



A WEEKLY COMMENTARY

ON TARGET

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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance –

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: *"We are face to face with a fundamental rule of existence: one which the ancients recognised even though they could not comprehend and apply it, and which our nineteenth century men of science forgot or ignored in their painstaking study of natural phenomena. That everything in the Universe is in some way connected with everything else: that nothing in God's creation can stir without everything else, vast or minute, feeling to a greater or lesser degree its effect. That in such movement there is almost infinite elasticity and room for recompense and adjustment is clear: what we have got to recognise is the fact of movement. It is something which scientists, after a century of denial, are beginning to be aware: that there is interlinked purpose and order in the universe, as in the human body and as in every machine – man's clumsy imitation of God's larger creation – that works. Life is a pattern, moving in an ordained rhythm: the stars in their courses and the tides of the sea and those subtler tides in the souls and bodies of men and women, beasts and birds all form part of the pattern. Mar it at any point and you mar it at some other... This is the secret which those who regulate society and the body politic have to master as scientists: there will be no peace in Israel until they do... So between ugly and unrhythmical surroundings and sour and acrid tempers there may well be a vital connection of which we have still to find the secret.*

"The great poets and artists – men gifted by God with instinctive apprehension of His universe – have always felt there is."

– Sir Arthur Bryant in *"The Lion and the Unicorn"*, 1969

THE IDEAL – AND THE REAL by Betty Luks:

Why is it we have continually been fed the idea that 'multiculturalism' and/or 'multiracialism', will prove an outstanding success in the western nations?

The League of Rights has been smeared and demonised for all these years because it publicly criticised such ideas, and warned that by bringing in large numbers of peoples who will not, or cannot, assimilate, the main political parties have sown seeds of future conflict for us all.

Europe is now a good example of this folly: There are now close to 15 million Muslims in Europe and many have no intention of assimilating. Professor Fouad Ajami of John Hopkins University, in *"The Moor's Last Laugh"*, *The Age*, 22/4/0, set out the dilemmas:

"In the 1980s, terrible civil wars were fought in Arab and Islamic countries – with privilege on one side, militant wrath on the other. The despots and the military caste in Algeria and Tunisia and Syria and Egypt won that struggle. Their defeated opponents took to the road; from Hamburg and London

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and Copenhagen, the battle was now joined. If accounts were to be settled with rulers back home, the work of subversion would be done from Europe...The geography of Islam – and of the Islamic imagination – has shifted in recent years.

The faith has become portable. Muslims who fled their countries brought Islam with them. Men came into bilad al kufr (the lands of unbelief), but a new breed of Islamists radicalised the faith there, in the midst of the kaflr (unbeliever)."

Scant loyalty and resentment towards 'assimilation': "The new lands were owed scant loyalty, if any, and political-religious radicals savoured the space afforded them by Western civil society," he continued. They also resented the logic of assimilation. Their sisters and daughters were denied the right to mix with "strangers".

"You would have thought that the pluralism and tumult of this open European world would spawn a version of the faith to match it," wrote the good professor. But no, "precisely the opposite happened. In bilad al kufr, the faith became sharpened for battle..."

We may carry *their* nationalities, said a Muslim talkback caller in Sweden, but we belong to our own religion.

The New Radicalism: "Satellite TV has been crucial in the making of this new radicalism," warned Ajami. "Preachers take to the air and reach Muslims wherever they are." From the safe havens of Western cities, "they counsel belligerence and inveigh against assimilation. They forbid shaking hands with women examiners at universities. They warn against offering greetings to 'infidels' on their religious holidays, or serving in the armies and police of the new lands."

'A Muslim has no nationality except his belief,' wrote an intellectual godfather of radical Islamism, the Egyptian Sayyid Qutb, who was executed by then president Jamal Abdul Nasser in 1966...

"Radical Islamism's adherents are unapologetic. What is laicite (secularism) to the Muslims in France and their militant leaders?" asks the professor. "It is but the code of a debauched society that wishes to impose on Islam's children – its young women in particular – the ways of an infidel culture."

What loyalty, if any, is owed France? France is in serious trouble with its Muslim youth. "The wrath of France's Muslim youth in the banlieues (suburbs) is seen as revenge on France for its colonial wars. France colonised Algeria in the 1830s; Algerians, along with Tunisians and Moroccans return the favour in our own time."

The policy is obviously to grant "its troubled Muslim suburbs everything and nothing. It leaves them to their own devices and grants them an unstated power over its foreign policy decisions on Islamic and Middle Eastern matters, but it makes no room for them in the mainstream of its life."

Assimilation is seen as 'cultural rape': Belgium is not without its problems. "In Antwerp, Dyab Abu Jahjah, a young Lebanese, only 32, has stepped forth to 'empower' the Muslims of that country. Assimilation, he says, is but "cultural rape"... The constitution of Belgium recognises Dutch, French and German as official languages. Abu Jahiah insists that Arabic be added, too."

Europe's leaders and their 'false bonding': Alouad Ajami continues, "In ways both intended and subliminal, the escape into anti-Americanism is an attempt at false bonding with the peoples of Islam. Give the Arabs – and the Muslim communities implanted in Europe – anti-Americanism, give them identification with the Palestinians, and you shall be spared their wrath. Beat the drums of opposition to America's war in Iraq, and the furies of this radical Islamism will pass you by."

This is seen as a way around the troubles. But there is no exit that way, he insists.

For the radical who "can't agitate against Mubarak in Cairo, can do it from the safety of Finsbury Park in London. The ferocity of the debate in the Arab world about France's decision to limit Islamic headgear in public schools is a measure of this displaced rage."

He thinks Spain in attributing the bombing visited on it "to its association with America's expedition into Iraq," has missed the point. The truth is darker. Jacques Chirac may believe that he has spared France Spain's terror by sitting out the Iraq war. But he is deluded.

The Islamists do not make fine distinctions in the bilad al kufr.

Europe is now host to a war: "The war is between order and its enemies, and is fuelled by demography: 40 per cent of the Arab world is under 14. Demographers tell us that the fertility replacement rate is 2.1 children per woman.

Europe is frightfully below this level: in Germany it is 1.3, Italy 1.2, Spain 1.1, France 1.7 (this higher rate is a factor of its Muslim population). Fertility rates in the Islamic world are altogether different: they are 3.2 in Algeria, 3.4 in Egypt and Morocco, 5.2 in Iraq and 6.1 in Saudi Arabia. This is Europe's neighbourhood and its contemporary fate. You can tell the neighbours across the Straits (and within the gates of Europe) that you share their dread of Pax Americana. But nemesis is near.

Five centuries ago, the Castilians took Granada from Boabdil. They were a hardy breed of sheepherders driven by a Malthusian logic, outgrowing their grazing lands, pushing southward – and into the New World from Seville – to answer Castile's needs. Today there is great turmoil in Islamic lands and a Malthusian crisis. Were it only true that those in harm's way in Europe are solely the friends of the Americans. The New World is a demon of this Islamism it is true. But that old border between Europe and Islam has furies all its own."

Fouad Ajami is a professor at Johns Hopkins, and author of *The Dream Palace of the Arabs* (Vintage, 1999).

BRINGING THE 'DRAFT' BACK IN AMERICA: John Sutherland of *The Guardian*, May 31st, 2004, announced to the world the U.S. authorities are going to reintroduce the draft. But it's such a vote loser, no one wants to mention it.

Last Wednesday, the American public was officially instructed to panic. Attorney general John Ashcroft and FBI director Robert Mueller – brows furrowed, faces grim – took over primetime T.V. to deliver a spine-chilling message to their fellow citizens: 'Al-qaida attack imminent.'

When, where, and what form the outrage will take, is unknown. But something very, very awful is going to happen very, very soon.

Cynics will be sceptical. Was this another attempt by the administration, like those 'orange alerts' last year, to divert attention from Iraq, the soaring price of gasoline, and Abu Ghraib?

On the same day that Ashcroft was terrifying his countrymen, I was emailed by an American student friend. He too is terrified. 'The U.S. legislature,' he wrote, 'is trying to bring back the draft asap. Check it out at www.congress.org. For some reason no major news networks or printed media in this country are carrying this story. If these bills go through, the only thing between me and military service is my asthma.'

"He's right," says Sutherland, "There is pending legislation in the American House of Representatives and Senate in the form of twin bills – S89 and HR163. These measures (currently approved and sitting in the committee for armed services) project legislation for spring 2005, with the draft to become operational as early as June 15."

"There already exists a Selective Service System (S.S.S.). All young Americans are obliged to 'register for the draft'. It has been a mere formality since conscription was abolished three decades

ago, after Vietnam, together with the loathed (and much burned) draft card. S.S.S. will be reactivated imminently. A US\$28m implementation fund has been added to the SS.S. budget. The Pentagon is discreetly recruiting for 10,350 draft board officers and 11,070 appeals board members nationwide.

Draft-dodging will be harder than in the 1960s. In December 2001, Canada and the U.S. signed a 'smart border declaration', which, among other things, will prevent conscientious objectors (and cowards) from finding sanctuary across the northern border. There will be no deferment on higher-education grounds. Mexico does not appeal.

All this has been pushed ahead with an amazing lack of publicity. One can guess why. American newspapers are in a state of meltdown, distracted by war-reporting scandals at *U.S.A. Today* and the *New York Times*. There is an awareness in the press at large that the 'embedding' system was just that - getting into bed with the military and reporting their pillow talk as 'news from the frontline'. The fourth estate has failed the American public and continues not to do its job.

The American public just wants the war to go away. One thing that would get their attention (but not their votes) would be (more of...ed) their children being sent off to die in foreign lands. Best not disturb the electorate until after November, seems to be the thinking. There are, after all, more important things than wars: getting your man into the White House, for example. Kerry has clearly calculated that, as president, he too may have to bring in the draft. So his lips are also sealed."

PEACE IN IRAQ? THE SUDAN EXAMPLE – <http://www.independent.org/tii/news/040601Eland.html> (1/6/04):

If the Bush administration were looking for an example of how U.S. withdrawal from Iraq could work, it would do well to look at Sudan, where a relatively peaceful solution to a violent conflict that has taken two million lives appears to be at hand, according to Ivan Eland, director of the Centre on Peace & Liberty at the Independent Institute.

"The Islamic Sudanese government and the major Christian rebel group recently reached a peace agreement to decentralise power in the country to individual states, which would give the rebels effective control over the southern part of the country," writes Eland in his latest column.

"Included in the arrangement is a referendum on secession to be held in six years in various parts of the country. The two factions also agreed to share oil revenues. Although the negotiated settlement of Sudan's civil war isn't perfect – it doesn't include all factions in the country – the episode does show that decentralised governance among ethnic or religious groups can give armed combatants enough comfort to negotiate peace."

If Sudan can do it, then Iraq can too – if the U.S. allows the Kurds, Sunnis and Shia to go their separate ways, if that's what they want.

"If the welfare of Iraqis was the paramount goal of U.S. leaders, U.S. policy in Iraq would be designed to avoid a similarly nasty civil war. Instead, the Bush administration's politically-driven strategy of retaining a unified Iraqi government, while mollifying armed factions that will eventually try to gain control of it, is a recipe for just such a disaster."

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