCY CARLYLE

Within a week, (5th June) the long-standing institution of marriage will finally be laid to rest. This is utterly unsurprising and expected. A societal norm that requires commitment and the recognition of obligation over pleasure can't last in a world where indulgence is ubiquitous and encouraged. And alas! it isn't going out with a bang, but rather, a whimper. As of the 7th April 2022, the Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Act came into force. The Act proudly proclaims the introduction of no-fault divorce in the UK as the next logical step following the revolution brought about in the early 1970's by the Matrimonial Causes Act. According to the new Act, there will be no requirement to establish any facts in court; nor shall blame be apportioned between the parties.

The Ministry of Justice claims that this will ensure parents or spouses divorce more amicably in the future. Yet it fails to provide any evidence to justify such a claim. Furthermore, after the order is made by the court, the divorce will be finalised after a mere six weeks, regardless of the wills and wishes of the other party. The Act is remarkably small for such a radical change in society and the historical development thereof. A nine-section bill, four of which are miscellaneous and unimportant, seems to be the perfect metaphor for how marriage is treated in the UK: an insignificant nuisance running against most people's idea of fun. It is not uncommon nowadays that someone is married three or four times, for a period of two to three years, before they find someone else.

The bill only aids them in walking out of the door whenever it most suits them. The idea of commitment is forgotten or, worse still, actively avoided. The concept of marriage as providing the most propitious environment for the upbringing of children is derided as archaic, unreflective of the more enlightened approach of maximum pleasure. The notion that we should attempt to tame our natural intemperance is so repugnant to us that it makes little sense to maintain marriage at all. Yet that would, however, negate the only reason as to why people marry anymore, for few people see marriage as anything more than a photo opportunity: Get together in ostentatious dress, write

your own vows by stealing a quote from Star Wars, and pound beers for the remainder of the day. It is, on the brighter side of things, no reason to become animated.

Why should you? The so-called Conservative Party introduced the bill, the Church of England is indifferent, and we're more concerned about teaching children to become radical race-baiting transgenders than to worry about splitting up their parents and destroying their home lives. And to be so ignorant as to believe that making divorce easier leads to less acrimony is a fantasy. Most of the fighting comes after everything is finalised. It's the custody of children that fuels the most vicious and destructive battles in many instances of divorce. But it is better to pretend that that doesn't exist.

As with so much of civilised life, it is becoming a relic of a past-age. Oakeshott's fundamental principles of conservative life – 'family, church, tradition and local association to control change and slow it down' – seem antediluvian and worthy of the same kind of study and examination as the classics. The great Johann Wolfgang von Goethe argued that '[m]arriage is the beginning and the culmination of all civilisation. It makes the brutal man gentle, and the most educated man can have no better opportunity of demonstrating his human spirit.' Perhaps this can be the first phrase written in front of the class in a future history lesson?

Percy Carlyle is a Social Observer.



<https://www.divorcemag.com/articles/think-the-kids-will-be-fine-if-you-divorce-think-again>

It's all my Eye and Betty Martin

JANE KELLY

A porter at one of the Oxford colleges has recently retired early, saying he can no longer 'get along' with the students. They have changed, he hasn't. They don't appreciate his merry quips and he is aware of the need for a lot more personal space between him and them, the constant threat that he might over step a woke mark verbally and physically, so he has gone off to tend his tomatoes at home. Many of us, particularly those without offspring, will recognise his unease. It's no longer possible to speak to children or young people freely and if you do dare to do it, you will often be met by a blank stare and no response. They are no longer encouraged to 'speak if spoken to,' and perhaps cannot manage to put sentences together, especially not if the encounter is unexpected. It's too much of a social challenge for them and of course from infancy they are now warned of 'stranger danger'. Then there is the problem that usually they cannot understand a word I am saying.

I realise I speak a different language from the young, I am happy about that as theirs sounds very ugly and glum to me. I have decided to press on with the old stuff for as long as I can, until arrested or certified at least. I recently came across a young girl lying on the pavement with her legs in the air. She was laughing helplessly with her friend who was also inebriated. 'You should take more water with it,' I said in my best jocular cockney voice. Both girls silently stared up at me in incomprehension. As I trotted off, I heard one say, 'What's that mean?'

I've gradually realised that the use of traditional English is an effective weapon against the rudeness of the young, an 'impactful' weapon as they would say against their arrogance in public places. Recently in a large supermarket, I asked where I could find the confectionary. A young Asian girl directed me to an aisle where they sold bread. When I went back to ask her again, she said I had asked her for 'candy'. I pointed out that I would never use such a word, it's not in my vocabulary. A young Afro-Caribbean man came to her assistance and they both told me forcefully what it was that I had asked her for and they were disgusted by my temerity at expecting her to know something about the geography of the shop where she worked.

'You can both go on like this until you are blue in the face,' I said, sounding like my late Gran. 'But I never said any such thing.' Their faces fell as they tried to assess the kind of racist crime I had just committed.

In *Pets Are Us*, I was looking for 'Whiskas crunch'. There were no other customers but the girl said they didn't have any, had no intentions of looking with me, and what was more important she'd never heard of it. That's what they call 'gas lighting'. It implies that you, the customer, are imagining an item which never existed ie, mad. 'It seems I've got to bust a gut to find it,' I said, quoting a school friend of mine from Wolverhampton in the 1970s. The girl looked surprised and irked, suspecting that I was in some way challenging her. The young are not used to that anymore. 'I better go and burn some more rubber,' I added, 'Good job I've got wheels'. She and a youth on the till stared stonily after me.

I had to go to the bank. Lucky we've still got one as my on-line page wasn't working. A large menu came up saying, 'Hi! Our bad but don't trip – we're fixing it!' Having to pay someone that day, I joined a long, sad looking queue of older people, who presumably don't like being on-line or were having problems too, waiting to reach a dusky young woman behind the counter. I told her I was there because I had a problem on line. A mistake. I should not have expected her to be interested in that and she wasn't, in fact she took it as implicit criticism. 'There has been no problem that I've heard of,' she said flatly. 'No other customers have mentioned it.'

'By Jove! You don't say? Fancy that!' I replied, channelling my Dad. She looked puzzled and suspicious that she was being insulted or 'disrespected' as they now say. 'Well. Wha'd'you know?' I went on, with a bit of Ken Dodd coming in. 'No one else has complained? And you know nothing about it. Well! I'll go to the foot of our stairs.' Her expression went from dark and stormy to baffled and scared. 'Well, it's all hog-wash (a term now forbidden in case it offends Muslims) eye-wash (also doubtful as it can trigger people with ocular problems) and, 'It's all my eye and Betty Martin,' to people like you, isn't it?' There were murmurs of approval from the archaic crowd

behind me, but I could see her fat wrist with its brightly coloured tattoo reaching for the help button, so I left swiftly not carrying out any transactions at all.

I sat down in the sun and spent a few moments praying for our language, once a repository of knowledge and history, a lexicon of fun, word play, puns and irony, now a weapon in the culture wars but mainly turning into a vast, bland, globalised soup. I prayed - *Ah! mihi, bea'te Martine* (Ah! Grant, me, Blessed Martin) give

me patience, please! Or as my grandfather used to say, 'Sod this for a game of soldiers.'

Jane Kelly was a professional journalist in London for 35 years. Since going freelance in 2008 she has written for The Spectator, Arts Review, The Jackdaw and published two books; a biography of Colin Farrell and Inside a memoir of her year teaching in Wormwood Scrubs, London.

Vote Truss or Sunak for PM and this is what you will get

JAKE WELCH

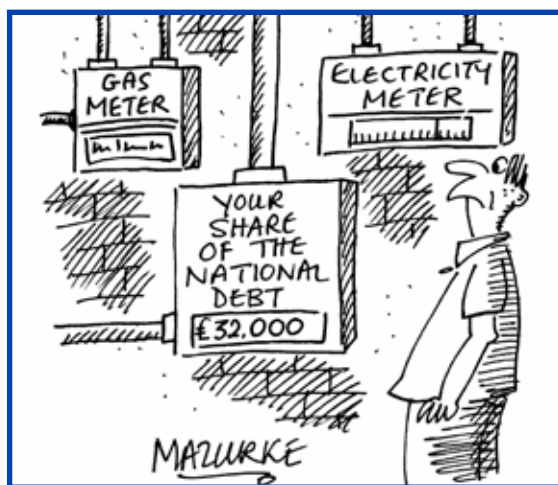
If the current opinion polls are correct, 2024 will produce a Labour government, likely in a coalition with the SNP, which means a strong possibility of the utter annihilation of the Conservative party. The next prime minister and their utter incompetence will not lead the country out of these troubling times within the next two years; instead, they will intensify the current sense of calamity and collapse. Although most conservatives would celebrate this and see it as an opportunity for a fresh start, we shouldn't forget the looming threat posed by a Starmer-Sturgeon coalition.

Although the thought of Labour's shadow cabinet – such as Angela Rayner as Deputy Prime Minister, David Lammy as Foreign Secretary, Emily Thornberry as Attorney-General, and no doubt Shola Mos-Shogbamimu as the leading intellectual figure – is terrifying to the reasonable person, there is a much more damning threat to the country with the next Labour government. Radical constitutional reform would make the Blair years seem somewhat tame in comparison. When the average voter plods into the voting booth, having suffered an arduous day in the office or factory, fears of constitutional reform will not be at the top

of the voting agenda. Modern celebrity-style politics has ousted the more civilised and self-respecting means of former years, whereby debate was more composed and measured, rather than based on appearance and the appeal to one's emotional state as a political argument. Very few people would enter the voting booth with the slightest knowledge of Britain's ancient, uncoded constitution or what it means and from where it comes.

As a result, the electorate is uninterested in the notion that constitutional change is on the way. Whatever it means, most people feel detached from such a notion; it would never have as big an impact as, say, Partygate

or the Chris Pincher controversy. Thus, malevolent megalomaniacs wishing to preserve political power indefinitely need not make it a priority in their manifestos, nor need they be vociferous in their advocacy for reform. Such was the case under New Labour which, as argued by Professor Jeff King at the University of Oxford, the British constitution was changed more between 1997 and 2000 than it had been in the previous two-hundred and fifty years. Let's not forget the catastrophe of Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish devolution, the attack on



the legal system under the Constitutional Reform Act of 2005, the establishment of the Supreme Court, abolishing the ancient position of Lord Chancellor as well as politicising the nomination of judges: and the destruction of the House of Lords, making it surplus to requirements.

What would a new Labour government introduce? There's a strong possibility that we would see a second Scottish referendum following the inevitable coalition with the SNP, with all of its disastrous repercussions to be felt for decades to come. This would cause Labour a dilemma for, to obtain office, Labour needs Scotland. Therefore, the electoral system would have to be radically altered, whereby proportional representation is established, and the age of qualification lowered to sixteen – meaning a reduction necessary to sit on a jury, too. It would also be likely that the House of Lords is removed in favour of a more 'democratic' house replicating the American senate. The likelihood of a conservative party obtaining office in the future would be heavily diminished.

Dare I add the effect it may have upon the death of Elizabeth II? Do we want to leave the passing of the crown and the opportunity created thereof to a Labour government? This has drawn little attention in the last few weeks of the leadership election. It hasn't crossed the minds of complacent Tories who seem more interested in choosing between one candidate representing six and the other representing half a dozen. The difference is non-existent and of no consequence at all.

Over the next two years, the threat of radical change – not to the unreformable mammoth of the NHS – must be prioritised amongst conservative circles. It has to be treated as a legitimate talking point. It's not going to be straightforward given the overall sense of indifference felt by the public. But it's necessary as a matter of existence.

The British constitution, although uncoded, often illusory and unapproachable, occupies a far different position from, for example, the American constitution. The American constitution's position is like an elephant in a narrow corridor. One can neither ignore nor work around it. The British constitution is an introverted and inconspicuous set of values and laws, passed down from generation to generation as it has been for the last eight hundred years. It is spread across many centuries and many documents, reflecting both the beauty and frustration of Englishness. Its beauty lies in its quietness. One cannot point and say, 'here are our values and what we

stand for,' as is the case for those across the Atlantic.

The closest document in existence is that of the 1689 Bill of Rights. It created the first modern state by way of being run with a supreme electoral assembly, which was then utilised by the proceeding generations to their benefit. Within the Bill, frequent parliaments, free elections, freedom of speech for members of parliament, no taxation without parliamentary consent, freedom from governmental intervention or interference, the right to petition, as well as the just treatment of people by the courts were all guaranteed.

This became a source of immense pride amongst the British of the proceeding centuries. No parades had to be held, no songs sung, no guns fired, nor any political fights due to the rigidity of an entrenched constitutional order. It has allowed Britain to regularly modernise itself without overthrowing the previous constitution. It was and remains the most modern constitution in the world, for its timelessness. It has never been a hurdle to progress. Yet, it unites generations spanning more than three hundred years. France, on the other hand, has had five since 1789 alone.

It should concern conservatives of all types how much has been changed and worsened in the past twenty-five years since we decided to tinker with this document. It has already seen much of its value and importance removed or diminished. And with further destruction on the way, it's about time to ask ourselves whether it is worth fighting for. Because without it, although we may continue calling ourselves British and still wave the Union Jack and sing God Save the Queen or Jerusalem, we will become that bit more detached from our past. At some point, so much would have changed that we will turn around and find even these things unrecognisable.

Conservatives have been poor recently insofar as nothing has been conserved. Perhaps the next couple of years presents an opportunity for the first victory in a long time.

Jake Welch is a master's student at King's College, London



The Second Battle of Vienna 2015

TERRY BUSHELL

When, in the autumn of 2015, columns of men of fighting age were tramping north through the Balkans and across Hungary, memories of the past were evoked throughout the region. The seemingly endless lines originated from Turkey and were almost entirely Muslim. Everyone recalled previous numerous Muslim invasions and viewed this migration in a similar light. Most people in Western Europe, which, thanks to the 1683 victory at Vienna, had never been menaced by Muslims, failed to understand the visceral reaction to the sight of Muslim men of fighting age marching through the Balkans from Turkey.

Ignorant liberal commentators denounced the uneasiness felt in the region as being motivated by hatred of immigrants and Islamophobia. After Peter Bucklitsch spoke out at the EU Parliament against the migration, BBC journalist Alex Morrison called him the worst human alive.

Most of the hundreds of thousands of young men claimed to be Syrians fleeing the war with Islamic State but were welfare seekers from areas not affected by the war and from other countries. They bought fake Syrian passports on the black market or simply threw away their passports and said they were from Syria. Markets selling fake Syrian passports sprung up across Turkey, while Serbian border police said 90 per cent of those arriving were from Macedonia, 3,000 a day, claimed they were Syrian – although they had no documents to prove it. A policeman said, ‘You can see that something is fishy when most of those who cross into Serbia give January 1st as their date of birth. I suppose that is the first date that enters their mind.’

Discarded passports were constantly seen in cornfields and roadside bushes and among the rubbish tips left behind by immigrants. Rejected food in vast amounts was also among the rubbish, the men were throwing away or refusing to accept food that was not *halal* and scorning Red Cross parcels because of the cross on the boxes.

These vigorous young men, brimming with hate and testosterone, as well as attacking border police and guards, constantly fought each other. Sunni gangs fought Shi’ite gangs, Syrian gangs fought Afghan gangs, Turkish gangs fought Kurdish gangs The UN

reported that 75 per cent of the migrants were ‘young, fit males’. That is not the demographics of a civilian population displaced by war; that is the demographics of an army.

Just after Hungary closed and fortified its border crossings with Serbia a crowd stormed the new fence, breaking down a gate and attempting to climb into Hungary. They were met with pepper spray and tear gas, and pictures of people coughing were what made the BBC news reports – especially clips in which women and children were visible. But examination of the raw footage from those incidents (RT was the best source) showed that most of the rioters were violent male youths. In the unedited footage you could hear them chanting ‘*Allahu akbar*’, although this was omitted from, or edited out of, all BBC clips.

Agitators were prominent at the front of the crowd by the fence, shouting instructions and encouragement to their fellow immigrants as they attempted to breach it. One was seen yelling through a megaphone while sitting on another man’s shoulders. He must have carried this cumbersome instrument for the entire journey, not forgetting to pack it along with other essentials when setting off on holy *hijra*, migration, such as a change of underwear and a toothbrush. Clearly, he had a sinister agenda. Needless to say, he never appeared in any BBC reports. Czech president Milos Zeman was right to call the refugee influx ‘an organised invasion’.

Journalists fed the public a steady stream of photos and videos that featured pitiful refugee women and children, showing them looking through the razor wire towards ‘freedom’, weeping, cooking their food over a campfire and being pushed back by border guards. Yet these images were so misleading that they constituted disinformation. The ugly fact was that most of the ‘refugees’ were young men who either had no wives and children or, more often, left them behind. These able-bodied young men all supposedly came from dangerous places. Why then were they not at home defending their families and their womenfolk?

They were a legion of the flash ones, the chancers, the spivs, the ne’er-do-wells, the Jack-the-lads. This could be seen from their bearing alone. They were cocky.

To equate them with the Jewish families fleeing

Nazi Germany arriving at Victoria Station clutching their little battered cardboard suitcases, apprehensive, diffident, was ludicrous. The Western public was being manipulated into supporting the immigration of fighting-age Muslim men into Europe, into joining the starry-eyed liberals brandishing ‘Welcome, Refugees’ signs at stations.

All those photos and videos of long columns of refugees walking along dusty roads carrying their children and pathetic belongings were not representative of the immigrants’ journey. This is yet another way in which the Western public were being manipulated by the media. An honest shot would show hundreds of smirking young men sitting on buses with air conditioning and upholstered seats. But you did not see any of those. News features about the immigrants always showed columns of them walking, as if they had walked all the way from Greece to Austria. But the total distance walked by them was small, a few miles at most. The rest of the journey was spent on buses and trains, which they stormed and overwhelmed, so that it was impossible to check if any had a ticket.

Those that arrived by bus at the Slovenian border town of Gornja Radgona went to a warehouse to stock up on food and bottles of water and collect clothing and shoes, all free, even though they were already well-fed and wearing expensive shoes and clothes. Their main concern while in the town was to recharge their mobiles for most were carrying the latest hand-held electronic devices. When it was cold and they arrived late they stayed overnight in the warehouse, which was heated for them. They then walked 500 yards across a bridge to the Austrian town of Bad Radkersburg. After being processed by Austrian border officials they stormed another bus to Germany. Most of them were refusing to identify themselves, to be photographed and fingerprinted as required under EU rules.

Masses of unscreened, fit, able-bodied men of fighting age chanting ‘*Allahu akbar*’ as they traversed Europe was clearly an invasion that threatened its prosperity, security, culture and identity. Since they headed for northern EU they were welfare seekers or terrorists or both, as Muslims regard welfare benefit payments as *jizya*, protection money extorted from unbelievers by Muslims whenever in a position to do so. Muslims consider that emigrating to a new land to export Islam is a highly meritorious act.

Hijra is why the filthy-rich Gulf states have not accepted Muslim settlers. Saudi Arabia told Germany it would not take any refugees but would fund building 200 new mosques in Germany. While Europe struggles to house the new arrivals, Saudi Arabia has permanently in place more than three million air-conditioned tents near Mecca, with water on tap and gas and electricity,

that are used just a few days a year, by pilgrims on the mass annual pilgrimage.

Encouraging vast hordes of Muslims to settle in Europe under various guises is so clearly irrational that several conspiracy theories have emerged to try to explain the phenomenon. With all Western leaders using identical wording to justify this irrational encouragement, and the justifications constantly changing, as though they will say anything at all to keep the Muslims coming, it is tempting to imagine a sinister Dr No or Goldfinger out of a James Bond novel manipulating them all behind the scenes.

In the autumn of 2015 the hundreds of thousands of welfare seekers, most of them young malevolent Muslim males, using the Balkan routes through Macedonia, Serbia, Hungary, Croatia and Slovenia to get to the infidel lands of milk and honey, seemed to have a lot of cash. Croatian newspapers reported that if they were unable to get on public transport, they took a taxi to cross Croatia from the Serbian border to the Slovenian border, about 300 miles, casually paying five times the usual fare. And those who arrived at Nickelsdorf just inside the Austrian border were paying for €2 purchases at shops with brand new €500 notes, to the point where shopkeepers had to turn them away as they had no more change. Where did those high-denomination banknotes come from? The immigrants did not find them in the Balkan cornfields.

Some American writers speculated that these notes were counterfeit. But those writers were not familiar with the technology that goes into euro notes, which are hard to counterfeit, which is exactly why the technology was adopted for the euro after being developed for Australian notes. Despite all that spending, there were no reports of counterfeit notes. If they did turn out to be counterfeit, someone would have been left holding them, usually the taxi drivers or the shopkeepers, who would have loudly complained. This did not happen. The notes were genuine because somebody was giving money to the welfare seekers before they even reached the promised lands. An Austrian intelligence officer reported that the money to finance their travel came from the US. If that was correct, their benefactor may have been multi-billionaire George Soros, who lives there.

But in the West now it is taboo to use the capital M word in any negative context. *The Economist Style Guide* of 1993 says, ‘Refer to the specific nationality: thus, **Canadians** rather than **North Americans**; never **Asians**.’ On 30 August 2014, *The Economist* wrote, ‘In northern towns such as Rotherham, Oldham and Rochdale, as well as in southern cities such as Oxford, gangs of Asian men have been convicted of grooming and abusing young white girls.’ Times had changed!

Nowadays, M*m's the word!

Self-righteous liberal BBC journalists revile Hungary for not accepting immigrants. But Hungary *does* accept immigrants, just not Muslims. Much of the history of Hungary consists of withstanding constant invasions by Muslim armies. Unlike the BBC, Hungarians know all about Islam.

In 2017 Austrians voted a coalition government into power that had placed opposition to mass immigration at the heart of its platform. This was denounced in the West European press as a revival of Nazism. The *Guardian* was particularly concerned.

In Austria more Muslim babies are being born than indigenous children. Half the pupils in Vienna are Muslims. Forty per cent of Vienna's population was born abroad. In two municipal districts more than half the population are foreigners, and a report in 2020 by the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis showed that the vast majority of the foreign settlers in the capital were Muslims.

In 2019, following pressure from the biggest Austrian Muslim organisation, the Community of Muslim Believers in Austria, a new mayor of Vienna, Michael Ludwig, rejected an equestrian statue of Jan Sobieski,

the saviour at the 1683 siege of Vienna, for being 'too controversial' with an 'anti-Turkish tone'. Despite many Balkan Muslims living in Austria and tens of thousands of mainly Muslim bogus asylum-seekers arriving in the 2015 European refugee crisis, Turks dominate this organisation. Ludwig said it was not an appropriate time to erect military monuments, that the statue was archaic and that anyway did not meet artistic standards. The commissioned statue was to have stood on the Kahlenberg Heights that overlook Vienna from which the Polish king led his famous 'winged hussars' on the decisive cavalry charge against the besieging Muslim troops that saved European civilisation. Created by renowned Polish sculptor Czesław Dźwigaj, it was returned to Poland, where it is now on display in Krakow. Its concrete plinth on the Kahlenberg hill remains empty.

Anyway it still serves as a monument not to a defining act of heroism as planned but to a shameful surrender.

Terry Bushell is a retired journalist whose Jihad: A Short History is being published by Pen & Sword Books, £19.99.

From the Backwoods

TIM BOOTH

We have a pier in the town that extends to the deeper water. The children of the town, both boys and girls, have for generations amused themselves by leaping from the end, the greatest amusement occurring at low tide when the drop is about 30 feet. They then swim back through the fierce tide to the dilapidated wooden steps, dense with seaweed, barnacles and mussels, in order to do it all again, hour after hour; until finally exhausted, they return home to sleep sound and healthy.

The local Council naturally attempted to prevent this activity some years back, placing warning signs and a locked gate, even a Pier Marshal clad in yellow vest. The kids naturally evaded and ignored all this. When the Pier Marshal was occupied in trying to stop them leaping from the northern side, they all rushed across and dived on the southern side. In the end he quit the unfulfilling post, to the regret of none.

There is a lifeboat station in the town that has, over more than a century, carried out many daring rescues. The former coxswain, now very aged, was decorated

for quite extraordinary bravery in the rescue of the crew of a stricken trawler in hurricane-force winds and huge seas, during which he brought the lifeboat, time and time again, hour after midnight hour, to snatch another man aboard, one by one; when the smallest mistake would have shattered the lifeboat on the cliffs and drowned all ten of her crew; and at last when all were safe, these lifeboatmen, exhausted, soaked, unpaid (in money), returned to their shed and left the boat in good hands to make ready if necessary for another launch.

When the lifeboat crew scrambles today there are pagers and mobile calls and WhatsApps and many other communications I seem to have missed. In former days, only until about twenty years ago a lifeboat call was instantly announced. The person on duty fired a maroon rocket that exploded with a boom that shook not just the windows but even the three-foot-thick walls of the houses, and brought the crew and many residents down to the lifeboat shed, asking 'What's happening?'

My own brother was on the crew and if awake (sometimes, I think, if asleep) would hear the hiss of the

ascending rocket and, dropping everything, leap over the garden wall to arrive at the boat in time to launch, for the privilege of being cold, wet, tired and possibly drowned. Such are those who go out on 'the Boat'.

The aged coxswain still sometimes runs the launch on racing days at the Yacht Club. He places the launch delicately alongside each moored boat, never scratching our perfect varnished topsides. He is now constrained by law and insurance policies and Health and Safety to wear a lifejacket at all times; but he wore no lifejacket that wild night of hurricane winds, for there was no need; a man overboard was a man lost. He risked all, because he possessed the skills to save those fellow-men who were otherwise to die. He sought no

reward and would have disdained any reward.

All of his lifeboat crew were, of course, once kids leaping from the pier, swimming like fish, knowing the tides and the hazards. I am most gladdened to report that the kids still leap from the pier, hour after hour. And, as in previous notes, I trust the readers of the *Salisbury Review* will applaud their freedom, their independence, their complete non-compliance with tedious rules. Sad it is that I must say these things, but for some of us, now the minority, in these latter days, let us continue to value freedom above all else.

Tim Booth is a sailor and occasional journalist.

Racism has had its day

BRIAN RIDLEY

To recognize that different races exist is not racist. Racism is the belief that some races are inferior to others.

One can make a case. The white Europeans have created a civilization that emphasises individual freedom under the law. The Asians have created a civilization that subjugates individuals to the State. Who is to say that one is better than the other? Well, for a start, the Asiatic one is comparatively simplistic. How the State survives depends on the thought processes of one man (emperor or dictator) and those of his advisors. The European state survives on the thoughts of many people, many not in the government, much more wide-ranging. Again, who knows? One might think that the input from free-wheeling intellects, living in unrestricted ways in a complex world, might be more promising for a state that is to work for all.

But notice that arguments along these lines are not about racism at all, they are about culture; democracy on the one hand, autocracy on the other. The ways of government are colour-blind. Race does not come into the issue of Hong Kong and China. Nor does it come into the gulf between Nigerians and Caribbeans, the

one whose children know their father, the other whose children often don't. Why this is, is another matter. The difference is cultural, not racist.

We should be aware of Bishop Butler's refreshing remark, 'Everything is what it is, and not another thing.' Racism is the belief that some races are inferior to others. It is not about culture or anything else. Racism

reveals itself in the thuggish behaviour of the white underclass at soccer matches. It also reveals itself in a myriad of interactions between white and coloured, in which racism seems to be so deeply embedded in the psyche that it must appear natural and unproblematic. It is not unlike the interaction of members of different classes. Southern gentle folk find it hard to get on with hard northerners, and vice versa. Everybody knows his place, do they not? Class consciousness goes along with racism; as part of ordinary social life.

Racism is a social problem, but nothing like the problem when it was associated with slavery. Then it was a serious humanitarian issue. To read today's papers you would think it still is. What everybody sees as the difference between races is nothing more than skin colour and culture. Nothing can be done about



colour, but culture can be evaluated. Evaluation is not racism.

It is only when one wonders where the cultural differences come from that a much darker picture emerges. We need only to pick out two of these causes – religion and ideology to see what the danger is: both have been the cause of wars. Nobody has ever gone to war because of racism. ‘Oh, so they are black and we are white. As long as they don’t bother us, let them get on with it.’ Nobody goes to war solely over differences of culture. ‘If the Brits want a Queen and an aristocracy, so be it. And if we want to be told what to do by our Leader, that is our affair. Nothing to stop us being polite to one another.’ Religion and ideology are fine in their place, but once exported, they become inflammatory: the Muslim view of women, the revolutionary fervour of Marxism, the concept of infidels, socialist dogma. But is nationalism more noxious than the export of religion and ideology.

If that were simply ‘my country is better than yours’, no problem. ‘The English are the best there is, and quite happy to help unfortunate foreigners to be as good’. No doubt the French and Germans feel the same. Confined within its border’s nationalism

is natural and unproblematic, but, like religion and ideology, once it gets exported it becomes a menace. The concept of all Germans in a Greater Germany led to war in 1939. The concept of all Russians in a Greater Russia led to war in 2022. The concepts may be identical, but the reality of the situation in each case could not have been more different. The Nazis were on a high, and Czechoslovakia was happy to be relieved of its Germans. In the second case, Ukraine was a Christian state – Kiev Rus – long before Russia emerged from being a colony of the Muslim Golden Horde. The Nazis regarded themselves as invincible, whereas the Russians, not possessing Kiev, the home of Russian Christianity, felt inferior, and began what is essentially a civil war that became a clash of democracy and autocracy.

Not a hint of racism in all of that! Its woke fans continue to cheer the team on. One only has to set racism alongside religion, ideology and nationalism to see that its team is nowhere near the first division. I think it is due for relegation.

Brian Ridley is a Fellow of the Royal Society.

Our social institutions have been chucked into the Woke Shredder

PAUL CLARK

In the late 18th century Edmund Burke expressed an idea which many people, then and now, have accepted – that the social institutions that he described deserve respect. They represent pragmatic experience and loyalty rather than general political ideologies, and because they have stood the test of time and have had a stabilising function over generations entitles them to that respect. Their influence in society tends to be conservative, and certainly anti-extremist.

The term ‘social institutions’ includes small bodies – families, local schools, places of worship, pubs, football clubs and groups focussing on common interests, like dancing and gardening. It also includes larger, more ‘public-rôle’ institutions, like academia, the media, professional organisations, the police, the military services, trade unions, etc in which people have a shared purpose with their own terminologies, codes of inference and values.

That was then, apparently.

Long ago, when I was an undergraduate in London, I recall meetings with several ‘comrades’ on the need

to subvert the political and cultural conservatism of the college and the university. We believed that this was a job for the workers, under our supervision, of course, but unfortunately there were not many of them around, a few porters, office staff and canteen ladies, and they weren’t in the least interested in our ideas. So, we had to try to enlist the other students, the lecturers and the administrators. We were thinking big, as students do, but we only succeeded in making ourselves unpopular. Mao’s Long March was an inspiring model for us although it was hopelessly impractical for our purpose. But somehow or other we had grasped the essential agenda with which our Leftist successors were to have much more success. Nowadays the Left is accustomed to seeing the higher-educated middle-class as the handiest revolutionary potential around, and their ‘long march through the institutions’ is finally reaching its appointed destination.

For at least two generations left-leaning educationalists have been preparing their students with a kind of script of their likely subsequent political opinions. This has

been more effective with middle-class students because they've generally done better than the rest of the population in the steadily expanding higher educational setup. Being better-qualified than the rest they have fanned out into the professions, the universities, the media, and into business management, commerce, marketing and advertising jobs. Their status as the new élite encourages them divide others between the underdogs who deserve their sympathy and the rest who are usually stereotyped (and sometimes they deserve to be!) as out-of-touch nationalists, Brexiteers harking-back to the British Empire, racists, sexists and homophobes, and the ignorant dupes always on the look-out for dodgy populist leaders. Consequently, 'the rest' should either be ignored silenced, or reformed and 'enlightened' in a more effective ways than their schools had ever done. And fortunately, there are now more attractive, entertaining and 'enveloping' methods of doing that. The virtually omnipresent media is a better propaganda tool than Dr Goebbels could even have dreamed of! Woke. The new Left's Kulturkampf.

As a football fan I see the knees-bend ritual performed by the players before every match. They do it to confirm their (presumably?) *nem-con* solidarity with Black Lives Matter and to identify themselves with the protests against recent and not-so-recent police behaviour towards black suspects. They represent a huge propaganda scoop which activists (black and white) have managed to transfer from America to the major media outlets in Britain. They are approved by one social institution, the Football Association, but the commentators belong to another sort – the television media, who often trespass from the sporting into the political arena by explicitly approving of the spectators' compliance with the knee. This is all supposed to be in a good cause, of course, although there's never been an announcement to the crowd that the original instigators of those pseudo-religious genuflections have gone on record as recommending that police budgets should be curtailed. The political manipulations are deliberately half-concealed, and people now seem to accept, or are resigned, to it.

Last February we went to the Tate Gallery to see the Hogarth Exhibition. As we went in we were met by apologies for Hogarth's attitude to blacks, women and Jews, who the management thought might be offended by what they would see inside. As far as we could tell, the few black persons there, as well as the women and Jews, were not in the least offended by the pictures themselves or by the Tate management's 'curatorial framework' which accused/excused the artist's politics. This was a picture-by-picture series of comments on the slavery, colonialism, exploitation and social inequality of the 18th century, with occasional explanations of how Hogarth

had (unconsciously or consciously) connived at them.

These priceless comments were attached to one of the pictures ('Self-Portrait Painting the Comic Muse').

Hogarth is seated in a an early American colonial style chair.... he leans forward , animated and in motion. Is it not strange that he restrains that dynamism by sitting down? If you see the chair as a thesis supporting his work, maybe not. In the engraving made after this work, Hogarth props his treatise The Analysis of Beauty against the easel, in which he writes that the undulating line of a woman's body is the epitome of beauty. The curvaceous chair literally supports him and exemplifies his view on beauty. The chair is made from timbers shipped from the colonies, via routes which also shipped enslaved people. Could the chair also stand-in for all those unnamed black and brown people enabling the society that supports his vigorous creativity?'

The Tate said that they would like to get our reaction to the exhibition, so we obliged them. We said we were glad to see the pictures but not the Tate's 'framing' of them. We said that Hogarth was (amongst other things) a satirical painter who, by definition, needed some ready 'victims'. His satire **was** meant to offend, though in his case it was relatively gentle and civilised. (Not at all like some of our contemporary satire.) If the Tate insisted on disapproving of Hogarth's (retrospective) political attitudes, or the satirical spirit as such, they ought to have abandoned the whole project at the start.

We got no reply from the Directorate but we had a 'we-know-better' email from a 'Visitor Communication Assistant'. She had a woman's name, but she was at pains to explain the pronouns we should address her with – ie *she*, *her* and *hers*. That seemed to be blindingly obvious to us, but on reflection we had to agree that if she happened to be a bloke or a transgendered person we would need to change them if we didn't want to be offensive. We also couldn't help wondering whether she had been willing to spell out her pronouns in that way, or whether she had come under pressure to say what the management (and LGBT etc) wanted her to say about her pronouns. Nowadays everyone is aware that the Woke movement has on occasion progressed into career-wrecking, intimidation and silencing people who disagree with it.

Edmund Burke didn't like slavery any more than Woke is supposed to do, and he would have seen social institutions as a safeguard from the slavery of political correctness. But what would he say now the Left is turning him inside out and standing him on his head? He might well wonder if our present social institutions are a defence, or a prelude, to enlightened totalitarianism.

Paul Clark is a retired lecturer in Further Education.

The Salisbury Review Archive

On 5th September we are launching our archive which contains every issue of the *Salisbury Review* since its start in 1982. If you are a current subscriber you will be able to access this archive on our website for a one-time fee of £5.

We hope that you find this archive interesting.

There follows two messages from our Editors, Myles Harris and Merrie Cave about their time with the *Review*, followed by some important articles from our archive to wet your appetite.

An unexpected and wonderful Job

Myles Harris

I was recruited by Merrie Cave to the *Salisbury Review* on the terrace of the House of Lords. I am not a Lord or even a member of the House of Commons, I was just a hack enjoying a fine view of the Thames on a summer's afternoon a free drink in hand. Various famous faces drifted past. I recall Lord Hurd who I taxed with the Tories' failure over ERM in 1992. It didn't seem to worry him at all to be addressed so impudently by a complete stranger, especially one of no account. Of course it didn't; hacks are like clay pigeons, a short life and then 'boom!'

I was a devoted Thatcherite. I had heard her last electrifying speech in the Commons in 1990. In mid flow she laughed and said, 'You know I'm enjoying this'. It was then I had discovered that, like the fall of a South American government, when an administration goes, everybody down to the doorman goes. Suddenly the *Evening Standard* and the *Spectator*, I had written several cover pieces for the latter, were not taking my calls. Nevertheless it did not stop me from getting into politics.

Thanks to the *Salisbury Review* I had the opportunity to meet Maggie in 2005 at a knees-up for the late Alfred Sherman, her economics guru. She was everything I imagined, not just the eyes of Caligula and the mouth of Marilyn Monroe (François Mitterrand, who knew his women, said it of her) but a grammar school girl (I am a grammar school boy) with a 1000 watt brain enjoying an enormous joke. 'Look at them!' she seemed to be

saying of her fellow politicians, 'Just look at them!' As we spoke a huge policeman loomed up between us announcing, 'Maggie, time to go,' and her bullet proof Jaguar swept her away. You could tell it was armoured by the way it sat low on the kerb. My two-minute brush with history was over.

Later, Merrie Cave offered me the privilege of editing *The Review*. I know I am addressing the faithful as far as Maggie is concerned, all of us hoping we may see another like her. In the meantime, we must keep the word: immigration, sound money, property rights, the idea of nationhood. Sadly, everything that has happened since her fall has gone to unpicking these ideas.

I try to keep these ideas alive in our pages, brushing the self-censorship demon off my shoulder whispering 'don't publish that,' when it sees something that will not just offend the left, but will offend 'Standing Ovation Tories' who have long lost any idea of what conservatism means and are presently cheering on Boris's assassins. We often talk of finding another conservative martyr like Ray Honeyford who lost everything for free speech, or Tommy Robinson, who went to jail for it – one of our writers, Catherine Blaiklock, founder of the Brexit Party, visited him in Belmarsh – or Julian Assange there at the moment, who will die in a US jail if Sunak or Truss allow it. Martyrdom is the only way the banner can be raised, and the troops brought to the colours, but do any of

us want to do a stretch, however short, like Roger Scruton's three days in a Czech prison, for freedom of speech? Be comforted, there is somebody, somewhere writing such outrageous ideas that are bound to land

him or her in the nick. Not normal boring, much chewed-over right-wing politics we read every day, but something really outrageous, like Maggie's, 'There is no such thing as society.' We wait to publish it.

I never expected it to be a lifetime's work

Merrie Cave

Working for the *Salisbury Review* is rather like joining a friendly interest club where everyone shares your views so you are not afraid to speak your mind. In 1990 computer technology had not caught on much so I talked and wrote to many more people all over the world by phone or letter

Our circle of friends expanded globally to meet believers, as Roger called them and many of the contributors and subscribers we met were extraordinary ordinary people who had had adventurous lives; they seldom make the Obituaries column but their lives are often more interesting than the obviously eminent.

The collapse of the Berlin Wall was sudden; only a few weeks before Roger had warned a student who was taking samizdat into Czechoslovakia to return to his hotel if he suspected he was being followed. During the nineties and many years beyond we hosted young and older people from Eastern Europe who came to London for short training courses. We found our guests much easier to talk to – their English was excellent, than some of our own young who had suffered a Marxist education. They were always surprised when I pointed out that there were more Marxists in the West than behind the Iron Curtain.

Our hospitality was returned most generously and we glimpsed the atmosphere that persisted in Prague even after liberation – stony faces in restaurants that didn't want to serve you in an empty establishment. I was fascinated by the former lands of the Hapsburg Empire; much of whose mores had not died, for in a strange way Communism had contributed to its preservation.

We went to Russia in 1995 where I was substituting for Roger at a 'Conservative' conference in Perm. My talk was about the influence of communism on the British intelligentsia; the audience was astonished about the Marxist influence in the Universities and that the satirist Michael Wharton was sent to Coventry by his BBC colleagues after expressing joy at Stalin's death.

One subscriber in Portugal had a problem getting her magazines and putting the mistake right in two post offices led to a long friendship with Patricia Lanca who was then (1990) a deputy in the Portuguese Parliament. As a reformed communist she was a prolific contributor to the Review, and took us all over Portugal with eloquent accounts of Portuguese history and politics. Through her we learned that Salazar was not the raging fascist he was painted by most of the press but a sensible ex-professor of economics who put the country's finances in order and stopped the political violence which had plagued the country until the 1920's.

Until 2008 (with the downturn) we visited America where I was successful in raising funds for the *Review* and the Claridge Press. We went to various conferences where we met and stayed with interesting people like Russell Kirk, who was one of the last examples of an independent intellectual on both sides of the Atlantic. Other continents followed: Australia, India and Africa (Tanzania). The latter came about through the Kambona family. Oscar Kambona was Nyerere's chief support but they fell out when Nyerere wanted to imitate Mao's China after a visit there. Oscar and his immediate family were lucky enough to escape but other family members and many Tanzanians languished in ANC prisons. Kambona's biography should be published soon exposing the truth about the seemingly saintly Nyerere.

Traditionally the *Review* has attracted writers who are on their way up: Daniel Hannan used to write for us years ago, while people who have retired or semi-retired like John Jolliffe are happy to contribute for modest rewards. The needs of aspiring journalists in uncertain times are now different. Two other conservative magazines have appeared recently but neither address issues which the *Review* has never shirked, so our silence would leave a gap. We hope that Roger's legacy will be maintained.

The Conservative Conscience

Roger Scruton - Archive 2007

We live in troubling times for the conservative conscience. The West is adrift without leadership, anarchy is spreading through Asia and Africa, while the political process in Europe has been absorbed by the fantasy of European union. Almost everywhere in the civilised world we encounter the signs of social decay: the decline in religious observance and local customs; the rise of crime and violence; the pornocratic culture of the mass media; the desecration of love and marriage; the collapse of education and the retreat of the individual into his private pleasure dome. These things threaten to populate the world with a new human species – cold-hearted, disloyal, promiscuous, uncultured and godless – whose soul pursuit is present pleasure, and who looks on the suffering of others with indifference or delight. In the face of this prospect those of us who were brought up in the old dispensation might be tempted to despair and the more so when we see how many of our own generation are prepared to accept or justify the reigning trivialities, and to preach the forward-looking gospel that sees nothing to be criticised in women priest, Sir Richard Rogers or the new Radio Three.

Cultural despair has been with us, however, for many decades, and writers who have no other message, or who seek to comfort us with fantasies of a life outside civilisation, merely illustrate what they condemn. The exasperated writings of men like Leavis and Lawrence are also exasperating. We live only once and that once is *now*. The choice lies before us as it has lain before every human being in history, to live well or badly, to be virtuous or vicious, to love or to hate. And this is an *individual* choice, which depends on cultural conditions only obliquely, and which no other person can make in our stead.

If our culture is demoralised, it is in part for want of good examples. A good neighbour, loving parent, conscientious teacher, loyal friend or faithful spouse is an object not only of admiration, but of emulation too. Nobody likes, still less admires, coldness, idleness or infidelity, even when he finds these qualities in himself. It is in our nature as social and moral beings to be drawn to virtue and repelled by vice, and society can never degenerate to the point where vice alone has a following. By living well we help others to live well, and this is a source of joy for us and for them.

Indeed, if we were to view the matter *sub specie*

aeternitatis, we might be persuaded that it is good to have been born in this time of decay. Our generation was granted a privilege which future generations may never know – a view of Western civilisation and its totality, and a knowledge of its inner meaning. We were given the pure truth of the Christian religion, and the morality of sacrifice which turns renunciation into triumph, and suffering to a secret joy. We also had the chance to see what will happen, should we lose these gifts. We had an opportunity to work on their behalf which no previous generation has been granted, and no future generation.

If our political leaders disappoint us, it is either because they have no inkling of this opportunity, or because they regard it with the kind of bored cynicism that prevents them from setting an example. But there is more to life than politics, and even those who like the deep restfulness that comes from true religion may still find themselves surprised by joy. For consider what has *not* been destroyed; music, poetry and art; the sacred texts and the secular knowledge which derived from them; the impulse to love and to learn, which will vanish only with the human species; the still-warm habit of association and institution-building, into which all are better impulses, may fade. These are the counters to despair, and the source of hope in any age. Society depends upon the saints and heroes who can once again place these things before us and show us their worth. This is not a task for the politician, his proper role is not to create a society, but rather to represent it. It is a task for the educator, the priest, and the ordinary citizen whose public spirit is around on behalf of his neighbours.

Such people are reluctant to come forward, largely because the mass media, dominated by materialists and sarcastic cynics, will cover them with ridicule. But the great merit of our civilisation, and of the Christian religion upon which it is founded, is that it teaches us to accept to know that the best is always mocked by that which feels condemned by it and to take comfort in handing our knowledge to *one* person, regardless of the score of those who could never receive it in any case. Of course, it is hard to feel the full confidence which those teachings require. But they are addressed to each of us individually, and their validity is not affected by what others think or do. We have within ourselves the source of our salvation: all that is needed, and to go out into the world.

The Salisbury Review, a voice crying in the wilderness

Alfred Sherman - Archive 2002

The *Salisbury Review* was founded in 1982. It was established as the port parole of a conservative organisation, group, which did not survive. The term conservative – used in lowercase to distinguish it from the Conservative Party, which is not conservative in our sense of the word – is a matter for interpretation, not at all cut and dried. By 1982, the aim of the *Review*, or any like-minded organisation, could no longer be to conserve or preserve conservatism and what it's stood for, but must of necessity have been either to restore or to mourn it. To restore entails enquiry into the causes of its desuetude and conditions for reversal. Moreover conservatism restored is conservatism reshaped, involving ideas of what should be rather than what is. Conservatism restored is a construct unlike natural conservatism, which in its day entailed hallowing the status quo because it was the status quo, 'all that is is right'. By 1982, very little of that was left. The Labour victory of 1945 had changed not only the face of Britain but also the Conservative Party. It had become let's party in all but name, a variant of socialism. These changes have continued till this day. What could conceivably have been rescued was a subject for conjecture which continues to this day with decreasing hopefulness. In that sense, to be conservative today is to be radical revolutionaries, to reject the status quo, but in favour of what?

The universities were once a home of conservatism. But having been turned into nationalised industries and a form of welfare in which discrimination between quality and mediocrity is outlawed, and quality sacrificed to accessibility, the universities were lost to conservatism. Conservatism entails hierarchy and deference. Conservatism's hierarchies were independent but interlocking: royalty, the Lord, the bench, the bar, the law society, the world of medicine, banking and business, the armed forces, the established church, *inter alia*. Deference has become unfashionable, except for momentary adoration of current idols: entertainers and sportsman. Otherwise, there is a dearth of models and standards. Many current cultural norms are antinomian or counter-cultural, eg, the Booker and Turner prizes defiant demoticism has replaced classicism; we have it on Plato's authority that art determines social behaviour. Our guardians go along with it.

1982, when the *Review* was founded, was a time of hope, Margaret Thatcher reigned with bold Conservative rhetoric. But decades of disappointment continued to follow. During the following 20 years our awareness of the

rigours, of deception grew *pari passu* with the oppositional stance of the *Review*, which has of necessity become a voice crying in the wilderness. Margaret Thatcher remains a key figure in British politics of the last quarter of a century, subject to continuous reinterpretation. That she towered above our narrow world like a colossus is beyond argument, but what became of it all is as fraught with argument as ever. Perhaps the appearance of Thatcher and the underlying reality are inseparable. Moreover, the Salisbury Group and its *Review* were not Thatcherite *ab initio*.

Though Iain Duncan Smith was elected as a Thatcherite favourite, he's rebranding of the Conservatives as the party of the public services (including massive subsidies to rail passengers, a small minority of passengers) and dedicating PM's questions to the treatment of a patient in A & E, as well as Oliver Letwin's extravaganzas, raise doubts. Margaret Thatcher was right when she pointed out that the Conservative party could not be called 'the party of free enterprise', though it favoured free enterprise, its roots go much wider, deeper and further back. State ownership and control the spread too far, but this leaves the question of the proper role, function and scope of the state to be worked out by modern Conservatives for the 21st century. In the '70s and '80s Thatcherism and conservatives generally stressed the creative role of free enterprise and the wasteful role of state intervention. These are both strictly true, but more generally a caricature. The implied slogan 'private good, public bad' is as misleading as the socialists' implied slogan 'public good, private bad'. For one thing, private and public are not simple antitheses. Public services, including defence, law enforcement, education and administration have always been the subject matter of conservatism. Public utilities may be privately, or state-owned without affecting their special character. Schools, hospitals and the like can be owned by charities. The profit-motive is an engine of change, not a good *per se*. Most Conservatives welcomed the transfer of control over the bank rate from the Treasury to the Bank of England. But should the rate of interest be fixed by a State institution rather than by borrowers and lenders? Margaret Thatcher once argued that week, the public, do not own the nationalised industries, on the contrary, they own us. Conversely, awareness of the complexity of society and the unknowability of motives and outcomes are part of the Conservative ethos, whereas by contrast Thatcherism dealt in certainties, in beliefs rather than ideas.

Classical conservatism was quintessentially and exclusively British. It had nothing in common with European society, institutions and thought, its links were with the Empire and then once-British United States, with its common-law heritage. The idea of the European community, European courts, law and bills of rights was anathema to it. But they now reign. Multi-culturalism has never been debated or legislated, but it holds sway as the unquestioned basis of national policy. Since multi-culturalism precludes Britishness, the whole basis of conservatism has been nullified without argument, mainly during the last 30 years. Patriotism has been dismissed as xenophobia racism, conservatism with it. Accusations of racism, that catch-all denunciation, make brave men blanche and throw up their hands.

Measurement and definition of state and non-state is not simple, nor are the criteria stable over time. Institutions controlled by party politicians have a character of their own. GPs and barristers are both self-employed but the one leads towards hospital doctors and the other towards judges. Regardless of the railways' exact status, it matters more if they are run as enterprises or part of the welfare economy than who their nominal owners are. The same holds good for the arms industry, and indeed many other branches of manufacturing industry which seek custom or help from authority. Much of the nominally private sector is dependent on the state in one way or another.

As things are going the English will become a minority in our motherland, and the country de-Christianised. Only history will tell us whether multiculturalism and the minoritism of the British nation will continue, or the process will be reversed by exercise of popular will, however painfully. The history of the *Review* has coincided not only with continued alien settlement but also with multiculturalism's continued conquest of thought and

its institutionalisation. The Honeyford case is an example. Conservatism has always been inextricably linked with both Englishness and Anglicanism. Multiculturalism, which treat all languages, cultures and nations as equals and Anglocentrism as xenophobia, violates the essence of conservatism. Anglicanism is but a shadow of what it once was Britain is less wholeheartedly Christian than it was in conservatism's heyday. The Church of England apologises for being Christian and accepts Islam as a legitimate British religion. Would conservatism's rebirth entail re-Christianisation? It all comes as a reminder that we are more keenly aware of what we are against than what we are for.

Ideas are shaped by circumstances: in conservatism's heyday the State sector was a few percent of GDP, mainly the armed forces, now it is roughly half. Can the State's dependents seek to curtail it? In the mid-70s an American politician warned that we might be approaching the point of no return in this regard. If we pass it, where could the Conservative counter-revolution emerge from?

As I pen these words, misgivings at some aspects of rethink have emerged from an unlikely source, the Labour Home Secretary. Hostile reactions were immediate and predictable; a sympathetic groundswell will take longer to emerge, if at all. I have just been invited by a nominally prestigious Conservative organisation to address a seminar on the question of national identity and relations with Islam. Are these harbingers or flashes in the pan? But this brings us back to the question: what makes things happen? Why should some voices crying in the wilderness make things happen, and others fall on stony ground? We do not know. But cry we must.

Sir Alfred Sherman was Mrs Thatcher's most influential economics adviser.

The Salisbury Review in Central Europe

Miroslav Pospisil - Archive 2007

I've got something new today' my contact said as she handed me my monthly supply of samizdat journals and materials. As usual, I had a week to read them and a week to make 12 copies of everything and pass them on to contacts of my own. I was curious, but I read the new issues of the familiar periodicals and reports first, leaving the new file till the end. When I finally started reading it the texts made me sit up. What was this? I did not have a clue. But it was so different from everything else that I wanted to read more, at once. I had to wait two months, however, for the next file. It was as electrifying as the first and this time there was a title

page. It said 'selected from the *Salisbury Review*'. It was summer 1986 in Brno, in Communist Czechoslovakia.

The *Salisbury Review* was a revelation. It introduced conservatism and conservative thinkers into our philosophical and political debates in a new way that made conservative themes the most potent inspiration for thought and action in the Czech clandestine circles in the latter half of the 1980s, just before the fall of communism. Its texts exposed the light of the 'new left' and its thinkers: something we had always known, or at least suspected, but with our lack of data and reliable information would not have been able to

demonstrate in such a well-documented way. But I believe that the most important contribution was that the *Review* and its authors gave us the language that we so badly needed to replace the newspeak of the Communist ideology machine as well as the newspeak that the détente politicians and the peace movement in the West were using and which, curiously enough, seemed to share the same grammar and idiom with the Communists' globbledegook. We needed an honest and rigorous language to be able to speak about the human condition again. We had almost lost that ability and the two socialist experiments carried out in our part of the world in the past 50 years (German National Socialism 1938–45, Soviet international socialism after 1945), but we had also been frustrated in our many attempts to recover the ability from sources in the West. Various individuals and initiatives had been trying to overcome our isolation, to make contact and to start a dialogue with people on the western side of the Iron Curtain. Some contacts had indeed been made and some exchanges of opinion had taken place, but we could not help feeling that the two sides were speaking different languages. That is why the *Salisbury Review* instantly became such a phenomenon in Czechoslovakia: yes, at last, what these people were saying made sense to us, because the examination of the human reality was uncompromisingly honest. The findings were not pleasant but the *Review* had the integrity to call a spade a spade. At last, here was someone who was expressing thoughts to which we could relate but for which we had not been able to find adequate language.

Many people must have felt the same because I suddenly started coming across issues and views from the *Review* not only in the seminars of the 'underground university', with which I myself was involved, but in various other discussions, lectures and meetings organised by various dissident groups of various

political colours. Some people identified with the views expressed in the *Review*, others hated them: but all were affected, it was impossible to ignore the intellectual challenge. The *Review* became a direct inspiration to samizdat journals *StØední Evropa* [Central Europe] in Prague and its Moravian sister publication, in Brno; conservative groups and think tanks were established, devoted to economics, politics and history. After the Velvet Revolution, the debate intensified, in the open at last, fuelled by the frequent visits made by the *Review's* editor himself, who was at last allowed to travel to Czechoslovakia again. Its themes dominated journalism and policy discussion for some time, making some impact even on the politics in the early days of our new freedom.

Today, 12 years on, the *StØední Evropa* is still as determined as ever to discuss issues that matter; the Brno samizdat publishing venture has become the *Proglas*, a serious monthly for politics, society and culture; and the Civic Institute continues to publish its pamphlets. The seeds sown by the *Review* in the 1980s have grown and produced fruit. At least in some intellectual circles. But in the world of the realpolitik? Well, the two political parties most inspired by the Conservative thinking epitomised by the *Review*, although influential in the early 1990s, can now attract 3 per cent of the popular vote at Parliamentary elections between them, if they are lucky. The views expressed in the *StØední Evropa*, the *Proglas* or by the think tank, Civic Institute are seldom heard in the mainstream policy debate. We have almost become 'normal', like the rest of Europe, in whose politics rigorous thought and honest language have little place.

Miroslav Pospisil was Director of the Jan Hus Foundation, 1990-2001

Colonel Sibthorp

Michael Wharton - Archive 2002

I oppose the Reform Bill – the whole Bill and every part of the Bill. I said it must go – go to the devil. I believe it will give political power and the electoral franchise to the very dregs of the community. If the Bill does pass, then all I have to say is: God to save my country: may God have mercy on it: may God protect it from revolutions, and may he preserve all proper respect for the aristocracy!

Almost any day when the House of Commons was in session between the years 1826 and 1855, he could be heard holding forth in this fashion – Colonel Charles de Laet Waldo Sibthorp, of Canwick Hall, Lincolnshire, member of Parliament for Lincoln, Colonel of the Royal South Lincolnshire Militia. In his day he was one of the best-known people in England. He was certainly one of the most remarkable figures who ever

sat in the House of Commons.

According to a contemporary account, he was a short stocky man of military bearing; a wispy, straggling beard and a high stick-up collar combined to conceal his face almost completely. He wore a bottle-green frock coat, wide three-quarter length trousers and Wellington boots, and a tall white hat. He wore a great deal of ornate jewellery, and as he spoke made wide sweeping gestures with a huge rectangular gold-mounted quizzing glass. He seemed like a visitor from a past age.

There is nothing about Colonel Sibthorp in the ordinary history books. He is a haunter of footnotes and obscure Victorian diaries. He appears in early Punch cartoons, generally in a ridiculous light. These are his monuments, together with the 500 odd columns of Hansard in which he spoke his mind on all subjects from the Reform Bill to the shocking condition of hansom cabs. Yet he is a symbolic figure, and for all his absurdity an appealing one.

Here was a Conservative of conservatives. He lived at a time when the England he knew, which in essentials had hardly changed for centuries, was changing at last. There must have been a great many people who hated the change as he did, even among the landowners who were greatly enriched by it. But only Sibthorp stood up in Parliament to denounce it with such total vehemence. This supreme adversary of progress came of an old and wealthy family of landowners who had represented Lincoln in Parliament for generations. He served in the army in the Peninsula War and succeeded to the family Estates in 1822. In 1826 he succeeded to what was virtually the family seat in parliament and soon became one of the great 'characters' of the House. He spoke in a rambling disconnected manner and had the gift of speaking on any subject but always making the same speech. He was fond of violent personal abuse, and when 'foaming radicals' were speaking would often crow like a cock and bellow like a bull to put them off.

When he first entered Parliament, it was convulsed by the great controversy over the Reform Bill. We have seen what he thought. He bravely fought it inch by inch until for all his efforts, it passed in 1832. Soon he had another target for his reactionary hate, the railway mania of the 1830s and 1840s. Many people thought, spoke and dreamed of little else. Engineers and surveyors were out all over the country with their flags and poles and theodolites; gangs of labourers were at work, blasting tunnels, piling up embankments, bridging rivers and generally altering the

face of the country. Sibthorp had much to say:

I have always considered all railways public frauds and private robbery by gambling speculators ... It is my decided opinion that these nefarious scoundrels will ere long appear before the public in their true light and that all the railway companies will be bankrupt, and that the old and happy mode of travelling on turnpike roads, in chaises, carriages and stages, will be restored.

The old and happy mode of travelling had gone for ever. But the great railway boom was followed, as Sibthorp had predicted, by a great railway slump, in which thousands of speculators were ruined overnight. In some of his best parliamentary performances, Sibthorp reminded the House: 'I told you so'. By now he had developed his

own special style of speaking, in which pet expressions were dragged in whether appropriate or not. Most of these were of a crusty, country type: 'one scabbed sheep spoils the

flock', 'old birds can't be caught with chaff'; 'Catch a weasel asleep' and 'Roarer is a good dog, but Holdfast is a better'. He was both.

Although he could not know it, Sibthorp was watching the beginning of the Welfare State. His reactions were violent. When it was proposed to provide public libraries for the working classes, in industrial towns, which he called unfeelingly, 'the cholera morbus places, he said he could not see why they wanted to read – 'I myself always hated reading when at Oxford.' He believed the British Museum was a waste of money and that it would be much better to pull down the National Gallery than complete it. In short, he opposed all forms of government interference, and outraged at the plan for a land survey.

The idea of a gang of schoolmasters coming round upon your land and surveying its productive properties is one which I never expected to hear proposed. How can we know that these people may not actually invade a gentleman's cellars and tilt his wine? Certainly we live in very extraordinary times when these dictatorial attempts are made to invade the sacredness of private property.

In resisting the imposition of that 'odious and delusive mode of taxation – income tax,' Sibthorp delivered a memorable message for all time: 'the government who propose this tax call themselves Liberals. Liberals! There never was such a misnomer. Who, I would ask, have been more disposed to cut up the liberties of the people than those who call themselves Liberals, whom I called revolutionaries and levellers, men having no feeling for



Church, King, State or People, or anything which has hitherto made England a great nation.'

Sibthorp saw threats to England everywhere, and never tired of denouncing her enemies, real or imaginary. For him the Irish Catholics were 'little better than fiends incarnate'. He lumped all foreigners together as 'odious and hypocritical' and proposed that a heavy tax should be imposed on them when they entered the country. He carried his hatred of foreigners so far that he managed to get the foreigner, Prince Albert's allowance reduced. This was his sole Parliamentary success, and it enraged Queen Victoria so much that she declared she would never visit Lincoln again while Sibthorp represented it in Parliament.

Everything he hated most was summed up in the great exhibition of 1851, symbol of progress, industry, democracy and international understanding. He attacked it furiously from the time when it was a mere idea to the time when it was realised in the Crystal Palace, 'that obscene and insanitary structure which has been offered as a supreme insult to the people of England, to the delectation of foreigners, who are pouring over to this unfortunate country in their thousands to debauch our daughters and swindle our tradespeople.'

It was all in vain. Perhaps his one-man campaign against the Crystal Palace exhausted him. He had a severe stroke in 1852, and soon after electrifying the house by proposing

that he be sent out to the Crimea at the head of the Royal South Lincolnshire Militia, he had another stroke and died in December 1855.

He was buried with his ancestors at Canwick Hall, in the chapel of the long, low house that looks across the valley to the soaring towers of the cathedral. It is council offices now. But even in his day an abhorred railway ran in the valley below, and the main streets were spreading out from the lower city. In the 150 years since he died, they have gone on spreading and everything he hated has spread with him. The England he defended with such passion, part clown, part hero, in the face of such unrelenting ridicule, has almost completely disappeared.

The Tory party, whose eternal principles he upheld so fiercely, has dwindled to a feeble shadow of itself; it would be a wonderful target for his most impassioned oratory. If he could come to life in our time, gasping with astonishment and indignation, the 'media' would try to seize him as an outrageous reactionary, made to be ridiculed and humiliated over and over, as a TV personality, by liberal thinkers and 'hypercritical' jackanapes on 'prime-time; television. I think he would have stood his ground. Hold fast is a good dog.

Michael Wharton was Peter Simple of the Daily Telegraph.

The Third Man: a Voyage to Damascus

Tristan Jones rejects pie in the sky after a Philby encounter - Archive 2007

By the early 1960s I'd been at sea since my 14th birthday, first before the war, as boy-deckie in a sailing-barge, then in the RN (lower deck) and from 1952 onwards, in what landmen call 'yachts', but what we always called 'small craft'; I was deck-hand, then mate, and then skipper. By 1959 I had my own craft, which I lived aboard and sailed in between yacht-delivery trips and any other work I might find. *Cresswell* was a converted wooden RNLI lifeboat, built in 1909; I'd bought her for £350. Politically, like most British 'matelots' of my generation on destroyers' messdecks, I'd picked up, by osmosis, *Labourite-Socialism*. In retrospect, what political ideas I had probably stemmed much more from nineteenth-century working men's clubs than from Marx. After my medical discharge from the service I'd practically forgotten politics, because of the daily struggle to stay

self-sufficient, free and at sea.

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

I'd started to cast off the lines from Sète jetty when the young Englishman appeared. It was towards dusk (always minions of the moon, we sailors) and I was anxious to get well clear of the French coast before dark. I was alone and it was before the time of automatic steering gears. The weather signs were good, but the prospect of being at the helm for hours was gloomy. I'd worked hard all day re-rigging the

mast. I would sail out clear until the small hours, then when dawn broke I'd snatch a few hours of sleep with my boat drifting.' Where are you sailing?'

I hadn't heard my own language for weeks. I looked up. He was English – no doubt about that. One of the bulldog breed, I know as soon as I saw his face. He wore a large khaki travelling coat and a small rucksack slung over his shoulder. Around his neck hung two camera cases. 'Spain... Barcelona...' Departure time is not for idle chatter.' Can I come along?' he was in his early 20s, shorts, stubby, and looked clean and healthy enough. It was before the spread of illegal drugs made such 'pierhead' enlistments inadvisable. It would be much better to sail *Cresswell* direct to Barcelona without stopping and drifting for sleep. It was autumn; there was always the threat of a sudden mistral wind blowing up.

'Ever sailed?' I asked.

'In a dinghy once or twice.'

I'd heard that one at least 100 times from would-be crew.

'Cook?'

'Well... Yep.'

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

The young man introduced himself as John. He was not talkative, and I liked that. By dusk John was showing himself to be a handy fast-learner. By midnight he was on the helm, with orders to stay on compass course, and to wake me should anything at all turn up; if the wind should increase, or if he saw any light. An hour before dawn, after John woke me with a cooked breakfast, we were well on the way to becoming, not friends, but something even better in a small craft at sea: *used to avoiding the one another*.

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

I'd asked John for his passport, and with both his and mine in hand addressed the policemen. My Spanish by then was quite good. 'Buenos noches, Senores. Quiremos entre Espana y iremos al restaurante' (Good evening, we wish to enter Spain and go to a restaurant.) The elder of the two Guardia Civiles shook his head. 'Es muy tarde' ('It's too late...')

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

The senior Guardia Civil waived his free hand in the direction of the dock gate. 'Off you go ashore. Get your passport stamped at the gates-office tomorrow morning!'

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

The first thing John did when we came to the wide Ramblas De Las Flores was search among the news vendors' stalls for a London *Times* newspaper. It took quite a while, but he finally sighted one and bought it. It was a week old, but he only wanted the crossword puzzle, he said. I was accustomed to oddballs among sailing crews so did not object to our delay.

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

While he was thus occupied, I stared into my tobacco smoke. The café-owner was absent, so a young woman, clean, but dressed in black rags, approached, a baby held close to her I'd been around the port of the world, and I'd learned to ignore the more egregious frauds who chose to beg. But this current woman had that look in her eyes that comes only from real starvation. She could have been 20 or 30, or even 40; there comes a time of such worn despair when the age means nothing. As she held her palm out over our table, John, who was bent frowning over his puzzle gestured to her away with one hand. At the same time I delved into my pocket and cracked out a tattered note – it could not have been more than 10 pesetas, and I offered it to the young woman, who dropped to her knees and kissed my hand.

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

My companion didn't look up from his crossword puzzle; his voice was low and cold and flat: 'You know that kind of thing will block the revolution.' I must have thought he was joking it didn't strike home then, but I must have replied: 'Well... a kid ...' And that was the end of that, and as we walked back to the boat to the night-calls of the *serenos* (night watchman) it didn't

mean much nor did it for quite a long time.

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

I awoke early next day to find my crew man missing. I dashed ashore and searched around the empty docks for a while; there was no sign of John. I did not report that to the gate office, I would probably be arrested for aiding an illegal entrant. I didn't know if the Guardia Civiles of the previous night had reported *Cresswell's* arrival or not. If they had I'd be arrested because my crew was missing; if they had not, and John was apprehended ashore, and told the police he'd arrived in *Cresswell*, I'd be arrested. Whichever way, I'd wind up in a cell.

There's an old sailor's saw: 'When in danger or in doubt, hoist the sail and head off out.' I quietly slipped my dock lines and, by daylight, with a mile down the sea channel out of Barcelona, headed for Majorca. There were no computers, and it would take ages for an alarm

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

It took me another two years to discover that John Philby had been a working cameraman on Fleet Street. I still don't know if he showed his passport formally to enter Spain, nor if the Guardia Civil found his name of interest. I wonder if in fact I smuggled Kim Philby's son (I saw a picture of the temporary crewman later' there's no doubt that's who it was) into Franco's Spain? Whether I did or not, that one remark in that dirty little café swung my compass needle right around. From the moment John Philby spoke then, I've never believed in pie in the sky.

Tristan Jones was a member of the Royal Geographical society and the Royal Institute of Navigation.

A New Continental System

Enoch Powell describes how Britain lost the right to govern herself - Archive 1992

A new French biography of President de Gaulle quotes from his memoirs *Mémoires d'espoir* the following note of a conference on 29 June 1958 with Harold Macmillan, then British prime minister: 'in the midst of a friendly discussion, which touched upon a great many topics, Macmillan suddenly declared with great feeling, 'The Common Market is the continental system all over again. Britain cannot accept it. I beg you to give it up. Otherwise we shall be embarking on a war which will doubtless be economic at first but which runs the risk are gradually spreading out into other fields'. As Jean Lacouture remarks, it was indeed 'breathtaking, but nobody denied it', and he comments: 'unity is never achieved without threat no pressure: this was the signal service paid to the European code for the excellent Harold. Macmillan.' Harold Macmillan's memoirs, which mention the conference, shed no light upon the incident which so much impressed de Gaulle, apart from an ambiguous paragraph in the farewell letter which Macmillan addressed to the President: 'In a word, what really worries me is that I do not see how one can divorce

economic and political grouping. Europe is already tragically divided from Stettin to Trieste, and I am very anxious to avoid any further division.'

How far in advance, if the truth were known, events can cast their shadows! What is 'breathtaking' in the Macmillan utterance of 1958 consists of course in his reference to 'the Continental System', that coalition of Europe which Napoleon I attempted to create in order to bring Britain to her knees and defeat the British blockade of his Continental Empire. So as far back as 1958 those in government in Britain understood the hostile political implications of the European Community and regarded it as something which Britain would, by tradition and instinct, be bound to resist: it was and saleable to the British public, nor was that opinion, so far as one can recall, out of touch with contemporary realities. Yet within four years the same Harold Macmillan was in Paris again as suitor to the same President de Gaulle not to interpose his veto upon Britain becoming itself a member of the European Economic Community; and when that veto was interposed, it was widely taken to have been the

tomb of Harold Macmillan which would prevent him ever recovering his tarnished political power and going on to win the Conservative party a third successive electoral victory in 1964.

What had happened in the meantime? It is a question to which some answer is demanded at a moment 20 years later when the British public is beginning to wonder whether there might not be some justification for that tradition of British opposition to a system of continental economic and political union which so startled President de Gaulle when Harold Macmillan instinctively coughed if up in 1958. 'Britain cannot accept it', Macmillan had been convinced in 1958; yet Britain did at least tacitly accept after the House of Commons in 1972 by the narrowest of narrow margins and count still in 1992 not unfairly be represented as placing the question lowdown on its agenda in an election year. So what had happened?

At the beginning of the 1960s American preoccupation with the supposed threat from the Soviet Union entered a new face, the two prospective antagonists being then assumed to have drawn more nearly even in nuclear capability. The United States found itself envisaging that which the nuclear deterrent had been supposed to exclude, namely, a protracted war, which would be weighed with varying fortunes and of which the Atlantic itself might be an important theatre.

In that new phase America's anxiety about the European 'pillar' of its alliance became more acute, and as a result two new demands were pressed upon America's 'most faithful ally'. One demand was that Britain should no longer hold aloof from the European community. Despite the incompatibility of a protectionist European trading bloc with the American ideal of free, of free, world-wide trading conditions, the community appeared to be nevertheless desirable as representing European political unification and thus the stiffening and consolidation of European support and loyalty behind the American alliance. The greatest contribution Britain could make what is therefore to 'get right in there' and give the necessary lead in creating a United States of Europe. The 'continental system all over again', which in 1958 Britain 'could not accept', had in so short a time become an imperative upon British government.

The other demand was more closely related to NATO and to the Atlantic. In the early 1960s the United States requested its allies to provide the *sine qua non* without which the Irish Republic refused to join NATO and thus complete the coverage of the eastern Atlantic. Under this pressure the British government gave an undertaking to use their best endeavours to secure by voluntary means the transfer of Northern Ireland out of the United Kingdom into an all-Ireland state and in

any case, pending that consummation, to take no step calculated to confirm or recognise the status of Ulster as an integral part of the United Kingdom. It is the visible implementation by Britain of that undertaking which re-started the IRA campaign in 1971 and has since filled it with the knowledge that its object, if not its methods, enjoy the approval and support of America and Britain.

The disappearance through a trapdoor of NATO is assumed adversary, despite desperate efforts to hoist him up again, may well logically have removed the American thumb from the British 'buzzer'; but trams, once launched upon a track, have a propensity to go hurtling on along the rails. In other words, a commitment can continue in force long after the reasons why it was originally entered into have weakened or vanished. That has happened in this case because I have a political generation has invested rhetoric and credibility, as well as the tensions to office, obsolete obsolescent objective: who dares now raise a finger or at a squeak European unity Ulster devolution?

There is a common factor which weirdly links together are too apparently so disparate subjects of the European Community and Northern Ireland. The objectives pursued in both have involved the abnegation of national and, in particular, of parliamentary sovereignty. The same Prime Minister who in 1985 by signing the Anglo-Irish agreement acknowledged the rights of a foreign government over a part of the United Kingdom represented in Parliament was the same Prime Minister in 1986 signed the Single European Act and forced through the House of Commons under guillotine the consequential Bill to authorise further transfer of legislative and judicial authority to institutions outside the United Kingdom. The significance of that fact is not altered by the same Prime Minister coming a cropper in 1990 because she announced in 1988 at public repentance at least as far as far as Europe was concerned. The two subjects upon which Britain has proved to be vulnerable to American pressure – European political union, and the Irish Republic claim to Northern Ireland – may at first sight appear to have a little in common. There is however a link which called for attention. That link is a marked decline in the attachment of the British people to the Parliamentary institutions. That the British public cropper in 1990 because she announced in 1988 her public repentance at least as far as Europe was concerned.

The two subjects upon which Britain has proved to be vulnerable to American pressure – European political union, and the Irish Republic came to Northern Ireland – may at first sight appear to have little in common. There is however a link which is called for attention.

That link is a marked decline in the attachment of the British people to their parliamentary institutions. That the British public would acquiesce without audible complaint was made and the taxes imposed otherwise then by Parliament would have appeared as recently as the nineteen sixties to be wildly unrealistic. It is the same indifference which statement manifest when they are content to say that government formally and openly sharing the responsibility for a part of the United Kingdom with the government of another state.

Indifference has within recent political memory recent to the point of normality. The government establishment in Britain has powerful resources at its disposal for securing that 'deference' towards its needs which Bagehot once identified as an outstanding English characteristic. Without that pervasive influence the change in public mood might not have been so complete; but alone it is not sufficient to account for a state of opinion in which those who objected to the abolition of Parliamentary self-government can be publicly dismissed as pedants. The House of Commons without audible dissent applauded politely when the government transferred its control over a population and territory represented in parliament to a foreign government. The same House of Commons had been content to see a similar transfer of the whole of the United Kingdom to external legislative and judicial authorities. Why choke on the Ulster gnat while swallowing the European camel? Such an aptitude for self-abasement is indiscriminating; and it demands to be taken seriously.

Parliamentary institutions of self-government pre-suppose existence of a 'self', an electorate sufficiently distinctive and sufficiently self-conscious of its uniqueness for government to be invested in the institution which represents it. That selfhood has undergone a severe battering since the end of the Second World War.

In the mind of several generations, it had been identified with a world-wide, oceanically-based structure of power; and the dissolution of that structure called in question the selfhood with which it was identified. The British had been an imperial people, a people great because they were imperial, a people distinct because they were imperial. If they were now visibly proving to be no longer imperial, it followed they must have ceased to be recognisable, by themselves or by the outside world, as a people. It must follow in turn that their right as a people to be self-governed by the own institutions in the own home no longer had a basis.

In this period of over-reaction, the British went so far as to assert that their former fellow subjects in the Empire who claimed and exercised complete self-

government would henceforward be undistinguishable in status from themselves in the United Kingdom. The new Commonwealth with its common citizenship was essentially anti-parliamentary. It was a self-repudiation which was not to be abrogated for a whole generation – the period between the British Nationality Acts of 1948 and 1982 – and then not until the population of the United Kingdom had undergone a profound and irreversible alteration.

By that time another great shift in the British electorate is a perception of itself had occurred. The second world war began as a war between the nation states of Europe, from the rest of which Britain had been differentiated during a period of intense revolutionary conflict by its uniquely stable institutions of self-government. It regarded their endurance with pride and satisfaction and as deserving to be defended, if necessary by armed force. Not long after that war ended with the 'unconditional surrender' which American intervention secured, the conflict had been subsumed into an entirely different confrontation, between communism and democracy, within which latter generality the institutions of British self-government were unquestioningly included. So British self-government became no longer a manifestation of distinctive identity: Britain was a democracy, classified under the American world umbrella along with other democracies – if not 'from China to Peru', at least from Turkey to Guatemala. In that 'brave new world' what was a national electric but a fetish out-crown left over? The North Atlanta Alliance and its ideological basis where as much anti-Parliamentary as the Commonwealth.

Thus did the developments which the Second World War ushered in create in the people of the United Kingdom a predisposition to accept without even a perfunctory site, the comprehensive abandonment in 1972 of their Parliamentary self-government and to reassure themselves that in so doing they were merely catching up with the rest of the western world. The course for which 'Hampden died in the field and Sydney on the scaffold' had become irretrievably old hat: it had assumed that mark of all lost causes in British politics, the stigma of being a bore. That at least was what the political parties considered could be safely assumed.

For the Conservative party, which Edward Heath had dragged through a hedge backwards to join Georges Pompidou in 1972, that might not be so surprising. For the labour party it was indeed surprising and significant; for the labour party had a history. The Labour Party, distinctively among of the socialist parties of Europe, had been from top to bottom a Parliamentary movement. It had come into existence

to win first of all Parliamentary representation and then a parliamentary majority for the demands of those classes of whom it felt itself to be the spokesman. The ballot box was its natural weapon; the House of Commons was its natural power base; Parliamentary self-government was the central presupposition of its very existence. Yet in the last five years this too has changed. In the last five years the Labour Party has been watching with growing chagrin and frustration the apparently durable hold of its political opponents over the electorate; and to the question 'Where have we gone wrong?', they have returned the answer 'We allowed ourselves to become out-of-date'. Above all, the Labour Party decided it must place itself in the lead in dismantling Parliamentary self-government.

The very palladium of the Labour movement, the supremacy of the House of Commons, was taken to be a vote-loser in modern Britain.

What we do not yet know is whether the Conservative and Labour parties have misjudged. If they are mistaken, it will be a fearsome operation, at which surely the Conservatives, with their fine sense of electoral advantage, will be the first to baulk, to approach the British electorate flaunting a promise to divest the House of Commons which it elects of the last remaining tatters of legislative, fiscal and political independence.

Enoch Powell was MP for Wolverhampton 1950-1974 and MP for County Down, 1974-1987

Suffer the Little Children

Patricia Morgan

The sexual orientation regulations being tacked on to the Equality Act 2006 by ministerial edict aim to stop those who supply services, goods or facilities from discriminating on grounds of sexual orientation. With the usual duplicity it is argued that the new arrangements mirror what is already the law in employment and occupation, and simply prohibit treating people less favourably, as with race. Teachers will risk prosecution if they do not treat homosexual activity as useful and desirable as heterosexual relations. Offence is subjectively defined and given where someone feels that their 'dignity has been violated'.

As Lord Tebbit remarked, this will inevitably 'create not only a shadow... but a wide fear of persecution': Home Office officials are preparing to identify schools which lack enthusiasm for rooting out 'homophobia' to be reported to the police, with 'hate crime coordinators' and reporting systems to be 'marketed and distributed' everywhere from GPs surgeries to shops to play schemes. With eight major statutes on gay rights passed since 1997, Lord Moran observed how sensitivity to homosexual lobbies has resulted in other interests and minorities being rebuffed. New gay rights were dictatorially imposed in Northern Ireland by executive fiat; avoiding primary legislation and any hope of amendment. The situation is little better in the UK – the leader of the Conservative Party has declared that

he will support the measures.

The advent of civil unions has meant the term 'partner' replacing that of spouse/husband/wife (so all are perceived to be in transient couplings of convenience), something now imposed on adoption agencies. The influential British Association for Adoption and Fostering, which provides training and advice, has long been as eager to further same-sex adoption as it has been circumspect about transracial adoption – condemned in social work as a threat to black children's cultural integrity. In the BAAF's 'good practice' guide to recruiting gay carers, the needs and interests of children hardly figure. It is not just asking for gays to have equal chances with other candidates, but making war on the 'traditional nuclear family' as something invented in the interests of colonial expansion, and not a way people actually live. Heterosexuality is 'based on myths and stereotypes', and 'gender is not biological', but 'a social, cultural, psychological and historical construct'. The external world is as unpredictable and illusory as the law.

While the heterosexual married family is treated with contempt, misgivings about homosexuality are characterised as a morbid fear to be fixed with re-education sessions. Practitioners must 'challenge' the 'homophobic assumptions', of birth family and panel members, and children must be reconciled to having gay carers. All contravene guidelines about

consultation. Consider if this were a black child being placed with white adoptive parents against his will.

Christian and Christian churches, schools, charities, printers and venues are directly in the firing line, since they are being coerced to provide services that aid and abet behaviours that conflict with their fundamental beliefs. The future of Catholic and Jewish adoption agencies is in the balance, and the withdrawal of public money will mean the end of their voluntary work with children and families.

The obliteration of all standards of right and wrong, true or false extends to empirical criteria and considerations. Might we expect some objective research on comparative outcomes for children placed with gay adopters? I think not. After the Bishop of

Chester told his local newspaper in 2003 about research showing that some homosexuals do reorientate their sexuality (true), he was investigated by the police. The Crown Prosecution Service could not act since legislation did not then provide for specific offences based on sexuality. The counter culture neo-Marxist were right – the shock troops of gay liberation, in ridding us of the nuclear family, will sweep with it what the legacy of Western enlightenment meant by objectivity, in law or science, rationality or freedom.

Patricia Morgan's latest book is Banning Conversion Therapy: What is the Evidence, Wilberforce Publications.

‘Making mock o’ uniforms that guard you while you sleep’

Merrie Cave - Archive 2016

It is hard to imagine, watching the limousines discharging the well-fed faces of our politicians at Berlaymont intent on butter tariffs and wine quotas, that a hundred years ago, almost to the day, their predecessors were planning the mass destruction of each other's armies in the Great War, a war fought with valour and patriotism on both sides, for causes which have absolutely no meaning today.

On July 1st 1916 the British Army suffered the worst day in its history at the Battle of the Somme; at its close 58,000 soldiers lay dead or wounded. Who today can understand, let alone explain such carnage? The British aim was to distract the Germans from Verdun, but the planning of the attack was a disaster because the Germans expected it and their defences were superior to ours. Despite our knowing this, the attack went ahead.

In the face of such slaughter why did the troops maintain the dogged optimism reflected in their cheery marching songs, in the face of the living hell of the battle fields? Old photos of the pals' battalions show enthusiastic young men marching off to a great adventure or a game: 'Playing the game has always been my religion,' said one veteran. Why did the survivors of the Somme and Passchendaele persist, defeat the German offensive in 1918 and break the

Hindenburg line in the Autumn after which Germany's subsequent collapse was rapid?

A witness to this, Charles Carrington, came from New Zealand where as a 'wild colonial boy' he ran away from school twice. His father sent him to England to be coached for Oxford but he joined Kitchener's Army (under age) instead. 'I stopped being a juvenile delinquent and grew up', he later said. Before the Somme, he realised he was facing the greatest test of his life in the most violent and ruthless battle ever to be fought, but his battalion did not go over the top that fateful day.

I knew him well during the last ten years of his life. He was an enthralling raconteur with a refreshing absence of condescension towards intellectual inferiors. He had been a schoolmaster, academic, historian and above all a prolific writer. When working for Cambridge University Press in the thirties, he was a pioneer traveller flying round Africa in small planes and driving in four continents. Latterly he was much in demand for television programmes about the Great War and in 1985 I drove him to Arras for one of them. On the way, from the library in his head, he regaled me with tales of the French and English armies that had marched over the same fields. I talked to most of the other veterans and did not hear any gripes about the battle nor the war, although there were plenty from

the intellectual TV people. One 'vet' said the rest of his life was never again as exciting as did another, a big chap, who had volunteered at 14 and was not sent home until he was wounded at Serre. I also witnessed the deep love between men although strangers who had experienced the comradeship of the trenches. I have a sonnet describing the bombardment which Carrington wrote on (army) message paper in memory of his friend Private Day who had been killed a few hours earlier.

Charles called it a secret society; imposters were instantly exposed by the passwords and private language the frontliners all shared. During the war they had hated the jingoistic hysteria of the civilians and afterwards did not wish to discuss it with anyone else.

After the war the unthinking chauvinism of the home front was exchanged for emotional anti-militarism which affected all belligerent countries. Carrington deplored both extremes although he admitted that he had never been 'able to work the Somme out of my mental system'. We cannot judge the past by the attitudes and values of the present for the *Zeitgeist* of the mind is the most distinct difference between generations: Innocence, deference towards authority and doing one's duty to God, King and country was the order of the day in 1914, as well as always accepting what life brings you. People are not like that any more.

Carrington's two 'war' books help to explain why thousands were willing to join the colours even when it was clear that the war might go on for a long time. *A Subaltern's War* appeared in 1929 when the craze for anti-war books was at its height and Carrington was accused by some critics of being 'A brutal unfeeling militarist.'

It is an instructive description of life in the trenches enlivened by the chat among his comrades and was used extensively in John Terraine's BBC series (1964). It was an idealist's war, a war of intense patriotic love on both sides, unthinkable today.

Carrington wrote, 'In this story of the war there will be no disenchantment. No corrupt sergeant majors stole my rations or accepted my bribes. No incompetent colonels who failed to give me food and lodging. No casual staff officers ordered me to certain death, indifferent to my fate.'

Charles Moore described his other more reflective book *Soldier from the War returning* (1956) as the best book about the Great War. Carrington wrote vividly of the effect of Army training on recruits:

The skinny, sallow, shambling, frightened victims of our industrial system, suffering from the effect of wartime shortages, who were given in to our hands, were unrecognisable after six months of good, fresh air and physical training. They looked twice the size and, put on an average of one inch and one stone and weight during their time with us.

What is clear to me is that I regarded the whole British Army as committed. It was 'we' who had got into this bog and had to fight our way out of it'; it was not they who had misdirected us.

In 1939 Carrington enlisted again, this time over age. Soldier at Bomber Command (1985) describes his experiences as Army Liaison officer to the RAF in the Second World War. He was horrified one day to see maps of central Italy targeting Rome and contacted the most influential Catholic he knew, who in turn rang Cardinal Hinsley who contacted Number 10. Next day the maps disappeared.

The Second World War happened because politicians and diplomats betrayed the sacrifices of the first by the blunders of the Peace Treaties and the failure to curb German re-armament. Carrington remarks that the most famous of the anti-war writers Sassoon and Graves who were lionised by the left wing press were brave men and no defeatists. Both saw the war through and, although they hated the Army and criticised the high command, loved their regiment and their comrades.

Nothing has changed. Today's veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan face ambulance-chasing lawyers after 'human rights' claims in the millions. We have a government, happy to prosecute soldiers for murder

while fighting in a vicious shooting war in which a mother with a pushchair may be concealing a grenade, or the smiling militia man who ate with you last night the next morning suddenly turns and still smiling fires a full magazine straight into your comrade's chest.

It has always been Kipling's 'Making mock of uniforms that guard you while you sleep'. *Plus ça change.*

Merrie Cave is our Managing Editor



Charles Carrington, MC 1897-1990

Faith and the Navy

Louis Le Bailly - Archive 2007

The 24th of May is a special day for me. My ship, HMS Naiad, was limping back to Alexandria. We were heavily down by the bows due to bum damage from three hits and 180 near misses in a hectic four hours of battle with Hitler's air force, as we sank his seaborne reinforcements to his airborne forces fighting for Crete. We had buried our dead during the night. Then, just as we came to our buoy in the harbour and the hospital barges came along side for our wounded, we heard that HMS Hood had been sunk. I had served in her, aged just 17, for over a year, rejoining four years later and, after 30 months service, went to war in her. Of the 1,418 lost I had known 300 of the engine room crew, and probably a couple of hundred others. The sudden destruction of my first naval home, leaving only three survivors, was a knockout blow.

Ten months later, with those not 'below' when the torpedoes struck I found myself swimming in a choppy sea, on a dark night, as Naiad sank stern first to the seabed. There was lots of jabbering and cries for help as we tried to get those who could not swim or were burnt onto the few rafts. Leading Stoker Davies, a Welshman with a lovely voice, started to sing *Abide with me*. He had been badly wounded in a previous action but had implored us to get him back to the ship. Most joined in and the last line, '*In life, and death, I Lord abide with me*', seemed rather appropriate swimming in 600 feet of water, 25 miles from the shore. The task force – less its Admiral, now in the water with us – had sped on its way. As Davies ended, an extraordinary hush ensued, broken only by a few sobs and one last despairing cry of 'mother'. Was it, I have always wondered, 'the peace of God which passes all understanding'? When we have discussed it at our reunions most have agreed that it was. And then suddenly HMS Jervis appeared, by a miracle of navigation, for we had no lights. There were shouts to 'hurry up', for the German submarine was in the vicinity. So, swimming madly, we pushed the raft to the jumping nets over Jervis's side, but when towards the last of us, Davies was helped up his heart gave out and he died.

In Naiad's 22 months of action it was the fortitude

of sailors, stokers and artificers that gave me strength. Few of them had had much of a life – jobless, the soup kitchens in Jarrow or Sheffield, or rounding up the sheep in the chilly Cotswold Hills. That had been their upbringing, after leaving school at 14. We had 20 boys under 18, and many little older. A boy re-rigged the aerals under fire; a 22-year-old handed up shells in a flooding magazine, till the water reached his chin. Boiler room crews never finished.

It has never seemed to matter to me since to which Christian church one belongs. Twenty years ago Solzenitzhyn, that author survivor of Stalin's gulags, on seeing the empty pews in London asked: 'What happens to society when people have forgotten God?' He knew a cruel Empire which explicitly denied the freedoms to which we are used. Where the state is sovereign there is no place for religion. Only private faith can challenge. I sensed that the inner life of those staunch young men I came to know so well was not determined by their social and material background. By today's standards their lives have been sordid. But somehow – whether from board school or parents – it was faith, not reason, that gave them their fiercely independent outlook, allowing them to measure the condition of their lives and giving them an individuality and a spirit not in any way the result of those outward conditions. In two years of fighting only one man broke. I had left him too long in a lonely post.

Today we are urged by politicians to rely only on the good things of life which can be measured and paid for. The churches, anxious to appear 'relevant', are obsessed with social and material factors. They deny to the young a spirit resting on mankind's acquired experience of faith, on a knowledge of ultimate things, on Moses' 'signposts', on the Christian foundations of our nation's freedom stretching back to Alfred's laws.

*Vice Admiral Louis Le Bailey later became
Director-General of the Defence Intelligence Staff.*

Rolling John

Heather Ollerenshaw - Archive 2018

I can't count how many times a day I roll John, and I cannot remember just how many people I've rolled him with. It was not long after his second birthday that John had a seizure. It 'knocked him for six' his mother Sarah told me. They hoped it was a one-off, a fever or a funny turn, but a few weeks later he had another, and then another. Each worse than the last, for each seemed to steal a piece of John away. It became bleakly clear to Sarah that her son was not going to get to live the life she had dreamed for him.

He had another birthday not so long ago. His seventy-fifth. I bought him a pair of socks. Another woman wrapped them. A third opened them and a fourth put them on him.

A team of carers entirely governs John's life. After his bath we dry him on the bed and roll him back and forth to fit an incontinence pad and wrestle his arms and legs, stiffened by old age and illness, into various outfits. Sometimes I know the other support worker, all too often I am working with a complete stranger.

We are called 'support workers', implying John has some sort of independent life, even though we do everything for him. What must it feel like to be bathed, toileted, fed and dressed by a rolling rota of faces and strangers?

Like many profoundly disabled people, John's care recently passed from the state to a private company, a transition, which brought cost cutting and new faces, lots of new faces. Like almost all modern care homes, the company is heavily reliant on a high turnover of unskilled agency staff on minimum wage. Yet we are supposed to do the work of trained nurses.

If you have to import people from the Congo to wipe arses in this corner of South Wales, because John's own countrymen will not do it, there is a problem not just with the care companies. It is everybody's problem, a very big one.

Within four years, it is predicted, 800,000 people may be in need of care, including 20,000 with no family to care for them, according to a report by the centre-left think-tank the IPPR.

By 2030 there will be 2 million people aged over 65 without adult children to look after them, up from 1.2 million in 2012, and about 230,000 of them will be in need of more than 20 hours' care a week and will have no informal support. Guardian 24 April 2014.

Moreover with open borders, these numbers are set to double by 2050, and double again by 2060 in a geometric progression, one of the 'benefits' of immigration slack-mouthed politicians in Westminster don't tell you.

The house where John lives has six residents. I am, for practical reasons – part-time jobs being almost impossible to find – one of the few people left who have stuck the job out for a year: most go in the first few months.

Sometimes I wonder if the many large mirrors about the house are one way, like those in police stations, with teams of social scientists sitting behind them, scribbling diligently from day to day about the goings on of the bizarre social experiment that modern care working has turned out to be. But even if there were such mirrors, nobody would sit behind them because the chronically ill have been all but abandoned by the state.

John and the other residents would have been instantly recognised by Florence Nightingale as those to whom her profession owed their first duty, 'to do those things for the sick they cannot do for themselves'. I have never seen a nurse in our home, we don't have uniforms, we are just people off the street, operating on the barest minimum of instruction and supervision, relying mostly on whatever intuition we happen to possess.

Nursing these days on the other hand means a smart uniform, public respect, high technology, good pay, looking after patients who usually have a future, or if they are going to die, dying in kindly hospices surrounded by relatives with their passing measured in days, weeks or months, not a lifetime. Our patients are lifers.

The house runs essentially like a big family. As well as John, there is another resident who is almost as incapable and a man who is afflicted by such wild flinging body movements as to make any ordinary day impossible. He must be changed frequently while flailing like this.

Then there is Darren, a young man with autism. Not the modern diagnosis but the classic kind. He never speaks and is rarely seen, preferring to be alone or staring out of a window. We also have a child-like elderly gent who spends his days playing CDs from

his vast collection. In between there is the dinner to be cooking and the washing to do.

And then, as though the job wasn't hard enough, there is Freddie. It was more than poor judgement to place a 21-year-old, 6'4" man with mental health issues in a house with profoundly disabled men such as we have. John must listen to the loud, swearing rap music that Freddie plays when he's in a hostile mood. Nobody dares tell him to turn it down. What can three women do against such a strong and volatile man? We sit in the office with our heads bowed, feeling powerless. Freddie rules the roost. We must tiptoe around the house. We are subdued. We are anxious.

I don't dislike the young man. It's clear he had a terrible upbringing; certainly, his father appears to regard his son entirely as the responsibility of the state. There is also his proven propensity to violence. He has a criminal record for assault.

There is only one member of staff on at night. Sometimes they have never worked at the home, and arrive as perfect strangers. This stranger must go into the men's bedrooms and change their nappies. It's hard enough with two staff to roll John, especially as he's put on weight, but on your own it's near impossible. Finally, a night worker complained and refused to work the job because there should be two staff present at night. It's not that they aren't on the whole very decent people. Most of them know how tough life can be, be it on an open migrant boat in the Mediterranean, managing four children alone in a high rise, or lining up twice a day at a food bank. They are good with the residents.

Of course, the company does not wish to spend more money on staff, so head office came up with another plan. We now must hook up a kind of catheter on John, attached to a sticky condom-like sheath that must be rolled onto the penis. This is no mean feat, for the latex gloves stick to it like flypaper, causing the support worker to have to roll it on with their bare hands eventually. Once attached, the tube is fed down the side of the bed and drains into a bag, which the support worker will have to deal with when they start their shift again at 7 am.

After rolling John, changing his colostomy bag, and going through the embarrassing ritual of fumbling to get a penis sheath on him, we sit down for what we hope will be a five-minute break.

Instead the loud hyena laugh of Freddie breaks that illusion. He's out of his room, and laughing his way towards the office. He holds his arm up. It is streaked with blood. He howls with wild laughter. The three of us women look at the floor, tired and subdued. Once, after he had acquired a large knife and took to wearing it zipped up in a secret pocket, we thought

the management would move him. But nothing came of the incident. Nor did they do anything when Freddie assaulted a member of staff. Freddie roams the corridors like the Minotaur, always in bare feet so he can sidle against the walls and appear whenever his name is mentioned. It's not uncommon for girls to talk in hushed tones and look about before whispering about what Freddie has done or said.

I thought the safety of workers and other residents would be taken seriously, but instead a distant and nameless management inexplicably decided that the most appropriate response to Freddie's marauding violence and constant arm and leg slashing was to send us all on a one day training course with a psychologist to be 'trained' in counselling techniques.

At this ludicrous farce of a training course we, the support workers, were told we were expected to magically become therapists (at no extra cost), and we were encouraged to spend time alone with Freddie 'getting to know him' and 'getting him to talk about his feelings'. I couldn't imagine anything more stupid and insulting. No risk assessment was done. No debriefing of the staff. I can think of no other industry that would subject its staff to so much psychological torture as to be expected to single-handedly deal with such situations with so little training and for wages of the barest minimum.

Though she's pressing on ninety now, old Sarah still visits her son John once a week. Her hips are bad, and she jokes that she could do with a team of carers herself these days. I pray she doesn't end up in a room next to a rap music-playing self-harmer who she has to hide from, or be wheeled to safety like her son. I'm ashamed of the faith she has in us to look after him when she doesn't know the chaos we hide from her.

Heather Ollerenshaw was a care worker.



<https://www.csan.org.uk/cherishing-older-people/>

Acknowledgement to Caritas

Global Warming: Beyond Belief?

Brian Ridley - Archive 2018

We live on a ball, captured in space by a star. Underneath us is a nuclear pile that, along with the star, keeps us warm. Without either, but especially the star, we would not be here. Enveloping us is the biosphere, a thin membrane whose thickness stretches from the deepest trenches of the ocean to the top of the atmosphere, a thickness roughly equal to the distance between London and Windsor. We somehow survive in spite of continental drift, earthquakes, volcanoes, hurricanes, tsunamis, drought, sun moods, galaxy moods, and even ice ages. We're not only survive but we go forth and multiply. We may not be able to match that formidable life force we call bacteria, but we have a darned good try. In a few more decades the number of us humans might be 10 billion; if not the most prolific, definitely the brainiest. But in spite of being the biggest, brainiest biomass of the planet, we still can't figure out how the biosphere worked. Which is somewhat disturbing, considering how our lives and the lives of our children and our future generations depend upon it

Our ignorance is scarcely surprising. The concept of the biosphere, and indeed that such a thing existed, it's only a century old, dating from the book published in 1924 by the Russian scientist Vladimir Vernadsky (1863-1945). Dim intuitions triggered by the fledgling Victorian studies of the atmosphere, oceans, geology and biology, eventually crystallised into a realisation that they were elements of a single entity, the biosphere. And what was new and highly relevant to us today is that living things on the planet had an influence as strong as any other. In the 1970s a new idea was added by the English scientist James Lovelock, who saw the Earth is a planet able to regulate its climate and its chemistry so as to stay comfortable for its living inhabitants, an idea that became known as the Gaia hypothesis. Not all scientists get along with LoveLock's idea, but they have certainly embraced the fact of the biosphere. But if the Gaia hypothesis is true, doesn't it mean we can relax about a possibly deleterious contributions to the atmosphere and let Gaia get on with sorting it out? Well, no; any self-regulation that goes on doesn't mean that it will favour *Homo sapiens*. Gaia

might decide that it and the rest of life would get on better without humanity. Especially as humans have added yet another layer to the planet which the Jesuit scientist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin and others have called the noosphere – the planetary envelope of the mind. The biosphere was complicated enough without the phenomenon of mind to have evolved. But if the human brain was all that it was cracked up to be, it would be perfectly capable of looking after itself without any help from Gaia.

It is certainly up to us to acquire a true understanding of all those interactions that make up the biosphere. But that will not happen if it becomes a political or religious issue, which, unhappily, has tended to happen in the current debate about global warming. Politicians, eager to jump onto the bandwagon of voters, mouth certainties for which they have no authority. Priests of the environment preach their religious dogma about the effect on the planet of mankind's sinful activities. Both politicians and priests know dogmatically that further debate is unnecessary, and attack vibrantly anyone who differs. Neither is a good advertisement for the noosphere!

The debate, of course, it's far from over. Thankfully there are rational voices on both sides. The scientific fact that is not disputed is that there has been a steady rise in the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, superimposed on which are wiggles that relate to the growth of vegetation in the spring and its decay in the autumn. It is further agreed that carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas, that is, it absorbs heat radiation from the Earth and stops it escaping; so it acts like a blanket and is seen as a candidate that could produce global warming. Beyond this there is little agreement.

The data in 1998 that set off the whole topic of global warming were the temperature is deduced from tree rings in California, whose ages stretched back a 1000 years, and those data were mixed with 20th-century thermometer readings from urban sites across the globe. The resultant graph of temperature against time showed a more or less flat curve from 1000AD to 1900AD followed by a precipitous rise to unusually high temperatures recorded in 1998.

The whole curve looks like a hockey stick, and the name has become notorious. Not only was the well-attested Mediaeval Warm period between roughly 1000 a day and 1500AD totally absent, but so was the equally well-attested Little Ice Age between 1500 and 1900. Something was wrong and, indeed, a subsequent analysis by neutral scientists confirmed that those data were flawed. Nevertheless, a hockey stick convinced the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), and subsequently the politicians believed that global warming was a reality.

Climate scientists are divided. In spite of the flawed hockey stick data, some believed the computer simulations that predicted global warming, all programmed on the basis of the greenhouse effect associated with the increasing concentration of carbon dioxide. Others pointed to the influence of variations in solar radiation, cosmic rays, and the dominant role of water vapour (another powerful greenhouse gas). They questioned the reliability of those computer simulations, since none of these effects were taken into account.

So what are the big issues? Here are three. Is global warming a fact? Doesn't the increasing concentration of carbon dioxide mean that global warming is inevitable? Is the increasing carbon dioxide man-made? Our ability to observe a whole range of natural processes, including heating, on a planetary scale has increased tremendously with the advent of orbiting satellites. Recent measurements of global temperatures showed no warming since 1998, in spite of computer simulations predicting otherwise. This result may turn out to be a chance blip on an inexorable upward trend, a possibility that continuous satellite monitoring will either confirm or not. However that might be, it is now evident that the computer models used extensively to support the global warming case are as fatally flawed as a hockey stick. Nevertheless, increasing computer power and more sophisticated programming will be welcomed. As regards the origin of the increase of carbon dioxide, it is generally accepted that some but not all is man-made. Evidence gleaned from the analysis of air bubbles in polar ice whose ages span 400,000 years reveals marked fluctuations in carbon dioxide content, the origins of which cannot possibly be man-made. This shows that sources of atmospheric carbon dioxide other than from our power stations have to be taken into account.

Highly rational and reputable scientists are to be found on both sides of the debate, and they are to be distinguished from the political and religious fanatics.

Warmists of whatever hue have been seriously let down by evidence of bad, and even fraudulent, science and by the unattractive dogmatism of the environmentalists. Sceptics have had their reasoned comments rejected by close-minded editors of journals, and, in general, have had to bear a level of abuse of inquisitorial intensity. It is only recently that sceptical voices are being heard and listened to. Thomas Huxley, wryly described as Darwin's bulldog for his feisty advocacy of the theory of evolution once warned against a too-easy acceptance of a scientific discovery: 'belief, in the scientific sense of the word, is a serious matter and needs strong foundation.' There is some foundation for a belief in global warming, but it is by no means strong. Nevertheless, some good has come out of this tangled business. At least some of the increased carbon dioxide is undoubtedly man-made, and it would be imprudent not to find means to moderate that contribution, even if there is no scientific evidence of any deleterious effect. Currently our environmentalist politicians in the West seem hell bent on returning our civilisation to the Dark Ages by banning fossil-fuel burning power stations. China, India, Brazil and Russia will certainly not go along with that, though they will be quite happy cynically to exploit the market in carbon footprint. Discounting the temperamental panic and urgency of the environmentalists, it is in our power to find a range of technological solutions. These will involve a greater role for generating the energy civilisation needs from nuclear fission and future nuclear fusion. They will also include novel ways of capturing carbon dioxide. They will not dismiss the idea of renewable energy sources, but they will not take them too seriously. If we are allowed by crazed politicians and environmentalists to use the brains that nature gave us, we will sort it all out, and befriend Gaia. Sorting out technical problems is, after all, what science and technology are good at.

Above all, we need to get a better understanding of Gaia. Talk of 'saving the planet' has usually meant saving the planet from the depredations of mankind. More robustly, we should plan to save the planet for us and our noospheric civilisation. We will only do that successfully if we heed Huxley, and grant belief in any scientific claim very sparingly. Which means for the most part, we should be beyond belief.

Brian Ridley is a Fellow of the Royal Society.

Britain's Second betrayal of Poland

Myles Harris - Archive 2017

On 13th August 1940 Herman Goering launched Adler Tag, Eagle Day, the Luftwaffe's all-out assault on Britain. Thanks to years of denial by British governments that Hitler intended war, an ill-equipped RAF suffered terrible casualties. By the 31st of August it looked as if we might lose. As a last resort and down to a handful of Hurricanes, Air Vice Marshal Dowding ordered the mobilisation of the 303 Polish squadron at Northolt. It was an act of pure desperation. The RAF establishment considered Poles to be reckless dreamers. Hadn't they lost their country by sending string and wire biplanes against Hitler's Messerschmitts?

Extraordinarily brave, on their first sortie 303 Squadron shot down a record number of German planes. At the end of the Battle of Britain Polish pilots accounted for 15 per cent of the German 'kill'. If Polish aircrews did not win this great air battle, it would not, it is said, have been won without them. People clapped them in the street.

They fought fiercely because they knew the price of appeasement and weak government, and what it is like to lose your country. When the Nazis and Soviets invaded Poland thousands of young men made their way first to France and then Britain in order to carry on the fight. By the end of the war, Poland's army was the fourth largest of the Allies. A Polish flag flew over that symbol of crushed Nazi ambition, the ramparts of Monte Cassino.

It did the Poles little good. At Stalin's request they were specifically excluded from the Victory Parade in Whitehall. Every other nation, even Tonga, marched, but no Poles. Seeing a young man in a Polish pilot's uniform next to her in the crowd in tears, an elderly woman asked him 'Why are you crying?'

Many left for America, Canada and Australia while post-war Britain embarked on a programme of encouraging non-European settlement. While it was very difficult for an Australian or American to obtain permanent residency, those with the least cultural links with us were encouraged, the door being opened ever wider to Africans and Asians to come in their tens of thousands as dependents of the state. The latter were told their hosts bore a secret animus toward them, felt guilty and were anxious to pay them large amounts of social security in reparation. The newcomers

were encouraged in a form of social apartheid called multiculturalism.

When, five years ago, the Poles returned under EU rules, we were confronted by something we had forgotten, immigrants very similar to us, so like us that until they spoke you would not know they were not British. Broadly classed as Eastern Europeans but mostly Polish, they were young and able-bodied, often well educated, extremely hard working, polite, from a religious culture close to ours and prepared to do the most menial jobs, even pulling vegetables from the frozen fields of East Anglia.

Nor were they here to free-load on our social security system. While the British took 11 per cent more in social security than they paid in tax, Poles made a net contribution to the exchequer of 34 per cent while our most favoured immigrants, non-Europeans, managed a contribution of 2 per cent.

Our reaction was to treat the Poles exactly the same way as before. 'Polish women four times more likely to offer risky sex!' screamed *The Daily Mail*, while the anti-white racist BBC sent reporters to Norfolk to ask local British benefit recipients, once they bothered to get out of bed, if they felt discriminated against by the hard-working newcomers. Meanwhile the arrival of a far smaller number of Romanians and Bulgarians allowed press and politicians to conflate all Eastern Europeans into a single army of menacing Slavs. The aim of both Tory and Labour Policy is now to severely restrict Eastern European migration, and therefore that of the Polish majority, while leaving migration from the third world unchecked.

Just as in 1945 Stalin's moles in Whitehall ensured Poland's contribution to victory was written out of history, so our present rulers have not lost their addiction to repressive socialism of which multiculturalism is a powerful weapon. Cheap, uneducated labour means a captive workforce, low factory gate prices, high profits and a stagnant economy. Educated, mobile workers mean a growing economy and rising wages. What is terrifying is that the ordinary population do not see this and are being led by the nose into an act of appalling bad manners towards those who were our allies in the worst of times, and would be our allies again. We are now truly part of the third world.

Myles Harris

ARTS AND BOOKS



Scruton: taking stock Benjamin D Carson

Against the Tide: The best of Roger Scruton's columns, commentaries and criticism, ed Mark Dooley (Bloomsbury, 2022)

Shortly before he died, on 12 January 2020, Roger Scruton, having endured a particularly nasty 'hate storm, in response to [his] appointment as chair of the government's Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission,' was in a reflective mood. 'I have to take stock of my life,' he wrote in the *Daily Telegraph* (2019), 'and for a moment it seemed that it amounted to nothing.' Admirers of Scruton, the man and his work, will certainly balk at such an assessment. Scruton, as much as any 20th-century intellectual since T S Eliot, articulated with great acuity a British conservative point of view, and he did so in the context of a state committed to maintaining its citizens in 'an amniotic bath from birth to grave'.

In *Against the Tide: The best of Roger Scruton's columns, commentaries and criticism*, edited by Mark Dooley (Bloomsbury, 2022), Scruton tells the truth as he saw it. Readers of Scruton's work will find represented here all the familiar themes and issues that occupied Scruton since his earliest publications: the importance of tradition, the nuclear family, country and home, Christianity, free markets, knowledge and Truth, music, literature, architecture, and, of course, wine. And it is difficult not to note just how consistent and prescient Scruton was.

For example, on the state of education, in 'The Blair Legacy', which appeared in a 1997 issue of *Salisbury Review*, Scruton writes of the 'moronization of the school curriculum'. Twenty-five years on, this 'moronization' is total. The politicization of higher education, and its focus on student-centeredness, means that the search for Truth is now only a struggle for power. (Here we see the spectre of Dewey and Foucault.) The goal of transmitting knowledge and the wisdom gleaned from the great books and schools of the ages has been replaced by a toxic obsession with

race, class, and gender. The object of critical inquiry is to expose the racism, classism and sexism at the heart of every Western artefact or institution. What is called 'critical thinking' is always deconstructive, a tearing down of venerable traditions and institutions, the best that has been thought and said, as Arnold put it.

One is reminded here of a famous, if fatuous, line from Walter Benjamin's 'Theses on the Philosophy of History': 'There is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism. And just as such a document is not free of barbarism, barbarism taints also the manner in which it was transmitted from one owner to another. A historical materialist therefore dissociates himself from it as far as possible. He regards it as his task to brush history against the grain.' Sadly, this is precisely the attitude of the 'woke' Left, which, in the name of 'social justice', strikes at the heart of the great achievements of the West. Dooley's collection, then, is aptly titled: Scruton's writings push against the tide of those, like Benjamin and his ilk, tasked with brushing history against the grain.

In 'The End of Education' (*The Times*, 1985), Scruton invites readers to 'pick up a copy of one of the new journals of literary theory, *Semiotica*, for instance, or *Poetics Today*, and wade through the acres of jargon produced by people who can neither write with skill nor read with understanding, and who have lost all sense of the difference between a genuine question and a will-o'-the-wisp'. In 2022, there is no such thing as 'writing with skill' or 'reading with understanding' in higher education. According to the new pedagogues, grammar is the product of white supremacy and, when it comes to reading, there is nothing to understand. Knowledge and facts have been replaced by feelings.

For decades, Scruton warned us of the dangers posed by those he calls 'fools, frauds and firebrands'. In 'The Triumph of Nothingness' (*The Times*, 1984), Scruton writes, 'Most of the thinkers [Gadamer, Foucault, Habermas, and Althusser] urged upon us as "correctives" to our Anglo-Saxon parochialism are, in my view, charlatans. . . . In short, they provide to the intellectually balding a dashing wig of long hair'. These thinkers, writes Scruton, in 'High Culture Is Being Corrupted by a Culture of Fakes' (*Guardian*, 2012), 'illustrate a peculiar kind of academic Newspeak: each sentence is curled round like an ingrowing toenail, hard, ugly, and pointing only to itself'. In 'Diary—August 2016' (*Spectator*, 2016), Scruton asks, 'Where do we turn for comfort . . . when our reading lists are gibberish?'

Scruton rightfully believed there is a ‘deep human need for beauty,’ and the beauty and wisdom that comes from great art and the sacred texts, despite the best efforts of the social justice warriors who only want to destroy them, will endure, even if they have to lie dormant in the catacombs for a time, waiting for a more auspicious time to resurface. In the last weeks of his life, Scruton wrote of gratitude: ‘Coming close to death you begin to know what life means, and what it means is gratitude’ (231). Fans of Scruton owe a debt of gratitude to Mark Dooley for giving us the best of Scruton’s shorter works, works written for the general public. Scruton, Dooley notes in his Preface, insisted that ‘writing about the issues that confront us is the work that *must* be done’. Scruton never shied away from writing about the issues that confront us, even when he knew his point of view would seed the hate storm. But, buoyed by love, gratitude and family, Scruton survived the storm and kept writing until the very end. And for that we all should be grateful.



Greene among the Cannibals

Jane Kelly

Too Late to Turn Back Barbara & Graham Greene in Liberia, Barbara Greene, Daunt Books £9.99, 2022.

‘Why don’t you come to Liberia with me?’ her cousin Graham Greene asked. ‘I agreed at once,’ writes Barbara Greene. ‘Liberia, wherever it was had a jaunty sound about it.’ She didn’t know never to agree to anything after ‘merrily drinking champagne’ at a wedding, and shortly after found herself struggling through the African jungle in ill-fitting shorts. Barbara was twenty-seven, spoiled all her life with a London flat and maid to draw her bath and put out her smart clothes. Greene was thirty-one, already author of five successful novels. It was his first trip outside Europe and he later admitted that no one else he had asked would do it.

The only maps he could find showed a few areas marked, ‘jungle,’ ‘wild animals,’ and ‘cannibals.’ Her writing gives a delightful impression that from the start neither Greene had any real idea what they were doing or why. She equipped herself with inappropriate clothing including riding boots to protect her from snakes. They were ‘two white dolls,’ perspiring in pith-helmets among thirty bare-foot African bearers carrying up to 50lb of luggage on their heads, including

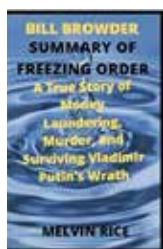
golden syrup, sausages, turnips, bully beef, and whisky. Accompanied by a monkey, goat and five chickens he also brought along beds, chairs, folding table, suitcases, a bath, a money box and hammock for when they were too tired, ill or blistered to trek nearly four hundred miles. They struggled with the monotony of claustrophobic forest, tedium alleviated by meeting strange often sinister characters, lonely missionaries and desperate doctors along the way.

They walked mainly in silence. They barely knew each other when they met at the wedding and she suspected that he was irritated by her ‘conventional little mind,’ and her shorts, while she was scared of his cold intelligence and irked by his drooping socks. He didn’t seem to really notice her, ‘I was learning far more than he realised’ she wrote. He didn’t observe how assiduously she wrote it all down in her diary, ‘However weary I felt.’ He consumed vast amounts of whisky and Epsom salts but was ill for most of the journey, covered in boils and nearly dying towards the end. He later described the trip as ‘fool-hardy,’ ‘absurd and reckless’, but she writes with relish about being bitten all over, swelling up in red lumps, her feet bleeding and parasitic ‘jigger worms’ under her toenails. She doesn’t even mind when her hairbrush is eaten by rats and for the next two months her hair goes unbrushed, ‘stiff with dust and standing out round my head like a halo.’ While he became more cynical about Africa and the human race, she remained optimistic. ‘Whatever lay in the future for us, I was quite sure it was all worthwhile,’ she wrote. ‘Without any doubt I would rather be out there than going to some party or dinner in London. Never in Europe could I have found those moments of pure beauty and peace. Loveliness unspoiled.’

At the end they said a friendly goodbye, ‘and we did not meet again for months or was it years?’ Greene published his, *Journey Without Maps* a year later, hardly mentioning her. Barbara’s memoir, *Land Benighted* appeared three years later, republished in 1981 under the current title. Her adventures didn’t cease; during the war she married a German diplomat and after the July Plot against Hitler, pregnant and watched by the Gestapo she lost the baby and was only reunited with her husband in 1946. They lived in Argentina, China and Rome where he became German ambassador to the Vatican. She died in 1991.

It’s a loss to travel writing that she didn’t go on with it; her account is illuminating about Africa, humorous and perceptive about her own reactions as she negotiated a dangerous but ‘unspoiled’ world. Her language and attitudes are of the time. ‘I had not got used to the smell of black bodies,’ she explains. Daunt Books were so daunted by having such a

non-woke manuscript that they offer a disclaimer explaining that it's, 'A (*sic*) historical text and for this reason we have not made any changes to the use of language.' The introduction is by author Keggie Carew who once ran a pop-up shop in London called, 'theworldthewayiwantit,' doesn't want Barbara's way at all. She hates her language, 'there is no way around the reprehensible colonial vocabulary of the day,' she warns, calling it a 'refuse heap.' She declares that the Greens are products of 'that hierarchal order that held such pervasive influence on Western thought.' He is 'patronising' because he treats Africans the same way he treats whites, 'normalising subjugation and exploitation.' Barbara is better, 'interested in the people,' but poor misguided girl she, 'endorses the gender roles that thrived in 1935,' and submits to 'imperialist attitudes.' Carew likes Americanisms such as, 'conflicted' and 'gifted' instead of 'given.' It's enough to make one clear off to 'darkest Africa,' another term she would never allow.



The Russian Money Launderette

Martin Dewhirst

Freezing Order: A True Story of Money Laundering, Murder and Surviving Vladimir Putin's Wrath, Bill Browder, Simon & Schuster, London, 2022, £20.00.

Whether or not you've read Browder's first book (*Red Notice*), do read his second, if you want to understand how Russia has been (mis)ruled and controlled since the end of 1991. The story up to about 2010 (the main subject of the earlier volume) is summarised in the first few chapters of its continuation here and takes us up to the early autumn of 2018. And if you're not quite sure what a freezing order is, just see page xiii.

Sergei Magnitsky, finished off in 2009, the unlikely hero of both these books, was one of Browder's most honest and principled accountants and lawyers who were trying to ensure that business in the 'new' Russia reached and then maintained the highest Western standards of honesty and decency. I think that in some ways the Russians whom Magnitsky can be best compared with for probity and courage include Boris Nemtsov, killed just outside the Kremlin in 2015, and Vladimir V. Kara-Murza, very nearly murdered twice since then and currently 'deprived of liberty' in Moscow, where he awaits trial. Browder writes about both of them here. I would also add the equally

heroic anti-crime activist, currently doing time in a 'correctional colony' to the east of Moscow, Aleksey Naval'ny, and whose name, like Magnitsky's, Putin is so reluctant to voice in public.

The big difference, of course, is that Magnitsky was not involved in politics, but 'merely' an honest family man and white-collar middle-class employee doing a skilled but low-profile job in Browder's Hermitage Capital Management company in Moscow. Before his arrest, he had been investigating a fraud case involving US\$230 million missing from Browder's company and which Browder himself was later accused of stealing. This is quite a lot of money, but the author puts it into perspective: 'If we could lift the hood on every Western bank, I estimate we'd find that the amount of dirty money that has moved out of Russia since Putin took power to be \$1 trillion, and possibly much more.' It looked very likely to Magnitsky that several Russian officials had devised a scheme, involving the use of vulnerable professional crooks, to divert some of Hermitage's clean money to themselves. This led to the arrest of Magnitsky, who, in ever worsening health in pre-trial investigation isolation facilities, was finally beaten to death in November 2009, 358 days after his detention. This changed the lives of his family, and of Browder's life, for ever.

This book tells us about the author's persistent and unceasing, attempts finally to achieve some sort of justice meted out to those most responsible for his loyal employee's premature death. Browder has travelled around the world, fairly successfully trying to persuade more and more countries – currently 34 – to sign up to the Magnitsky Act and at least somewhat clean up their own business and financial practices. Putin's initial revenge was, of course, perverse: he banned the adoptions, then already in process, by generous and kind-hearted Americans, of Russian orphans, many of them physically and/or mentally challenged. How are they doing now, in Russia?

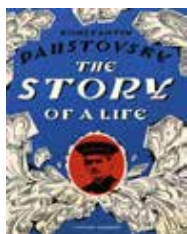
I found the account of Browder's efforts to arouse more awareness of some of the shadier sides of life in present-day Russia not only unputdownable but very worrying about the willingness of many people in many other parts of the world to do business (ie, collaborate, rather than cooperate) with that country. He mentions not only crooked Russians, but crooked people in a variety of other countries in what is regarded as the West. I'm reluctant to name names, lest any libel lawyers try to bankrupt *The Salisbury Review* – Browder and his publishers are better endowed. However, this book indirectly raises broader, more important, moral and political questions.

Not only Generals are sometimes accused of fighting the previous war when giving allegedly out-

of-date advice on how best to deal with the next one (Ukraine is not mentioned here). But did things start to go unstoppably wrong in Russia already in August, 1991, during the coup and counter-coup in Moscow, organized by different factions of the KGB and supported by the Gorbachev-hating Yel'tsin? Did the Cold War really *end* in about 1989, or was it merely *suspended* for a decade? And has the former *Soviet* Russia really become *post-Soviet*, rather than merely *neo-Soviet*? After all, Yel'tsin was, and Putin is, far more *Soviet* than Gorbachev was and, miraculously, still is. Browder writes that in 2012 he had 'accused the Russian government of having merged with Russian organised crime' 'Why had Putin gone to such lengths to protect a group of crooked officials and organized criminals? Because, quite simply, he was protecting himself.'

Browder's new book has been published at exactly the right time, when at least a few more people are questioning why some Western lawyers, tax experts, estate agents and business(wo)men who have increased their wealth by collaborating for years with Russian oligarchs and their families are not even being investigated. The 'Panama Papers' and their successors raise very troubling questions about Western, and not only Russian, probity. Are London and New York all that much cleaner than Moscow? The author concludes that 'despite all the evidence I've presented to British law enforcement, Parliament, and the British press, to this day not a single money laundering investigation connected to the Magnitsky case has been initiated in the United Kingdom.'

I have never before read a 300-page book so quickly – in less than a day, and I'm already impatiently waiting for volume 3, bringing the story up to at least 2023. If you want to gain further insights into a few of Putin's and his Russian and non-Russian collaborators' crimes, make sure you read at least this volume.



One of Russia's Greatest Sons

John Jolliffe

The Story of a Life, Konstantin Paustovsky, Vintage Classics, £25.

Along with Pasternak and Bulgakov, Paustovsky somehow survived the Great Terror to become one of the finest Russian writers of the early twentieth century, the great heirs of Turgenev and Tolstoy.

This new translation is remarkably similar to the original one, though occasionally a jarring solecism replaces something more in keeping with the author's graceful style, which is completely natural as well as imaginative; never forced but often gaining from understatement. But on the whole, this is a thoroughly readable version

Paustovsky's great characteristic is his total dedication to his country, to its language, customs, forests, villages and people. He was born in 1892, and in the pre-war section there is often a sense of decay in the places he frequented: ponds choked with weed, boggy woods overgrown with brambles and fallen trees. In his beloved Kiev, he takes the reader past the cathedral and the other churches with their glorious golden spires, the impressive opera house and the stately squares, to the mean back streets, sunk in squalor and stricken with a poverty which would never be cured by Lenin, though much later there would be a brief Indian summer when Ukraine escaped from the Soviet Union, only to be crushed by the cloven hoof of Putin. Even in the first part of the book he conveys a certainty that however many historic buildings are laid waste, however many ordinary homes in town and country are pulverised in his insatiable lust for domination, Putin will never destroy the sheer determination of the Ukrainian people, especially as they continue to return from their diaspora. Not as glamorous as the Polish version of this inner strength, the Ukrainian form, equally dogged and less volatile, will eventually prevail.

Before 1914, decay and poverty were usually regarded as the natural course of events. Then there had been the sudden shock of the defeat of the Russian fleet in the Japanese war ten years earlier, and the great affront to national security. When the war came in 1914, Paustovsky chose to become an unqualified medical orderly, soon gaining experience in helping the wounded, and in other relief activities, on a series of hospital trains in various parts of Russia. In 1941 they were up against a powerful enemy who they were never to defeat until salvation came thanks to Britain and America. At home there was military incompetence on a huge scale; ammunition which did not fit the guns, uniforms which never kept out the cold, boots which quickly fell to pieces; beside which the temporary shortage of shells in England was a minor problem.

The horrors of that war have been described elsewhere many times, and it is a great failure by the publishers not to have provided maps which would have made sense of the various theatres of war. A few more dates also would have been helpful. The home front also suffered from breakdowns of various kinds. In the general chaos that eventually led to the

disintegration of the army and the spread of revolution there was plenty of eccentricity, which led one of Paustovsky's fellow volunteers to ask in despair 'Can you really tell who's sane and who's insane? Well, can you?' He did not wait for an answer. Yet Paustovsky was able to write that 'the good can often shine through a fog of lies, poverty and suffering, just like at the end of some rainy day the fire of the setting sun can pierce the grey clouds with its rays.'

The last section of the book jumps about in time and space, and is hard to follow: there is no index and very few dates, but plenty of assorted drama. He found work of sorts in a newspaper in Moscow, but found time to make his way, with some difficulty, to the Crimea, via his beloved Kiev, now briefly under the shaky control of Ataman Petlyura, who is well described here. Two years earlier, he had managed to miss a smart cruise ship, the Portugal, by then a hospital ship on which he was due to serve. It had sailed without him and was soon sunk by a German submarine. Of 273 on board, only 100 survived.

Story of a Life should really be called *Scenes from a Life*. There is plenty of incident, of the most varied kind imaginable, and plenty of vivid description. Paustovsky was never a dissenter or an active foe of the Soviet state, which no doubt accounts for his survival. He admitted to being a dreamer, an observer, a romantic, insisting on living on his own terms, though such an attitude failed to save the lives of many other authors, and others. Anyone at all gripped by Russian literature will enjoy this book enormously. My only criticism, apart from the lack of maps, is that the book should be given the title suggested above.

Paustovsky was twice put forward for the Nobel Prize for literature. In 1964 the judges preferred Sartre, of all people, and in the next year they typically kowtowed to Soviet pressure and gave the prize to Mikhail Sholokhov, a time-server who was also rightly accused of plagiarism. Once again, the Nobel judges lowered the value of their awards.



Re-cultivating the Ocean Celia Haddon

Rewilding the Sea. How to Save Our Oceans. Charles Clover, Witness Books, £22, pp 261. Illus.

Rewilding has finally reached the oceans. In the 1970s

and 1980s the big campaign was the *Save the Whale* movement. Whales were big, iconic and beautiful, and in 1986 whale hunting was banned except for a few exceptions. Most, though not all, whale populations recovered but now *Save the Whale* has given way to *Help Our Kelp*. At last, we are getting to the idea of saving the sea itself rather than singling out one of two particularly striking species. *Rewilding the Sea* is surprisingly hopeful that it can be done, an optimism that makes a welcome change from the predictions of doom in most books about conservation.

We can ban catching various endangered marine fish in the hope they may survive, but there is little point if they are going to starve in a polluted sea. Overfishing, which is undoubtedly widespread, is only part of the problem. Marine fish need a habitat where they can live and breed and we are trashing the sea, itself. We should be focussing on ocean habitats rather than their individual occupants. It's not just how much fish we take out of the ocean, it is what our fishing vessels are doing to the sea while they fish. The destroyers are not the small inshore fishing boats but the huge subsidised trawler fleets sucking up anything living and injuring any plants and creatures that are left behind.

Trawling the bottom of the sea with the so called 'tickler chains' yanks the flat fish into a net, but it also crushes, injures and kills all the shellfish and other creatures living at the bottom. Another problem is the fishing method used for scallops which are caught by dredging. Metal cages are hauled across the seabed, flicking the shellfish into the cage. Nowadays these steel cages can jump over rocks so that they can dredge almost anywhere. As they pass, they leave a trail of injured sea creatures and yanked-out sea vegetation behind them.

The coastal areas round Britain have their own ecosystems. In Lyme Bay, where scallop dredging was wrecking the seabed, there are coral reefs. Not the coral reefs that we see in nature films of Australis's Great Barrier Reef, but reefs of cold-water corals - pink sea fans, ross coral, dead man's fingers, boring sponge (they bore into shells and limestone) and yellow sunset cup coral. There is now a marine protected area along the edges of Lyme Bay and in theory, at least, this particular little bit of seabed has been saved. The local small boat fishermen can still use lobster pots and scallops can be harvested by divers. Indeed, those who like shellfish can support marine conservation by buying *Lyme Bay Reserve Seafood*, which has its own brand and website.

The disappearance of a single species can put a whole ecosystem at risk. A single adult oyster can filter out the algae and nutrients from as much as 140 litre of sea water a day. The oyster fishery in the Solent was once

the largest in Europe but by 2013 they were almost fished out. Not only had local oyster fishermen lost their livelihood but blooms of green algae, no longer filtered by oysters, were smothering the mudflats. A complication of oyster restoration is that the oyster needs to settle on 'cultch', a substrate of gravel and old oyster shells and by now there were few old shells left on the seabed for the larvae to grow on. The Blue Marine Foundation, which Charles Clover co-founded, decided to restore the oyster beds. Mature British oysters were brought from Scotland, and deposited on a prepared gravel and shell substrate, which had been brought in by barges to one of the harbours. The gravel would hopefully provide the right surface for the imported shellfish.

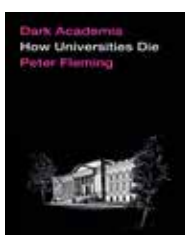
Their other move, with the expertise of Portsmouth University, was to put mature oysters into vertical tubular cages, to keep them safe from competitors like the invading American slipper limpet. Thus protected, they could safely shed their larvae or spat, into the sea where the larvae, if they were lucky, might find some hard substrate to settle on. The Foundation and the University also set up a native oyster hatchery, with the aim of re-seeding the Solent with our native oysters. It is too early to know whether this is working and there is some evidence that the mature Scottish oysters are having a tough time in the mucky Solent. At a guess, it may take a further 20 years before any of us will be eating native oysters grown in the Solent. But that is not really the point of the restoration: during those 20 years the growing oysters will be cleaning up the sea water too.

Underwater kelp forests are swathes of those brown flat seaweed fronds that grow out from a stiff stem. Some used to be commonly washed up on the beaches and could be used as fertiliser for gardens. Kelp forests can take up and store 20 times more carbon dioxide than the tree forests on land, reducing climate change, stabilising the seabed, and mitigating coastal erosion. They also create a safe nursery for small fish, for the hatchlings of bigger fish, for lobsters, crabs and many other seabed animals. In turn small fish sheltering in the kelp attract the bigger fish that eat them, and these in turn attract the dolphins and seals that prey on the bigger fish. But trawlers using a beam trawl, a sort of chain mat with a series of chains at the mouth allowing it to be dragged across rocky seabeds, uproot whole kelp forests as they pass.

Off the Sussex coast trawling has destroyed 90 per cent of kelp forests that used to flourish there. This in turn has reduced the fish stocks for the smaller inshore fishermen. So in spring 2021 the Sussex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation managed to get a ban on trawlers fishing within four kilometres of the coast.

According to Clover, within two months of the ban there were the first signs of new kelp plants and pods of dolphins had been seen off Worthing pier. Meanwhile there are underwater cameras and scientists swarming all along the Sussex coast to see how long it will take to regrow the forest. *Help Our Kelp* may not be as catchy as *Save The Whale*, but it has had its first success. If this works, there will be others.

Rewilding the Sea is a journalist's book and, as such, is easy to read while the references for each chapter show it is properly knowledge based. Too much apocalyptic gloom can put me off environment books and TV programmes, so the optimistic tone was also pleasant. It left me wishing I could dive to see the Lyme Bay corals.



Snouts in the Academic Feeding Trough

James Monkton

Dark Academia: How Universities Die, Peter Fleming, Pluto Press, 2021, £14.99.

It is no secret that universities have long been in a near constant state of crisis, yet the comforting image still persists of crusty old dons in tweed jackets, smoking pipes and discussing Aristotle over mid-afternoon sherry in the common room. While still in living memory (just) for many institutions, the reality today is of an environment of massive and unnecessary stress imposed on academics by useless managers and the dictates of the market. Peter Fleming's *book* lucidly explains how dire the situation is and, bleakly, how hopeless are dreams of returning to an age of the Newmanian idea of universities existing to promote liberal, (in its classical meaning) education for its own sake. Now all is utility, profit and bums on seats.

Fleming, a professor at an Australian university, paints a truly desolate landscape, but one that is entirely accurate. Demoralised staff who spend more time on bureaucracy than teaching and research, never mind even reading on their topic; disaffected students interested only in grades and not learning; meaningless targets and constant appraisals intended to keep staff in a permanent state of anxiety and insecurity; grade inflation as universities compete with each other to keep their customers – the students – happy; bullying and lack of concern for staff's health and well-being – these are increasing

hollowed-out husks of what they should be, fewer ivory towers and more corporate headquarters. Everything here will be familiar with academics across the globe; I found nothing in it which I did not recognise. For all its starkness, *Dark Academia* does not exaggerate.

The author blames two phenomena for the perilous state of tertiary education: neoliberal commercialisation and rampant managerialism. Being a left-leaning academic, (part of the job description of academics for decades), Fleming lays into the marketisation of universities. He is right to do so. Students as paying customers often feel that having stumped up exorbitant fees they have already ‘fulfilled their half of the bargain’. Now the onus is on lecturers to provide them with the finished product of good grades. This has led to rampant grade inflation and ‘grade grubbing’ – students pestering lecturers demanding higher marks for average or substandard work. The option of a quieter life is too tempting for some academics to resist. The ideas that ‘delayed gratification is crucial to proper learning’ and that ‘error is an indispensable feature of long-term knowledge acquisition’ have long been jettisoned.

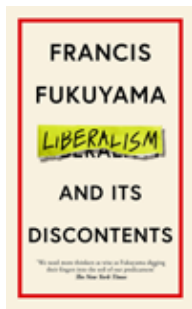
‘Student satisfaction’ surveys and responses are the oxygen of university administration, so the customer must always be right. Not discussed here is the culture of assignment extensions: students can apply for postponements of their assignment deadlines, sometimes by months – something that is palpably unfair to those who submit their work on time. Students are also encouraged to rate their lecturers like Uber drivers or Amazon feedback comments, compelling many academics, who live in fear of this, to favour entertainment over education in their lectures.

Vice Chancellors and Presidents have the biggest snouts in the biggest feeding troughs. They are now CEOs, with half of them in the UK receiving over £300,000 a year and at least five on half-a-million or more. Meanwhile, staff are increasingly placed on zero-hour contracts or temporary contracts (with no holiday pay) and students are fleeced. One of the greatest frauds of recent times in this country has to be the universities’ insistence that students pay for their accommodation fees even though courses were all put online during the Covid lockdowns. Fleming might have made a lot more of this. Another con, again not sufficiently exposed here, is the standard annual student fees of over £9,000 a year in the UK for all students. A humanities degree does not cost anything like this; the money is siphoned off into science,

engineering and medicine, which will provide better paid jobs for graduates than the humanities and into the great blob of university administration.

Rampant managerialism is Fleming’s other main target. Lecturers at universities are now regularly outnumbered by administrative and ancillary staff. The culture of managerialism has an iniquitous effect on our universities, imposing counter-productive ‘bureaucratic sludge’ on an already strained system. Universities have become providers of administrative jobs rather than places of education; they exist primarily to support these posts and all academics will recognise this observation: ‘Managers will often seek to legitimate their own roles within the institution above all else. Bureaucratic ritualisation is where meetings are held for the sake of meetings and considered as an output’. Even HR departments are now guardians of management, to whom ‘their loyalty is undying’, and not of the workforce: ‘HR staff deemed to be too employee-focused are actually got rid of.’ Fleming is again spot-on in his analysis and understanding of the managerialist woes within the university sector. However, he seems unaware that it is the same throughout the entire education system, all the way down through FE colleges, secondary schools and even primary schools. Primary teachers face nearly all the same bureaucratic nightmares as their lecturing counterparts.

The book, for all its perceptive and informed insights, has one major flaw: it completely eschews the damage done to universities by progressive liberals and leftists. Fleming seems to be too much of that ilk to air this huge problem. This is a great shame, as it leads to an incomplete and even distorted picture. A huge proportion of the bureaucratic burdens stems from woke impositions on diversity and inclusion, not least through audits and training days. The progressive pandemic that has spread through universities has massively undermined education, not least through the relentless attacks on our knowledge and wisdom accrued through cultural traditions. Many academics themselves have been in the frontline of this cultural war, contributing to the decline of the university sector. We are at the stage where mathematics departments are ‘decolonising’ their curriculum, which makes about as much sense as lobotomising a turnip. Fleming perfectly hits two nails on the head, while missing a third altogether. That suffices to make this is an important and informed book which, by its very rectitude, offers no hope.



The Fading Light of Liberalism

Alistair Miller

Liberalism and its Discontents, Francis Fukuyama,
Profile Books, 2022, £16.99.

Liberalism is in a bad shape. Whereas the ideological battle of the 1930s was between the liberal democracies and the ‘great dictators’, today’s battle is between those same liberal democracies and a new breed of tech-savvy ‘spin dictators’ who control their citizens, not by fear and mass repression, but by manipulating the media and distorting information. With liberalism now imploding under its own contradictions, it is clear which side will win out.

Fukuyama’s original thesis in *The End of History and the Last Man*, which caused such a stir in the heady aftermath of the fall of the Berlin Wall, was that political history had come to an end with the triumph of Western liberal democracy. Fukuyama still believes there is no alternative to classical liberalism, but clearly something has gone wrong, and a reset is needed. The current book lacks the excitement, of its predecessor, but perhaps this reflects the sombre times in which we live. There is much useful analysis for students of political theory, with the occasional striking insight, but Fukuyama’s recommendations for saving liberalism, unobjectionable though they are, ultimately miss the point.

He reminds us that at the heart of liberalism is a belief in individualism: that no human being can lead a fulfilled life without enjoying the freedom to choose his beliefs and to make his own life choices. It is therefore a great advance on earlier hierarchical social arrangements, with the bonus that unparalleled economic growth and prosperity are also made possible. Moreover, liberalism serves as an antidote to conflict between rival ethnic or religious groups, or indeed nation states. By ‘taking questions of final ends off the table’, it ‘lowers the temperature of politics’: you are free to believe what you want, but

only on condition that you do not try to impose your beliefs on others. Freedom is necessarily coupled with the rule of law, democracy, free speech, private property, and free markets, which together guarantee the freedom of the individual.

What could go wrong? The problem, argues Fukuyama, is that the core principles of classical liberalism have been ‘pushed to extremes’ on both the Left and the Right, to the extent that those core principles are themselves undermined.

On the Right, classical liberalism has morphed into neoliberalism, in which the worship of markets has become a religion, and the role of the state denigrated, even when ‘public goods’ like the natural utilities cry out for state ownership. The result is indiscriminate deregulation and the concentration of power and wealth in the hands of ‘a small class of oligarchs’, whose wealth flows freely across borders to ‘low-tax jurisdictions’. Meanwhile, labour flows freely across borders to maximise efficiency and profits, regardless of the social consequences. The inevitable consequence of this globalization has been a protectionist backlash, a rise in populism, and a collapse of faith in the institutions of liberal democracy.

On the Left, ‘primordial individualism’ has been questioned because it takes no account of the struggle for recognition of historically ‘marginalized groups’, like African Americans, women, and homosexuals. Fukuyama supports this ‘identity politics’ if its objective is ‘to win acceptance and equal treatment for members of the marginalized group as individuals’. But, under the influence of critical theory, these legitimate group grievances have been theorised, by Derrida, Foucault, and the like, into a thoroughgoing post-modernist critique of liberalism, which brands the entirety of Western civilization – its democratic institutions, its culture, its language, even the scientific method, a covert power structure for ‘white supremacy’. Since words too are just another instrument of white oppression, those who use the wrong ones must be cancelled.

This has provoked an identitarian backlash on the Right, where intellectuals such as Andrew Breitbart and Peter Thiel have applied postmodern critique in reverse to the mainstream liberal establishment, leading to a host of internet-fuelled conspiracy theories, including the ones that Trump won the last presidential election by a landslide, and that vaccination programmes are ‘a politically motivated government plot’. Consequently, a significant part of

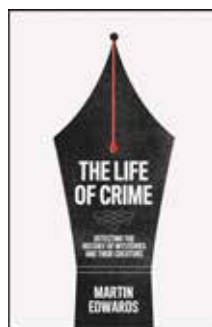
the American right now lives in ‘a fantasy world’. Political opponents no longer ‘simply disagree’; they ‘see different versions of reality’.

There is much truth in Fukuyama’s analysis. But what is to be done? Fukuyama sympathises with the traditional conservative critique of liberalism: that a liberal society lacks the shared values of a religious, moral, and cultural tradition, which would bind people together into a community; that it reduces people to consumers engaged in ‘the aimless pursuit of material gratification’. But in a secular, diverse, liberal society, the idea of rolling back the clock and ‘restoring a shared moral horizon’ is a non-starter. Instead, argues Fukuyama, what is needed is a more inclusive conception of national identity founded on aspects of it that ‘can be adopted voluntarily and therefore shared more broadly, from literary traditions, shared historical narratives and language, to food and sports.’

This is fine so far as it goes, but unless freedom is given substance by goods, values, and virtues that are worth striving for, it is rendered vacuous. And because these goods are mediated by cultural traditions, to access them requires people to have been raised and educated *in a tradition*. Oakeshott expressed this process of initiation as ‘learning to recognise ourselves in the mirror of a civilization’. Moreover, secular liberalism has developed and evolved under *specific* historical and social conditions, within a *specific* culture and civilization – namely, the Classical-Judaeo-Christian civilization of the West. The deconstruction of this civilization, its disestablishment as the dominant culture, all in the name of celebrating ‘difference’ and ‘diversity’, kicks away the very foundations on which classical liberalism is founded.

Fukuyama offers us ‘multiculturalism’, which he justifies on the grounds that it provides ‘cultural diversity that adds richness and interest to life’. But instead of initiation into a cultural tradition, a civilization, we are being dished up a cultural theme park in which one might sample Buddhism one day and indigenous North American Indian culture the next.

Liberalism has spawned multiculturalism which destroys liberalism. This is the real paradox – and on this crucial issue, Fukuyama is silent. He might devote a future work to the subject, but by then, the light of classical liberalism may have been extinguished.



An Encyclopaedia of ‘Whodunnits’

Anthony Daniels

The Life of Crime: Detecting the History of Mysteries and Their Creators, Martin Edwards, Collins Crime Club, £30.

Martin Edwards is a fortunate man – though luck has little to do with it. A solicitor and then a successful crime novelist, he is also a fine commentator on crime fiction, and has provided many, or most, of the introductions to the British Library’s successful series of republications of forgotten crime novels of the so-called Golden Age. His knowledge of crime fiction is encyclopaedic and suggests more than a lifetime’s reading. And could there be a happier life than that of a man who reads crime novels and can claim honestly that he is *working*?

For many of us, reading such novels is a guilty pleasure. We feel that we are wasting our time in so doing, as we feel guilty when we eat one chocolate too many. We should be reading Kant or polishing the silver rather than puzzling over who murdered a most unlikely victim by any one of a cast of unlikely characters.

Yet many serious and highly intelligent persons – philosophers such as Bertrand Russell, Ludwig Wittgenstein and A J Ayer were devotees of the genre, and I have never seen it adequately explained why murder should exercise so strong a hold on the imagination of almost everyone. A person who says that he is not interested in murder is probably lying or suffering from autism. What is this almost universal fascination? Vicarious wish fulfilment? I think I may truthfully claim never to have wished to kill anyone, and yet I read murder stories for pleasure.

This very long book astonished me. No entomologist could have classified insects more conscientiously than Edwards has classified crime novels since their beginning as a literary genus of their own. Though he states in his introduction that he has not included *every* crime novel or author of consequence, he has certainly included every one known to me from my desultory and unsystematic reading. And he has succeeded in a difficult trick: writing interestingly about crime novels without ever revealing their *dénouements* or the

solution to the puzzle that they pose, so strong is his desire not to spoil it for the readers whom he inspires to read them.

I am sure that many readers will do as I did and test the book by looking in the index for a favourite author or book, preferably not one universally known such as *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, to see whether it is included. My test case was *The Woman of Straw* by Catherine Arley, a French writer whose book would, if I were asked the absurd question of which I considered the best crime novel ever written, take my vote. But you would have to know a lot more than I do to catch Edwards out in any substantial omission. Arley is there, albeit not quite given her due, confined to an endnote.

The book's short chapters are furnished with copious endnotes, which the reader should on no account miss, for they contain sharp observations and much information about the authors and their often-colourful lives. The book, alas, is too large and awkward to be read in bed (I tried) and it is irritating to have to go, sometimes several times a page, from text to endnote: but I suppose footnotes rather than endnotes, though far easier to read, might have intimidated a potential readership, giving the impression that the book was a work of dry erudition rather than of entertainment. It is indeed erudite but is not of that kind of modern literary scholarship that is impenetrable to read and proud in its obscurity.

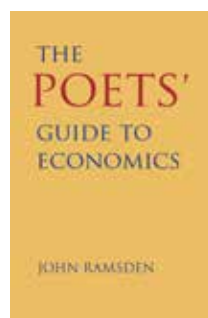
If you don't read the footnotes, you will miss the detail that T S Eliot's brother wrote a crime novel, or that Harry Stephen Keeler, an American crime writer of the 1930s, was confined at an early age to a mental asylum, or that F Tennyson Jesse, Alfred Tennyson's great niece, who wrote incisive introductions to some of the *Notable British Trials* series, lost her hand when it was caught in a propellor as she waved out of an early aircraft. Of course, it is possible to go through life without knowing any of these things yet the possession of useless knowledge is a pleasure in itself.

Though the book is encyclopaedic, it is not an encyclopaedia and thus there are omissions that it will gratify the pedant to notice while he wonders at the author's formidable but lightly-worn learning. For example, while Edwards mentions R. Austin Freeman's service as a military doctor in the Gold Coast (Freeman was the inventor of Dr Thorndyke), and his later enthusiasm for eugenics to counter the degeneration he saw all around him, he omits to mention that he wrote a book in which he condemned the British conquest of Asanteland as unjustified. Again, we are not told that Stanislas-André Steeman, the prolific and popular Belgian crime novelist, published crime novels with the Belgian fascist *Rex* publisher. We all have our snippets of useless information that we delight to

bring to the fore of our minds, so that we should not feel too crushed by our ignorance by comparison with an author's knowledge.

It is a sign of the times that the footnote on Arley, who chose her pseudonym to sound English in the belief that English crime novelists were best, says that she was an *actor*. Born in 1926, and 30 when she published *Woman of Straw*, she was an *actress*. And there is no mention of the original title of Agatha Christie's renamed *Then There Were None*, which of course was *Ten Little Niggers*, a book referred to on no fewer than nine pages. This is a rewriting of history like the removal of Yezhov and Trotsky from photographs. It would be of mild interest to know whether the above was foisted on the author by dictatorial sub-editors, or whether it was his choice. If the former, it is sinister.

But I should not end on a sour note. This book can be read with pleasure by all those who enjoy crime fiction: at least ninety per cent of all readers.



If poets ruled the world

Alexander
Adams

The Poets' Guide to Economics, John Ramsden,
Pallas Athene, June 2022, £10.75.

'There will inevitably be a struggle between the banking, or financial, interests and the people all over civilised countries: but no one can tell which will win. In industrial countries, the odds are in favour of the banks, or financiers.' So wrote the reactionary Catholic Hilaire Belloc, in support of his idea of localism and communitarianism, shortly before the Wall Street Crash.

His is one of the many insights from creative writers into finance, included in *The Poets' Guide to Economics*, a new book by John Ramsden, which contradicts the common assumption that poets are dreamers with no inclination for financial analysis. This book sets out the thoughts of 11 poets (all British, except for one American) on economics and financial policy, starting with Daniel Defoe (in the 1690s) and ending with Ezra Pound in 1944.

The variety of the views reflect the differing times and temperaments of the authors. Perhaps thankfully,

most of the views are in prose rather than verse. Defoe's economics were marked by his religious non-conformism and disastrous investment, generating his sceptical outlook. He wrote perceptively about the power of credit. 'Credit makes the soldier fight without pay, the armies march without provisions, and it makes tradesmen keep open shop without stock. The force of credit is not to be described by words; it is an impregnable fortification, either for a nation, or for a single man in business [...]' By Ramsden's account, Defoe advocated for higher wages for the poor but without reservations regarding inflation, seeing the greater expenditure of the poor as an economic stimulant.

The economic thoughts of Jonathan Swift can be found in *Gulliver's Travels*, which satirise his society through a sequence of fantastic parodies of its failings. Swift's Irish origins led him to agitate, in pamphlets for reform to equalise trade across the British Isles, even calling for an Irish boycott of English goods until that end was met. Swift was highly involved in politics, earning him an audience with Prime Minister Robert Walpole, to little effect. His famous *Modest Proposal* of 1729, in which Swift proposed alleviating famine conditions in Ireland by eating babies, was an economic satire more than a moral one, because it set aside the moral issue to propose a parodic solution to economic imbalance.

Unsurprisingly Percy Bysshe Shelley had radical views on economics: He supported the French Revolution, railed against income from land rental and agitated on behalf of the English poor. His *Queen Mab* (1813) was a romantic fantasy underpinned by Whig ideas, assuming that a linear progress towards equality and egalitarianism would establish virtue as the key principle of society. It advocated violent revolution and led to the printer being imprisoned for distributing seditious literature. In 1817, Shelley published a demand for the lowering of the populace's taxation to pay interest on Britain's debt for the Napoleonic Wars. Samuel Taylor Coleridge was on the other side. As a conservative patriot, he was in favour of the war against Napoleon, and wrote a pamphlet to support the cause. He disagreed with those who claimed that the war was economic folly. *Vulgar Errors Respecting Taxes and Taxation* (1809) compared credit to an irrigation system, anticipating by a century detailed economic modelling that did show the aptness of the parallel. Coleridge is a particularly rewarding subject for social conservatives to consider as a figure who provided a route to conserving his land and people without resorting to luddism or communitarianism.

The image of Sir Walter Scott is on every Bank of Scotland £5 note because he saved banknotes in

Scotland. When it was proposed in 1826, following the crash of several banks, that small-denomination banknotes be outlawed, the Scots were concerned. Coins of precious metal were scarce in Scotland and the restriction on £5 notes would precipitate a financial crisis north of the border. Scott rallied support for the saving of the banknote. Scottish banks were prudent, so inflicting a measure that would penalise Scots unduly for an infraction by their English neighbours would be unjust. He also addressed the live issue of regional subsidies and the division of financial power between Edinburgh and Whitehall.

Thomas de Quincey read David Ricardo's *Principles of Political Economy and Taxation* while in an opium daze. He developed a theory of value and wrote his own economic treatise. Ramsden compares de Quincey to Coleridge. 'Where Coleridge was genial, De Quincey's image seems menacing. He [de Quincey] had every sympathy for the poor as individuals but none at all as a class. The Peterloo massacre found him firmly on the side of authority.' de Quincey (as per Ramsden's assessment) is more reactionary than Coleridge by far, supporting the Opium Wars and dismissing the competence of the Chinese and Irish.

Ramsden stretches his definition a touch by including writers who are not known for their poetry, such as John Ruskin. Ruskin's economic thoughts are well known. He was a vociferous opponent of industrialisation, claiming that the system debased man, depriving him of the respect and autonomy that was due an artisan. Ruskin's response was to propose a reversal, but returning to a guild system, with more craft and skill put into manufacturing to entail fewer goods at higher prices. Society should have values based upon satisfaction, integrity and dignity, not profit. Wealth was a net positive and 'illth' was a net negative (waste, pollution, illness, ugliness) that was an unintended and inevitable side-production of industrial manufacturing.

George Bernard Shaw made it his business to be an expert on almost any subject of popular interest, he wrote much about economics. As a materialist and socialist, Shaw believed society would be shaped by economics and that the economy would be planned, progressive and totalising in character. Shaw, as the Universal Man, felt suited to provide a global view of the future. 'I know ten times as much of economics and a hundred times as much of practical administration as Marx did.' Shaw did have some insights into the socialisation of costs by private business and his solutions (for example, taxing alcohol producers for the costs of prisons and doctors) sound like the 'sin taxes' of today.

At the other end of the spectrum was Hilaire Belloc, founder of the Distributist movement, which was a

form of Catholic communitarianism. Distributism advanced private ownership of residences for working families, rather than the communal state ownership of socialism. With the distribution of the means of production, land and residences to ordinary people, stable local communities could form, combating the rapacious expansion of massive firms and rich magnates in marketplace that was not free or fair. Belloc posed the troubling question that has not been answered: How can big finance be prevented from eroding all tradition and stability in a society and thereby inducing pernicious nomadism?

American poet Ezra Pound was a follower of Major Douglas, who stated that there was a major shortfall in expenditure and available money to purchase in the modern economy. Douglas stated that this led to inexorable growth to compensate, turning money from a store of wealth or means of exchange into a system

to enrich financiers. Pound, who lived in Italy, became a supporter of fascism, which seemed to balance capitalism with governmental controls on finance and production. His hatred for usury led him to equate usury and Jews, hence the virulent anti-Semitism of his wartime broadcasts and to being charged with treason by the victorious Americans.

The author includes a variety of views and political assumptions that are not his own. He presents their cases fairly, on the whole, and makes a genial, if occasionally opinionated, guide to the field. Ramsden, who read history and economics at Cambridge and later worked at a merchant bank, has the economic knowledge to appraise these writers. Although his blithe repetition of the claim that Keynesian economics ended the Great Depression, and a handful of other received opinions might give some readers pause for thought.

Film

JANE KELLY

Eric Ravilious: Drawn to War. Film 87 mins. At selected cinemas. Some with Q&A

Visiting an exhibition of work by John Nash, brother of the more famous Paul, last summer at the Towner Gallery, Eastbourne, I was intrigued to see a Wedgewood dinner service designed by Eric Ravilious on a lower floor. I have often seen his designs on merchandise, it sells well to the public but when I mentioned his name people seemed vague about him. Few seemed aware of his unique work, before and during the last war. He was killed flying over Iceland in 1942, aged thirty-nine, the first war artist to die on active service. Since then, he has been largely forgotten. Bafta Award winning film maker, Margy Kinmonth, has rediscovered his genius in this small, delightful film., the sort of penetrating work once enjoyed by BBC audiences in the distant past. Voiced by Freddie Fox, Harriet Walter, and Jeremy Irons, with guest appearances from Ai Weiwei, Alan Bennett and Grayson Perry, the film is showing at 130 cinemas, and tickets were hard to come-by, but extra screenings are on as so many now want to see the forgotten painter's work.

In the film his wife, Tirzah Garwood, voiced by Tamsin Greig, says he was always kept down as an artist, because he was, 'Not quite a gentleman.' Class prejudice can't really explain why he so completely disappeared

from view. He is, 'A shared secret,' says Alan Bennett, one of his fondest admirers, 'because his paintings are so accessible. 'I don't think he's thought to be a great artist,' Bennett suggests. 'I'm not sure he's properly estimated because he's so easy to like.' That is the most positive view of his obscurity. Tate Britain and other galleries holding his work treat him as a non-person, for most contemporary curators see him as a quaint decorative pastoralist and worse, someone dangerously nostalgic about a country and its culture best forgotten.

In his short life, he was one of the most prolific and beloved English artists using traditional watercolour, pen and ink and woodcut, but his kind of art; based on craft and skill has been effectively cancelled since the 1970s. He engraved more than 400 illustrations and drew over 40 lithographic designs for books and publications. His woodcut of two Victorian cricketers has graced the cover of Wisden since 1938. After a brief experiment in oils, he painted almost entirely in watercolour, showing us an England mysterious. beautiful and vulnerable. He became well-known for his landscapes showing ancient landmarks cut out of chalk, such as *The Westbury Horse*, and the *Wilmington Giant*, 1939, built up with a dry-brush in layers of pattern, the giant framed by vicious looking modern barbed wire. From a tranquil English provincial scene, he created a disturbing world where

everything valued is under threat.

His interiors, painted on site, look simple but were meticulously composed with lines and angles subtly distorted. His cottage bedrooms, painted in the Sussex Downs, with their patterned wall- paper and empty chairs, look like rooms we think we remember from childhood. Despite rarely painting people, as the film points out, work such as, *Tea at Furlongs*, 1939, show a tea laid out, ready for people to appear. His *Train Landscape*, giving a fleeting glimpse of a still, timeless view from a train window is slightly crooked, odd and disconcerting. Like many German painters at that time, with their 'New Objectivity,' his work is traditional and calm at first glance but full of unease.

Watching the film, which presents image after dazzling image, showing his huge ability with design, is like visiting a brilliant exhibition whilst an intelligent curator walks beside filling you with fascinating facts. These include a detailed family background. That's possible because in the 1970s Ravilious' children found

long-lost art work and family documents under a bed, giving Kinmonth a wealth of primary source material. She structures her documentary around letters, photos and diary entries. Following a trend for bigging up artists wives, but in this case done reasonably, she gives Tirzah Garwood, who was a successful engraver, a share in the story, allowing her to emerge as an interesting woman who put aside her own artistic ambitions to take care of their cash-strapped family, enduring his long absences as a war artist and numerous infidelities. Her engraving, *The Wife*, seen in the film, shows a woman sitting up in bed, with her husband's side empty. Ravilious wrote her excited letters about all his wartime adventures, while she struggled at home, bringing up their three children in a freezing, frequently flooded house in Essex and working as an illustrator. Nine years after his death she died from cancer. The film which starts with distant landscapes becomes an intimate and moving tale about the vicissitudes of an English family in war.

IN SHORT

Young Bloomsbury, Nino Strachey (John Murray, £25)

The characters in 'Young Bloomsbury' were a motley crew, most of them to some extent influenced by their forerunners, some of whom were very worthwhile authors, with Lytton Strachey by far the most distinguished writer; Virginia Woolf an outstanding critic and, for some, a rewarding novelist; Duncan Grant, an artist of very uneven quality, though good at painting lampshades for the Omega Workshops. For a time, he was all the rage. (He sold £1,600 worth of paintings in three weeks at an exhibition in 1931.) Roger Fry was an imaginative critic, but an unsuccessful painter and administrator, who fell heavily between the two stools of the National Gallery in London and the Metropolitan in New York. Desmond MacCarthy was a charming literary editor of the Sunday Times, followed as lead reviewer by his disciple Raymond Mortimer. E M Forster was a novelist popular for some years but now widely forgotten.

Their young followers, in so far as they did follow them, were an even more mixed bunch, chiefly notable for their interminable and interlocking love affairs, and their lack of any sense of direction, let alone of purpose. They were much concerned with their rejection of

the past, however much they may in fact have owed to it. Their chief aim seems to have been to satisfy their love of pleasure, and to escape the restrictions which had in fact begun to weaken before 1914. But their overshadowing background was the shattering events of the war, and the extreme difficulty that so many of the survivors felt in settling down when it was over. Some, like Osbert Sitwell, who succeeded in surviving the war in the Grenadier Guards, had a lot to offer. Eddy Sackville-West was to spend two decades compiling an encyclopaedia of recorded music, only for it very soon to become obsolete with the arrival of long-playing records.

However, while it lasted, it was a goldmine. John Strachey was a young Oxford dandy turned vehement Labour politician. He soon joined the New Party of Oswald Mosley who had served briefly as a minister in the first Labour Government, but was inspired by outrage at what, after the war, had befallen so many of those who had fought bravely beside him.

If you have an appetite for narcissistic frivolity and self-indulgent froth, there is plenty for you here. But buried below the surface there are some highly successful figures. Cecil Beaton and Rex Whistler were to achieve great acclaim in the ultra-fashionable end of the world of the decorative arts. The pace

throughout is breath-taking. The dust-jacket claims that the book ‘offers an entirely original and thrilling focus’ on a group long known as a mutual admiration society of devotees of literature, music and the arts. But by their rejection of former standards, and their failure to replace them with any compelling or even sympathetic new ones, they have made most of these revelations seem stale and empty rather than shocking as they would have been a hundred years ago.

John Jolliffe

Princess of Siberia. the story of Maria and the Decembrist exiles, Christine Sutherland, World of books.

In spite of the irritations of draft erratic punctuation, Americanised spelling etc, this book proved an apposite choice during the present war in Ukraine. Maria was the daughter of a hero of the Napoleonic Wars and in 1824 was married to Prince Sergei Volkonsky, a Decembrist.

The Decembrists were an aristocratic group who presented reasoned arguments based on their experiences in the Napoleonic wars. They were not revolutionaries and were certainly not out to overthrow the Tsar and the royal family. Yet they were ruthlessly crushed and some men were executed. Prince Sergei was sent in 1825 to permanent exile in Siberia. He served years of hard labour and terms of imprisonment until the Tsar’s death some thirty years later. brought an amnesty.

The Tsar’s decree of Maria’s own permanent exile was read to her when she was half-way to Siberia to join her husband. Her story, made available to the author through previously unpublished diaries and memoirs, shows her determination to join her husband despite having to leave her infant son in the care of her family in Ukraine and Russia. She had another son and daughter in a detention camp in Transbaikalia before the family was allowed to settle in Irkutsk. Maria endured many hardships but brought culture, farm cooperatives and education to Siberia through her benevolent influence on local governors.

More than the story of a determined and capable woman, this tale explains the long links between the Ukraine and Russia. Nothing can excuse Putin’s barbarity and the savage cruelty of the Russian forces to their ‘brethren’ in Ukraine today, but until the Russian revolution the links between Russia, Ukraine and to a lesser extent Poland, were interwoven between family and estates in either or both countries. In the 19th century Russian was the language of the serfs while the aristocracy communicated more easily in French – an

added hardship for the exiles in Siberia. Ukrainians and Russians are two peoples linked by blood and both have a long history of holding their tongues at the prospect of harsh punishment then and now.

Rita Twiston Davies

We Are Bellingcat: An Intelligence Agency for the People, Bloomsbury Publishing 2022, pb £9.99.

Eliot Higgins had never been to Libya or Syria; nor did he need to. He was a university dropout, who had no investigative or journalistic experience, let alone knowledge of Arabic or weaponry. By his own admission, he lived an unremarkable life in the humdrum suburbs of Leicester. An administrative worker by day, a video gamer by night.

But his life took an unexpected turn in the early 2010s, during the Arab Spring, when a series of anti-government protests and uprisings swept across North Africa and the Middle East. As he sat at his home computer to watch the events unfold, two sources of motive power—boredom and curiosity—grew and impelled him to act.

What he found is astonishing. By sifting through and collating materials that were available online—tweets, Facebook posts, Tumblr photos, YouTube videos, etc Higgins was able to accurately reconstruct broad sequences of events that had occurred thousands of miles away. He mapped the front lines of the civil conflict in Libya, uncovered evidence of an international arms smuggling operation in Syria, and identified and documented President Assad’s indiscriminate use of illegal munitions in various Syrian governorates. All this he achieved without leaving sight of his computer.

On one occasion, in 2013, Higgins read reports of a suspected chemical-weapons attack in Ghouta, the rebel-held suburb of Damascus. Other similar, unconfirmed reports had emerged in recent months, but this was the worst, with casualties in their hundreds., Higgins started up his computer to investigate, and soon found images of the alleged rocket sites online. He identified some salient features, that several rockets had remained intact, that the base of their warheads had two ports, one of which was a screw cap. This suggested that the rockets were intended not to cause explosive damage but to distribute a chemical payload., Higgins tried to locate the landings and launch sites.

By comparing Google Maps with the background geographical features shown in the images, he was able to establish the exact location of the attack. He then used the observable shadows cast by the rockets to infer their likely trajectory, which he discovered was

probably a Syrian military installation.

He posted these findings on his blog, which in its first year attracted more than half a million viewers which included academics, politicians and journalists. As an upshot of this publicity, Higgins soon found online collaborators, and before long, the man with a blog became the founder of an investigative research group which he called 'Bellingcat', an allusion to the fable about the mice who resolved to place a bell around a cat's neck to prevent it from acting unseen or unheard..

Higgins and his team have belled many bad cats: drug lords, conspiracy theorists, barbarous governments, corrupt politicians, self-incriminating paedophiles, fanatics of various stripe and ruthless men-of-arms. The team are also responsible for exposing the Russian

involvement in the downing of Malaysia Airlines flight 17 over Eastern Ukraine, as well as the attempted assassinations of Salisbury's Sergei and Yulia Skripal, and the Russian opposition leader, Alexei Navalny.

All this is recounted in Higgins' fascinating autobiographical book about the evolution and escapades of Bellingcat, and his own unlikely career path from office administrator to online sleuth extraordinaire. This book can be read in a few sittings, and some readers, including journalists, researchers and celebrity stalkers, should find it an accessible and engaging introduction to the basics of open-source investigations.

Ruan Hughes

The

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Sir Roger Scruton At His Desk



Sir Roger Scruton at his desk

by Lindsey Dearnley

This painting was created after a sitting with Roger Scruton as he worked, and pondered, at his farmhouse in Swindon.

Oil on canvas. 18x24

Prints available upon request