

CULTURAL REVOLUTION, CULTURE WAR:

HOW CONSERVATIVES LOST ENGLAND
AND HOW TO GET IT BACK

BY SEAN GABB

*I give not Heav'n for lost. From this descent
Celestial vertues rising, will appear
More glorious and more dread than from no fall,
And trust themselves to fear no second fate....
(Milton, PL ii, 14-17)*



The Hampden Press
London
2007

Cultural Revolution, Culture War: How Conservatives Lost England, and How to Get It Back, by Sean Gabb

© The Hampden Press, Sean Gabb, 2007

All rights reserved. No reproduction, copy or transmission of this publication may be made without written permission.

Any person who does any unauthorised act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

This first edition published in August 2007

The right of Sean Gabb to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted hereby in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

Published by
The Hampden Press
Suite 35
2 Lansdowne Row
London W1J 6HL
England

Telephone: 07956 472 199
E-mail: directors@hampdenpress.co.uk
Web: www.hampdenpress.co.uk
Directors: Dr Sean Gabb, Mario Huet

ISBN: 0-9541032-2-X
ISBN 13/EAN 9780954103224

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data: A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Printed and bound by Biddles Ltd, 24 Rollesby Road, Hardwick Industrial Estate, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 4LS

Registered in England and Wales No.00158041

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK
TO ALL THOSE MANY
WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE COST OF
PUBLISHING IT;

AND TO THE MEMORY OF CHRISTOPHER
RONALD TAME (1949-2006),
MY LEADER, MY COLLEAGUE, MY FRIEND;

AND TO MY DEAR WIFE, ANDREA, WITHOUT
WHOSE PATIENCE
AND UNDERSTANDING
I MIGHT NEVER
HAVE WRITTEN A WORD

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION: ENGLAND, JULY 2007	5
ONE: REVOLUTION FROM THE TOP.....	8
GOVERNMENT AND THE RULING CLASS.....	8
STRIPPING THE MUSEUMS.....	9
THE SECRET POLICEMAN	11
THE DINING POLICE.....	13
THE HOMOPHOBIC HERESY.....	13
NO PLATFORM FOR WEIGHTISTS.....	14
BONFIRE OF THE SANTITIES.....	14
A TALE OF THE LITTLE PIGS.....	15
A THOUSAND SIMILAR CASES?.....	16
TWO: THE MARXIST ROOTS OF THE REVOLUTION	18
THE NEO-MARXIST RESCUE HYPOTHESIS.....	18
THE NEW RULING CLASS.....	20
MARXIST THEORY IS MARXIST PRACTICE	22
THREE: THE HEGEMONIC IDEOLOGY.....	23
MULTICULTURALISM AS HEGEMONIC IDEOLOGY	23
A CULTURAL PROJECT.....	25
THE CONTROL OF LANGUAGE	26
RACISM: THE ULTIMATE HORROR.....	28
CONTROL OF THE NEWS MEDIA	31
CONTROL OF THE ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA	33
ADDENDUM.....	35
FOUR: LEGITIMATION CRISES	37
IDEOLOGICAL WEAKNESS	37
DUAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE COMING CRISIS OF MULTICULTURALISM.....	38
IDEOLOGICAL STRENGTH.....	39
THOUGHT CRIME AND THE POLICE STATE	40
THE REVOLUTION WAS: THE TERROR IS: IRREVERSIBLE CHANGE WILL BE.....	41
FIVE: WHAT IS TO BE DONE?.....	45
SECOND THOUGHTS ON MULTICULTURALISM?.....	45
A NEW LEGITIMISING IDEOLOGY?	47
THE QUISLING RIGHT.....	49
WHAT IS TO BE DONE?.....	52
A FRONTAL ATTACK	53

SMASHING THE CLASS ENEMY	54
THE BBC AND OTHER MEDIA.....	56
EDUCATION	57
THE WELFARE STATE.....	57
CREATING IRREVERSIBLE CHANGE	59
INFORMATION: THE HEALTH OF THE RULING CLASS.....	60
SIX: A NEW ORDER OF THINGS	62
MILDLY UTOPIAN THOUGHTS	62
TAXES AND THE ECONOMY	62
THE CRIMINAL LAW	66
THE CIVIL LAW	68
THE CONSTITUTION.....	68
THE UNION.....	70
FOREIGN POLICY	71
RACE AND IMMIGRATION	72
LIBERTY AND TRADITION.....	75
SEVEN: FEASIBILITY OF COUNTER-REVOLUTION	77
TECHNICAL FEASIBILITY.....	77
THE CONSTITUTIONAL EASE OF AN ENGLISH COUNTER-REVOLUTION.....	78
PRESENT IMPOSSIBILITY.....	79
CLEARING AWAY THE RUBBISH.....	80
LONG STRUGGLE	82
HOW TO FIGHT THE BATTLE	83
SPOILING THE EGYPTIANS	85
CONCLUDING REMARKS ABOUT MONEY	86
APPENDIX ONE: THE CONSERVATIVE FRAUD	90
APPENDIX TWO: THE FUTILITY OF REGULATION	97
CASE STUDY: THE PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY	98
MARKET FAILURE AS AN ARGUMENT	99
REGULATION AS THE ANSWER.....	100
THE POLITICS OF REGULATORY CAPTURE	100
INDEX	103

FRONT COVER: *Death or Liberty!* by George Cruickshank, December 1818
(detail)

INTRODUCTION: ENGLAND, JULY 2007

Those who wish to change the world must first understand it. Unless we can know where we are, and why, we cannot hope to end where we want to be. And for those traditionalist Tories, classical liberals and libertarians who comprise the British conservative movement, the first step to understanding is to accept that we have lost the battle for this country.

The Blair Government was not an aberration from an otherwise healthy state of affairs. Its social and political acts were not “political correctness gone mad”. Nor did its economic policies involve “wasteful government spending”. Tony Blair was not, as many gloomily or contentedly repeat, “a conservative in charge of the wrong party”. Gordon Brown is not a conservative.

Nor is it the case that, if we have lost many others, conservatives have at least “won the argument over economics”. The truth is that we have lost every argument at any level that matters. On all issues during the past quarter century or more, we have failed to set an agenda to preserve—let alone to re-establish—ourselves as the free citizens of an independent country. We have lost.

Now, I will emphasise that our defeat has extended over a generation. It was already evident before Tony Blair came into office. Undoubtedly, his Government did, after 1997, set records in this country for corruption and tyranny and treason. It increased taxes and spending. It regulated matters that even despotisms in other times and places have mostly left alone. It fought wars of aggression against Serbia and Afghanistan and Iraq, and justified these with the most shameless lies. It threw our armed forces into unwinnable occupations, and exposed us to attack by foreign terrorists and to insurrection from within the Asianised areas of our own cities. It hastened the transformation of our laws from a shield for the innocent into a weapon of the State. It placed us deeper under various kinds of foreign rule.

Yet evil as the Blair Government was, it was not original in its evil. The personal and financial corruption of the Ministers aside, its acts were entirely a working out of principles established before 1997. There was no break in continuity between the Blair and the Thatcher and Major Governments. It is notorious that no bad act of government since 1997 has been without precedent. We can ask whether Tony Blair was a Thatcherite, or whether John Major was the first Prime Minister of New Labour. The questions are equally unimportant. Our past three Prime Ministers may differ in order and degree, but not in their nature.

Nor is it important that Gordon Brown is now Prime Minister, or who may

win the next general election. Electoral politics may change governments. It is normally other forces that determine the policies of government. Led by David Cameron, it is possible that the Conservatives will, before 2010, win office. But will this be a victory for conservatism? We can imagine a Conservative Government. It is much harder to imagine a government of conservatives.

Just as it is possible to trace the evils we now face over the past few generations, it is possible to look forward to a country—indeed, a world, for England is not alone—in which they will have triumphed. It is clear that our ruling class—or that loose coalition of politicians, bureaucrats, lawyers, educators, and media and business people who derive wealth and power and status from an enlarged and active state—wants an end of liberal democracy.

The desired new settlement that already exists in outline is one in which those at the top or with the right connections can enjoy the most fabulous wealth and status, and in which their enjoyment of these can never again be challenged from below. We, the ordinary people, are to be stripped of our constitutional rights—no freedom of speech, no personal or financial privacy, no procedural safeguards in the criminal law. We are to be taxed and regulated to what counts in our own culture as the edge of the breadline. This is on the one hand to provide incomes for clients of the ruling class, and on the other to deprive us of the leisure that might allow us to understand our situation, and of the confidence that might allow us to challenge it. In any event, every organ of the ruling class is at work on promoting ideologies of boundless submission to the new settlement.

At the same time, structures of accountability that emerged in the 17th and 18th centuries are to be deactivated. Their forms will continue. There will be assemblies at Westminster. But these will not be sovereign assemblies with the formal authority of life and death over us all. That authority will have been passed to various unelected and transnational agencies. And so far as the Westminster assemblies will remain important, our votes will have little effect on what they enact.

We are passing, in England and all over the West, into the sort of world that existed in much of Europe before the French Revolution—a world of diverse and conflicting sources of authority, all equally unaccountable. The great simplification of authority that happened in Europe after 1789, and that had happened over two centuries earlier in England, was a product of nationalism; and simplification was followed by accountability and then by liberalism.

This sort of reaction is in future to be made impossible by promoting movements of people so that nations in the old sense disappear, and are replaced by patchworks of nationalities more suspicious of each other than of any ruling class.

SEAN GABB—CULTURAL REVOLUTION, CULTURE WAR

Seen as actors in an historic tendency, the Ministers of the Blair, and now of the Brown, Government are to be much condemned for their bad acts. But, as said, they really have only given a speed and individuality of detail to tendencies that were established before they came to power, and that will continue after they have fallen. The evils that we face are only partly a matter of individual wickedness.

To understand why all this has happened, and will continue to happen, we must look beyond electoral politics. We must even look beyond the ideologies, or claimed ideologies, of electoral politics. The true key to understanding lies in the analysis of class interest.

ONE: REVOLUTION FROM THE TOP

Government and the Ruling Class

Elected politicians never have the running of a country all to themselves. While undoubtedly important, they must in all cases govern with the advice and consent of a wider community of the powerful. There are the civil servants. There are the public sector educators. There are the semi-autonomous agencies funded by the tax payers. There are journalists and other communicators. There are certain formally private media and entertainment and legal and professional and business interests that also obtain power, status and income from the policies of government. Together, these form a web of individuals and institutions that is sometimes called the Establishment, though I prefer, in my present analysis, to call it the ruling class.

The Government is usually part of this ruling class. But this need not be the case. Short of a revolutionary terror to bring it to unconditional obedience, the ruling class is always autonomous of the Government. And there are times when the vagaries of birth or conquest or the electoral system will set the two in opposition. It is then, short of a terror, that the ruling class can block or slow the policies of a government with which it disagrees. It can even impose policies of its own quite opposite to those of the elected politicians. It can do this because of its size and permanence and its indispensability to every day government, and because of the cohesion it frequently gains from a shared body of ideas.

These ideas set the agenda of debate and policy. They determine what questions exist, how they can be discussed, and what solutions may be applied. They provide a whole language of debate. Ideas outside the range of what is established—and especially hostile ideas—are denigrated or ignored. They are seldom allowed full discussion in the usual media. Established ideas, on the other hand, are spread, through education and the general control of administrative organs, to the rest of the population.

Of course, this has always been the case. Even quite strongly dictatorial governments draw their legitimacy from consent—and perhaps the most important form of consent in the short term is of those who enforce their commands. Nor, in itself, is there anything sinister about an autonomous ruling class. As a repository of culture and experience, it can give a stability to government that unchecked political democracy may not.

In this country, however, the ruling class has become a sinister force. The immense growth of the State during the 20th century had already made it larger and more powerful than was healthy for liberal democracy. Already in the 1900s, the norms of limited government were giving way to the often arbitrary

rules of an extended state. In the 1920s, the Lord Chief Justice himself could write of “the new despotism”.¹ The tendency made enormous strides in the 1940s, with only a limited reaction in the next decade—a reaction sharply reversed in the 1960s. By 1979, the traditional forms of our Constitution remained in place, but were mingled with structures of extended power inconsistent with the spirit of our Constitution. These structures provided a living to millions—either through various kinds of welfare or through employment in the nationalised industries. Much of the formally private economy was corporatised and cartelised and regulated in ways that made it often another arm of government. Even without an ideology of revolutionary change, the ruling class had become a danger to our ancient ways.

Since around 1979, however, the ruling class has, in its commanding heights, been captured by people whose view of the world makes them not incidentally but fundamentally hostile to liberal democracy and all the other broadly conservative institutions of this country.

I repeat—this new ruling class is aiming at the establishment of absolute and unaccountable power. The establishment of such power may involve force. But much more than force, it involves a reshaping of our thoughts. This might seem a bizarre, or perhaps an exaggerated, claim. But it is true. The ruling class that we presently have is not satisfied with us as we presently are. It wants a new people over which it can exercise a new kind of dominion.

To see this desire in action, let us take several representative events—or classes of event—of the past ten years.

Stripping the Museums

In January 1999, work began on altering the exhibitions at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich. It had until then been a place for learning about British supremacy at sea, and was loosely organised around the uniform worn by Nelson at the Battle of Trafalgar. According to Richard Ormond, the Director, it was “old-fashioned” and needed to change with the times. He explained:

We’re not spitting in our predecessors’ graves, but when this museum was created the Red Ensign ruled supreme and as a maritime nation we were on the crest of a great wave. We are in a different world today... Unless we find new intellectual purpose and bring home to people that the sea is still central to our lives, we will become a sideshow museum dealing with traditional artefacts to an increasingly limited market.²

¹ Lord Hewart of Bury (Lord Chief Justice of England), *The New Despotism*, Ernest Benn Limited, London, 1929.

² Quoted in “New look for the National Maritime Museum“ *The Daily Telegraph*, London,

When someone says he is not spitting in someone's grave, there is fair chance that he is. Out, therefore, went most of the paintings and scale models—out too most of the displays about battles and exploration. In came exhibitions about slavery and history “from the position of the colonised”. One of the new displays shows a white woman in eighteenth century costume with a manacled black hand reaching out to her. The text attached to this reads: “The slave trade was driven by the need for an English cup of tea”.

There are also large displays about global warming, damage to the ozone layer, marine pollution, threatened fish stocks, and the “danger of rising sea levels”. Commenting again, Mr Ormond made no apology for the change. Care of the sea, he said, was a “number one international issue”. It had to be brought to our attention even if it meant reducing space for exhibitions about the past.³

Added to all this was a sprinkling of new works from something called the Sensation Generation of Young British Artists. Tacita Dean was commissioned to make a “video sculpture” about the sea. Stefan Gek had already made a sculpture by crushing a buoy in a diving chamber. There was a “Caribbean folk sculpture” suggested by the floats in the Notting Hill Carnival. And a video about weather forecasting was to use poetry and “talking fish”.

These changes were unanimously approved by the Board of Trustees—one of whom was the Duke of Edinburgh; and the museum was reopened by the Queen the following 11th March. Commenting on this event, Mark Irving wrote in *The Independent*:

In shifting gear from being a museum about maritime history to become a theme-park showcase for government-backed environmental projects and commercial achievement, the museum redefines our national image: “national”, ‘maritime’ and ‘museum’ are words loaded with a special frisson.⁴

This was not an isolated instance of change. Since then, virtually all museums and galleries that receive public funds have been remodelled to weaken their connection with the past, or are being remodelled to make them into vehicles for contemporary propaganda.

The British Museum is a good illustration of this second purpose. Because the most celebrated of its exhibits are the products of alien and often dead races, and because the universal prestige of one of those races is such that only the boldest dare attack its works, this museum has not received the same comprehensive gutting as the National Maritime Museum. Instead, the labels

25th January 1999.

³ *Ibid*

⁴ Mark Irving, “Our past is all at sea”, *The Independent*, London, 16th May 1999.

to exhibits in the Greek and Roman galleries have been supplemented by written comments by black people in this country about what those exhibits mean to them.

Even classical musicians have been told to change if they want to receive continued public funding. In October 2003, the Association of British Orchestras organised a symposium on Cultural Diversity and the Classical Music Industry, and effectively required attendance from every classical music organisation in England larger than a string quartet. Among those addressing the symposium was Professor Lola Young, Head of Culture at the Greater London Authority. She said: “We must change the look of the classical music industry”.⁵ She was supported by Roger Wright, head of BBC Radio 3, who confessed that everyone at the BBC now underwent “diversity training”.⁶

The Secret Policeman

But the work of remodelling our thoughts goes beyond financial incentives. On Tuesday the 21st October 2003, the BBC showed *The Secret Policeman*. This was a television documentary in which a reporter posed for six months as a police cadet and then as a police officer, while secretly filming his colleagues. Some of the language caught on film expresses strong dissent from the established opinions on race and immigration. One of the officers put on a white hood and discussed the merits of burying a “Paki bastard under a railway line”. He also insisted that Stephen Lawrence—a black youth whose death in mysterious circumstances led to a government inquiry into “institutional racism”—had deserved his end. He added:

Isn't it good how good memories don't fade? He fucking deserved it, and his mum and dad are a fucking pair of spongers.

Another officer said of his Asian colleagues:

Truthfully? Fuck them all off. I'll admit it—I'm a racist bastard. I don't mind blacks. I don't mind black people. Asians? No.

Another said of Asians in general:

A dog born in a barn is still a dog. A Paki born in Britain is still a fucking Paki.

The documentary was shown to howls of outrage. The Acting Deputy Chief Constable of the North Wales Police said:

⁵ Norman Lebrecht, “How the PC brigade is destroying our orchestras”, *The Evening Standard*, London, 8th October 2003

⁶ *Ibid*

I felt physically sick as I watched *The Secret Policeman*.⁷

The Deputy Chief Constable of the Manchester Police said:

I was shocked, sickened, ashamed and saddened by what I saw.⁸

The Home Secretary—at the time David Blunkett—joined in:

What's been revealed is horrendous. The issue is... what we can do to ensure police services across the country adopt the new training programmes on diversity to root out racists before they can get through the training programme.⁹

The Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police went further:

His force intends to plant informers in its classrooms to root out racist recruits. It will also allow community representatives to sit on recruitment panels to prevent racist applicants entering the force. At the Met's training school in Hendon, which trains 3,500 new officers a year, one recruit in a class will be secretly selected to inform on colleagues. Their identities will remain secret for the rest of their careers and they will act as intelligence gatherers. If racism is discovered by undercover officers, it may be used to provide evidence for a criminal prosecution for incitement to racial hatred.¹⁰

In other words, the Home Secretary was proposing to make political orthodoxy a condition of employment as a police officer. The Metropolitan Commissioner was proposing to set agents of provocation among his own officers.

Five of the officers filmed resigned the day after the showing. Another was suspended. What has happened since to them is beyond the scope of this work. But they will probably never again find the sort of employment that allows children or a mortgage. Their lives may have been ruined.

Doubtless, the words recorded were tasteless and uncharitable. But hardly anyone bothered to ask if the public reaction to them had not been excessive—after all, there was no evidence that those officers had carried, or were likely to carry, their opinions into acts against life or property.

⁷ Jaya Narain and Adam Powell, "Five racist policemen quit force in disgrace", *The Daily Mail*, London, 23rd October 2003.

⁸ *Ibid.* One police officer claims it took him over a week to recover from the shock of watching the programme. See Bryn Lewis, "Police racism is a challenge to the ethnic minorities", letter published in *The Independent*, London, 30th October 2003.

⁹ Jaya Narain and Adam Powell, "Five racist policemen quit force in disgrace", *The Daily Mail*, London, 23rd October 2003.

¹⁰ Helen Carter, "Informers will be planted at training colleges", *The Guardian*, London, 23rd October 2003.

The Dining Police

In fairness, though, the police are only preparing to do to each other what they have been occasionally doing to everyone else. In April 2000, it was reported that the police in Gloucestershire had formed a special unit to conduct what they called “Operation Napkin”. Officers out of uniform were sent on weekend evenings into Indian and Chinese restaurants, their mission to arrest anyone who made impolite comments on the ethnic origin of the staff. This continued for a month, and was hailed by senior officers as a success—even though it had netted only one arrest.¹¹ Therefore, it was extended to Christmas. Chief Inspector Dean Walker, the officer in charge, confirmed that the operation would continue for the rest of the year. By now, one arrest had been joined by one caution.¹²

Success bred imitation. In March 2001, the Metropolitan Police launched their own offensive against “vandaloo and lager racism” in London. 25 officers out of uniform visited 10 ethnic restaurants chosen at random, in search of offenders. This operation was ordered by Deputy Assistant Commissioner Tarique Ghaffur. No doubt, Mr Ghaffur was concerned his officers should be given something to do in a city where theft and violence and general disorder were falling to their lowest points on record.¹³

The Homophobic Heresy

Not even high position in the Church brings immunity from the pressure to conform. Early in November 2003, the Bishop of Chester gave an interview to his local newspaper. He is a theological conservative, and is opposed to the ordination of practising homosexuals. During his interview, he said:

Some people who are primarily homosexual can reorientate themselves. I would encourage them to consider that as an option, but I would not set myself up as a medical specialist on the subject—that’s in the area of psychiatric health.¹⁴

Whatever we may think personally of homosexuality, or the ability or duty of homosexuals to alter their preferences, the Bishop was only expressing the settled doctrine of mainstream Christianity. The exceptional sinfulness of

¹¹ News report, “One held in Operation Napkin”, *The Independent*, London, 26th April 2000.

¹² News report, “Police dine out on anti-racist campaign”, *The Gloucestershire Echo*, Gloucester, 1st December 2000.

¹³ News report, “Undercover probe into ‘vandaloo racists’”, *The Evening Standard*, London, 27th March 2001.

¹⁴ Quoted in Richard Alleyne, “Bishop’s anti-gay comments spark legal investigation”, *The Daily Telegraph*, London, 10th November 2003.

homosexual acts has been clearly asserted since the third Lateran Council of 1179, and has at least some foundation in the Scriptures. Even so, he was immediately investigated by the police. The investigation came to nothing, but a spokesman for the Cheshire Constabulary commented:

The issues raised have been examined. The Crown Prosecution Service has been consulted at length, and the Cheshire Constabulary is satisfied that no criminal offences have been committed. Current public order legislation does not provide specific offences based on sexuality.¹⁵

No further action was taken, but there was still a rebuke for the Bishop from the Chief Constable. He said:

We need to be very aware of the position of minorities in this country and make sure diversity is celebrated. Vulnerable minorities should feel they are protected.¹⁶

No Platform for Weightists

As yet, there have been no prosecutions in this country for a deficiency of respect for those who choose to be different. But the authorities lose no opportunity to show the limits of their tolerance. In October 2005, Mary Magilton was run over in Oldham by a driver she described to the police as “fat”. The Police, apparently, gave her a “frosty look” and told her to change her description. When she was unable to find a synonym for fat that came within their “appropriate language” guidelines, the police declined to take any statement from Mrs Magilton. The driver who ran her over does not appear to have been found.¹⁷

Bonfire of the Sanities

Then we have the 2003 Guy Fawks Night celebrations at Firlie in Sussex. On the 25th October, the Firlie Bonfire Society took an old caravan, put inside it effigies of a gypsy family, gave it the fake registration number P1KEY—“Pikey” being a term of abuse for gypsies in certain dialects of southern English—and dragged it in a procession through the village. They then took the caravan into a field and set light to it. Apparently, the onlookers cried: “Burn them, burn them”.¹⁸

¹⁵ Quoted in Matt Laddin, “Bishop’s psychotherapy for gays comments not a crime”, *The Independent*, London, 11th November 2003.

¹⁶ Quoted in “Police clear Bishop in gay row”, *The Times*, London, 11th November 2003.

¹⁷ Brian Lashley, “PC’s warning for mum who said ‘fat’”, *The Manchester Evening News*, Manchester, 13th October 2005.

¹⁸ Stewart Payne, “Effigies of gypsies are set alight at village party”, *The Daily Telegraph*, London, 30th October 2003.

The caravan was private property, and was burned on private property. No one was injured in the event, and there was no incitement to acts of violence against identifiable individuals. Even so, the Commission for Racial Equality was involved within hours of the first—horrified—news reports. Trevor Phillips, its Chairman, said:

This is clearly an example of incitement to racial hatred. You couldn't get more provocative than this.... [T]he matter should be pursued and the people involved punished... [to] prevent a culture that says discrimination and victimisation are OK¹⁹

The Firlie Bonfire Society issued an “unreserved” apology, explaining that the event had been meant as a humorous comment on an eviction battle between the local authority and some gypsies—and that choosing topical themes for the annual bonfire was a tradition. But apologies and excuses were to no effect. By the 13th November 2003, the local police had arrested ten of those connected with the event. They were charged with offences under the Public Order Act 1986, which makes it a crime to incite “hatred” against any racial group. The maximum sentence on conviction is imprisonment for seven years. A police spokesman explained:

The arrests are the result of a two-week investigation. We are taking this extremely seriously.²⁰

Nigel Farage, the leader in the European Parliament of the UK Independence Party, intervened in defence of free speech. As a comment on the arrests, he announced his intention to set light to a caravan containing effigies of Edward Heath, John Major and Tony Blair. He was immediately threatened by the police with arrest for inciting racial hatred if he went ahead—politicians seem now to have been classed as an ethnic minority. Mr Farage had to content himself with comparing the use of 15 police officers to make the ten arrests with the 8,498 burglaries in Sussex during 2003, only 15 per cent of which had been solved. He said:

It is amazing that lack of manpower prevents a higher clear-up rate, while 15 officers can be found to suppress free speech and investigate a politically correct crime.²¹

A Tale of the Little Pigs

There were no prosecutions of the Firlie Bonfire Society. Nor was Nancy

¹⁹ Quoted, *ibid.*

²⁰ “10 in gipsy fire probe”, *The Daily Mirror*, London, 13th November 2003.

²¹ UKIP News Release, “Police halt demonstrators by threatening arrest of MEP and staff”, 13th November 2003.

Bennett prosecuted five years earlier for the similar offence of displaying china pigs in the front window of her house in Leicester. This had annoyed Moslems going past in the street to their local mosque. She had also annoyed them by decorating her house with union flags and putting in her window the Koranic text “Let there be no compulsion in religion”.

In May 1998, the police entered her house under warrant and confiscated 15 of her china pigs. Then they submitted a report to the Crown Prosecution Service to see if she could be charged with any criminal offence. She could not be. But Yaqub Khan, speaking for the Leicester Federation of Muslim Organisations, made his feelings plain:

There are rules which, as good citizens, we have to observe. We are a multi-faith society and we, as Muslims, respect other faiths practised in this country, so I think, in return, they should respect ours. Something like this is taken very seriously by Muslims and it is a very sensitive area.

The quote from the *Koran* was also seen as provocative.... *The Koran* is a sacred book. If that is placed in a window where pigs have been placed then that is even more offensive. It may be a trivial matter for some sections of the community but it has to be dealt with.²²

A Thousand Similar Cases?

Now, these are not isolated instances. They are not rare oddities or examples of British eccentricity. A reading of the national press will turn up sometimes dozens of similar cases in a week. And the daily newspapers continue to pile up similar instances. Take the case of David Davies, a Conservative Member of Parliament and the Member for Monmouth in the Welsh Assembly. In September 2005, he raised a laugh in the national media by submitting an application to the Heritage Fund for £48,000. He said he wanted to make a film about “the settled community”. The joke in his application was that it closely mirrored the wording of a successful application to fund a film on gipsy culture. The joke was not found universally amusing. Mr Davies was reported to the Standards Committee of the Welsh Assembly. This body has the power to unseat him. A Welsh Nationalist Member of the Assembly accused him of

Giving support to people who behave appallingly towards gipsies²³

Then there are instances beyond counting in the newspapers of local authorities and schools that ban the wearing of Christian symbols, or refuse to

²² Quoted in Claire Garner, “Police intervene in battle of ‘offensive’ china pigs”, *The Independent*, London, 26th May 1998.

²³ News report, “MP accused over gipsy film jibe”, *The Daily Telegraph*, London, 11th October 2005.

allow notice to be taken of the Christmas and Easter ceremonies—always on the alleged grounds that these “exclude” the devotees of other faiths.

A thorough search of the newspapers during even a few weeks might reveal enough instances of the tendency identified to fill an entire book. Certainly, searching an electronic database of British newspapers for the ten years to the 15th October 2006 turned up 862 uses of the phrase “political correctness gone mad”. This is the phrase most commonly applied to such events. Perhaps many of these uses refer to multiple comments on the same event. On the other hand, not every such event attracts the phrase, and many others go unreported, or are reported in newspapers not in the database. This being so, it seems reasonable to suppose about a thousand similar cases over the past decade.

There could easily be more. The instances given above, then, can be seen as illustrations of a tendency. They manifest a ruthless hatred of the past, and an inquisitorial zeal for rooting out dissent. They show the nature of our ruling class as it has become.

There has not, I grant, been any abrupt change in this ruling class. There are still often to be seen the surface mannerisms of the old ruling class, and the personnel of the new are often related to the old. But there is, in all that matters, a new ruling class. This does not function as a repository of culture and experience. Nor—though these are important—is it primarily driven by sectional concerns about status and enrichment. It is instead a revolutionary class dedicated to the transformation of this country into something other than it has always been.

It may seem strange to talk about Marxist influence in an age when Marxism appears to have collapsed as any kind of revolutionary or governing force. But what we now face is best described as a Marxist revolution from above. It may not be the Marxism of Marx, but it is recognisably that of his followers.

TWO: THE MARXIST ROOTS OF THE REVOLUTION

The Neo-Marxist Rescue Hypothesis

According to Marx himself, the political and cultural shape of any society is determined by ownership of the means of production. There is the economic base, and piled on top of this is the superstructure of all else. Let the base be changed, and the superstructure will be changed as surely and automatically as the appearance of a forest is changed by the varying distance of our planet from the sun. There are inherent ambiguities in his theory and many possibly varying interpretations of it. But this summary is accurate enough for our current purposes.²⁴

As here summarised, there is a rough grandeur to his claim. It is, however, false. We have now been waiting over 150 years for the inner contradictions of liberalism to reveal themselves, and so bring on the next stage of human development. There has been no immiserisation of the proletariat, and no general crisis of overproduction.

Aside from dropping the whole system as a failure, two responses to this problem emerged in the early 20th century. The first was to look around for some half-convincing rescue hypothesis—see Lenin, for example, on how exploiting the colonies had replaced exploiting the workers at home.²⁵ The second was a rescue hypothesis that kept the messianic fervour of the original ideology while dropping its discredited economic determinism. The three most important projectors of this hypothesis were Antonio Gramsci, Louis Althusser, and Michel Foucault.²⁶

²⁴ In justification of this view of Marxism, see: “The Mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life process in general” (Karl Marx, Preface to *A Critique of Political Economy*, in David McLellan (ed.) *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1977, p. 389).

See also: “[As the material production of a society develops, and men develop their material intercourse], so they alter, along with this, their real existence, their thinking and the products of their thinking” (Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1964, p.38).

In general, it is often hard to say with any definiteness what Marx really meant. He wrote so much over so long a period; and his followers spent the hundred years after his death writing commentaries on his works, and then commentaries on each other, until the original was blurred like a landscape after heavy snow.

²⁵ V.I. Lenin, *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916), Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1968.

²⁶ The works of these writers are often diffuse and hard to follow—see the general comment given above on Marxian scholarship. Rather than quote minutely from their work, it may be better just to provide a short reading list. In many cases, the editorial introduction gives a better understanding than the text that follows. See then: Antonio Gramsci (1891-

According to their reformulation of Marxism, a ruling class keeps control not by owning the means of production, but by setting the cultural agenda of the country. It formulates a “dominant” or “hegemonic” ideology, to legitimise its position, and imposes this on the rest of society through the “ideological state apparatus”—that is, through the political and legal administration, through the schools and universities and churches, through the media, through the family, and through the underlying assumptions of popular culture.²⁷

There is some reliance on the use or threat of force to silence criticism—the “repressive state apparatus”—but the main instrument of control is the systematic manufacture of consent.²⁸ An ideology becomes hegemonic when it permeates the whole of society, determining its values, attitudes, beliefs and morality, and generally supporting the established order in all conversations and other relationships. Such an ideology ceases to be controversial for most people, instead being seen as common sense, or, even if undesirable, as a natural state of affairs. At times, it can amount to a “discourse”, this being a set of ways of thinking and talking about issues that makes it at least hard for some things to be discussed at all.

It was because of this control through the cultural values of society—not through the use or threat of force—that the Marxist predictions of collapse and revolution were said to have been falsified. It was because the workers had been prevented from understanding their real interests by their acceptance of the dominant bourgeois ideology. Because they thought in terms of national identity and the amelioration of hardship through social reform, they could not see how exploited they were, and how no true improvement was possible within the existing mode of production.

Though much ingenuity has gone into proving the opposite, it is hard to see what value even a reformulated Marxism has for analysing the politics and culture of a liberal democracy. As said, there is a web of institutions and

1937), *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1971; Louis Althusser (1918-90), *For Marx*, Allen Lane, London, 1969; Michel Foucault (1926-84), *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, Tavistock, London, 1974; by the same, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Tavistock, London, 1979.

²⁷ Anthony Giddens—who comes close to being one of the guiding minds of the New Labour Project—defines ideology as “shared ideas or beliefs which serve to justify the interests of dominant groups” (Anthony Giddens, *Sociology*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 3rd edition, 1997, p.583).

²⁸ “...the supremacy of a social group manifests itself in two ways, as ‘domination’ and as ‘intellectual and moral leadership’.... The ‘normal’ exercise of hegemony on the now classical terrain of the parliamentary regime is characterised by the combination of force and consent, which balance each other reciprocally, without force predominating excessively over consent.” (Gramsci, *op. cit.*, p.215)

individuals who establish and propagate certain ideas. But none of this has ever so far amounted to a hegemonic discourse. Rulers have tended to legitimise their position by reference to standards which were not imposed by them, but had largely emerged spontaneously throughout society as a whole. The function of the ideological state apparatus has been not to enforce values on the governed, but to reflect and thereby reinforce values already taken for granted. Even in times of emergency, liberal democracies have always been reasonably open societies, with a high degree of toleration of dissent, and economic institutions that had raised and were raising the living standards of all social groups.

The New Ruling Class

Nevertheless, while useless for analysing power within a liberal democracy, neo-Marxist sociology does apply to those people who now comprise the ruling class. They are self-consciously using an ideological state apparatus to impose their own, profoundly anti-conservative hegemony in Britain and throughout the English-speaking world.

This hegemony proceeds from the capture, over the past generation or so, of the ideological state apparatus. This did not begin in 1968, but that is the year when the strategy was first openly discussed in terms of a “long march through the institutions”. The rioting of that year had not led to revolution from below: the hegemonic ideology of liberal democracy had too strong a hold on the minds of the workers. And so it was necessary for revolution to be imposed from above, by those able to reshape the terms of hegemony.²⁹

We can see this in the domination of the universities by radical socialists. From Sociology and the other social studies, they spread out to colonise virtually every other discipline with the exceptions of Economics, Mathematics and the natural sciences. They are particularly strong in most departments of Education and in teacher training programmes.

Since the 1980s, Dennis O’Keeffe, now Professor of Sociology and the University of Buckingham, has been analysing the capture of education by the neo-Marxists. They dominate teacher training. They run the institutions, and they determine the modes of instruction. Student teachers are required to read and discuss and thereby absorb the works of Gramsci and Althusser and Foucault, among others. Professor O’Keeffe describes teacher training as

²⁹ According to Dominic Strinati: “The revolutionary forces have to take civil society before they take the state, and therefore have to build a coalition of oppositional groups united under a hegemonic banner which usurps the dominant or prevailing hegemony.” (Dominic Strinati, *An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture*, Routledge, London, 1995, p.169).

SEAN GABB—CULTURAL REVOLUTION, CULTURE WAR

a missionising ideology. The world is [said to be] intolerable. It is full of unacceptable hierarchies. It is the duty of teacher education, at least so far as the school-world is concerned, remorselessly to combat these hierarchies.³⁰

The neo-Marxists have been turning out generation after generation of graduates exposed to their ideas. Few of these graduates, of course, became committed activists. But, from early middle age downwards, there are now hundreds of thousands of intellectual workers—the key personnel of any administration—whose minds have been shaped within radical socialist assumptions. Even if they disagree with some of its practical implications, they have internalised the hegemonic ideology.

Looking at the beliefs, or the guiding assumptions of modern school teachers, Professor O’Keeffe finds that

socialist ideas pervade education....³¹

Leave aside those in the ideological state apparatus, and look at the leading personnel in the Governments we have had since 1997. Here, we see an almost unvaried hold on positions of importance by people whose minds have been at least shaped by the general ideas of neo-Marxist sociology.

Take Gordon Brown—a fervent socialist well into the 1990s. In 1975, he wrote:

The public control of industries is essential to the provision of social needs and services.³²

In a longer work, published in 1989, he added:

The market cannot, unaided, educate and train our workforce, plan and fulfill national research goals or restore or even compensate for our battered infrastructure....And the market, unregulated, tends inevitably towards socially undesirable ends such as pollution, inequality and monopoly.³³

Take Peter Mandelson—once a member of the Communist Party. Take John Reid—also once a member of the Communist Party. Take David Blunkett—on the “hard left” when he was Leader of Sheffield Council. Take Stephen Byers and Alan Milburn—once members of the International Socialists, now better known as the Socialist Workers Party. Take Margaret Hodge—as Leader

³⁰ Dennis O’Keeffe, *The Wayward Élite: A Critique of British Teacher-Education*, Adam Smith Institute, London, 1990, p.69.

³¹ Dennis O’Keeffe, *Political Correctness and Public Finance*, Institute of Economic Affairs, London, 1999, p.49.

³² Published in *Red Paper on Scotland*, 1975, quoted in Philip Johnston, “Does Brown have a doctrine for Britain?”, *The Daily Telegraph*, London, 11th June 2007.

³³ Gordon Brown, *Where There’s Greed: Margaret Thatcher and the Betrayal of Britain’s Future*, Mainstream Publishing, Edinburgh, 1989, Introduction, pp.6-7.

of Islington Council, she flew the red flag over the town hall. Take Paul Boateng—once a “radical” black lawyer. Take Charles Clarke—he once boasted himself “further to the left than Wedgwood Benn”.³⁴

With the exception of Tony Blair himself—and perhaps only because he has never believed in any system of ideas—virtually everyone in or formerly in the present Government has an extreme socialist connection.³⁵

They may not now be socialists in the economic sense. They have mostly shaved off their radical facial hair and have all now put on suits. Indeed, they are happy in practice to make deals with big business that they would once have denounced as fascist. But their most basic assumptions—from which their old economic analyses had proceeded—have remained intact.³⁶

Marxist Theory is Marxist Practice

And this is what makes the various kinds of Marxist and neo-Marxist analysis so peculiarly appropriate to the actions of our new rulers. These analyses accurately describe how the minds of our rulers work. Speech in the old liberal democracies was reasonably free. There was an attempt to separate news from comment. Justice was fairly impartial. But since our new rulers spent their younger years denying these truths, they are quite willing, now they are in power, to act on the belief that they are not true. Because they believe that tolerance is repressive, they are repressive. Because they do not believe that objectivity is possible, they make no attempt at objectivity. Because they do not believe that justice is other than politics by other means, they are politicising justice. Because they believe that liberal democracy is a *façade* behind which a ruling class hides its ruthless hold on power, they are making a sham of liberal democracy. In this scheme of things, the works of a whole line of Marxist and neo-Marxist philosophers, from Gramsci to Foucault, are to be read not as a critique of liberal democracy, but as the manifesto of their students.³⁷

³⁴ Quoted in Michael Gove, “The Marxist ideologues who are our masters now”, *The Times*, London, 23rd January 2001.

³⁵ For America, see the career of Hillary Rodham Clinton. In 1969, she addressed her fellow students at Wellesley College thus: “As the French students wrote on the walls of the Sorbonne: ‘Be realistic! Demand the impossible! We cannot settle for less’” (Boyd Tonkin, “Why New Labour is in search of an ideology”, *The Independent*, London, 25th April 1998).

³⁶ According to Boyd Tonkin, “Yes, the folks involved [in New Labour] had long since dumped their faith in dialectical materialism, the vanguard party and the rest of it. What survived was a pattern-seeking, system-building cast of thought” (“Why New Labour is in search of an ideology”, *The Independent*, London, 25th April 1998).

³⁷ And because they believe that business is ruthless and exploitative, they are ruthless and exploitative in their business dealings. They treat their workers like dirt, and conduct their

THREE: THE HEGEMONIC IDEOLOGY

Multiculturalism as Hegemonic Ideology

Let us turn now to the details of the ideology by which these people ensure cohesion of thought and speech and action, and by which they justify themselves to the ruled. It may seem that there is no single dominant ideology. There are different strands and emphases within the ruling class, and these often contradict each other. There is, for example, the passion to regulate where not ban every activity in the name of health and safety. There are claims about ozone depletion and anthropogenic global warming, and about the consequent need for all action to be regulated. There is the plan to join in a United States of Europe, and the late revival—though perhaps also collapse—of the old plan to join with the Americans in reordering the world. There is the present obsession with Islamic terrorism that is used to justify the creation of an overt police state.

These objectives cannot all be achieved at the same time. Several, indeed, are plainly in opposition. Nor is it always possible to judge motives. Do some people support the ban on tobacco advertising and the ban on smoking in “public places” because these come from the European Union? Or do they support the European Union because it is directing a war against tobacco? Hegemony is never a simple matter of one group with one agenda, but must be constantly negotiated between competing forces.

There is, even so, a commonality between the various kinds of hegemony. Obviously, all require an enlarged state. At the same time, whatever else it may be for, none has anything to do with the national past or the currently perceived interests of the majority.

Though it has not entirely broken with the past, and though it may appeal to tradition and popular aspirations as convenience requires, the ruling class legitimises itself on other grounds. And while there may be different strands and emphases, there is one strand and one emphasis that give the ideology its hegemonic nature.

This is the multicultural project. There are arguments over the details of the New Britain promised by New Labour. There is none over the fact that it is not to be a nation in any meaningful sense. Excepting only conformity to the hegemonic ideology, it is to have no homogeneity. It is instead to have “a rich diversity of communities”. Some of these are to be sexual, some religious. But the real passion currently is for ethnic diversity.

In 1998, the Government set up a Commission on the Future of Multi-

affairs as close to naked fraud as their legal advice allows.

Ethnic Britain. Its purpose was

to analyse the current state of multi-ethnic Britain and propose ways of countering racial discrimination and disadvantage and making Britain a confident and vibrant multicultural society at ease with its rich diversity.³⁸

Chaired by Bhikhu Parekh, an academic placed in the House of Lords by Tony Blair, the Commission was a sub-division of the Runnymede Trust, a formally private body “devoted to promoting racial justice in Britain“. Its Report can be seen as a digested expression of the transformation intended for this country. Among the recommendations were a formal declaration by the State that Britain was now a “multicultural society”, and a commitment that

deep-rooted antagonisms to racial and cultural differences [should be] defeated in practice, as well as symbolically written out of the national story.³⁹

There was also some discussion of giving the country a new name:

[The Name Britain] has systematic, largely unspoken, racial connotations... Englishness and therefore by extension, Britishness, is racially coded.⁴⁰

No new name was suggested, though it was emphasised that the country from now on should be regarded not as a community, but as a “community of communities”.

Though elements within the ideological state apparatus have shown some willingness to incorporate them, the ruling class has yet to take full notice of these recommendations. But, its behaviour and language all proceed from the same assumptions. See the endless official fussing over criminal conviction rates and examination passes, the emphasis on “diversity”, the careful blending of races and sexes and appearances in all official photographic opportunities, the changed emblems and mission statements of governmental agencies.

In the neo-Marxist terminology, the ruling class and its ideological state apparatus are imposing a new hegemonic ideology of multiculturalism.

³⁸ *Report of the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain*, published in 2000 by the Runnymede Trust—Introduction available at:

<http://www.runnymedetrust.org/projects/meb/reportIntroduction.html> (checked June 2007)

Published in hard copy by Profile, London, 2000.

³⁹ *Ibid.* See also in hard copy: “In the opening chapters of this report we have argued that some of the dominant stories in Britain need to be changed—stories about the past, the present and the future. With regard to the past we have recalled a range of myths: that the history of Britain goes back many centuries; that it has always been a basically peaceful and lawful place, un-troubled by internal dissent or strife; that there is a single true version of the national story; that until recently Britain was culturally homogeneous; that the sea round Britain aptly symbolises its independence and isolation from the rest of the world.” (p. 103)

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

A Cultural Project

To impose this ideology, it is necessary to destroy the old social order. Our new ruling class needs to overturn existing traditions and norms, standards and laws, history and heroes. Every autonomous institution, every set of historical associations, every pattern of loyalty that cannot be co-opted and controlled—these must be destroyed or neutralised. That is why the museums are being remodelled.

A nation is not merely the population of a territory. It also exists in time. People identify with each other partly because they live together and speak the same language and have similar customs and beliefs, but partly also because they have a common historical memory. Wiping this memory, as if it were a length of video tape, has become a priority of the ruling class. Great anniversaries from before 1914 are almost ignored. History in the old sense is no longer taught in state schools. The weights and measures have been changed by force. The names of every ancient form are changing. National and regional devolution is blurring the old constitutional landmarks. The stated justifications are all threadbare. No intelligent person could advocate them except as a means of turning the past into a foreign country.

Museums must be a primary target in this war against the past. They contain physical objects that real people once made and used. They help to tell us who we were and what we might be again.

This is particularly so with the National Maritime Museum. That is why it has been destroyed. The new Museum removes part of this physical link. True, Nelson's uniform remains on show. But it has been removed from the full context that gave it meaning. As the centrepiece of a museum filled with guns and scale models of Dreadnoughts, it was the secular equivalent of a saint's relic. As an appendage to a politically correct circus of modern art and moans about racism and the environment, it becomes at best a piece of blue cloth with a hole in it. At worst, it becomes tainted with all the sins alleged against our history.

Do this, and opposition to the transforming of the country will be neutralised. Strip us of our national identity, and we defend our traditions and freedom with all the confidence of an animal dragged from its lair.

But the project is not only about the removal of physical links. The overall strategy of attack is more subtle, if easily described. It involves controlling the language of public debate, control of the news and entertainment media, and the use of these to control perceptions of the past and thereby to shape the future. As George Orwell said in *Nineteen Eighty Four*, "who controls the present controls the past: who controls the past controls the future".

The Control of Language

Most obvious is the control of political taxonomy. The distinction between “right” and “left” is an extraordinarily pervasive force, shaping general understanding and judgement of political concepts. Hitler was on the “extreme right”. Conservatives are on the “right”. Therefore, all conservatives partake of evil, the extent of evil varying with the firmness with which conservative views are held. Any conservative who wants to achieve respect in the media must first show that his conservatism is of the “moderate” kind—that intellectually he is more of a social drinker than an alcoholic. Equally, libertarians and those called “neo-liberals” are on the “right”. Therefore, they must be evil. The humorous accusation that someone is “to the right of Genghis Khan” serves the same function.

The use of this taxonomy allows the most contradictory views on politics and economics to be compounded, and all to be smeared without further examination as disreputable. Therefore, the “extreme right-winger” David Irving, who is a national socialist and holocaust revisionist; the “extreme right-winger” J.M. le Pen, who wants to reduce the flow of immigrants into France, but is not a national socialist and who apparently has much Jewish support in his country; and the “extreme right-winger” Enoch Powell, who was a traditional English conservative and a notable champion of liberal economics—all these are placed into the same category, and hostile judgements on one are by natural extension applied to the others.

At various times and in various ways, the trick has been played with other words—for example, “reform”, “progressive”, “modernisation”, and “outmoded”. This first is among the earliest modern examples. From around the end of the 18th century, concerted efforts were made to alter the qualifications for voting in parliamentary elections. The advocates of change were arguing for the abandoning of a system that had been associated with the rise of England to wealth and national greatness, and that had allowed a reconciling of reasonably stable government with free institutions. In its place they wanted a franchise that had never before been tried—except perhaps in some of the revolutionary upheavals in Europe. Perhaps they were right. Perhaps they were proved right in the event. But their way was made easier by calling the proposed changes “reform”—a word they charged with positive associations—and leaving their conservative opponents to argue against “improvement”.

Modern politics are less intellectually distinguished than in the 19th century. Therefore, less effort has been needed to play the trick with “outmoded”—which allows ideas and laws to be rejected simply on the grounds that they are

old.⁴¹ The word has a marvellous capacity to replace debate. Ideas and institutions are never good or bad, right or wrong: they are simply in or out of fashion. Since there is no arguing over fashion, there is no arguing over the things in or out of it.

Then there are the periodic changes of permitted terminology. Every so often, conservative newspapers report that a new word has been coined to describe an established fact, and laugh at the seeming pedantry with which use of this new word is enforced within the ideological state apparatus. For example, homosexual became “gay”, which became “lesbian-and-gay”, and which is now becoming “LGBT”—this being the acronym for “lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgendered”.

Words and phrases like mongol, spastic, cripple, unmarried mother, and many others, have likewise been replaced and replaced again. In a sense, this is a misguided but well-meaning attempt to mitigate the hardship of the thing by finding new words that contain no added hurt. But its effect—and therefore part of its intention, a Granscian project being granted—is to remove conservatives from the moral high ground in any debate over policy on such people. When conservatives must think twice before opening their mouths, consulting their opponents on what language of description is now appropriate, they have conceded a very important part of the agenda of debate to their opponents. They have conceded an authority over words that must be gradually extended to a general authority. Conservatives may laugh at the clumsy acronyms and circumlocutions that are coined to replace existing words. But the intention is far from comic; and the effect is highly dangerous.

A similar effect is achieved with the frequent and often seemingly arbitrary changes of name given to ethnic groups and to places. Gypsies must now be called “Roma” or simply “Rom”, and Red Indians must be called “Native Americans”. Ceylon has become Sri Lanka, Dacca has become Dhaka, and Bombay has become Mumbai. Again, words are no longer the neutral means of discussion, but are charged with a political meaning, and judgements can be made on whether or not they are used as required.

⁴¹ A random trawl of an electronic database of newspaper articles turned up these examples: “Peckinpah’s violent and noble western is hot through with outmoded notions of honour and regret as the wild west begins to fade” (Television schedule, *The Guardian*, London, 17th November 2003); “I am neither militant nor a feminist but I have to say I still see no place in modern society for such outmoded misogynistic remarks” (Letter to the Editor, *This is Worcestershire*, Worcester, 19th November 2003); “And as for poor old W. Pollitt... and his outmoded thinking on parking policy...” (*This is Lancashire*, Lancaster, 17th November 2003); “...with Labour as the reactionaries fighting to defend the outmoded *status quo*” (Janet Daley, “Finally we can talk about policies”, *The Daily Telegraph*, London, 12th November 2003).

Sometimes, words are imposed with a more immediate effect than forcing the deference of opponents. Take a word like “deprived”, which has largely replaced the older word “poor”. This came into general use in the 1970s, and was soon used without apology or comment even by Conservative Cabinet Ministers. It carries a powerful ideological charge—the message that anyone with money in the bank or a good set of clothes has somehow received an unfair advantage, and that those who lack these things have been deliberately excluded from the distribution. Though frequent use has tended to blunt its effect and make it no more than a synonym for poor, its acceptance in any debate on social policy puts conservatives at an instant disadvantage.⁴²

Or take the use of “gender-neutral” language—the replacement of “he” as a general pronoun by “she/he”, or “s/he”, or “they”, or by the random cycling of pronouns; and the renaming of just about every occupation containing the suffix “-man”. This is supposed to make language more inclusive of both sexes, and is advanced on the grounds that it follows social changes that have brought women to a greater prominence than they enjoyed during the development of our language. This object could have been more economically pursued by allowing the pronoun “he” to take a neuter meaning unless a masculine was plainly required by the context. But this was probably not the main object of recasting the rules of composition. That was probably to draw a line separating the present from the past—to make past writings on almost any subject increasingly quaint, at which point, of course, they can be dismissed as “outmoded”.

A similar effect can be seen in the compulsory metrication of weights and measures⁴³, in the changed names of counties and streets, and in the changed names of offices and institutions and forms—see, for example, the replacement of Lord Chancellor by Minister for Constitutional Affairs, of “writ” by “claim form”, of “railway station” by “train station”, of “Mayor” by “Leader”, and so on.

Racism: The Ultimate Horror

Above all, take the word “racism”. In this word, the ruling class has acquired a term of venomous abuse that can silence most criticism. That the word has

⁴² See, for example, Isabel Oakeshott: “New figures show the disease is no longer confined to deprived communities and is becoming a scourge throughout the capital” (“No one is safe from the spread of Tuberculosis”, *The Evening Standard*, London 24th November 2003).

⁴³ That the metric system of weights and measures has many advantages cannot be doubted. Nevertheless, the advantages are not so great as to justify any amount of compulsion; and the circumstances in which use is compelled wholly outweigh these advantages.

no fixed meaning makes it all the better as a weapon of ideological control. It can mean a dislike of people because of their race or colour. It can mean a belief in differences between people of different races. It can mean a propensity to violence. It can mean no more than a preference for one's own people and values—even a belief that one has a “people”. As “institutional racism”, it can exist in the structures and assumptions of corporate bodies without the intent or knowledge of those employed within.⁴⁴ Or it can arise when every effort is being made to avoid it.⁴⁵ It can mean a mental disorder,⁴⁶ or a physical disorder of the brain,⁴⁷ or a sin.⁴⁸ It can even be stretched to

⁴⁴ On this point, see *The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry: Report of an Inquiry by Sir William MacPherson of Cluny*, HMSO, London, 1999, CM 4262-I&II:

“The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people.” (6.34)

⁴⁵ *The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry*:

“Such failures can occur simply because police officers may mistakenly believe that it is legitimate to be “colour blind” in both individual and team response to the management and investigation of racist crimes, and in their relationship generally with people from minority ethnic communities. Such an approach is flawed. A colour blind approach fails to take account of the nature and needs of the person or the people involved, and of the special features which such crimes and their investigation possess.” (6.18)

⁴⁶ See this from America: “Dr. Alvin Poussaint, a Harvard Medical School professor and perhaps the nation’s most prominent African-American psychiatrist... urged the American Psychiatric Association [in 1999] to ‘designate extreme racism as a mental health problem’ by including it in its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders....”

“Poussaint gets support from Dr. Walter Shervington, president of the National Medical Association, an organization of more than 20,000 black physicians. When he took over leadership of the NMA last year, Shervington, a New Orleans psychiatrist, called for a discussion of adding racism to the APA’s list of mental disorders.

“When (racism) becomes so severe in its expression, should it not come to the attention of a psychiatrist or someone working in the mental health field in relationship to identifying what some of the core struggles are around it?” Shervington asks....

“Sabina Widner, a clinical psychologist who teaches at Augusta State University, is blunt about the human rights implications of classifying racism as a mental illness.

“When I hear these types of things, I think about Russia,’ she says, ‘where people who are dissidents, people who don’t hold majority views, are subjected to psychiatric treatment.” (Extracted from John Head, “Can racists be called mentally ill? Debate strikes a nerve”, *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, Atlanta, 23rd January 2000).

⁴⁷“Scientists have developed a brain scan they claim to tell whether a person is racist. A group of 30 white volunteers were shown photographs of black individuals. Those with racist tendencies showed a surge of brain activity. That scientists reflected an attempt to curb latent racism.... This led researchers to conclude that racial prejudice exhausted the brain.” (News story, “How a new brain scan can root out racism”, *Metro*, London, 17th November 2003). See also Julie Henry, “Test to reveal ‘inner racism’ in job applicants”, *The*

cover belief in the core beliefs of liberal democracy—after all, anyone who believes in the rights of the individual must also accept that some groups will have more successful individuals than others.⁴⁹

It can mean any of these things or all of them⁵⁰. Whatever it means in any

Sunday Telegraph, London, 10th June 2007.

It might be useful to know if the scientists can find any variation of activity in the brains of those who are happy to be racists, and to know why only white subjects were tested. On the other hand, it might not. Such claims made on the basis of 30 tests fall under the heading of “junk science”, to stand beside virtually all the claims made against smoking and drinking.

⁴⁸ See: “The [Roman Catholic] church has come close to acknowledging the problem. Earlier this year, guidelines for parishes to review their practices described institutional racism as ‘a form of structural sin and primarily a sin of omission’. (Stephen Bates, “Racism in Catholic Church ‘driving minorities away’”, *The Guardian*, London, 16th October 2000).

See also: “The Pope, clad in purple as a sign of penitence, said sorry on behalf of his flock for all past wrongdoings, from treatment of the Jews to forced conversions, the Crusades and Inquisition, and more contemporary sins such as discrimination against women and racism.” (Frances Kennedy, “Pope confesses 2,000 years of Church sins”, *The Independent*, London, 13th March 2000).

See also: “The Archbishop of Canterbury yesterday apologised for wars, racism and other sins committed in the name of Christianity.” (Laura Clark, “Christian leaders say sorry for wars”, *The Daily Mail*, London, 30th December 1999).

⁴⁹ According to Ann Leslie, writing in 1992, “[e]ven the word ‘individual’ can now be deemed as evidence of racism—as a student at Pennsylvania University discovered to her cost when she wrote a memorandum to the ‘Diversity Education Committee’ innocently declaring her ‘deep regard for the individual’.

“The memo was returned with the word ‘individual’ heavily underscored: ‘this is a red flag phrase today, which is considered by many to be racist. Arguments that champion the individual over the group ultimately privileges (*sic*) the ‘individuals’ belonging to the largest or dominant group’.” (Ann Leslie, “The conspiracy to rule all our minds”, *The Daily Mail*, London, 14th September 1992).

⁵⁰ In conversation, my late friend Chris R. Tame said this about racism: “Anti-racism is a useful ideological tool since the contemporary concept of racism is a portmanteau one, that combines a large—and apparently ceaselessly growing—number of quite distinct ideas. ‘Racism’ is used to describe or mean, amongst other things:

- the scientific view that important aspects of human intelligence and/or emotional disposition vary according to racial group and are transmitted genetically;
- the attribution to anyone holding such views that their belief is held on the basis of prejudice or blind hatred;
- that believing that there are average/general differences in IQ/emotional disposition between racial groups means that one hates other races, or seeks to deny them equal rights or just treatment;
- the denial of just, fair and meritocratic treatment to individuals on the basis of their race, ignoring their individual character, IQ or achievement;
- the practice of violence against, or denial of individual rights to, individuals of

particular context, it soils and discredits all who are labelled with it, placing them outside any claim to respect or tolerance or fair dealing. Modern English contains no greater instance of the power of words to terrify and subdue.

This explains the responses to the words recorded in *The Secret Policeman*. Look at the response of that Welsh police chief—he described himself as “physically sick” at what was said.

“Physically sick”? When was the last time any of us felt that about something read or heard? Cat droppings, rotten meat, certain medical conditions—these can set the average stomach heaving. But it is hard to think of anything written or said that really can provoke a physical response. And these were the words of a senior police officer. It has long been his professional duty to acquaint himself with matters that require a greater than average firmness of mind. “Physically sick”? It may be doubted.

But what those police officers said was not merely tasteless and uncharitable. Nor was it merely embarrassing to their senior officers. So far as their senior officers were concerned, and so far as the authors were concerned of virtually all media and political comment, what they said was the equivalent of heresy or treason. It was a duty not merely to deplore what they said, but to denounce it in the strongest terms that came to mind. Any faintness of utterance, it seems to have been felt, might leave one open to suspicions of agreement oneself with what had been said.

A similar trick is under way with the word “homophobic”—see that otherwise bizarre attack on the Bishop of Chester, and those otherwise scandalous comments of the local Chief Constable. But no discourse here has yet been established. It is still permitted to denounce the attack, and even to laugh at it. The event can be freely discussed. There is no need for deference to the overarching ideology, followed by dissent over its precise application. For how much longer this will continue, though, may be doubted.

Control of the News Media

Noam Chomsky, another radical socialist, is useful to an understanding of how the news media are controlled. There is no overt censorship of news—no bureau through which news must be cleared, no restrictive licensing of media outlets, no closed order of journalists, or whatever. Instead, only those journalists and media bureaucrats are ever appointed to positions of public

different races.

“As soon as we look critically at the varied meanings associated with the word ‘racism’ it is clear that one is dealing with what Ayn Rand calls an “anti-concept”, a word designed actually to confuse distinct meanings and ideas, and to smuggle all sorts of unjustified assumptions into political discourse.”

influence who already share the hegemonic ideology. They censor themselves.⁵¹

Again, the Chomsky analysis was intended to apply to the media in a liberal democracy, and was false. When liberal democracy was in its prime, there was a truly diverse media in which all strands of opinion found open expression. But, as ever, his analysis does apply to any media dominated by those he has influenced. Nobody tells BBC reporters how to cover stories. Instead, all BBC positions are advertised in *The Guardian*, and most are filled with graduates from the appropriate Media Studies courses.

Now, the propaganda thereby spread by this controlled media is not usually so overt as that of the great totalitarian tyrannies of the 20th century. Techniques of influence have much improved since then. News is reported, and with seeming accuracy. The propaganda lies in the selection and presentation of news.

To take a notorious example, everyone knows that the overwhelming majority of interracial crime in Britain and America is black on white. Yet this is not reflected in the media coverage. When the black teenager, Stephen Lawrence, was killed in South London back in 1992, the story received lavish coverage in the media; and the story continued through failed trials, a public enquiry, and the official and media harassment of the unconvicted suspects. The much larger number of black on white murders—known rather than suspected murders, and containing an obvious racial motivation—are either not reported at all or covered briefly and without comment in the local media.

Then there is the presentation of news. A skilled journalist can cover a story in such a way that no fact is untrue, and dissenting views are reported in full—and still manage to produce an article so biased that it amounts to a lie. It is a question of selecting the right adjectives, or suggesting doubts or motives, of balancing quotations, of carefully taking words and opinions accurately reported but framing them in settings that suggest the opposite.

The greatest single exposure of these techniques is the 1993 article “How to Frame a Patriot” by Barry Krusch.⁵² This almost by itself raises the analysis of media bias to an independent study. The article repays the closest reading. But, to give a brief example, look at the way in which almost all coverage in *The New York Times* and on CNN of the Oklahoma bombings include some reference to the American militia movement. No connection has ever been proven between the bombings and any militia, yet the connection is still made

⁵¹ Professor Chomsky is an unusually prolific writer. See, however, his article “The Propaganda System”, published in May 1992 in *Lies of Our Times*—available, with an archive of his other writings at <http://www.zmag.org/chomsky/index.cfm> (checked June 2007).

⁵² Currently available, with an archive of his other writings, at <http://www.krusch.com>.

in reporting of the bombings—without making any overt accusation, the association is still made out.

Or look at the way in which nearly all media coverage of the British Conservative Party smuggles in some reference to the personal corruption of several Ministers in the John Major Cabinet. The exception to this rule is Kenneth Clarke, the leading Conservative supporter of British adoption of the Euro: his role in the arms to Iraq scandal is forgotten. Equally, any reporting of the far worse corruption in Tony Blair's Cabinet is usually accompanied more by pity than condemnation. Without any actual lies told, the impression conveyed is that the last Conservative Government was so corrupt that the known examples may have been a fraction of the whole, while the Blair Government—its war propaganda excepted—was a model of virtue compromised only by the Prime Minister's inability to realise that not all his colleagues reached his own standards of honesty.

Control of the Entertainment Media

Control of the entertainment media is an area almost uncovered in Britain, except for the radical socialist analyses of the 1960s and 1970s. But it is probably far more important than any control of the news media. Fewer and fewer people nowadays pay much attention to current affairs programmes on the television, or read anything in the newspapers beyond the sports pages—if they still read newspapers at all. But millions watch the entertainment programmes; and these have been recruited as part of the hegemonic apparatus.

Look at the BBC soap *Eastenders*. This is a programme in which almost no marriage is happy or lasts for long, in which anyone wearing a suit is likely to be a villain, and in which the few sympathetic characters are worthless but presented as victims of circumstances. While they may not have invented them, the scriptwriters have introduced at least two phrases into working class language: "It's doing my head in", and "It's all pressing in on me". These are usually screamed by one of the characters just before he commits some assault on his own property or another person. It means that the character has lost control of his emotions and can no longer be held accountable for his actions.

Then there is its almost comical political correctness. The last time I was able to make myself watch the programme, one of the characters was a taxi driver, and his mother in law an old working class native of the East End. Neither of them raised the obvious objection when one of his daughters decided to marry a black man—not that such a marriage would be in any sense wrong: what matters here is the deliberate absence of the obvious objection as part of a project of delegitimation.

But this is a flourish. The longer term effect of the programme is to encourage intellectual passivity, an abandoning of moral responsibility, and an almost Mediterranean lack of emotional restraint.

Or look at the BBC Radio 4 soap *The Archers*. This is supposedly an “every day tale of ordinary country folk”. It was this once. Nowadays, it is almost agitprop street theatre in its propagandising. Every male character is a monster or a weakling, or both. The female characters are pillars of feminist strength. The village pub is run by two homosexuals. The village solicitor is an Asian woman. A few years ago, the daughter of one of the characters brought back her black South African husband. His voice made it plain what he was: not one of the characters commented. There was virtually no discussion of the autumn 2002 Liberty and Livelihood march in London—the biggest rural demonstration since the Peasants’ Revolt—nor did anyone attend it. All this is a small rural community!

Or look at how the BBC treats its own archive. Every so often, black and white footage of presenters from the 1950s is shown, with parodied upper class voices talking nonsense or mild obscenity added in place of the original sound. Is this meant to be funny? Perhaps it is. But its effect—and, again, its probable intention at least in part—is to sneer at the more polished and sedate modes of communication used before the present hegemonic control was imposed.

Together with what is shown goes what is not shown. In 1980, Benny Hill was told that his television contract would not be renewed. He was a very popular comedian in this country. In Central Europe, and to a lesser extent in the United States, he remains popular. But his humour was either not political, or was political in the wrong sense. It did not challenge conventional morality. Rather, it reinforced that morality while poking gentle fun at it. He was denounced as “sexist” because of his taste for scantily clothed young women. The more probable reason, though, was that he did not fit the agenda of the new generation that was taking control of television.

The same is true of the soap *Crossroads*. Though still attracting more than 11 million viewers, this was killed in 1987. Again, it was probably killed because of its cultural conservatism. The main character, Meg Richardson, was a strong and successful businesswoman. She was almost a character from an Ayn Rand novel in her facing of challenges and her ethical commitment.⁵³ Again, it was alleged that the programme had low production values. That has not prevented other programmes from remaining in production. Another culturally

⁵³ There was her frequent, and fondly recalled, assertion: “Prevarication is the thief of time”. One might hear such words in *Eastenders* only from a character about to be arrested for cannibalism or marital rape.

conservative soap, *Neighbours*, is allowed to continue only because it is an Australian import, and because it is shown at times when hardly anyone is able to watch it. The adult soap schedules are dominated by programmes that are not conservative.

Or there is the killing, in 1981, of the old D'Oyly-Carte Opera Company. The Gilbert and Sullivan comic operas are glorious works of the English stage. Sullivan's music is some of the greatest ever composed in this country by a native. Gilbert's plots and lyrics are also works of genius. But the operas are also conservative—their celebration of values even as they poke gentle fun at them. And they were enjoyed by a generally conservative audience. The Opera Company had fallen on hard times, and had trouble maintaining its old production values. It applied to the Arts Council for funding, and was refused. It had to close. When at last revived, it had to limp along on whatever highly taxed private donations it could raise. Whatever may be thought of it in principle, state support has been made available for the most worthless travesties of art, so long as they conform to the anti-conservative agenda of arts funding. Gilbert and Sullivan were banished from the professional stage for years in this country because they did not so conform.

It is possible to fill up page after page with similar examples of the use of popular entertainment as a reinforcer of the hegemonic ideology—the careful balance of races and sexes in positions of authority, the vilification of white middle class men, the undermining of traditional morals and institutions, the general attack on all that is targeted for destruction.

Any one example given may seem trifling or even paranoid. But, taken together, the function of much of the entertainment media is to subvert the old order. Hardly ever are people told openly to go and vote Labour. But the overall effect is so to change perceptions of the present and past that voting Conservative or expressing conservative opinions comes to be regarded as about as normal and respectable as joining a Carmelite nunnery.⁵⁴

Addendum

Since I wrote the above, the BBC has gone some way to admitting its systematic bias. In June 2007, it published *From Seesaw to Wagon Wheel: Safeguarding Impartiality in the 21st Century*.⁵⁵ This does not explicitly admit to

⁵⁴ Apparently, “American sociologists [have] discovered evidence that audience thinking could be positively influenced by soap operas: US viewers of medical soaps became convinced that more women were real-life doctors than was actually the case.” (David Belcher, “A bubble that won’t burst”, *The Herald*, Glasgow, 28th February 2001)

⁵⁵ Available at:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/review_report_research/impartiality_21century/report.pdf (checked June 2007)

bias. Indeed, it is filled with praise of the BBC as an impartial and respected source of information about the world. As an indictment of the BBC role in helping to create and maintain a corrupt discourse it is almost as bland as the various reports commissioned by the British Government into the war in Iraq. By concentrating mostly on the news and current affairs output of the BBC, it says little about the more pervasive use of entertainment as propaganda. Even here, it states fair intentions that there is no reason to suppose will be carried into effect.⁵⁶

But its publication shows at least an awareness that others are aware of the bias. It means that my own—more radical analysis—cannot simply be dismissed as paranoia.

⁵⁶ See, for example: “Factual programming should not normally be built simply round a ‘for’ and ‘against’ proposition. Opinion is more complex and subtle than that. All rational shades of opinion should be covered, though not necessarily in equal proportions. Maverick or minority views should not necessarily be given equivalent weight with the prevailing consensus, but it is not the role of the BBC to close down debate. In both factual and non-factual output, there may be blanks on the creative canvas – sometimes caused by political correctness, sometimes by shared assumptions within the programme-making community, which result in the exclusion of uncongenial views or ideas. Filling in these blanks is a refreshing creative opportunity, and an essential element of impartiality.” (*ibid*, pp.80-81)

FOUR: LEGITIMATION CRISES

Ideological Weakness

But even as the most senior functionaries within the repressive state apparatus strain both language and credibility in proclaiming adherence to it, the hegemonic ideology has one great apparent weakness. This is its impossibility. It is a false ideology.

It is possible for small alien minorities to be accepted into a country. Orthodox Jews are a good example. They live in the nation, but do not regard themselves as of it. What makes them acceptable is that they do not make nuisances of themselves and can never by their nature be other than a small minority. Even hardened anti-semites have little objection to the Orthodox, being more concerned about the alleged doings of the assimilated.

It is also possible for large numbers of aliens to be accepted into a nation so long as they assimilate and embrace its culture as their own. The United States in the century to about 1970 is a good case here. During this time, settlers of British ancestry went from being the majority to a large minority, but the American nation they had created continued to exist and to prosper by just about every reasonable standard. But a large and rapid immigration in which the burden of adjustment is thrown not on the newcomers but on the natives—in which, indeed, the newcomers are positively discouraged from assimilating—that is an obvious cause of resentment and even disorder.

There cannot be one society made up of widely different communities each of which loves and respects all the others. There cannot be a society in which the ethnic composition of every group—from university vice chancellors to hairdressers, from lunatic asylum inmates to fashion models—exactly parallels that of the census returns. Instead, there will be a retreat into ethnic nationalism among all groups.

In this context, the words of that police officer quoted above—“A dog born in a barn is still a dog. A Paki born in Britain is still a fucking Paki”—take on a grim significance. The words show a hardening of spiritual boundaries more typical of the Balkans or Africa than of the Britain we have always known—a nation of which membership has been more defined by allegiance to the Crown and adherence to certain norms than by race or colour.

Of course, the destruction of national identity will not make humanity love one another. We are pack animals by nature, and group loyalties will always survive. Destroy the customs and traditions that bind a people together, and a new cement of shared blood will rapidly emerge. What that police officer said is not integral to national pride. His words are part of what replaces it. Given such attitudes, most of our constitutional arrangements must tend to become

unworkable. What is the point of democracy—national or local—or trial by jury, when decisions are just a product of group voting strength?⁵⁷

Dual Consciousness and the Coming Crisis of Multiculturalism

The ideological state apparatus can be set to work on proclaiming the joys of diversity. But the result is at best what Gramsci calls a “dual consciousness”—a situation in which values are imposed but only partially accepted. Multiculturalism is a discourse, so far as many now cannot find neutral terms to oppose it: see more of the words quoted from that police officer—“I’m a racist bastard”—where the immorality of an opinion is conceded even as it is expressed; but the discourse cannot secure plain consent.

The inevitable result is a sharper use of the repressive state apparatus. We cannot be made to love and respect each other. But we can be made to act as if we did. Therefore we have a frequently absurd but always searching inquisition into matters regarded until just recently as private. There are laws to censor speech and publication, laws to regulate hiring and promotion policies, and to regulate the selection of tenants and membership of private bodies, and increasingly stiff criminal penalties for breach of these laws⁵⁸. Every few days, the media gives space to some official expression of rapture at the benefits we have gained from multiculturalism. Its most notable fruit, however, has been

⁵⁷ John Stuart Mill said almost a century and a half ago: “Free institutions are next to impossible in a country made up of different nationalities. Among a people without fellow-feeling, especially if they read and speak different languages, the united public opinion necessary to the working of representative government cannot exist. The influences which form opinions and decide political acts are different in the different sections of the country. An altogether different set of leaders have the confidence of one part of the country and of another. The same books, newspapers, pamphlets, speeches do not reach them. One section does not know what opinions, or what instigations, are circulating in another. The same incidents, the same acts, the same system of government affect them in different ways; and each fears more injury to itself from the other nationalities than from the common arbiter, the state.” (John Stuart Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government* (1861), in *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, *Essays on Politics and Society*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1977, p.547).

⁵⁸ See, for example, this from 1998: “A couple of weeks ago, the Commission for Racial Equality recognized what black actors have known for a long time; namely the ‘unjustifiable under-representation of ethnic minorities in theatre, opera, cinema, television drama, etc.’ The Commission announced that it will press for legislation to close a loophole in the Race Relations Act which allows directors to use ‘authenticity’ as an excuse for all-white casting. A black Nelson Mandela or a white Winston Churchill will be acceptable; but an all-white production of Hamlet will be in contravention of the act. In this, Britain is merely catching up with the USA, which has had a quota system long enough to ensure that black faces are now run of the mill across the media.” (Lesley Downer, “Theatre: Wanted: a brand new caste”, *The Independent*, London, 2nd September 1998)

the creation of a police state.

Ideological Strength

In a sense, though, the falsehood of the ideology is not so much a disadvantage as a great benefit to the ruling class. Because it is false, it can only be accepted on faith; and faith can give rise to more passionate attachments than any sober acceptance of the truth. And with passionate attachment goes passionate rejection of the opposite.

So for the police state laws, these are welcomed. At the very least, the various inquisitions set up provide jobs and status that would not otherwise exist. They are also enjoyed for their own sake. Governments by their nature like to oppress, and the degree of their oppression is limited only by the prospect of resistance and their own beliefs about what is seemly. And as an article of faith, multiculturalism obliterates regard for old conventions.

Just look at how the self-proclaimed “civil libertarians” of the past behave now they are in positions of authority. In the 1970s, they could be trusted to demand every refinement of due process when some picketer was in the dock, or someone accused of revealing official secrets. Now they have incorporated “racial aggravation” clauses into the law which in effect make opinions into crimes. They have abolished the double jeopardy rule because it prevents their vendetta against the alleged killers of Stephen Lawrence⁵⁹.

Multiculturalism also undercuts the old grounds of peaceful opposition to misgovernment. Arguments from ancestral right can be delegitimised by a mere raising of eyebrows and a polite question about whose ancestors are being invoked. Everyone knows the next response will be an accusation of “racism”. Therefore, the argument is dropped more often than not, while those who dare raise it must go about protesting their belief in the official ideology.⁶⁰

Nor is the destruction of accountability unwelcome. Democracy has always

⁵⁹ *The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry*, Chapter 49, Recommendation 38: “That consideration should be given to the Court of Appeal being given power to permit prosecution after acquittal where fresh and viable evidence is presented.”

⁶⁰ Indeed, this book breaks the first rule of debate on multiculturalism. Anyone opposing the ideology must first protest his belief in its principle, only dissenting over specific applications. A typical discussion must begin: “Of course, I utterly condemn racism in principle. Some of my best friends are [insert here an ethnic group, the more different in appearance from the majority the better]”. Better still is to claim membership of an ethnic minority: “I am myself Jewish”—though Jews are going out of fashion, and so it may be more advantageous to be one quarter Tibetan, or even one twelfth Red Indian. If all else is unavailable, protestations of homosexuality may be sufficient. Without disclaiming any, I claim none of these things.

been something of a fraud in this country—and perhaps with good reason, as it is doubtful if the mass of people can ever be trusted with the vote. But rulers were vaguely answerable to the ruled, and could, given the right provocation, be removed. Multiculturalism turns us from a nation to which ultimately the rulers had to defer into a gathering of mutually hostile groups—all with different ambitions and complaints, all capable of being turned against each other in the manner that imperial ruling classes throughout history have used to nullify opposition. In the words of Margaret Thatcher,

Thus the utopia of multiculturalism involves a bureaucratic class presiding over a nation divided into a variety of ethnic nationalities. That, of course, looks awfully like the old Soviet Union.⁶¹

Thought Crime and the Police State

And so we find ourselves living in a country where conformity to the dominant ideology is imposed by threats of force accompanied by an increasingly hysterical propaganda. It is as if the ruling class were waving a stick and turning up the volume on a television set—so it can stop others from talking about something else and give them no choice but to watch the programme.

And it is still not enough. Dissent has been driven out of the establishment media and out of respectable politics, but it continues to flourish in private and on the Internet. We live in a country where almost no one would describe himself openly as a “racist”, but where the British National Party seems to stand on the edge of an electoral breakthrough.

Therefore the chorus of outrage when those police officers were exposed: there could be no public expressions of sympathy for them—indeed, the knowledge that there was much private agreement with at least the sentiments expressed, if not with their manner of expression, required the public denunciations to be all the more unsparing. It also explains the demand for still greater supervision of speech and action. As in some gentle parody of Stalin’s Russia, it is accepted as necessary for conformity of speech and action to be so generally compelled that even the slightest expression of dissent stands out like a black swan among white.

This is the wider significance of the undercover filming of those police officers. It is worth asking why only white officers were filmed, when black and brown officers might not in private be oozing love and respect for their white colleagues. It is also worth asking in what context the words were uttered, and to what extent the reporter had made of himself an agent of

⁶¹ Margaret Thatcher, “Resisting the utopian impulse”, *American Outlook*, Spring 1999; quoted in “Culture, et cetera”, *The Washington Times*, Washington DC, 22nd June 1999.

provocation. And it can be asked whether the opinions expressed could be shown to have had any effect on actions. But, while it would be useful to have some on the record, the answers are obvious. Witch hunts need witches. When they can be found in public, their finding must be ruthlessly used. When none can be found in public, they must be searched out in private. When none can be found at all, they must be invented.

However discovered, such dissent from the multicultural ideology can be used to justify its more intrusive imposition. Therefore, the promises of political tests for recruitment for the police, and of an inquisition to ensure conformity by the use of agents of provocation. Police officers are already bad enough. They are inefficient. They are incompetent. They are corrupt. But the known presence among them of informers and agents of provocation—can only tend to remove them still further from the rest of the population. They will become a sort of Janissaries, quite separate in outlook and perhaps in nationality from those they are employed to coerce into obedience.

Nor will covert information gathering be confined to the police. Once established as normal, it will be used against other targets. One of the recommendations of the Report into the death of Stephen Lawrence was

[t]hat consideration should be given to amendment of the law to allow prosecution of offences involving racist language or behaviour, and of offences involving the possession of offensive weapons, where such conduct can be proved to have taken place otherwise than in a public place.⁶²

This was rejected as unworkable. However, the use of undercover filming to gather evidence makes it workable. The informers and agents of provocation will spread into every area of private life. New friends or partners taken to dinner parties will constrain discussion even when no one intends to discuss the forbidden issues. We shall have to start learning the rules of private conduct that East Europeans have been forgetting since 1989. Life will become grimmer and more oppressive.

The Revolution was: The Terror is: Irreversible Change will be

We do not in this country face a revolution.⁶³ The revolution has already

⁶² *The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry*, Chapter 49, Recommendation 39.

⁶³ The title of this section is suggested by the Gareth Garret essay *The Revolution Was* (1938). See, in particular: “You do not defend a world that is already lost. When was it lost? That you cannot say precisely. It is a point for the revolutionary historian to ponder. We know only that it was surrendered peacefully, without a struggle, almost unawares. There was no day, no hour, no celebration of the event—and yet definitely, the ultimate power of initiative did pass from the hands of private enterprise to government.” The whole essay is available on-line at:

http://www.rooseveltnyth.com/docs/The_Revolution_Was.html (checked June 2007)

happened. What we now see about us are its consequences, not its warning signs. We are entering the reign of terror that attends most revolutions. That no one has yet been murdered is unimportant. Terror is only incidentally about killing people. More fundamentally, it is about atomising any group opposed to the revolution so that resistance becomes impossible. That is the function of the otherwise random and bizarre persecutions mentioned above.

There may come a time when the repressive state apparatus will begin to operate with a Middle Eastern or South American zeal. At the moment, though, it is unnecessary—and the ruling class, for all it does or discusses, remains too much still under the influence of the old liberal democratic norms.

Because it was a cultural revolution, it was not marked by any great symbolic act of violence—no storming of the Bastille or of the Winter Palace. It came on instead in gentle stages, by the appointment of this person here to that position there, and by his commissioning of a new mission statement, or issuing of new instructions for the enforcement of rules already made.

The Labour victory of May 1997 was an important stage in the revolution, as it meant that those formally at the head of the executive no longer had to be led, in idleness or ignorance, along the revolutionary path, but could be expected to drive the whole machinery of state forward. But this was not the revolution.

How will all this end? Not, we can be sure, in Dr Parekh's "confident and vibrant multicultural society at ease with its rich diversity". One can reasonably see one of two outcomes.

The **first** is that the ruling class will keep control until it has finished remodelling the population. According to the 2001 returns—and these probably understate the truth—the non-white population of England rose by 40 per cent in the 1990s.⁶⁴ According to an anonymous demographer,

Whites will be an ethnic minority in Britain by the end of the century.
Analysis of official figures indicate that, at current fertility rates and levels of

⁶⁴ Paul Brown, "Minorities up 40%, census reveals", *The Guardian*, London, 4th September 2003. The official figures are:

England by Ethnic Group (000s)

	1981	1991	2001
White	44,682	44,848	44,925
Black	707	917	1,286
Asian	1,031	1,487	2,102
Oriental	414	626	825

immigration, there will be more non-whites than whites by 2100.⁶⁵

With a small and credible adjustment to the extrapolated trends, minority status could be reached as soon as 2040. Long before either date, though, national life would have been wholly transformed. For ethnic change would not be accompanied by cultural assimilation. It would not here be as it was in America. No one called Kravitz sailed on the *Mayflower*. No one called Angelini signed the Declaration of Independence. Yet hundreds of millions who ancestors only arrived in America long after its birth as a nation now join in an uncomplicated celebration of its national rituals. Many nations have been connected by a common ancestry. But many have not, relying instead on commonality of allegiance or belief. Such is America. Such was Rome. Taking the English world as a whole, such has even been England.

Undoubtedly, the large differences of appearance shown by most of the newcomers to this country make the assimilation harder than was the case with the Huguenots or the Jews or the Irish. But they need not make it impossible. Many of our own newcomers have assimilated. But many have not; and the present and future pressures of migration, and the official policy towards migrants and their descendants will check—and even sometimes undo—the process of assimilation.

In these circumstances, ethnic change would not be accompanied by an assimilation in which white Englishmen were joined by black and brown Englishmen, and the nation went on much as before. Ethnic change would bring with it cultural displacement. Whole areas of the country would become alien; and within them, the physical appearances, place names, festivals, rituals and general customs of the past would be obliterated—in much the same way as happened when, from the 5th century, the northern barbarians displaced the Romanised Celts who had inhabited this country before them. Then, the ruling class could be safe. It would be presiding over an empire, not a nation, and would be safe from effective challenge.

The **second** outcome is that the English—or British—will turn nasty while still the majority. Probably this would not be an original nastiness. The French might well turn first, or the Israelis: We are not unique in the challenges we face, nor entirely in the nature of our ruling class. But there may come a time when the harsh ethnic nationalism of that police officer becomes the consensus. Then there will be a spiritual casting out of “strangers” from the nation, followed by ethnic cleansing of the strangers, and severe legal and social disabilities for those allowed to remain. And among these strangers will

⁶⁵ Anthony Browne, “UK whites will be minority by 2100”, *The Observer*, London, 3rd September 2000. The demographer “wished to remain anonymous for fear of accusations of racism”.

be many who are now unambiguously accepted as of the nation and who regard themselves as of the nation.

It is worth recalling that, until the National Socialists redrew the spiritual boundaries of the nation, many Jews were German nationalists. Such redrawing of spiritual boundaries would be just as much the end of what makes this country special as of the multicultural project itself; and no one who believes in liberal democracy can honourably lift a finger to help redraw them. But pious wishes will not stop their being redrawn if present trends are allowed to continue.

Either of these possible outcomes involves irreversible change. Each one closes the door on our more liberal past. But there is a **third** possible outcome. This is that present trends will not be allowed to continue, that the multicultural discourse will be overthrown before it is too late, that freedom of speech and action will be restored, and that private and public arrangements will be made to encourage assimilation of all British citizens to the cultural values of the majority. This will not bring us to Dr Parekh's land of harmonious diversity. But it is the only basis on which people of widely different appearances are ever likely to live at peace with each other.

FIVE: WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

Second Thoughts on Multiculturalism?

It may be that the failed war in Iraq has forced sections of the ruling class to think again. The terrorist bombings in London of July 2005, were a shock to anyone who believed that “diversity is strength” in our “community of communities”. Reports began to appear in the newspapers of widespread disaffection among British Moslems—not only with the Iraq war, but also with the customs and institutions of this country.

In July 2006, for example, an official report drafted for the Prime Minister claimed that up to 16,000 British Moslems supported Islamic terrorism at home and abroad, while 416,000 Muslims felt no loyalty to this country.⁶⁶ All numerical claims of this sort are based on extrapolations; and without knowing the questions and methodology employed, such numbers are not to be accepted uncritically. But they do support much anecdotal evidence that some Moslems are less interested in joining in the multicultural love feast than in seating themselves at the head table.

To reports of this kind must be added discussions within the ruling class of a nature unknown since the 1960s. In November 2006, Jack Straw, Leader of the House of Commons, and formerly Home Secretary and Foreign Secretary, took up the long since rejected language of integration. “Simply breathing the same air as other members of society” he emphasised, “isn’t integration”.⁶⁷

He was not alone. A year earlier, in September 2005, the Head of the Commission for Racial Equality said he was frightened that Britain was “sleepwalking its way to racial segregation.”⁶⁸ Trevor Phillips, who had worked his way into the ruling class as an apostle of the multicultural faith, grew thereafter so keen on the promotion of “shared values” that he was eventually accused by the Mayor of London of trying to “move the race agenda away from a celebration of multiculturalism”.⁶⁹

Even doubts about the value of unlimited immigration can now be voiced within the ruling class. In October 2005, Polly Toynbee, one of the most

⁶⁶ The report, “Young Muslims and Extremism”, was drawn up for the Prime Minister by officials at the Home and Foreign and Commonwealth Offices. It is reported in Sean Rayment, “Whites being lured into Islamic terror”, *The Times*, London, 2nd July 2006.

⁶⁷ BBC News report, “Muslims must feel British—Straw”, 2nd November 2006—available on-line at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/6110798.stm (checked June 2007)

⁶⁸ BBC news report, “Schools ‘must fight segregation’”, 22nd September 2005—available on-line at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/4269988.stm> (checked June 2007)

⁶⁹ BBC news report, “Mayor’s BNP outburst at Phillips”, 1st September 2006—available on-line at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/5301498.stm (checked June 2007)

notable propagandists of the ruling class wrote up her concerns in *The Guardian*. Under the title “It’s not racist to want to control immigration”, she spoke about the effect of immigration on working class living standards, and about the strain on public services.⁷⁰

More recently, doubts have become explicit and voiced never the very top of politics. In June 2007, Ruth Kelly, the Communities Secretary, called on local authorities to encourage immigrants to learn English. She said in an interview given to the BBC:

I think speaking the language is absolutely key. Something the commission looked at specifically is whether we should be translating from English into different languages as a matter of routine. They are going to put out guidance . . . where local authorities can ask really hard questions about whether or not we are providing a crutch and supporting people in their difference, or whether translation is being used in the appropriate circumstances....

I do think translation has been used too frequently and sometimes without thought to the consequences. So, for example, it’s quite possible for someone to come here from Pakistan or elsewhere in the world and find that materials are routinely translated into their mother tongue, and therefore not have the incentive to learn the language.⁷¹

Hazel Blears, Chairman of the Labour Party and a candidate for its deputy leadership, went further. Speaking at the same time as Mrs Kelly, she accused immigrants of criminal and disorderly behaviour, of driving down living standards, and of changing the appearance of the country.⁷²

But does any of this mean that the ruling class has seen where its policies are taking us, and is now having serious second thoughts? Undoubtedly, various realities previously overlooked or deliberately ignored have now become inescapable. But this does not mean that the ruling class or any significant group within it is considering the third outcome mentioned above.

Multiculturalism, remember, is not for our ruling class a set of abstract

⁷⁰ Polly Toynbee, “It’s not racist to want to control immigration”, *The Guardian*, Manchester and London, 11th October 2005.

⁷¹ Quoted in news article, “Make migrants learn English, says Kelly”, *The Times*, London, 11th June 2007.

⁷² She said: “We have got areas in Salford where private landlords are letting properties with 10 and 12 people in there.... Now, the community doesn’t object to the people—they object to the exploitation and the fact that that leads to people being on the street drinking, antisocial behaviour.

“They object if they are undercutting wages and not getting the national minimum wage and they are not abiding by health and safety, so you have got to enforce the law.” (Quoted in news article, “Make migrants learn English, says Kelly”, *The Times*, London, 11th June 2007.)

propositions to be accepted or rejected according to the evidence. It is an ideology that legitimises its power. It is a justification for jobs and status. It provides a shared language and shared values. It is to a large extent the social glue that holds the ruling class together. It is true that a systematic divergence between claims and reality will lead to the sort of crisis that destroyed Soviet Communism after about 1970. But we are far from seeing this for our own ruling class.

What we are seeing is a shift of rhetoric to pre-empt effective dissidence. If Labour Ministers start speaking like Nick Griffin, the electors may feel less inclined to vote for the British National Party. This is helped by the fact that perhaps the majority of recent immigrants have been white Slavs from the new member states of the European Union, and that complaints about their immigration can be insulated from any accusation of racism.

The effect of this shift in rhetoric has not been any moderation of policy. In the past few years, we have had new laws that make it a criminal offence to speak insultingly of Islam, an extension of the equality laws to cover homosexuals, and two attempts to send the Leader of the British National Party to prison for saying what until recently no one would have imagined might be a crime.

In return, we have been told that we can now fly the English flag outside our homes without seeking planning permission, and we have been promised “Britishness” lessons in the schools that will, in all probability, amount to more ruling class indoctrination. To balance this, we have had an immense sharpening of the repressive state apparatus, allegedly to counter the threat of Islamic terrorism, but almost certainly for use against all dissidence.

There has been no visible attempt to control the inflow of immigrants, legal or illegal. Nothing has been done to stop the inflow of asylum seekers. The enforcement of political correctness of the sort described above has continued unchecked.

A New Legitimising Ideology?

It may, however, be that, while the ruling class has no interest in formally dropping the multicultural project, it will become less important as a legitimising ideology. We are, at the moment, passing through the greatest moral panic of my lifetime. The media is filled with wild claims about the alleged fact of global warming, and the politicians are discussing law after law that are said to be needed if sea levels are not to rise by ten foot come next Tuesday. Almost every large organisation that I encounter is falling over itself to implement policies on recycling. Everyone in the news seems to be trading accusations about who is creating the biggest “carbon footprint”. The schools

and children's television are becoming little more than a giant evangelising project for the environmentalist faith.

Now, in principle, environmentalism is just as good a justification as multiculturalism for an extended and activist state. There are the same opportunities for demonising opponents, the same kinds of excuse for intrusive legislation. Is all this, then, an alternative legitimising ideology? Am I perhaps as out of date in worrying about multiculturalism as I might be in worrying about overmighty trade unions?

I think not. Despite the omnipresence of the global warming propaganda, environmentalism is attended by several important disadvantages as a legitimising ideology for the ruling class.

First, opposition at every level has not yet been stifled. No scientist has yet lost his job because he disagrees that the world is getting hotter, or that this is caused by our actions. The media still feels some obligation to treat the global warming claims as an open question. Because these claims and others like them are manifestly absurd, it would not be safe to rely on them while opponents were still free to laugh at them in public.

Second, claims about global warming still do not provide the same shared language and shared body of assumptions for the ruling class as multiculturalism and political correctness. Why change from a political cosmology that, with a few more epicycles, can be made to explain the world to one that has still to be fully developed?

Third, the business interests are not universally in agreement. Multiculturalism and political correctness can be absorbed by all large corporations as cartelised costs—that is, so that no important business interest suffers differentially. Environmentalism imposes significant and differential costs on much business. There are business interests that benefit from the panic over global warming. But oil companies, car manufacturers, transport companies, and many other businesses stand only to lose, and can be expected to resist more than token restrictions. In some cases, they can even be expected to fund opposition.

Moreover, when I say that the costs of environmentalism cannot be cartelised, we need also to bear in mind that the Chinese and the Indians, and perhaps the Americans, have no interest in sharing the burdens of environmental regulation. Whatever is done in this country, and in the European Union, imposes costs on local business that place it at a serious disadvantage with the rest of the world. This requires government to consider either much higher levels of protectionism than are currently fashionable, or a steady outflow of investment and jobs.

Fourth, environmentalism imposes direct and obvious costs on ordinary people. The current legitimising ideology imposes such costs only on a minority. We are all oppressed and impoverished. But only a few at any one time have this brought inescapably to their attention. Environmentalism, on the other hand, raises food and transport costs, reduces consumer choice, and forces people to recycle or to live without forms of waste disposal formerly taken for granted. It is politically unpopular whenever translated from hysterical propaganda to meaningful action. Witness, as an instance of this, the recent electoral revolt against councils that wanted to abolish weekly rubbish collections.

And environmentalism does not hold out any promise of a better world. Politically correct multiculturalism may be taking us towards a nightmare of universal surveillance and dispossession. But the formal promise is one of fairness for all. The best the environmentalists have to offer is a tightening of belts

For these reasons, I do not yet think there is to be a change of legitimising ideology. In medical terms, environmentalism is still to be seen as a secondary infection. The totalitarian hysteria with which it is currently accepted is more a symptom of ruling class control than a main excuse. Like the mania against smoking and obesity and vicious dogs and weapons of self-defence, it could never have been made into an excuse for jobbery and oppression except in a nation already morally disarmed.

I may be wrong. But I predict that claims about global warming will sooner or later go the way of claims about ozone depletion. They will not go away. At the same time, they will cease to be any positive guide to action. It is unlikely that the ruling class has lost faith in the multicultural project as a legitimising ideology.

The Quisling Right

What, then, of the Conservative Party? Is this not opposed to political correctness? Is this not the party of continuity with the past? The answer is no, it is not. There is no reason to suppose that the third of our outcomes will be promoted by the next Conservative Government.

Let us assume for the moment that the strategists of the Conservative Party are right—that Gordon Brown will be a less able opponent than Tony Blair was—and let us assume that a Conservative Government led by David Cameron will be a government of conservatives. The first of these assumptions has not so far been tested, and the second is manifestly unlikely. But let us make them. How, then, would such a government be able even to rule the country, let alone reverse the harm of the past few decades, with an

ideological state apparatus so heavily politicised and so heavily biased against them?

One answer is that it would not be able. It is not true that an election battle in the country is all that needs to be won, and that after this, the decision of the people will be accepted. We can be sure that any such decision will not be accepted. Given the personnel of the ideological state apparatus—and increasingly of the repressive state apparatus—it would be absurd to imagine that the present cultural revolution would be called off because of a small and perhaps temporary change at the top. This is a Gramscian project carried out by Gramscians. These people spent their younger years reading and thinking about ideological hegemony, and they are now, in their middle years, trying to achieve it.

I will shortly move to a discussion of what a government of conservatives might do to win the culture war. But I have spoken in private with many Conservative Members of Parliament and advisers to the Conservative leadership. None of these people has given me reason to suppose he even understands the nature of what has been done. There has certainly been no proper thought given to a response. The best of these people have been waiting for the past decade for Labour to renationalise British Telecom. They read their economics in the 1980s, and this is an argument they might win. But since Labour has moved away from socialism in the old sense, this fluency in economic debate has been useless.

That is so for the more genuinely conservative of the Conservatives. The Party, however, is dominated by people who are not conservatives at all. The fuller answer to the question of whether the next Conservative Government will halt the revolution before it reaches the point of no return is that it will not—because it will not want to.

In government, the Conservatives would not even try to challenge the project of our ruling class. The Conservatives ruled this country between 1979 and 1997, and there was no break in continuity between where they left off and the Blair Government began. The difference between a Conservative and a Labour Government after the next election, it must be accepted, would be one of tone rather than of substance.

For as long as I have been alive—and for some while before—the Conservative Party has been a gigantic fraud on the people of this country. Its true function has not been to articulate, but to neutralise discontent. The only threat to the hegemony of the ruling class has been the deeply conservative prejudices of the English people. Any conservatism would be a threat, because it means an adherence to values not fully controlled by the ruling class. English conservatism, though, is an especially dangerous threat. Its values are those of

