GOOD & EVIL

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Dear reader,

As this is *Leviathan's* initial foray into the public sphere, a short introduction is in order. Our journal is student-run, focusing on politics and current affair issues from the presently chilly yet beautiful Scotland, to further and perhaps sunnier corners of the world. We seek to fill the void of reasoned political debate and analysis from students such as you. Although the pieces to follow may adopt certain ideological perspectives, *Leviathan* does not endorse these views as right or wrong. Following in the footsteps of John Stuart Mill, the 'collision' of ideas and opinions is what *Leviathan* seeks, for only with reasoned and frank debate can certain truths be deciphered. In this spirit we humbly ask readers to reply to what you have read here. Are the authors not convincing, have they missed something, or why do you disagree with their opinion or analysis?

This issue's articles are loosely or directly tied to the theme of 'Good and Evil', thus entailing a degree of broadness in the opinions and analysis to follow. Strictly defining either term is uncalled for. However, generally we can say that groups or policies branded 'evil' are those which individuals and societies often would rather not associate with or implement. In contrast, policy or groups associated with normative and beneficial 'good', are pursued by individuals and societies when given the opportunity, or so we hope. Identifying "Good and Evil' is also context specific, although certain norms may influence our definition, those norms do not have to be universal, and as individuals we make up our own definition. Consequently in the following pages some authors prescribe analysis as a way of rectifying a 'flaw' or 'evil'. Others simply analyse a situation or phenomenon, leaving it up to the reader to decide what is 'good' and what is 'evil'.

Most importantly, at a time of year when exams, essays and job or further study applications are high on the agenda, I am sincerely indebted to all those who have involved themselves in getting *Leviathan* off the ground. To our sponsors in the Politics Society and Edinburgh University Department of Politics and International Relations, *Leviathan* would not have been possible without your financial and advisory support. To the writers, artists and unsung heroes in our production, editorial, publishing and advertising staff my thanks cannot be expressed in words. The success of this release is most notably yours!

Now go forth. Debate, ponder and criticize our first instalment, but most of all enjoy!

Cheers,

Ryan Jacobs
Leviathan Editor-in-Chief

Individualism or Collectivism?

Mark Aspinwall on why lecturers should be left alone to develop their teaching and research as they see fit.

Imagine you go to a friend's flat for dinner. As you stand to leave at the end of the evening, he hands you a sheet of paper with a form on it. 'Evening meal guest feedback form' it reads. You fill it out, indicating your views from 1 (awful) to 5 (great). Categories – 1) overall impression; 2) quality of meal; 3) quality of beverages; 4) ambiance; 5) relevance of music. Next night you go to a Coldplay concert. Much to your surprise, Muse and The Cranberries are there too. Unfortunately, they're not playing. Instead, they're part of the British Music Industry Excellence Framework, and their job is to evaluate the quality of Coldplay's 'output' – their songs, their concerts, interaction with fans, lighting, etc.

Welcome to higher education. Obviously, in social situations such as dinner parties and concerts, feedback is private and informal. Not so in universities. In our core activities of teaching and research, oversight is strong and getting stronger. When we design a course, we provide a justification for it with intended 'learning outcomes'. When the course is finished we ask students for their feedback; then write a report on the results. These reports get gathered up and form part of a bigger report. Occasionally, we get checked by authorities superior to us, even from outside the university itself, to make sure we're doing things properly.

Some old-timers still remember the days when lecturers had a lot more freedom to design and deliver courses however they wanted. Now we can't change something as simple as assessment without going through an elaborate approval process. The number of faculty and the amount of time spent on accounting activities is enormous. All this oversight and accounting comes about because we're basically a public agency. We get money from public sources and we have a big impact on people's lives. We should be accountable and transparent. We end up, therefore, spending a lot of time thinking up rules and procedures about how to treat students fairly. We can't do whatever we want anymore. The danger is not simply that classroom spontaneity is lost, but that time is lost too – time which could be spent in classroom or improving our understanding of the social world.

What about research? Well, this is more individualistic, but it's changing too. Academics traditionally decide what they think is important, design research to answer questions, figure out where it should be published, and hope for the best. In the past, that was the end of the story. Reputations were made on the basis of how successful individuals were at the 'publishing game'. This is still the case in the US, where junior 'tenure-track' faculty are assessed by their colleagues after about 6 years in a sometimes brutal process of weaning out those who are less effective publishers. In the UK, we're now ranked every few years by a mysterious external body which evaluates the research we do and places us on a national rank. We then live with the consequences until the next time the process is undertaken. And the consequences are deadserious: levels of public funding and reputational effects result from our position on the research ranking. Universities are therefore very concerned how their departments fare in these evaluations.

In PIR, we've created two separate programmes in which external experts advise us on our research activities. We also have in-house 'surgeries' where we do stress-tests on each others research papers. We can't leave this to chance anymore – we've become more hands-on and interventionist.

So, in research, as in teaching, the consequences of what we do as individuals are felt by others too, even though we academics are pretty individualistic when it comes to our research. We don't like interference, whether it's from the people who fund us or from our own colleagues. How do we square that? How far should the accounting go? And does it result in less creativity and spontaneity? It seems clear that when the actions of individual colleagues have an impact on a department, there need to be incentives in favour of pro-collective behaviour, whether in the classroom or in the journals. That's why we've become more bureaucratic (compartmentalizing jobs and working on standard procedures) and also more professionalized (doing similar things in similar ways). These processes mean there is less autonomy for individuals to design and carry out there own unique programmes of research and teaching.

Of course, there is a delicate balance between individual freedom and collective obligation. We all want to encourage individual choice, creativity, and new ideas. But we need to look out for the greater good too. It's not an easy balance to strike and frustrations can be felt among students and staff alike.

Let me know what you think - I'd like to hear from you. You can find our blog online at www.pol.ed.ac.uk. Or join us live at our many seminars and other events, also advertised on the website.

Dr. Mark Aspinwall,

Head of Politics & International Relations

Upcoming Events & Lectures of Interest

Europa Institute

Dec 2 2010, 10:30 Raeburn Room, Old College. Scotland, Ready To Take Another Leap?: John Curtice and Rachel Ormston

Dec 2 2010, 12:30 - 14:00, Seminar Room 1, 21 George Square, The Dynamics of Territorial Restructuring in Western Europe: Donna Wood and Simon Toubeau

Feb 4 2011, LT183, Old College. Scotland in the World Lecture: Prof Brigid Laffan

Feb 24 2011, LT175, Old College. Annual Mitchell Lecture: Prof John Peterson

Mar 15 2011, tbc, The new dimension of labour: Europe and America's roles in the global system: Prof Simon Reich

Mar 17 2011, tbc, Scotland in the World Lecture, co-hosted by the Europa Institute: Prof Martin Rhodes

Just World Institute

Jan 19 2011, 13:45 - 17:00 Seminar Room 3, Chrystal Macmillan Building. Half-day Workshop: Climate change, overpopulation and procreative justice: Prof Carter Dillard and Dr Clare Heyward

Politics and IR Research Seminars

8 Dec 2010, 13:00-14:00 Seminar room 4, Chrystal Macmillan Building. Challenging Methodological Nationalism: New Perspectives on German Federalism: Prof Charlie Jeffery

*These events are open to all. As we don't yet have all details confirmed. For updates (timings, titles, etc) to details please see http:// www.pol.ed.ac.uk/events/index

WikiLeaks:

Some call it the biggest success for investigative journalism of all time. the attention of millions by collecting and posting highly classified documents information that governments and other organizations spend lots of time, WikiLeaks releases more classified material than the rest of the world's press nightmare of every security and defense government official materialized on Julian Assange and his bee-hive of lawyers, journalists and hackers practice

Christin Weigt and WikiLeaks as a force for good, in an inhumane world

The most recent WikiLeaks release of 400,000 intelligence reports as part of the "Iraq War Logs" in October provides details of 109,000 deaths a majority of which are civilian. Prominent government and military officials including US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Secretary of Defence Robert Gates and Admiral Mullen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff have publicly bleated their horror about the leak. The accusations against Assange and his organization range from strong condemnations to portrayal as potential murderers of US soldiers and their partners[1].

The most puzzling criticism is the accusation that the War Logs are going to damage the reputation of the UK and US governments. Considering the newly disclosed atrocities committed by the US and UK forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, it seems logical to me that their reputation among the local population in this part of the world is dreadful. Is the government's concern that a disclosure of unknown facts about the Iraq War is going to damage their own reputation at home? A worrying thought.

In reality the lay person might well break his or her teeth trying to get to the bones of the cluster of codified military reports. Little actual information seems to reveal itself when aimlessly searching for WarLogs. So how is this maze of information supposed to rewrite history?

> "The most puzzling criticism is the accusation that the War Logs are going to damage the reputation of the UK and US governments."

To UK human rights lawyer Phil Shiner the answer is clear: the Iraq War Logs, just like the Afghan War Logs released three months earlier, add much needed evidence in the public sphere. For those capable of decoding the hieroglyphics, they shed light on the activities of US and UK troops and end wrongful secrecy about a war that has gone on too long and has cost too many lives. Three categories of war crimes have been exposed in the analysis of the intelligence reports: unlawful killings of civilians (15,000 more than claimed by the UK government[2]); cases of torture committed by the Iraqi National Guards and police with UK and US forces handing people over and then turning a blind eye; and killings and ill-treatment of Iraqis in UK custody[3].

An avalanche of legal activism triggered by the leak is going to put the government under severe pressure to justify their secrecy as anything else but an attempt to deceive the public. WikiLeaks' Iraq War Diaries have provided much needed evidence to the Public Interest Lawyers group supporting the public enquiry of 142 Iraqi civilians in the UK High Court claiming to have been subjected to "torture and to cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment" by UK soldiers from March 2003 to December 2008[4].

The disclosure of these crimes does not create victims nor does it compromise national security. It nurtures the victims of severe human rights violations while correcting a blurred picture of the war created in absence of crucial information. The Iraq War Logs

> "The disclosure of these crimes does not create victims nor does it compromise national security."

create transparency and accountability by turning arcane into common knowledge. Julian Assange's mission is brave and honorable. Yes, the reputation of the UK and US governments will probably suffer. And rightly so.

[1] Landers, K. "Wikileaks boss may have blood on his hands." ABC News, 30 Jul. 2010. Available at http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/30/2968456.htm

[2] McGinty, S. "Wikileaks founder defies critics." The Scotsman, 24 Oct. 2010, Available at http://www.scotsman.com/news/Wikileaks-founder-defies-critics.6596158.jp

[3] "Extensive War Crimes: Wikileaks Iraq War Logs: Legal Action is Unavoidable." Center for Research on Globalization, 30 Oct. 2010, Available at http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=21696

[4] "Lawyers seek inquiry into claims of UK abuse in Iraq." BBC, 5 Nov. 2010. Available at http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-11699891

Good or Evil?

The controversial website WikiLeaks was launched in 2006, and has attracted and videos. The information you will find on the website is the kind of effort and money trying to conceal from the general public. It is said that combined. It is the dream of every whistleblower come true, and the the World Wide Web. Inevitably the question arises: do WikiLeaks founder good journalism or are they simply malicious trouble-makers?

Wander Rutgers contemplates the dangers of WikiLeaks

WikiLeaks and its enigmatic spokesperson, Julian Assange, have reached new heights as they published the second large dose of classified information on US war activities, this time almost 400,000 documents concerning 'significant actions' from the US military and allies in Iraq. But the 'revolutionary' way WikiLeaks has publicized these leaks, through the large scale publication of relatively unfiltered material, violates their own principle of 'harm minimization', jeopardizing individuals safety and national security for little more gain than would have been achieved through the initial release of the documents to the conventional press.

When the forum for whistle-blowers received the information on the two wars, it had in its possession very sensitive files that could expose both individuals' involvement and threaten strategic interests. WikiLeaks' aim in handling this information has been to 'change the perception of those who pay for [the wars]' by releasing valuable new insights into the reality of war. This would enhance the accountability of governments and the

military by exposing crimes committed and facts denied to the electorate. This target was successfully reached when WikiLeaks handed over the Iraq War Logs, and previously the Afghan Diaries to a handful of quality news providers.

Four high-quality newspapers with a strong reputation for accurate and balanced reporting and extensive experience in protecting sources were given time to go through the information, check its sources and then publicize contextualized investigations in their respective publications. The public response to this release was immense, and this large publication in itself had the power to initiate the debate on the effects of the two wars. Through this initial publication the most important facts and some gruesome details were disclosed while individuals and security were not endangered. This should have been it: mission accomplished.

Unfortunately, Mr Assange and his colleagues decided that this wasn't enough. WikiLeaks itself is an interesting organization, it is a 'multi-jurisdictional' form to avoid prosecution, it consist of a small group of

activists in which one person, Mr Assange, has the final say. At the same time as the newspapers released their stories, WikiLeaks proceeded to upload all the raw data online, edited only by their own journalists. This data, of such little extra value for the cause aimed to achieve, carried in it all the harm. Because WikiLeaks does not have a reputation as a balanced news-source to protect, nor does it face legal action from the risk it imposes, it does not bear the consequences of publishing information which may endanger lives and national security.

This renders it unequipped to make the important decisions involved in deciding to what detail documents should be published online. "Any risk to informants' lives was outweighed by the overall importance of publishing the information": Assange argued, as he attempted to justify releasing names of hundreds of Afghan informants, and details that could pose security threats on the ground. This statement illustrates the arbitrary principles by which WikiLeaks decided what information was too risky to publish while

nobody, neither government nor legal system, could act as any form of safeguard for their irresponsible behaviour with the lives of people. WikiLeaks does not have this capability and therefore the harm done by publishing the information, which has been evaluated by a small group accountable to no one, cannot be justified by marginal gains.

In publishing the details of the many documents in their possession, WikiLeaks violated their 'harm minimization' policies. The enormous impact achieved by worldwide news coverage was only marginally complemented by publication of the mass fields of data, which perhaps only terrorists can find the time to go through, and had in it all of the malign consequences that could easily have been avoided. Going through conventional news sources that risk their reputation and legal prosecution for any unnecessary harm they create or inaccuracies they publish, creates a safeguard for the quality and safety of the information; a capacity that WikiLeaks has shown itself incapable to guarantee.

How to Lose Votes

Mitchell Hargreaves on whether Clegg's decisions in the coalition will save

Support for Nick Clegg has collapsed monumentally since the general election, and his reputation now lies somewhere between 'self-serving Conservative facilitator' and 'hypocritical destroyer of his own manifesto.' Mocked by opponents and hated by former supporters, the primary reasons for this animosity are his support for the very Conservative spending cuts that the Liberal Democrats campaigned so strongly against, and his sudden change of heart regarding tuition fees. But how much of Nick Clegg's support for Conservative policies is necessitated by the coalition government? Is he really selling out his own manifesto for a taste of power, or is he trying to demonstrate to the electorate that a coalition government can lend credence to his campaign for proportional representation? The answer to this question is very important, because it will likely determine whether Clegg is remembered as the saviour or the destroyer of his party.

Clegg's support for a rise in tuition fees, a rise which all fifty-seven Liberal Democrat MPs pledged to vote against, has elicited the strongest reaction during his tenure as Deputy Prime Minister. He now faces a backlash from within his party, and waves of protests from students and university staff nationwide. The Liberal Democrats have dropped over ten points in YouGov opinion polls since May 6th, and yet the Conservatives maintain a forty-point rating despite orchestrating the cuts. This is likely due to the fact that Cameron is standing by his, albeit widely unpopular, pre-election promises, whilst Clegg on the other hand is facilitating the cuts which disappoint those who voted Liberal Democrat, thus destroying much of his party's credibility in the process.

Perhaps though, his support for Conservative economic policies is simply the nature of coalition politics. If it were his intention to oppose all Tory policies he could have refused a coalition, and opposed a minority Conservative government. He might have maintained his integrity, but the cuts would

> "By setting the country on course for a potentially significant change in the electoral system, it is possible that Clegg may yet prove himself the saviour of the Liberal Democrats."

still be going through, and the country wouldn't be facing an Alternative Vote referendum, nor would the income tax personal allowance be raised by one thousand pounds next April, taking almost one million people out of income tax altogether. Furthermore, by refusing a coalition on ideological differences, Clegg would have been undermining his campaign for proportional representation. Similarly, any attempt to form a coalition with Labour, an attempt that would keep the party with the most votes out of power would have been hypocritical. So perhaps by trading off most of the Liberal Democrats' economic policies in exchange for compensatory social reforms, Clegg is simply working towards validating his campaign for the Single Transferable Vote.

Nevertheless, he could have salvaged his integrity throughout the run-up to George Osborne's spending review. Making clear his dislike for cuts, but highlighting the necessary compromise he must make, would have been a more dignified approach than blaming changing circumstances, or reverting to the coalition's universal scapegoat: the budget deficit left by Labour. Clegg is wrong in presenting the coalition as a single, unified administration, and excuses only present the image that he's trying to conceal his treachery from the public. However by setting the country on course for a potentially significant electoral system change, it is possible that Clegg may yet prove himself the saviour of the Liberal Democrats. Yet his tenure as leader is unlikely to last long enough to receive any such recognition.

Nothing justifies the hypocrisy Clegg demonstrated over tuition fees. It is impossible to campaign under the slogan "no more broken promises," only to immediately renege on a signed pledge to the electorate, and expect to maintain political credibility, especially considering Clegg's university constituency of Sheffield Hallam. Thousands of students voted for him, and the scale of this betrayal should have been better considered before deciding on priorities in government.

In fact, tuition fee rises were dropped by the Liberal-Democrats as a priority in coalition negotiations before the elections. Clegg is thus justifiably denounced as an antichrist who betrayed students. Despite his claim that the situation is worse than he'd anticipated when pledging to vote against tuition hikes, he has in one fell swoop proven himself every bit as untrustworthy as the politicians he condemned. Additionally, Clegg cannot take sole credit for the AV referendum; it is a diluted Liberal Democrat policy, and the minimum any party leader would have demanded. Other leaders, however, would likely not have capitulated to Cameron in such spectacular fashion. Clegg has reduced himself to, at best, a laughing stock, at worst, an abhorred pariah. His party seems a shadow of the 'defenders of political integrity' they used to cast themselves as. He has destroyed his party's reputation and integrity, and it is difficult to argue that he deserves the nation's trust again. He certainly won't receive it. Much of the criticism that has arisen from Clegg's support for the spending review could, and indeed should, have been avoided by more careful planning and greater honesty.

Tuition fees aside, Britain is not used to a coalition, thus, perhaps with time, opinion on Clegg's cooperation with the Conservatives may improve. With regard to whether Clegg will be remembered as hero or destroyer, even sympathetic supporters of Clegg's predicament cannot deny his betrayal. It seems naïve to think Nick Clegg will ultimately come through for his supporters.

and Alienate People

or destroy the Liberal Democrats as a credible third party in British politics.

He will not command public trust or affection again, and his party will suffer for it. Clegg has transformed, for many, from angel to devil. He does not appear to have an end strategy on tuition fees, and until the economy has fully recovered we are unlikely to see the scrapping of fees in the Liberal Democrat manifesto. As a result, the Liberal Democrats will not come close to the opinion poll figures they saw in May while Clegg remains leader.

And yet, if the Alternative Vote referendum passes next year, they may just see increased government representation

> **"He will not command public trust or affection again, and his party will suffer for it."**

in 2015. Next May, however, Clegg's peers in Holyrood are likely to bear the brunt of public disaffection, and any support Nick Clegg can gather at the next general election will be far more reserved than that which he became accustomed to after the Prime Ministerial debates. While his support for Conservative cuts can be defended, his hypocrisy and dishonesty can not. Clegg can only hope that his legacy will set Britain on the path to a fairer electoral system, paving the way for future Liberal successes. If not, he will be remembered solely as the hypocrite who betrayed and disillusioned a generation, and in doing so brought his party crashing down around him.

Spending cuts take effect...

Joshua Valanzuolo

Dumb Tea: Philosophy

Samuel Dresser explores the loud, proud and essentially anti-intellectualist outlook

University graduates, academic egg heads, and award winning thinkers populate the offices of Capitol Hill. Supreme Court Judges; the President; his wife; his cohort; legions of congressmen and women; their aides; advisers; and donors-- most have attended top-notch schools; most can reasonably be described as 'intellectuals'; erudite people charged with the enormous responsibility of running America. Further- more, Barack Obama has famously trusted the profes- sorial types, those who make a living ruminating over the issues that define his presi- dency. This faith in smartness, in aptitude, in understanding and academia should be the most logical move a president could make—why would he not trust these people? But it is this trait for which he is so often demonized by the increasingly vociferous Right, that faction now known as the Tea Party. Indeed, the Tea Party mistrusts most academics, most intel- lectuals (and Obama for being an academic intellectual). The question I want to provide some cursory answers to is this: Why is knowledge so mistrusted by the Tea Party?

First, some notes on this pugnacious movement. The party is an object of extreme interest to Americans, but even more so to Europeans, who conceive of Tea Partiers as living, breathing confirmation that American culture is vacu- ous, scary, inferior, and, best of all, unintentionally hilarious. In many ways Europeans are right, but the Tea Party need be understood as the outcome of a half-century of festering dis-

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trust of the mainstream[1]. What most characterizes unthinking conservatism is an infantile desire to revert to some hazy, idealized, long-gone past that, unfortunately, never actually existed. Tea Party rhetoric is that of the Revolution—at least as a child would understand it. They think of the Revolution as a time of innocent and pure American- ism, when Americans were united by their individual- ity: e pluribus unum reigned, and not, as they see it now, the other way around. Tea Partiers recognize in the Revolution the wholesomeness of the so-called American Dream: forgetting, of course, that no such notion really existed at the time. And they have chosen, of all people,

"Why is knowledge so mistrusted by the Tea Party?"

President Wilson as the arch- nemesis of holy, unfettered individualism--he the enemy of personal liberty reserved for The Greatest Country On Earth--because he had the audacity to crack down on ram- pant big business and introduce the federal in- come tax and the Federal Reserve Sys- tem. Without Wilson, the 'argument' goes, America would today be a land built on dreams re- alized. It does not take a historian to show that this is a rather rose-colored view of the situation.

As these cursory notes indicate, the Tea Party thinks of itself as the exemplification of American ideals, embracing the principles of the Founding Fathers and seeing through the perfidy of liberalism. They feel

they are, as it were, standing for all that is good--while every- one else has fallen under the hypnotic power of evil, whether it takes the guise of fascism, socialism, or communism (is there even a difference?). It is here we find the beating heart of the Tea Party mentality: the strictest, most indiscriminate demarcation between the Good and the Evil, as if American politics were the exact mime- sis of Star Wars politics. As upholders of soaring American ideals, it is their God-given duty to fight back against the liberals, who are regularly described as 'un-American', and trusted for all that entails[2]. What I mean to say is that they consider the uncompromis- ing distinction between Good and Evil to be an American ideal, on par with liberty, small government, etcetera. That they make such a contrast is in virtue of their understanding of Americanism[3]. And herein lies the titanic difficulty.

# of a Movement

that helps to define the new force in American politics, the Tea Party

Because of this conception of American ideals, the Tea Party has never let a little thing like 'evidence' distort or nuance their sacred Good-Evil divide. Worse, they are not in the least embarrassed by their lack of knowledge. For salient examples, see Palin's inability to name a Supreme Court case other than Roe v. Wade, or O'Donnell's total ignorance of the Constitutional Amendments, or the droves of 'birthers'; or Tea Partiers not knowing the fundamentals of health care reform; or their wholesale subscription to John Birch-esque conspiracy theories; or their lack of differentiation between Communism, socialism and fascism; or, more philosophically, having no notion whatsoever of the fundamental tension between 'equality' and 'liberty' that so bothered Tocqueville 180 years ago. Most disturbing, and exemplifying exactly what is wrong with Tea Party 'intellect', is Glenn Beck, whose goal it is to attempt to rationalize the maxim "Tea Party Good, Everybody Else Evil." His programme, the Glenn Beck Show, is filled with crackpot history lessons based on conspiracy theories and the anti-Communist hysterics of the McCarthy era[4]. And he wants to demonstrate two things: first, history is on the Tea Party's side and second, the Tea Party's place in history is divine and sacred. This attempt to be knowledgeable and rational[5] is exactly what proves the point that the Tea Party places no emphasis on erudition and intelligence: for Beck and his followers could not be farther from the real thing. They wield 'history' and 'knowledge' as tools to prove their point - not in order to evaluate their point. Counter-examples to Beck's positions are consigned to liberal conspiracies, liberal media hyperbole or liberal hypnotism--never to be taken seriously. This lack of real argumentation demonstrates better than anything that knowledge has no value for Tea Party folk; only faith to the cause does.

Obama and liberals are bellicosely attacked for their 'elitism', a term formerly used to denote a kind of class resentment, but now meaning something much closer to epistemological resentment. Going to an Ivy League school, being a scholar and an academic and a thinker has fallen into terrible disrepute, while the Tea Party wants to protect the rich from being taxed too heavily--this, they surmise, goes against the grain of the American Dream[6]. Obviously, much of the mistrust in Obama and his cohort's intelligence is derivative of their political party and left-leaning ideology--but this does not explain the wholesale, passionate disregard for argumentation and academia more generally. It is not just that some academics are politically opposed to the Tea Party that hurts 'knowledge', it is rather because of the effect that knowledge has on the Tea Party's Good-Evil foundation: namely, the pernicious effect. Any understanding of history--a real understanding, not a 'Beckian' pseudo- understanding--necessarily blurs the line between Good and Evil: and the Good is not so straightforward, not so historically determinant and never so maliciously extremist (even stalwart Republicans see this).

It is a scary place to be, thinking knowledge and understanding are themselves Evil, if only because of their 'distorting' effect of the strict divisions between what is Good and what is not. It might be said here that, yes, of course lack of knowledge leads to virulent and vituperative forms of extremism--this is no substantive claim! And that exactly is the point: the Tea Party is extremism par excellence, and should be fought as such.

[1] Zerike, Kate. "The Tea Party, Exported." Foreign Policy Magazine, 26 Oct. 2010. Available at http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/10/26/the_tea_party_exported

[2] Kramer, Roderick M. "The Sinister Attribution Error: Paranoid Cognition and Collective Distrust in Organizations." Motivation and Emotion 18(2), 1994, pp. 199-230

[3] Precursor: "Axis of Evil".

[4] Wilentz, Sean. "Glenn Beck, the Tea Party, and the Republicans." The New Yorker Magazine, 18 Oct. 2010. Available at http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/10/18/101018fa_fact_wilentz

[5] See the online, for-profit 'Beck University'.

[6] Weisberg, Jacob. "Elitist Nonsense." Slate Magazine, 02 Oct. 2010. Available at http://www.slate.com/id/2269576/

People of Scotland Unite:

Silvia AC Nerreter explores growing public opinion in Scotland against coal

About 40% of electricity in the UK is produced through burning coal. This accounts for nearly 30% of the UK's CO_2 emissions. Furthermore, the industry is expanding in Scotland. There are 35 opencast, and 7 deep coal mines in the UK and over 40 more opencast mines have been proposed. According to the Coal Authority, the number of applications for opencast mines doubled in 2009-2010 from the previous year, encouraged through government subsidies and funded by bank investments.

There is growing opposition to this proposed expansion around Scotland, coming from communities and protestors who are trying to raise awareness of the environmental and social impacts of the coal industry, and to reduce the number of new mines and power plants. Despite the Department of Health's 'Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants' providing scientific evidence of open cast coal mines causing health problems, the coal mining industry in Scotland is growing, mainly due to the easy accessibility of coal deposits. The presence of coal dust in the air and chemicals in groundwater, leftover from the washing of coal, has been linked to an increase in the risk of lung and kidney diseases by around 70%, as well as high blood pressure and heart attacks. Further effects on the local community include noise pollution, ground vibration and an adverse impact on the landscape and recreational space.

There have been four applications for new and expanded opencast coal mines and expansions less than ten miles from Edinburgh city centre; two in Rosewell, one near Cousland. Opposition from local communities and activists against those projects was, and still remains, strong, but in Rosewell, economic interests overcame local opposition and a new opencast mine has been opened. Local residents unsuccessfully tried to prevent the mine by legal means, but most are now resigned to its presence. Some protestors who still hoped to stop the project climbed onto machines working on the mine in February 2009 and brought work to a halt for a few hours, but when the police arrived, no one was arrested.

In October 2009 one extension of the mine was admitted by the Midlothian Council, an application for another extension is still pending.

However, in other locations local people's campaigns have proven successful in influencing the council's decision. An application for the establishment of an opencast mine at the Airfield farm near Cousland was made in July 2009. The area around Airfield has been classified as an Area of Great Landscape Value. Local residents who opposed the development organized a community led, voluntary organization called "Communities Against Airfield Open Cast" (CAAOC). They managed to get support from 95% of local people, all opposing the mining plans. Overall over 1000 people voiced their opposition and managed to influence the council's decision, as the Midlothian Council decided in October 2010 to refuse Scot-

Paul Glazzard

tish Coal's application for the mine. The Council's Development Management Manager, Peter Arnsdorf, stated: "The proposal is contrary to Government planning policy, as set out in the Scottish Planning Policy (February 2010) in that it will not provide any benefits to the local community or local environment that would outweigh the disbenefits arising from its adverse visual and landscape impact; the possible adverse effect on the quality of life of local communities resulting from an additional source of noise into this rural environment; the impact from dust; and the potentially adverse effect it will have on the enjoyment of recreational users of the surrounding countryside."

This success story gave hope to many people. CAAOC described it as a "victory of democracy". Dougie McKenzie, chairman of CAAOC stated: "It restored our faith in both the planning system and our councillors who have clearly listened to their electorate's concerns."

Unfortunately this has not been the case everywhere and, as activists put it, "corporate greed" often dominates social and environmental interest, even in an established democracy like the UK, as was seen in Rosewell.

One of the longest citizen oppositions against opencast mining exists in the Douglas Valley, South Lanarkshire, a beautiful woodland area and popular recreational location with a lot of wildlife.

No New Coal Mines Here!

mining and how it is trying to halt the industry's growth

For the last 20 years, Douglas Valley communities have fought against Scottish Coal to preserve this habitat, but, despite these efforts, five opencast mines have been opened and the applications for more mines have been accepted. Despite local opposition, the council has so far rejected none of the applications.

One of the biggest mines that has been opened is at Mainshill, a site in the middle of an old forest. Opposition there has been particularly pressing, however, the council ignored months of campaigning by local residents, including over 800 letters of objection sent to them, to grant permission for the mine to open.. In June 2009 when work on the mine was due to start, activists set up a camp on the site, called "Mainshill Solidarity Camp". It has been strongly supported by local communities through food donations and the camp was in existence for seven months. However, in January 2010, the camp was forcefully closed by the National Eviction Team, a process which took five days and 43 people were arrested. Nevertheless, local people still have hope the mine can be shut and opposition persists.

Financial investment heavily determines where energy resources are exploited. Despite portraying a 'green' image to the public, many Scottish banks are heavily involved in financing the coal industry, especially RBS and Lloyds TSB. The site of the Mainshill mine in the Douglas Valley is owned by Lord Home, chairman of Coutt's bank, the corporate wing of RBS. Earlier this year the University of Edinburgh moved its bank accounts to RBS, a change that has been criticized by many students, and, at the time of writing, there are plans afoot to petition the university to express student disapproval.

Protests against RBS have been increasing in Edinburgh, especially in 2010. The biggest of those events was the "Camp for Climate Action" in August, set up next to the RBS headquarters in Gogarburn, just outside of Edinburgh. Smaller actions occur almost continuously around Edinburgh, such as the "Crude Awakening" action in the city centre on 16th October, which tried to catch passer-bys's attention by holding a Ceilidh in front of the RBS headquarters on St. Andrews Square. This was followed by a "die-in", where everyone, except people dressed up as corporate bankers, dropped to the ground, demonstrating the lack of influence ordinary people have compared with the domination of strong economic interests.

The Public opposition to opencast coal mines in Scotland is growing, fuelled by health research and increasing environmental awareness. This is taking place right on our doorstep: There have been four applications for opencast coal mines and expansions less than ten miles away from Edinburgh, two of them granted by Midlothian Council with a third still pending. However, one was rejected after the successful campaign of opposition of local residents. This is perhaps the most important development in the campaign against coal mining across Scotland, as resistance to the mines, and the number of people involved in these campaigns, increases, there is still hope that the spread of coal mines across Scotland can be prevented.

> "Despite portraying a 'green' image to the public, many Scottish banks are heavily involved in financing the coal industry, especially RBS and Lloyds TSB"

Mariana Iotenko

Want to learn more?

http://www.coal.gov.uk/media/137/25/8713-Coal_Auth-Annual_Report_and_Accounts-WEB.pdf

Rosewell:
https://planning-applications.midlothian.gov.uk/OnlinePlanning/caseFile.do?category=application&caseNo=09/00349/FUL

Airfield:
https://planning-applications.midlothian.gov.uk/OnlinePlanning/propertyDetails.do?action=showProHistory&lpiKeyValue=IOB2E0KV20000

http://airfieldopencast.co.uk/
http://coalintheuk.org
http://coalactionscotland.org.uk
http://www.corporatewatch.org.uk

Communism, Fascism and Myths

Nik Matheou on why the hammer and sickle

There is a certain disparity in the manner in which the two major totalitarian ideologies, communism and fascism, are treated by the public at large today. Communism is largely seen as a "good" ideology which is too easily corrupted by what is termed "human nature", whereas fascism is seen as an "evil" ideology in of itself. I intend to argue that there is no basis for these assertions, and to forward some suggestions for why they might have come about.
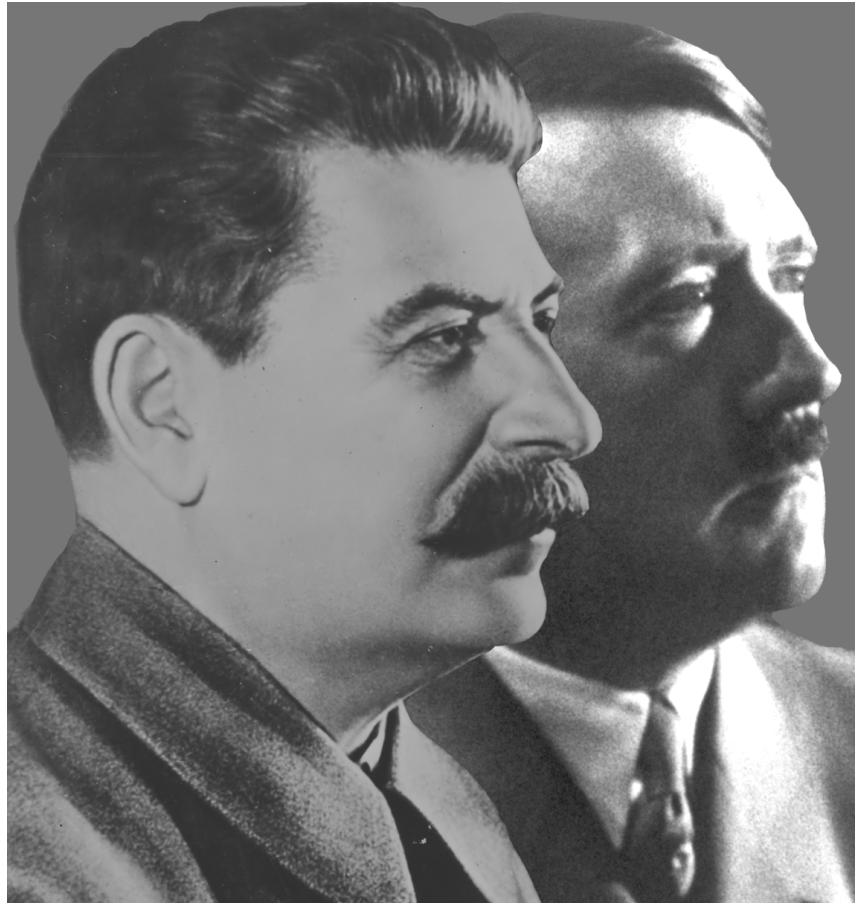
First we should attempt some basic assessment of the ideologies themselves. Communism is centred on the idea that the working class should, at some point, take control of the means of production, and initiate a social revolution through a process called the "dictatorship of the proletariat", leading eventually to a perfect distribution of resources between all members of society. Fascism aspires to organise the state along a strict hierarchical structure, and to organise the economy into a corporatist system. It views the nation as a mass cultural expression and the natural form of human organisation, and thus glorifies it, subsuming all individualism to it. It is worth noting that fascist hierarchy is meritocratic rather than aristocratic, and thus open to any strong and staunchly loyal members of society.

Having outlined this there are a number of comments we can make on the ideologies themselves. They both are aimed at single groups, communism at the working class and fascism at a particular nation, and desire to place that group at the top of the heap so to speak. Neither is particularly clear in what manner this should take place, and both foresee a single party state which has a monopoly on all forms of production and mass mobilisation.

A difficulty with looking at the issue of communism and fascism, as alluded to, is that there has not been an example of a state which managed to pull off a perfect version of these ideologies. This has often been used as a defence of communism, and could be said of fascism as well, although to my knowledge this is rarely done. However, I would argue that this is a weak argument to make, if an ideology cannot be implemented then that is a fundamental flaw and not an excuse. The only evidence we can use is what has happened, not how things might or should have happened. In practice then communism and fascism are remarkably similar, as is often remarked. In government structure they share a tendency towards bureaucratic dictatorship, communism slightly more bureaucratic and fascism slightly more dictatorial. Equally in economic structure they both create state monopolies, communism directly controlling all the means of production and fascism more indirectly, making use of state contracts and funding although with the potential recourse to nationalisation. They both also create a hierarchical political structure based around the party, with the party as the sole means of political power.

> ## "If an ideology cannot be implemented then that is a fundamental flaw and not an excuse."

We should address the racial issue in fascism, as this is clearly a major factor in why it is labelled as evil. Strictly speaking fascism is not a race based ideology, Nazism is a race based form of fascism. The confusion between these two terms can go some way to explaining why fascism is viewed so negatively as opposed to communism. However we will not separate the two in this article, as it can still be argued that communism and fascism are equally "evil" even if Nazism comes under that heading. Nazism relies heavily on painting certain racial groups as inferior enemies of the state, and uses them in propaganda as the "other" against which the state must fight. This idea is found

of the Second World War
might be just as evil as the Swastika

recurrently in communist states, the only difference being that rather than a specific ethnic group, entire social classes are condemned as the enemy. For instance kulak witch-hunts in the 1920s and 30s USSR can very easily be likened to the early Nazi victimisation of Jews. Communist states have also violently suppressed religions, as well as ethnic minorities, supposedly excused by its internationalist and atheist ideology.

We should now turn to looking at why these ideologies are treated so differently. In large part it can be argued to be due to the experience of the Second World War, although as we shall see this only seems odder. The Second World War is commonly portrayed as the classic fight of good against evil. This idea is all pervasive in films, books and computer games, and yet there is arguably little basis for it. Had the sides remained as they were in 1939, with both the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany and its allies aggressively conquering land then there could be a case for it. However once the Allies numbered Stalin amongst them, it cannot be argued that this was the "free" world versus those who would wish to dominate it. Understandably Western propaganda had to present Stalin as "Uncle Joe" in order to keep morale up; however many historians and commentators who have come after the war need not have subscribed to such a myth.

Katie Brady

> *"It cannot be argued that this was the 'free' world versus those who would wish to dominate it."*

There is little doubt that in reality the West was allied to a dictator at least as "evil" as Hitler. Some of the most contentious issues of the Second World War come from the death statistics, but even a most liberal reading wouldn't put the number killed through deportation or gulag at much less than those lost to the Nazi death machine, and regardless "evil" was never measured by such quotas. This is not a defence of Hitler by attacking Stalin, it is simply necessary to point out that one cannot draw lines in the sand here. The West's inability to recognise this basic fact is arguably the greatest factor influencing sustained impressions of communism as a "good" ideology and fascism as "evil". Indeed the British War

Crimes Act of 1991 stipulates that only acts committed by the Axis powers in the Second World War can be termed war crimes, this is perhaps insulting to the thousands of Soviet soldiers sent to gulags after the war simply for having met Western troops, as well as the millions of other victims of Stalin.

It is clear that these myths have created something of a strange paradox in the modern world, where someone can be jailed for denying the holocaust or wearing swastikas, but a t-shirt with the hammer and sickle is fashionable. I do

> *"The British War Crimes Act of 1991 stipulates that only acts committed by the Axis powers in the Second World War can be termed war crimes, this is perhaps insulting to the thousands of Soviet soldiers sent to gulags."*

not argue for the softening of anti-Nazi laws, or the jailing of communists, only a greater sense of perspective when looking at the issue. In fact it is arguably necessary to shed all ideas of "good" and "evil" when referring to Nazism, communism or the Second World War at all. The use of these imprecise terms only serves to cloud the events and the ideologies, hampering any genuinely academic approach to the issues.
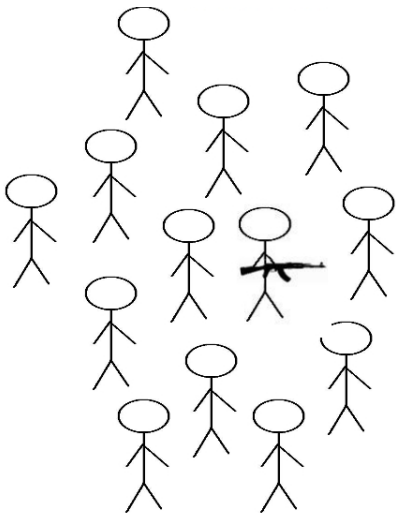
Sanctioned

Ryan Jacobs on the sad reality and perhaps

Once designed for use against heavily armoured Soviet tanks on the European frontier, the Hellfire missile has found softer targets in Pakistan's dusty mountains. Launched from the wings of unmanned drones circling far above the battlefield, the drone strike campaign eliminates its fair share of terrorists and insurgents; however its overarching strategy resembles a game of whack-a-mole much more than a strategy with a pre-supposed end game. Worse are the numerous civilians unlucky enough to be near targets when Hellfire rains down. When in June 2009 a US drone targeted Baitullah Mehsud, the head of the Pakistani Taliban at a funeral, it missed. Mehsud survived. Over 40 others, some of whom were civilians, weren't so lucky. Later that year Mehsud, a man ultimately responsible for the deaths of countless innocent civilians and political figures like former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, died in a second strike along with his wife and relatives.

Drone strikes are "products of meticulous planning among lawyers, intelligence officers, and others who scrupulously and independently confirm information about potential enemies, working to establish a rigorous 'pattern of life' to minimize the deaths of innocents."[1] Thus, referring to all civilian deaths as accidental is naive. With so much pre-planning and a drone orbiting above to video-stream the operation back to headquarters, civilian deaths here are not an accident. The more likely scenario is that civilians are aimed at in the pursuit of important targets among them. Military and civilian authorities weigh collateral damage with the need to take out an active threat. Is this an evil strategy though? A fair amount of wide- eyed human rights activists and the general public might say so. But it's always easy to be in opposition when you don't have to provide a rival strategy. The unethical use of drone strikes is nuanced by the fact that vast amounts of civilian aid is bequeathed to Pakistan to build up its physical, social and political infrastructure. Besides Mehsud, and hundreds of Taliban and al-Qaeda foot soldiers, many other high-value targets have been killed by the campaign: Abu Khabab al-Masri, al-Qaeda's expert in weapons of mass destruction; Abu Haris, al-Qaeda chief in Pakistan; Abu Laith al-Libi, the number three man in al- Qaeda's hierarchy;

and Abu Jihad al-Masri, al-Qaeda propaganda chief.[2]

To examine why the US has arrived at this potential moral impasse, one needs to understand the strategy which got it there. The do-gooder, nation-building exercise in Afghanistan has failed. NATO forces are planning to slowly withdraw. Offensives to retake Taliban strongholds in Marjah and Kandahar were met with

> "The do-gooder, nation-building exercise in Afghanistan has failed. NATO forces are planning to slowly withdraw. Offensives to retake Taliban strongholds in Marjah and Kandahar were met with stiff resistance... public support for continued occupation is dwindling, and stingy finances don't bode well for increased support."

stiff resistance, and not just from insurgents but from fed up locals. American and British public support for continued occupation is dwindling, and stingy finances don't bode well for increased support to an ineffective Afghan state. However, as the Taliban comes to the table for talks, about talks, about a negotiated solution, the threat to western countries has moved to Pakistan and Yemen. In isolated valleys and mountains, long abandoned by government forces, Al-Qaeda and its affiliates planned the unsuccessful Times Square and air cargo attacks. How do you reach them though? Pakistani military offensives have only been marginally successful, and this summer's flooding further

hampers their ability to cleanse terrorist safe havens in the North-West Frontier Province and South Waziristan. The ubiquitous Predator drone has filled the void.

Despite their questionable legality; the fact that US administration officials know drone strikes "can't win a war;"[3] and the high numbers of civilian casualties, officials have no better option. Western publics are sick of nation-building and prolonged counter-insurgency operations. Thus, more overt boots on the ground in Pakistan instead of the presently covert CIA teams generating intelligence is out of the question. The complementary benefits of targeted killings aren't new. Israel, not known for its nuanced diplomacy, relied on tactics similar to the drone strikes during the second intifada. Complemented by other policies like robust human intelligence networks to identify targets, Israel's targeted killings of Hamas leaders and bomb makers led to a significant drop in the lethality rate of Hamas attacks.[4] David Kilcullen, an advisor to counter-insurgency practitioners, argues "if we want to

Sin

necessity of drone strikes in Pakistan

strengthen our friends and weaken our enemies in Pakistan, bombing Pakistani villages with unmanned drones is totally counterproductive."[5] He's wrong. Firstly drone strikes aren't equal to bombing Pakistani villages and this isn't the firebombing of Germany. The strategy being followed by the US and its allies is one of maintaining the status quo; it's neither counterproductive nor productive. It's the 'whack-a-mole' approach. Learned from the Israeli experience, by launching drone strikes, terrorists, insurgents and their networks are disrupted, not defeated:

"Plans are disrupted when individuals die or are wounded, as new people must be recruited and less experienced leaders take over day-to-day operations. Perhaps most importantly, organizations fearing a strike must devote increased attention to their own security because any time they communicate with other cells or issue propaganda, they may be exposing themselves to a targeted attack."[6]

There is no doubt: the drone campaign in Pakistan provides militants a great recruiting tool. Assassinating a target often entails the "accidental" death of civilians around him, and as the saying goes "kill one and ten replace him". However, to train those

new ten to the operational skill level an eliminated high value target might have had, can take years. You'll find no argument here that the drone campaign doesn't provide an effective long term strategy. In fact a recent study by Micah Zenko points to the fact that discrete military operations like drone strikes, have statistically only met their political objectives 6 percent of the time.[7] The problem is that as the disengagement from Afghanistan occurs, the least effective option for combatting terrorist networks is becoming the only possible one.

It is a morally messy affair relying on drone strikes. They unduly kill civilians, create terrorists and harm a nation's image abroad. Yet, the whack-a-mole approach to counter-terrorism is a way of maintaining the status quo or balance of power in the short term. Blanket banning drone strikes in Pakistan isn't advisable either. The Pakistani military is unwilling and unable to deal with the prevalent threats. A local uprising against

> *"The strategy being followed by the US and its allies is one of maintaining the status quo; it's neither counterproductive nor productive. It's the 'whack-a-mole' approach."*

militants isn't likely either; one just has to look at the stranglehold the Taliban has on communities in Afghanistan. Drone strikes can inhibit the threat from terrorist safe havens, but only when mixed with a comprehensive strategy to fight radicalism in Pakistan. The mistake in Vietnam was seeing airpower as the solution to win the war, when it was only something which maintained the status quo.

Long term strategies lie in mixing this toxic policy with substantial civilian aid to Pakistan, and this is happening. A $7.5 Billion aid package was bequeathed to Pakistan this summer, including substantial civilian infrastructure such as dams and health centres.[8] Of course the bequeathing of civilian aid doesn't mean it will be utilized effectively. Still, the redevelopment of a state takes much longer and costs much more money, than either the launching of a Hellfire missile or planning of a terrorist attack. Allowing the safe havens to grow uninhibited only means it will become easier for militants

and terrorists to plan cross-border and foreign attacks. Thus, for the time being, sanctioned sin will continue to be launched from the wings of Predator drones high above Pakistan's desolate northwest. It being the least evil policy at the US' disposal.

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A War Worth

Alex Paul on why the war on drugs has

There is a war the US government spends $1,400 a second fighting[1]. It is not Afghanistan or Iraq; in fact this war was formally declared in 1971 by the disgraced US President Richard Nixon, although arguably the opening salvos were exchanged way back in the 1920s. It is a war that is fought for control of a global trade estimated to be worth $422bn annually[2], and $100bn[3] to the US Treasury alone. It involves the forces of 'good': law enforcement agencies and the justice system, battling an 'evil' that threatens to corrode the fabric of Western society. But what is this evil? It's illicit drugs, such as heroin, cannabis and cocaine. However, is it the drugs themselves that would destroy our society? Or does conventional policy of criminalisation and prohibition make them an 'evil' influence? Would we do better by embracing the evil and making it, well, slightly less evil? In short, is it time for a new approach to the 'war on drugs'?

The recognition that an alternative approach is needed is one that seems to have been gaining currency in the last decade. With Portugal decriminalising all drugs for personal use in 2001; The Latin American Commission on Drugs and Democracy suggesting a policy shift for South American countries from prohibition to reduction; and the appearance in California of 'Proposition 19' on state ballot papers in November 2010 show this clearly. This approach is twofold:

recognising the failure of conventional drug policy to stamp out the trade and use of illicit drugs, whilst acknowledging

> ## "Would we do better by embracing the evil and making it, well, slightly less evil?"

that criminalisation has allowed organised crime to reap massive profits from the continuing demand for these drugs.

Granted, advocates for the 'war on drugs' will point to figures that show[4], over the last 100 years there has been the dramatic drop in the percentage of drug users worldwide. According to predictions in the UN's World Drug Report 2008, if 1908 figures on percentage of opium users to general population had remained static, 91 million people today worldwide would be opium users, compared to the 2008 figure of just 16.5 million people[5]. However, this reduction must be placed in context of the more potent side effects of criminalisation.

Firstly, the war on drugs costs massive sums of taxpayers' money. Money that could be spent on other public goods desperately in need of funding. For example, in California,

just US$8000 per year is spent per child in Oakland schools, whereas $216,000 is spent on each under-age detainee in state jails[6], many of whom are detained for drug possession. Overall, decriminalising cannabis only would save the US Government $17bn a year and prevent the criminalisation of 750,000 Americans for the possession of cannabis.

Secondly, the illicit trade in drugs is big business, and organised crime is prepared to fight bitterly to grab a share of this business. In 2006, the new Mexican President, Felipe Calderon, declared a new 'war on drugs' and deployed the army to battle the cartels that were already fighting among themselves to control supply routes to the world's biggest drug user, the USA. Since December 2006, when this war was launched, there have been over 28,000 deaths[7] in Mexico alone, and no significant decrease in the amount of drugs reaching the USA. Furthermore, one of the main sources of funding for the Taliban in Afghanistan has been the opium trade, netting them between $259 million to

$518 million[8] in just one year, 2007. Decriminalising drugs would place these revenue streams into the hands of governments instead, allowing these profits to be spent on drug treatment and harm reduction whilst denying the profits to the drug cartels and the Taliban.

Thirdly, in recent years, it has had little discernable effect on the global market for drugs. Since the US Government began funding Plan Colombia in 2000, providing US$7.5bn of aid and support to Colombia to help "combat the narcotics industry"[9], US street cocaine prices have fallen, and worldwide cocaine production has hardly changed[10]. Cannabis is now produced in higher quantities than ever before. By accepting there is a demand for these drugs and decriminalising them, governments would be able to treat them like any

> ## "$8000 per year is spent per child in Oakland schools, whereas $216,000 is spent on each under-age detainee in state jails."

other product and tax them accordingly. In the UK, presently the taxpayer, through the NHS, has to pay the treatment of drug addicts anyway. So by treating illicit drugs as a taxable commodity, this care could be funded by tax revenue from the drugs trade instead.

Fighting

failed and how to fix it

Nevertheless, does decriminalisation work? To take an example, since it was enacted in Portugal in 2001, use among almost all sectors of society has declined, HIV infection rates have also dropped, and the numbers seeking treatment for drug addictions has more than doubled. According to the author of a recent report into the effects of this policy, Glenn Greenwald of the US think-tank 'The Cato Institute' commented "Judging by every metric, decriminalization in Portugal has been a resounding success. It has enabled the Portuguese government to manage and control the drug problem far better than virtually every other Western country does."[11] Questions do remain, such as whether it would work in countries with much larger problems, but it is surely an alternative worth considering by Western governments, approach instead of blindly continuing to adhere to the failing policy of prohibition.

There's one final point to consider. 20% of the adult English population smoke[12]. The average person in the UK consumes 14 units of alcohol a week, with nearly 1 in 3 men and 1 in 5 women[13] in the UK drinking more than the recommended amount. In 2008, there were 9,031 deaths[14] from alcohol in the UK. This is all legal. And yet, a 2010 report in The Lancet, authored by Professor Nutt, the former chief drugs advisor to the UK Government,

DRUGS... I'VE NEVER SEEN THE POINT OF THEM MYSELF!

Mariana Iotenko

found that alcohol was the most harmful drug in the UK today, when effect on the individual and wider society is factored in. So why are the "most harmful"

> ## "The UK government, found that alcohol was the most harmful drug in the UK today."

drugs legal and "less harmful" drugs illegal? Is it not time as

a society we stopped fighting a war we cannot win and, instead of continuing with the failed approach of prohibition and instead try a new approach of regulation and decriminalisation? Could a more nuanced approach make illicit drugs just that little bit less evil?

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Far right-wing support: A frightening reality

Sofia Dolfe on the political discomfort fueled by a new wave of right-wing parties

Many across Europe have watched the rise of a new wave of far right-wing political parties with increasing discomfort in recent years. Increasingly, far right-wing political parties have generated pervasive support, with the ambitious agenda to heavily reduce the flow of immigration as the central premise. In Europe alone, far right-wing parties have been successful in Austria, Denmark, Germany, Italy, and, in Sweden, the far right-wing Swedish political party, the Swedish Democrats (SD), passed the 4% threshold, gaining 20 seats in Parliament after the September National Elections. Also, in Britain, the British National Party (BNP) has gathered popular support, evidenced by their 2 seats in the European Parliament.

This augmentation is a frightening reality; political figures blaming social, political and economic problems within their countries as a result of immigration. This widespread support for far right-wing parties facilitates racism against refugees, persons fleeing their country of birth due to fear of persecution for religious, social or racial issues; persons who are entitled to their inherent right of protection, as outlined in the United Nations Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.[1] According to Edith M. Lederer from the Associated Press, migrants are subjects "of the most insidious contemporary forms of racial discrimination." She continues, claiming that "immigrants bear the brunt of xenophobic intolerance – and this is true of

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the United States, and it is of Europe, and it is of many parts of the world."[2] Frighteningly, far right-wing governments underpin this racist ideology, and their increasing support furthers xenophobia in society. This increase in support is extremely worrying; suggesting an alarming repetition of our most shameful history is under way.

Supporters of far right-wing parties particularly seem to base their argument on the scarcity of job opportunities and the question of identity, both of which immigrants are accused of "stealing" from nationals. In the UK, the BNP has manifestly declared that higher unemployment for British nationals is a direct cause of immigration, with immigrants "stealing" job opportunities[3] from British nationals. This claim lacks huge credibility. As explained in The Economist, immigrants do not "steal" jobs, on the contrary they contribute immensely to the growth of British economy, "especially in sectors such as agriculture where many of the low-paid jobs migrants take would not make sense at the

higher wages needed to attract natives from unemployment."[4] Clearly, immigrants are willing to do the jobs that British nationals reject and deem themselves overqualified for. Also from a realistic perspective, if a non-British worker of different ethnic origin, with little awareness of British standards, that most probably does not speak English comprehensively, "stole" a job from a British national, he or she was most probably better suited.

The flow of immigration weakens the sense of British identity, BNP supporters also argue. Not only ignorant of the fact that "Britishness" in itself is an assimilation of collective nationalities, English, Northern Irish, Scottish and Welsh, the argument is weak and outdated. The modern, globalized society we live in inevitably creates fluidity between national borders, and any average Brit or European takes advantage of this, through i.e. gaining education abroad, online shopping or unrestricted travel within Europe's frontiers. In Europe, multiculturalism and the flow of citizens is encouraged. Recently, the European Commission has proposed the implementation of a 'jobs wanted' list for all Europeans,

to encourage international job-seeking within the European Union. BNP activists may claim that the presence of Eastern Europeans on the British market leaves Britons job-less. Britons are equally opportunistic, however. According to the Institute for Public Policy Research, 5.5 million Britons live and work abroad on the European market.[5]

Aside from the inaccurate assumptions of far right-wing supporters, it is discomforting that a political agenda of such malice even exists. Ought it not to be morally rooted in humankind that we have a responsibility to protect those refugees struggling for freedom and survival in their country of birth? It seems hypocritical that citizens widely espouse the concept of charity as a means for assisting those in need. Charity events, charity organizations and charity fund raisings are widespread and they all have extremely positive connotations. Why then, are we through the continued support for far right-wing governments counteracting our good achievements and repudiating the most significant charity of all, the welcoming of helpless refugees into our safe, national borders?

[1] "The 1951 Refugee Convention." The UN Refugee Agency, July 25, 1951. Available at http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49da0e466.html
[2] Lederer, M, Edith. "UN investigator: Migrants suffer worst racism." Associated Press, Nov. 1, 2010. Available at http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20101102/ap_on_re_us/un_un_racism_and_immigration
[3] "Immigration." British National Party, May 12, 2010. Available at http://www.bnp.org.uk/policies/immigration
[4] /5 "The Politics of Immigration and Identity." The Economist, April 29, 2010. Available at http://www.economist.com/node/16015455

Arizona's Immigration Law: We've Heard It All Before…

Gabriel Gill Andrews on Arizona's messy fight over immigration

As a border state, Arizona's immigration policy has always been a highly contentious and heated issue. Arizona is currently home to an estimated 460,000 illegal immigrants,[1] and, as a result of a number of economic and social problems, among other things, Arizona is also home to a large and mobilized white-supremacist-xenophobe population. The Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act (Arizona Senate Bill 1070) has sparked a great deal of controversy, both national and international, and has both typified and reignited a number of American political debates that are as old as the hills… Indeed, it has rekindled the familiar paradox of a nation that can at once be designated "the land of the free" and also limit the freedoms of selected minorities. This paradox dates back to the very drafting of the Constitution, and the debate over slavery that took a civil war to resolve, taking the Union to the very verge of dissolution.

If we cast our minds back a few months, 23 April was the day Jan Brewer, the Republican Governor of Arizona, signed the America's toughest ever state-level bill on immigration into law.[2] The bill included a number of new provisions; two of which invoked nationwide, and indeed worldwide, criticism. Firstly, the bill required police officers "where practicable" to detain people that they had stopped while enforcing other laws that they reasonably suspected to be in the country illegally. The second regarded immigration papers; the bill required that immigrants carry these at all times – even making failure to do so a state crime.[3] This July, a federal judge named Susan Bolton blocked these two key provisions hours before they were due to take effect, prompting a conservative backlash.[4]

Judge Bolton stated: "requiring Arizona law enforcement officials and agencies to determine the immigration status of every person who is arrested burdens lawfully present aliens because their liberty will be restricted while their status is checked."[5] Much of the controversy that has resulted from the initial propositions was rooted in a rather understandable fear that this would lead to racial profiling of suspects – this would clearly be the case. A number of opponents have called it an invitation
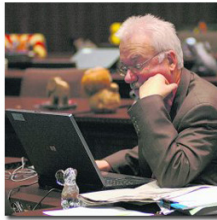
Training for Arizona Law Enforcement
Which Person Will You Question About their Immigration Status?

Alan Levine

for the harassment of, and discrimination against, Hispanics, regardless of their citizenship status.[6]

Governor Jan Brewer, signatory of the original bill, has sent the amended version straight back to court, to challenge Judge Bolton's blocking of the two provisions – reigniting the debate over state autonomy in the face of federal interference once more. Brewer made her stance on the issue very clear: "America is not going to sit back and allow the ongoing federal failures to continue… Arizona would not be faced with this problem if the federal government honored its responsibilities."[7] It seems to this writer that Brewer may have a point – the federal government does have to do its job. It is not acceptable for a state to have an illegal immigrant population that is nearly ten per cent of its total population.

However, the legislation that was signed on 23 April went too far. Obama said that the law threatened "to undermine basic notions of fairness that we cherish as Americans."[8] Due to traditional tensions over state autonomy that date back to the Federalist v. Anti-Federalist debate during the ratification of the Constitution, presidents rarely weigh in on issues of state legislation. In this instance, it appears that Obama had no choice. Indeed, I am inclined to agree with Cardinal Roger M. Mahony of Los Angles, who stated that having the ability to demand documents of suspected illegal immigrants is like "Nazism."[9]

The point over whether these laws are akin to Nazism is an important one, and needs to be elaborated. There are several key features of the passage of SB 1070 that are not immediately obvious – but, in fact, do link it to Nazism, or more specifically Neo-Nazism. Russell Pearce, the Republican State Senator who was both architect and sponsor of the bill, has links to Arizona's National Socialist Movement through the locally infamous J. T. Ready. Ready, who led Neo-Nazi protests against Judge Bolton's amendments on 13 November, was endorsed by Pearce when he ran for city council in 2006.[10] Ready, the President of the Young Republicans while at college also used to work with Sean Pearce, the Senator's

> "America is not going to sit back and allow the ongoing federal failures to continue… Arizona would not be faced with this problem if the federal government honored its responsibilities."

son.[11] Whilst this writer is not suggesting that Pearce is a Nazi, these connections seem at least interesting in light of the nature of the provisions of the bill, which do contain perceptible fascist overtones.

At any rate, whether motivated by fascistic tendencies or not, the provisions of the recent immigration bill will no doubt continue to be fiercely debated in courtrooms, the media, and on the streets of Arizona for a long time to come. Such is the nature of American politics; the debates often involve moral absolutes, and therefore there is little room for compromise. Whether it is a debate regarding the federal government meddling in state affairs, or over the individual rights of minorities, these debates are as old as the hills…

[1] BBC News Web Site (2010) 'Protest Across US Over Arizona Immigration Law' 01 May, available at: news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/8656533.stm

[2] Archibold, R. C. (2010) 'Arizona Enacts Stringent Law on Immigration' New York Times, 23 April, available at: www.nytime.com/2010/04/24/us/politics/24immig.html?_r1

[3] Ibid

[4] BBC News Web Site (2010) 'Judge Blocks Arizona's Controversial Immigration Law' 29 July, available at: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-10607927

[5] Ibid

[6] Archibold, R. C. (2010) 'Arizona Enacts Stringent Law on Immigration' New York Times, 23 April, available at: www.nytime.com/2010/04/24/us/politics/24immig.html?_r1

[7] BBC News Web Site (2010) 'Arizona's Anti-Illegal Immigration Law Back in Court' 10 November, available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-11667450

[8] Archibold, R. C. (2010) 'Arizona Enacts Stringent Law on Immigration' New York Times, 23 April, available at: www.nytime.com/2010/04/24/us/politics/24immig.html?_r1

[9] Ibid

[10] Nill, A. (2010) 'Neo-Nazis March in Support of SB-1070 in Arizona' Think Progress, 14 November, available at: thinkprogress.org/2010/11/14/neo-nazi-phoenix/

[11] Tucson Citizen Web Site (2010) 'Neo-Nazis and Russell Pearce's Buddy JT Ready March to Arizona State Capitol This Saturday' 12 November: available at: http://tucsoncitizen.com/three-sonorans/2010/11/12/neo-nazis-and-russell-pearces-buddy-jt-ready-march-to-arizona-state-capitol-this-saturday-video/

The Best of a

Natasha Turak on why America's relationship with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is,

"He may be a son of a bitch, but he's our son of a bitch", as Franklin Roosevelt allegedly described Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza in 1939. These words typify a common practice in US foreign policy: that of cosying up to one evil to counter a worse evil. Any realist would tell you it is the only way to go; while human rights violations and undemocratic regimes make us sad, it is national security interest that takes priority. The degree of 'evil,' of course, varies and depends on perspective, but a simple look at a country's human rights record is often a sufficient determinant. The United States extols the virtues of its strong alliance with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, but many claim that, as one of the most corrupt regimes in the world, the Saudis are just the best of a bad bunch. Is the Saudi-US partnership really that crucial? Is the American military's frequent obsequiousness to the Saudi kingdom a betrayal of its core values? Is it time to put these indulgences in the past? Yes, yes, and yes.

Sixty billion dollars worth of Apache, Blackhawk and other American military helicopters, along with a vast array of radar systems, anti-aircraft missiles, anti-ship missiles, F-15 fighter jets, and guided bombs are set to grace the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the course of the next fifteen to twenty years.[1] The proposed arms deal—the biggest in US history—was confirmed by the Obama administration last October and awaits only Congress's approval, which is almost guaranteed. The deal would not only create

75,000 American jobs, it would more importantly counter growing threats from Iran and terrorist activity along Saudi borders. Since the Gulf War, America's military presence in the Gulf has been crucial in promoting regional stability. The US aims to build up an Arab alliance against Iran and its allegedly expanding nuclear programme. Iran denies the accusations, but how much trust are you going to put into a nation whose president so tactfully claimed during a UN summit that the US government plotted 9/11?

The US State Department hails the arms deal as an assertion of America's unwavering support of its "key partners and allies in the Arabian Gulf and the broader Middle East," and that it has "tremendous significance from a strategic regional perspective."[2] Such a strong statement of commitment by the United States to the Kingdom sheds light on the strategic importance of their alliance, as well as the contradictions and sacrifices involved in such a friendship.

Let's just put aside the fact that fifteen of the nineteen hijackers on 9/11 were from Saudi Arabia. Amnesty International describes the scale of the Kingdom's human rights violations as "shocking." Obvious violations include the total covering of women and severe gender inequality, public executions, and the juvenile death penalty. Yet when dealing with Saudi Arabia the United States government does not revert to its trademark devotion to democratic values—rather, it practically bends over backwards to please.

The US military shows no objection to the Islamic Kingdom's religious censorship of

> "The US State Department hails the arms deal as an assertion of America's unwavering support of its 'key partners and allies in the Arabian Gulf and the broader Middle East'"

Bad Bunch?

as per tradition, a question of choosing the lesser of two evils.

mail coming in for US personnel; Christmas cards and photos of uncovered female family members are confiscated and may be disposed of. Military chaplains are required to remove the small crosses on their necks in the name of 'cultural sensitivity.' A court case brought by a female US fighter pilot in 2002 finally ended the eleven-year-old requirement of female personnel serving in Saudi Arabia to wear head-to-toe abayas, and sit only in the back of vehicles while in the Kingdom.[3] As a commander of a Marine Recon Platoon in Desert Shield said: "the Saudis have no respect for us. They just see us as their mercenaries."[4] So why would the most powerful nation on earth continue to comply so enthusiastically with this unbalanced friendship? Reasons abound, reasons not limited to strategic importance and oil. This unique alliance was born during the Cold War, as both countries bonded over common defence and energy interests while shoring up defence against the Soviets. Saudi Arabia's support during Operation Desert Storm in 1991 fostered the cosy friendship between the Bush family and the House of

Saud. The US can name lots of reasons besides strategic importance for the special treatment allotted to the Kingdom. The country is filthy rich, it spends plenty of money on high-end American weaponry, and American officials enjoy lavish treatment during visits to Riyadh. A less known incentive is the benefits that senior officials reap after they've served time kissing up to the Kingdom. The National Review maintains that "no other posting pays such rich dividends once one has left it, provided one is willing to become a public and private advocate of Saudi interests."[5] In a comment blatantly evocative of bribery, former Saudi ambassador to America, Prince Bandar bin Sultan, remarked that "if the reputation… builds that the Saudis take care of friends when they leave office, you'd be surprised how much better friends you have who are just coming into office."[6]

Meanwhile, as the world's biggest consumer of oil, the United States remains heavily dependent on Saudi Arabia, and it is no secret that some of the revenue ends up in the hands of very questionable groups. The Kingdom uses its oil capital to proliferate Wahhabism, a radical form of Islam, in mosques around the

> "Meanwhile, as the world's biggest consumer of oil, the United States remains heavily dependent on Saudi Ararbia, and it is no secret that some of the revenue ends up in the hands of very questionable groups."

Middle East and the world. For instance, in Egypt, far more women are completely covered in public than were twenty years ago due to the influence of Saudi Imams in the mosques that they are funding. Wahhabism fosters the very ideology that instigated the architects of the September 11th attacks. America is essentially funding the very war on terrorism that it is fighting.

The hard truth remains, in the end, that their dependence on the region and its unsavoury kings will continue without waning for at least the next few decades—the US needs all the allies it can get in the Gulf as it deals with the instabilities of Iraq, the balance of power regarding Iran, and the ever-present threat of Al-Qaeda. Diplomatic and stable partnerships will remain crucial regardless of stark differences in values and domestic governance. The US is expected to rely on imported oil for at least the next few decades,[7] despite efforts being made to find alternative energy methods. And as their biggest customer and defence provider, the Saudis need America just as much as America needs them. The frequent attitude of sycophancy, however, regarding conduct of American military and government officials in the Kingdom, needs to end. As stated by

> "The US should use its leverage regarding defence to address the human rights situation in the region, as it has in many other countries."

former US ambassador to Saudi Arabia Hume Horan: "the era of Cold War indulgence is behind us."[8] The US should use its defence leverage to address the human rights situation in the region, as it has in many other countries. Meanwhile, mutual interests are pursued as the friendship continues, for better or for worse. In the words of Saudi Prince Turki Al-Faisal: "whether you like it or not, the destinies of the United States and Saudi Arabia are linked and will remain linked for decades."[9]

[1] Gollust, David. "US Confirms $60 Billion Arms Sales Package for Saudi Arabia." Voice of America, Oct. 20, 2010. Available at http://www.voanews.com/english/news/usa/US-Confirms-60-Billion-Arms-Sales-Package-for-Saudi-Arabia--105375438.html

[2] "US confirms $60bn plan to sell Saudi Arabia arms." BBC, 20 Oct 2010. Available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-11587348

[3] Pipes, Daniel. "The Scandal of U.S.-Saudi Relations." The National Interest, December 1, 2002. Availble at: http://nationalinterest.org/article/the-scandal-of-us-saudi-relations-543?page=6

[4] Pipes, Daniel. "The Scandal of U.S.-Saudi Relations." The National Interest, December 1, 2002. Available at: http://nationalinterest.org/article/the-scandal-of-us-saudi-relations-543?page=6

[5] Dreher, Rod. "Their Men in Riyadh." National Review, June 17, 2002.

[6] Porter, Gareth. FBI Chief Defended Saudis." Asia Times, July 4, 2009. Available at: http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/KG04Ak01.html

[7] Deutch, John, Schlesinger, James. "National Security Consequences of U.S. Oil Dependency." Council on Foreign Relations, October 2006. Available at http://www.cfr.org/publication/11683/national_security_consequences_of_us_oil_dependency.html

[8] Pipes, Daniel. "The Scandal of U.S.-Saudi Relations." The National Interest, December 1, 2002. Available at: http://nationalinterest.org/article/the-scandal-of-us-saudi-relations-543?page=6

[9] Kovalyova, Svetlana. "Saudi prince urges U.S. to recognize oil dependency." Reuters, September 4, 2006. Available at http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE5832AV20090904

Why Politics

Uday Jain on how the financial crisis and its consequences contributed to public

Given the vogue of gritty reboots, it is only fitting that Gerry Stoker's impassioned plea for the 'primacy of politics'[1] holds a sombre relevance to current affairs. *Why Politics Matters* explores the causes and possible solutions to the problem of increasing public disenchantment with politics. The themes discussed in his

> ## "Less than three in ten Britons agree with the statement 'the government treats people like me fairly'."

book have only grown more relevant since it was published. Over the course of this essay, I will first outline the international turn away from politics and how it was accentuated by the financial crisis. Assessing the range of the public response, I will build on Stoker's work to propose a new moral framework for our engagement with politics.

Before proceeding further one needs to first appropriately define 'disengagement'. Almond and Verba's work in this field is particularly relevant. They compared the 'political cultures' of Germany, the US, Italy, Mexico and the UK to establish their relationship with the practice of democracy. As they succinctly put it: "A democratic form of participatory political system requires… a political culture consistent with it."[2] They defined political culture as the general outlook of citizens towards their political system, and their sense of citizenship. They measured this by studying data on political behaviour and attitudes in various surveys over a broad period of time.

Comparing Almond and Verba's conclusions on the UK's political culture in the 1950s, with more current data on political attitudes, Stoker, in a later essay, finds that regarding two crucial dimensions of political culture, there has been a significant turn for the worse. These dimensions are 'a sense of empowerment to influence decisions' and "contentment with the political system."[3] He highlights key findings by Pattie et al [4] that less than three in ten Britons agree with the statement that 'the government generally treats people like me fairly'. Furthermore, class differentials increasingly play a significant role in attitudes towards politics. By 2007, citizens from professional and managerial social groups were twice as likely as those from unskilled groups to vote, donate to a party or campaign, and four times as likely to have engaged in three or more political activities.[5]

While there is a considerable scholarship emphasising changes in the political and civic culture through history, certain political scientists and political historians argue that citizens were never really 'engaged' to begin with. Jefferys' analysis of British democracy through the twentieth century suggests that there have been many low-points in terms of public confidence which were contingent upon particular historical circumstances.[6] Also, the lack of sufficient data on

public attitudes in the early half of the twentieth century limits the scope of any substantive theorising.

Yet, the problem of decline is nowhere as immediate as a crisis of public confidence in democratic institutions. This has been made clear by the work of Pattie et al, and more recent surveys by the Hansard society under *The Audit of Political Engagement*. Thus the salient components of public disenchantment or disengagement with politics are the prevalent lack of confidence to influence decisions and in the capacity of the system to respond, and a lack of belief in the fairness of government.

The international turn against politics

Focus on British secondary literature is helpful in framing the parameters of our discussion, yet this disengagement can also be observed to varying degrees in democracies around the world. A cursory glance at various polities suggests as

> ## "If there was ever a time that the citizen was *entirely* disconnected from crucial public decision-making, this was it."

much. There is serious doubt in the US about Obama's presidency, rage at Sarkozy's administration in France, incredulity in Greece at the willingness of politicians to surrender their sovereignty to the IMF and EU, while Kan faces a significant loss of the Japanese public's trust, and even the world's largest democracy is unable

to act on the plight of farmers and others in rural areas (still constituting India's majority); many of whom are driven to suicide in the tens of thousands (notably in Vidarbha, Maharashtra).

The above 'panorama' of international disenchantment comes with serious qualifications. It only presents the general contours of public dissatisfaction which once again are particular to the domestic conditions of the countries in question. Yet to some extent, citizens around the world feel a sense of helplessness when it comes to influencing the direction of their government. This perceived disconnect was very evident in the intergovernmental response to the financial crisis and what followed.

A crisis originating in rather complex circumstances (involving obscure financial instruments such as credit-default swaps and subprime mortgages), originating in the US, rapidly spread across the world, and necessitated unprecedented government intervention in the

economy to restore normalcy. Incomprehensible amounts of money ($700,000,000,000 in the US, €200,000,000,000 in the EU) were spent to save an ill-understood yet apparently crucial sector for the international economy. All of a sudden, it was widely acknowledged that we faced the greatest economic crisis since the Great

Still Matters

disenchantment with democracy, necessitating a new civic morality.

Depression in the 1930s. If there was ever a time that the citizen was *entirely* disconnected from crucial public decision-making, this was it.

Adjusting to visibly straitened circumstances and startling levels of unemployment, citizens were in disbelief to later see the 'bailed out' financial sector quickly return to relative profitability.[7] Also, companies such as AIG - which found their 'toxic' assets guaranteed by the US Treasury - awarded generous bonuses of around \$165m[8] to their employees. In terms of 'a sense of empowerment to influence decisions' and 'contentment with the political system', it therefore seems clear that most citizens would find themselves, to some extent at least, responding in the negative.

In the face of such tremendous decisions taken so quickly, and by so few, it seems that the public will has been bypassed in recent times. Building from our earlier panoramic view, there has also been an impressive public response to this loss of voice; a response that reaches its extremes in ill-tempered demonstrations across Europe. While it is still uneven and divided, there is a palpable desire to affect change in the political system in favour of a fairer, less opaque and more inclusive approach to government.

A New Civic Morality

How should we channel this palpable desire to ensure a substantive civic engagement with politics? It is useful now to turn to Hay's trenchant critique of the current political para-

digm. He notes that "the marketisation of electoral competition is in danger of reducing the electorate to a series of atomistic rational consumers who, as atomistic rational consumers, will rationally disengage."[9] Finally, the now popular approach to judging politicians by their 'performance' rather than ideology is misleading (how then does one judge those in opposition?), and contributes to a discourse light on meaningful policy proposals.

As Almond and Verba cogently put it, "The passive citizen, the non-voter, the poorly informed or apathetic citizen – all indicate a weak democracy."[10] To ensure a vibrant and healthy democracy, all the

> "It is in our interest, as students, intellectuals and citizens facing increasingly difficult times to ensure that the 'sordid' business of government is *not* left to the politicians."

above should be clearly delineated as evils. More importantly, as marketization and its concomitant implications (such as individualisation and polarised misinformed discourse) all contribute to the weakening of democracy; they qualify as the forces of postmodern political evil.

An honest, open, and well-informed study of our circumstances, willingness to compromise for the collective good, and fundamentally a passion for the return of authentic democracy are our virtues. It seems that given the scale of the public response so far (seen in

London in November, Paris and Athens earlier this year), we are not lacking in passion. Yet other characteristics are lacking and they are tightly wound with the prevalent marketization of our politics, necessitating a robust anti-marketization.

Anti-marketization entails an acknowledgement of severe social contradictions and inequalities that persist in our system today, yet does not imply a polarisation of the various interests (such as the people vs. the elite). It merely draws attention to these fundamental flaws, and in a spirit of democracy, seeks to involve as 'informed amateurs', to borrow from Stoker; all citizens within the democratic process. It is a nu-

anced, inclusive, and above all realistic approach to politics.

Anti-marketization also does not limit itself in terms of what it considers possible and impossible. As Žižek qualifies emphatically, it is an act which is "…more than an intervention into the domain of the possible — an act [that] changes the very coordinates of what is possible and thus retroactively creates its own conditions of possibility."[11] In this spirit, our new approach will not limit itself to the possible, or what seems possible today. Given the radical and unprecedented changes we have experienced

in our own lifetimes, it is not inconceivable that similar change can occur on a social and political scale.

Who will bring about this change, this anti-marketization? In the spirit of the performative contradiction: we will. After all it is in our interest, as students, intellectuals and citizens facing increasingly difficult times to ensure that the 'sordid' business of government is not left to the politicians. Thus, by proceeding in this spirit, and by identifying and further studying the unrepresentative nature of current politics, we will be better prepared to propose a superior, 'non-market' and maybe even genuinely democratic framework.

[1]Stoker, G. (2006). *Why Politics Matters*. Basingstoke: Palgrave-MacMillan.

[2]Almond, G. A., & Verba, S. (1989:3). *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

[3]Stoker, G. (2010). The Rise of Political Disenchantment. In C. Hay (ed.) *New Directions in Political Science* (pp. 43-63). Basingstoke: Palgrave-MacMillan.

[4]Pattie, C., Seyd , P., & Whiteley, P. (2004). *Citizenship in Britain: Values, Participation and Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[5](Stoker, The Rise of Political Disenchantment, 2010, p. 54)

[6]Jefferys, K. (2007). *Politics and the People: A History of British Democracy since 1918*. London: Atlantic Books.

[7]Logutenkova, E. (2010, July 27). *UBS Profit Beats Estimates on Investment Bank Rebound*. Retrieved November 9, 2010, from Bloomberg Businessweek: http://www.businessweek.com/news/2010-07-27/ubs-profit-beats-estimates-on-investment-bank-rebound.html

[8]BBC. (2009, March 17). *Obama 'outraged' at AIG bonuses*. Retrieved November 9, 2010, from BBC News: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/7945774.stm

[9]Hay, C. (2007). *Why We Hate Politics*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

[10](Almond & Verba, 1989, p. 338)

[11]Žižek, S. (July-August 2010:94). A Permanent Economic Emergency. *The New Left Review*, 85-95.

Happy Birthday Mrs Thatcher!

Assanatou Samaké on French pension reform

October 13th was Margaret Thatcher's 85th birthday. On that day, many in France could not help remembering how she reduced trade unions to a shadow of what they were in the middle of the 1980s. The Iron Lady's will, resisting determined miners protesting against pit closures, putting the country under the threat of power-shortage.

France has been going through recurring demonstrations and strikes in the past three months, as the people show their discontent towards government plans to reform the pension system. Youth organisations and the inter-union committee composed of major trade unions called for no less than nine marches and strikes since the beginning of September. Consequently, public transport has been disrupted, oil refineries blocked (thus triggering shortages in some parts of the country), and some universities and high schools closed.

These manifestations of disagreement from the population are seen as quite typical of France; so typical that Laurence Parisot, leader of the Medef business's union, said that strikes would further

Thomas Robbins

damage the reputation of the country. The government was severe with strikers, saying that they were taking the country hostage. Despite these condemnations, made harsher because of a few violent people infiltrating protests, a spectacular 70% of the population supported the demonstrations. However, why would the French people support those that made them miss their trains, and prevented them from gassing up their cars?

At the beginning...

The French pension system is currently in an unprecedented deficit of 32 billion (£27.5 billion), which previous reforms in 1995 and 2003 could

> "Pensions are a fundamental pillar of the social model. Thus a reform as significant and necessary as this one was very liable to create considerable reaction from the population."

not solve. The reform that Sarkozy has just adopted aims to raise the legal retirement age from 60 to 62, and the full-rate retirement age - concerning those who did not contribute to the pension system for the required 40.5 years - from 65 to 67, However, during the 2007 presidential election campaign, President Sarkozy promised that this would not happen. The whole debate is centred around the inequalities it could engender, especially between men and women since women often need to work longer and leave the system with much less.

Sarkozy's key reform

Pensions are a fundamental pillar of the social model. Thus a reform as significant and

necessary as this one was very liable to create considerable reaction from the population. This reaction has been amplified by a common feeling that the government passed the reform without listening to neither them nor the unions. Bernard Thibault, national leader of the CGT (France's most important trade union), frequently complained about the government not holding true negotiations. On the other hand, Eric Woerth, the Labour minister - also implicated in a money scandal with France's richest woman, Liliane Bettencourt - argued that he'd received all the union leaders and heard their views. This sense of being ignored has also affected young people, who came to the streets to express their fear of not finding a job at the end of their studies as a consequence of the reform, and also to express a broader concern about their place in society.

> "This sense of being ignored has also affected young people."

A battle to be continued?

Officially, the social conflict is now over, the reform is enacted, and there were significantly fewer people at the last demonstrations. As such, the President and his government may have won the legislative battle, but not the opinion contest... A year and a half until the next presidential election, with opinion polls very low, Sarkozy's re-election hopes are extremely uncertain.

Good vs Evil in Liberal Democracies

Zine Dif on regulating society

"It is impossible to go through life without trust: That is to be imprisoned in the worst cell of all, oneself."[1]

In this article, I outline my own opinion of what constitutes good and evil within modern liberal democracies. To start, I provide a brief description of the ideals of free markets and their functioning, which in reality upsets patterns: leading to insecurity, narcissism, and fear. Next, I provide an alternative account of the 'good' that can emerge from liberty - provided we embody the principles of trust, prudence, social responsibility, and subservience to society. These sentiments are embodied in the much overlooked works of Adam Smith's *The Theory of moral Sentiments* (1759) and Francis Fukuyama's *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity* (1995). If more attention were paid to these principles, I believe that the pathway to 'opulence,' the good that we all desire, can be achieved without the evils described above.

Within free market liberal democracies, individuals are free to acquire property and consume the goods and services that they can afford. These choices are subject to the manipulation of the media as well as other institutions that control the flow of information. This idea can be found in Noam Chomsky's *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media* (1988). In modern liberal democracies, such as the UK and US, individual consumption has led to chronic negative externali-

ties, insecurity, great inequalities in wealth, and a social environment that is based on fear, distrust and the excessive consumption of goods. This provides short term fulfillment without consideration of the negative externalities and the wellbeing of our fellow man. This individual behavior is, I believe, encouraged by a media that is obsessed with physical appearance and consumerism.

In his book *Anarchy State and Utopia* (1974), Robert Nozick proposed that the unpatterned system of modern liberal democracies is perfectly acceptable, deeming any end-state patterned principle of distribu-

> "Chronic negative externalities, insecurity, great inequalities in wealth, and a social environment that is based on fear... provides short term fulfillment."

tion unacceptable, as it would require continuous interference into the lives of individuals.[2] Nozick finds justification for this principle in John Locke's *Second Treatise on Government (1690)*: "Every man has property in his own 'person'. This nobody has the right to but himself."[3] However, the state should play a greater role than the 'minimal night-watchman state' that was confined to the

"protection of individuals and their private property and the enforcement of contracts."[4] I would like to propose that unpatterned systems, if they produce the evils described, are not morally justifiable. It is perfectly acceptable for a state to implement a pattern, or, more preferably, to provide individuals with the information and education that will allow them to act in a 'good' way, to ensure the collective liberty of society as a whole.

I believe that realization of a system of patterned market freedom was the aim of the political theorists and economists of the enlightenment. Moral behavior and a social outlook was the underlying theme of Adam Smith's much overlooked *The Theory of Moral Sentiments (1759)*: "And hence it is to feel much for others and little for ourselves, that is to restrain the selfish and to indulge in our benevolent affections, constitutes the perfection of nature; and alone produce among mankind that harmony of sentiments and passions in which consist their whole grace and prosperity."[5] Of course, in the current state of inequality and ever greater individualization of humanity, it is hard to see how this can be achieved. But as long as we can accept that the 'one' is part of something much greater and act to restrain our impulses, direct our desires towards the socially optimal, and move towards what Plato described is the "form of the good", then there is always hope. Anthony Seldon, in his most recent work *Trust: How we Lost it and How*

to get it Back (2009), describes how support for the family, greater accountability for those who hold the reins of power, and the fostering of trust among the community and within our children are the optimal means for producing the desired outcome.[6]

To conclude, modern liberal democracies are guilty of fostering sentiments that are not conducive to collective security, prosperity and the pursuit of the 'good', and the creation of individuals that look beyond their own needs. They are guilty of encouraging the unnecessary at the expense of humanity, leading to the degradation of the planet, unacceptable disparities between individuals, fear, and narcissism. According to writers such as Robert Nozick, this is permissible and can be justified due to the inalienable nature of property rights. However, I don't believe this to be the case, instead I propose that patterns can be implemented in order to preserve the overall human good; either by the state or by the provision of information and education to those that compose society.

[1] Graham Greene (1904-1991), English novelist and playwright.

[2] Nozick, R. (1974) "Anarchy State and Utopia." Blackwell Publishing, Ch. 6, pp. 149-166

[3] Exdell, J. (1977) "Distributive Justice on Property Rights." Ethics, 87(2), pp.145

[4] Scanlan, T. (1976) "Nozick on Rights, liberty, and Property." Philosophy and Public Affairs, 6 (1), pp. 3-25

[5] Smith, A. (1759) "The Theory of Moral Sentiments." Oxford University Press, 1976, pp. 25

[6] Seldon, A. (2009) "Trust: How we lost it and how we get it back." Biteback Publishing Ltd

EU Revision

Leonie Hertel on the need to overhaul the Stability and Growth pact in favour of a

Seeking to deal with current repercussions of the financial crisis and prevent further budgetary catastrophes, the EU member states have agreed on a 'limited' Treaty change in order to "increase fiscal discipline, broaden economic surveillance and deepen coordination."[1] However, it shall not modify the general 'bail out' ban in Article 125 TFEU.[2] Instead, based on recommendations of the Task Force to the European Council, the treaty change shall be discussed in upcoming Council meetings and be finalised in mid-2013 before the expiry of the current emergency fund.[3]

In brief, the Task Force suggests measures to reinforce compliance with the Stability and Growth Pact, provisions for macroeconomic surveillance, and minimum requirements for national fiscal frameworks.[4] In order to ensure budgetary discipline, reinforced budgetary surveillance and conditionality of EU expenditure upon compliance with the Growth and Stability Pact are recommended. In addition to the strengthening of the Pact, the Commission shall conduct annual risk assessments of the member states' macroeconomic imbalances and vulnerabilities; if latter are excessive, the Council shall be entitled to demand correcting policies and impose sanctions. For policy coordination of member states, a 'European Semester' is already on the way of implementation, which envisages annual assessment of budgetary measures and structural reforms. The report also

calls for "independent analysis, assessments and forecasts on domestic fiscal policy matters" conducted by institutions at the national and European level. Additionally, a permanent crisis-resolution mechanism shall be incorporated into the treaty, possibly in Article 122 TFEU alongside financial support for

natural disasters, displacing the currently operating European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) and the European Financial Stability Mechanism (EFSM).[5] These recommendations have been adopted by the Council in October.

At the Council summit, the member states' positions on the proposed treaty change diverged greatly. Some member states such as Luxemburg and Belgium were wary of the proposed Treaty change, warning not to open the Pandora's Box of yet another treaty

change, while Eastern European states in particular voiced concerns that harsher sanctions including the suspension of structural funds would damage their economic performance.[6] Unsurprisingly, in its tradition of opt-outs, the UK has ensured not to be affected by financial sanctions while welcoming

measures to enhance the euro zone's stability; Denmark has taken the same route.[7] In the Irish case, any treaty change by the ordinary procedure, as

> "Unsurprisingly, in its tradition of opt-outs, the UK has ensured not to be affected by financial sanctions while welcoming measures to enhance the euro zone's stability;"

limited as it might be, is anticipated with fear as it most likely

entails another referendum.[8]

Negotiations also showed a fragile image of the often heralded European consensus. Although the German-French proposal to temporarily suspend deficit sinners' voting rights has failed to gain the support of the other member states, the matter is not off the agenda and will be further discussed in upcoming Council meetings.[9] What happens to consensus in the European realm if economically strong states (who have themselves regularly breached the Growth and Stability Pact's public debt and deficit caps) dictate to weaker states how to handle their fiscal and, indirectly, macroeconomic policies? Does this not have more potential to break the euro zone (and eventually the EU) than an economic and financial crisis?

Another political issue arises with regard to tighter surveillance of national budgets and the Commission's proposed new role in macroeconomic supervision. It may be expected that national parliaments face increased constraints in exercising their budgetary competences. How then, can the democratic deficit be reduced when European bureaucracies begin to meddle with national budget policies, a prerogative of democratically elected bodies?

After Crisis

more dynamic instrument to address economic crises more effectively.

In acknowledging the failure of the Growth and Stability Pact, member states have agreed on other measures to accompany it. A permanent crisis-resolution mechanism admittedly opens the way for immediate responses for urgent cases, preventing a spread of economic crises due to economic and monetary interdependence. It cannot effectively address the reoccurring breach of the Growth and Stability Pact; it is not intended to. Other measures envisaged by the Task Force, such as enhanced budgetary surveillance, entailing harsher sanctions such as the suspension of EU funds, however, seem to have little potential to generate fiscal stability. Until now, the Stability and Growth Pact has largely failed to enforce compliance, so what says it will in the future – especially if a 'rescue fund' is in place?

In contrast to its envisaged purpose, the Pact can arguably aggravate economic downturn by adding the burden of financial sanctions, and possibly in future the suspension of EU funding, while leaving member states within the cap in fiscally strong times to themselves. In fact, its rigidity may be seen as working against economic stability. Apart from challenges that are posed to the budget by the economic environment, the Pact has increased the difficulty for member states that spiral into recession to effectively use their countercyclical policies for stabilisation of the economy, among which

has traditionally been public expenditure (linked to public debt). Moreover, it has from the outset ignored national differences, which the Task

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Force now refers to: "action to address macroeconomic imbalances and divergences in competitiveness is required in all Member States, but the nature, importance and urgency of the policy challenges differ significantly depending on the Member States concerned."[10]

Certainly, the Pact's rationale has been well intended as it seeks to stabilize the euro zone; unconstrained fiscal policy cannot be an alternative in a monetary union and free riders pursuing narrow

national interest to the detriment of other member state's economies need to be discouraged. However, it provides no incentives for national govern-

ments to cut public expenditure and reduce the national deficit by revenue collecting policies in favourable cyclical periods. Without a doubt, the member

states would never allow the EU to regulate their tax revenue and national debt repayment. Thus, without the 'revenue' side to the Growth and Stability Pact, it necessarily lacks a dynamic element. How can the Pact be made more effective? Can a dynamic element be incorporated with member states painstakingly safeguard-

ing their competences? How can more incentives for a proactive, stable fiscal policy be generated? If it remains as inefficient as the financial crisis has shown, its value to the monetary union is certainly in doubt. Should it be replaced? If yes, with what?

It remains to await the European Commission's proposals for a change of the Growth and Stability pact in the upcoming months, to see which alterations to the Growth and Stability Pact as well as other provisions are to be discussed in Council meetings.

"Until now, the Stability and Growth Pact has largely failed to enforce compliance, so what says it will in the future – especially if a 'rescue fund' is in place?"

[1] European Council Conclusions. EUCO 25/10. October 29, 2010, Brussels. Available at http://consilium.europa.eu

[2] Ibid.

[3] *'EU leaders back 'limited' treaty change, budget cap'.* EurActiv. October, 29, 2010. Available at http://euractiv.com

[4] *'Strengthening Economic Governance in the EU'.* Report of the Task Force to the European Council. October, 21, 2010. Available at http://www.consilium.europa.eu

[5] Mussler, Werner Von. *'Der Rettungsschirm Bleibt Aufgespannt'.* Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitunger. October 29,2010. Available at http://faz.net

[6] *'France, Germany face EU revolt over Treaty change'.* EurActiv. October 28, 2010. Available at http://euractiv.com

[7] 'EU leaders frame euro zone crisis rules'. BBC. October 29, 2010. Available at http://bbc.co.uk

[8] Sheahan, Fionnan and Collins, Sarah. *'Government faces nightmare scenario of Third Lisbon vote'* October 29, 2010. The Irish Independent. Available at http://independent.ie

[9] European Council Conclusions. EUCO 25/10. October 29,2010, Brussels. Available at http://consilium.europa.eu

[10] *'Strengthening Economic Grievances in the EU'.* Report of the Task Force to the European Council. October, 21,2010. Available at http://www.consilium.europa.eu

It's not that simple

Fiona Longmuir on defining Good and Evil in today's politics

Having sat down to write about the nature of Good and Evil with so many ideas, I found myself beaten. I didn't even know where to begin. I didn't even know how to define these two concepts. Putting my pen down, I wondered aloud "What makes someone bad?" "Silly Fiona, I know", came a little voice from across the table. I looked up and saw the wisest of advisors sitting with a gleeful smile on her face; my five year old little sister. I listened as she rattled off a long list of what makes someone 'bad': breaking promises, telling lies, taking things that don't belong to you, calling people names, not helping people who need help, not sharing. I smiled at her innocent view of a world no bigger than the school playground, and then stopped, because she was right. Any child will tell you that these things are wrong. So I began to wonder where this indisputable sense of right and wrong goes, why a five year old has a more refined idea of Good and Evil than I do, why, as we get older, clear black and white views fade into grey.

I know, I know, it's not that simple, right? The sentence to automatically end any political argument. You don't understand, it's not that simple. But take a look at our parliament and what do you see? Squabbling, name calling, broken promises, selfishness, bullying. And all this made me wonder, when it comes to politics, why don't we ever grow up?

Bickering and petty rivalries take centre stage at election time, when politicians battle for votes. Take a look at the billboards from each political campaign, and instead of messages of moving forward, positive policies and new ideas, you'll see photographs of the opposing party leader, and a slogan detailing why you shouldn't vote for them. The potential leaders of our country encourage us to vote for them not by advertising their good points, but by exposing the weaknesses of their opponents, an immature and underhand tactic.

I still like to think that people choose parties based on their manifestos, their policies, and not because they are the best of a bad lot. But then, how many of these policies are actually honoured? The government has now released their fifth list of British schools who will not be receiving the new buildings that they had been previously promised. 700 school building projects have been cancelled so far,

Joshua Valanzuolo

and these lists are expected to continue growing.

> ## "I still like to think that people choose parties based on their manifestos, their policies, and not because they are the best of a bad lot."

It would be unreasonable to expect every political promise to be kept; sometimes circumstance renders policies impossible or impractical. Nevertheless, as a voter, I would expect every school to have the facilities to give every pupil the best education. And when it has been reported that in the Newark Orchard School, one of the schools on the fifth list, pupils have to stop working to set out buckets when it rains, it would be difficult to deny that these schools need help.

I can't help but see my sister's list forming in front of my eyes: arguments, empty promises, calls for help being ignored. And in an unstable political climate with an unlikely coalition trying to find its feet, a disgruntled opposition attacking the government and increasingly apathetic voters, the politicians need to take a look at what we learned all those years ago in the classrooms. They need to remember the things that we know are right and wrong. They need to move away from childish attitudes. They need to take politics out of the playground.

...and for our next issue

Leviathan tips the Sacred Cow

Gary Denness

The idiom 'Sacred Cow' refers to the conviction that a topic, group or individual is beyond criticsm. For example Christopher Hitchens notably referred to Mother Teresa as a 'Sacred Cow', due to research into her less than praisewothy deeds. The phrase orginates from the Hindu veneration of the cow.

Anyone interested in writing or working on the next issue, please contact us at leviathan@eupolsoc.org.uk