

Book Reviews

The Abolition of Britain, from Winston Churchill to Princess Diana, by Peter Hitchens. Encounter Books, 325 pp., hardcover, \$22.95.

This is an important book, which you may not realize until you examine carefully the final chapter. If you read the book from page one to the end, you might get the impression that the author is an old “fuddy duddy” because he opposes almost everything in the modern world, daring to criticize Margaret Thatcher because her commitment to free markets made her insensitive to tradition; but there is a profundity in this old-fashioned presentation, which will capture you if you are patient. The last chapter, therefore, should be read first. The book will be best introduced by quotations.

We allowed our patriotism to be turned into a joke, wise sexual restraint to be mocked as prudery, our families to be defamed as nests of violence, loathing and abuse, our literature to be tossed aside like so much garbage, and our church turned into a department of the Social Security system.

We let our schools become nurseries of resentment and ignorance, and humiliated our universities by forcing them to take unqualified students in large numbers.

Teachers objected with increasing fury to the idea that they were mere engines for handing on the knowledge of others, partly on the grounds that this was authoritarian.

Sex education became popular and began in primary schools. In discussion groups children were asked to discuss masturbation and to play games with the following words as part of the game: gay, lick, sex, intercourse, lesbian, mingle, hug, kiss, talk, and laugh. For eleven-year-olds!

It seems plain that television has helped to make things worse in its role as third parent, amoral teacher and pornographer in both violence and sexual license, gradually removing our natural disgust at these things. . .

The effect of television, especially colored television, on a society whose values were all open to question and whose morals were dissolving was explosive and continues to be.

We need to protect and rebuild the unseen web of goodness which is essential for a free and democratic nation to continue to exist.

The British people seemed to have forgotten their attachment to liberty, at the same time as they forgot their history and their geography and their literature.

. . . the burial of a great and civilized nation, or whether they will halt a process which they never asked for or voted for, or were even asked if they wanted, which has brought about misery, decadence and ignorance, and which threatens to abolish one of the happiest, fairest and kindest societies which has ever existed in this imperfect world.

Many young children have no idea at all of what goes on in churches, and it is noticeable that many of the new suburbs now springing up have no church buildings anywhere near them.

Prayers for the Royal Family tended to get left out, but lengthy pleas about the most fashionable international crisis would be inserted elsewhere.

The emphasis had at last shifted from character to the state. The age of social services had arrived.

Now we are traveling back to the primitive times before literacy, when adults could keep less from their young, when adulthood came far earlier, and the culture of the tribe was cruder and more immature as a result.

It shows that for the first time this century, the young are not inheriting prejudices, opinions, values, morals and habits from their parents.

The new cruelty, which leaves hundreds of thousands of children without a proper family, is imposed through many acts of generosity by the state and the taxpayers, and through the broad-minded tolerance of individuals and opinion-formers.

The greatest fortress of human liberty, proof against all earthly powers, is the family. . . . All serious tyrannies have sought to undermine or infiltrate it, socialist tyrannies most of all. . . . In his *History of England, 1914-45*, A. J. P. Taylor points out that the only agents of the state a Victorian Briton was likely to meet were the postman and the local policeman.

The pattern in all these events is the same: Behavior which was once deviant is made to seem mainstream, or at least acceptable, and those who are unhappy about it are portrayed as narrow-minded, old-fashioned, prejudiced, and wrong.

The top shelves of normal news-agents now sag with explicit pornography that would once have been hidden in dingy rubber-goods shops in the wrong part of town.

Cigarette smokers are blamed for their illnesses. Homosexuals and drug addicts are not, however, blamed for becoming HIV-positive. The reason the inconsistency goes unchallenged is that both campaigns are a key part of the cultural revolution, the propagation of a new morality. Social disapproval has shifted, in many places, from the homosexuals to those

who openly disapprove of their actions. . . . This is one of the most unpleasant techniques of the new conformism, which finds it very hard to accept that any normal honest person could disagree with its ideas.

The United States is not as corrupt as England. Some liberals in the United States can occasionally be shocked at immorality. We call homosexuals “gay,” suggesting their behavior is normal, and destroying a wholesome word of longevity. Printed pornography with us remains under the counter, but television promotes sexual obscenity and criminal violence. At the recent confirmation hearings for John Ashcroft, he was condemned because he had conventional and time-honored moral beliefs. The fear of his critics was that he was an honest man.

—*Angus MacDonald*

The Politics of Bad Faith—The Radical Assault on America’s Future, by David Horowitz. The Free Press, Simon & Schuster, Inc., New York, 214 pp., \$25, ISBN: 0-684-85023-0.

David Horowitz, a radical leftist of the sixties who defected during the seventies, speaks to society about the tolerance of unacceptable moral behavior by Christians and especially by Protestants. He was invited to speak at a conference of the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons (AAPS), where I met him. This book helps us to understand our own and society’s predicament in the post “Cold War” era.

Politics of Bad Faith has six distinct essays, all addressing the conflicts between the Left and the Right that have existed for two hundred years, originating with the French Revolution when the radicals sat to the left in the National Assembly. Although the “Cold War” is over and the Left lost, the “cultural war” is in full swing. The leftists, who call themselves progressives in their concern for social justice and their attempt to create the better world, feel confident that theirs alone is the vocation of reason and compassion. The Right, however, is baffled that these Leftists remain blind to the effect their ideals have had, especially on the poor and the oppressed, the focus of their actions. Horowitz states that the Left itself has become all but invisible which, he feels, has made them dangerous. The Right does not fully comprehend that we are at war.

It is in the third essay, “The religious roots of radicalism,” that Horowitz traces his Jewish roots and describes how he became a leftist radical. As he was chanting, “One, two, three, four, we don’t want another war,” during a May Day march, Irish children in the crowd began to chant, “Down with the Communists! Up with the Irish” Horowitz realized at that moment that he did not identify himself as a Jew. He was a revolutionary and an internationalist. To identify himself as a Jew would have been a betrayal to the Revolutionary Idea. It was twenty-five years later, when he defected, that he understood:

. . . the importance of boundaries—the religious boundaries that separate the holy from the profane; the secular boundaries that separate the uncharted from the familiar, the apocalyptic from the mundane. Among

the conservative lessons my heretical life has taught me about boundaries are the costs incurred in crossing them.

In the fifth essay, “A radical holocaust,” Horowitz blames the tragedy of the AIDS epidemic on sexual radicals who failed to realize in 1969, the year of “Gay Liberation,” that promiscuous anal sex, conducted with strangers, was unsanitary and dangerous and a threat to public health with epidemic repercussions. Yet gay liberation was so defined that sex was transformative and challenged the heterosexual and monogamous norms of the Judeo-Christian culture. Gay activists did not view their licensed “bathhouses” as threats to community morals and health. Instead, these establishments became known as “liberated zones” where the gay community could pursue their alternative lifestyle. The defense of this “gay culture” by radical activists was so successful that it made traditional public health intervention politically impossible.

The gay liberationists not only thwarted measures to control the epidemic in their community, where ninety-five percent of the AIDS was found, but denounced the screening of blood for blood banks as infringing on the “right” of gays to give blood. Thus AIDS was allowed to spread among hemophiliacs and drug-using heterosexuals resulting in the black and Hispanic populations accounting for more than fifty percent of those infected.

Horowitz summarizes that

. . . the war against civilization and nature . . . the radical enterprise, inevitably produces monsters like AIDS. The nihilism that rejects nature and the idea of the normal, as it sets out to create a radical new world, is as blindly destructive as ever.

This message is important for all Americans. The medical community is finally becoming aware of these destructive political forces. Horowitz gives a clarion call, as well as an indictment—that this AIDS epidemic is due to the medical profession forsaking its principles, those applied to previous epidemics, for a Leftist agenda. We must understand these forces that are changing not only medicine and healthcare, but also the very basis of our society. We must have the courage to become knowledgeable and proactive in moving toward our previous standards of the Judeo-Christian code—a code that nurtures rather than destroys.

—Del Meyer

The Kinder Gentler Military: Can America's Gender-Neutral Fighting Force Still Win Wars? by Stephanie Gutmann. New York: Scribners, 2000, pp. 300, \$25.00.

During a series of exhaustive interviews at a number of military bases and on board Navy ships, Stephanie Gutmann collected a vast amount of information on the attitudes of soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen. In the spring of 1991 U.S. armed forces stood at the peak of their efficiency and morale was high. Since then it has been all downhill to the point where the services are “hollow.” The Army, Navy and Air Force are so over-stretched and engrossed in what the author calls

“political correctness” that their combat capability is open to serious doubt. This nation has been there before.

On June 25th, 1950 the North Korean army stormed south across the 38th parallel. Although U.S. armed forces had shrunk in the late 1940s because of the assumed efficacy of nuclear arms, President Truman decided to throw American units into Korea to stem the Communist advance. The result was disaster. The 24th Army Division was destroyed by the North Koreans as they swept almost to the southern tip of the peninsula. In five short years the U.S. Army had forgotten how to fight. The Army’s emphasis at the time was on being “kinder, gentler,” especially to its junior enlisted people. The newly independent Air Force was not in much better condition in view of its single-minded doctrine that the threat of nuclear attack would solve all of our defense requirements. Only the Marines (and naval aviation) were trained to fight and they saved the day until the Army and Air Force could recover their capabilities of 1945.

The problems of the services can be broken down into three categories: personnel, material, and operational, all of which are interconnected. Personnel problems are unquestionably the most serious, especially that of the assignment (some say misassignment) of women and their pregnancies and motherhood. It is the nature of military services that demands of those services have first priority. However, no mother worthy of the name will put the Army, for example, before her children. The author cites a case in which a breast-feeding mother was called away from some arduous and necessary activity to go to her child because it was screaming to be fed. The effect on the morale of him or her who had to relieve the woman is obvious. When a pregnant woman assigned to a ship is transferred after her fourth month, no relief is sent, again with the result of someone else performing her duties.

Mixed gender training has pointed up the fact that women are more prone to injury than men. Bone fracture caused by the arduous physical training necessary for combat personnel has led to the “dumbing-down” of such training for both sexes except in the Marines which still train the males and females separately. Since women are not yet included in the advanced training of infantry and airborne troops, those units are still able to maintain their training standards. However, the push to extend the combat billets to women will certainly lead to combat capability loss in those units as well if they are effected. A huge question looms about the availability of women for combat units. The services can probably recruit enough female officers in the Army and Marines, but all indications are that enlisted women in the ground forces will balk at such assignments.

Material problems, especially lack of spare parts, exacerbate the personnel problem. Cannibalizing an aircraft to make another operational requires over twice the work of installing a new spare. And after the job is finished there is no guarantee that the replacement part is itself satisfactory. Overwork, which the junior officers and enlisted people uniformly blame on their political and senior uniformed leaders, is a major factor in low retention rates of skilled personnel.

Finally, the ever-increasing operational tempo with ever-decreasing forces

means more work, more time away from home and family and more stress on spouses. Again, this problem is reflected in declining retention rates.

Toward the end of the book, the author makes an interesting suggestion: that peacekeeping duties be made the realm of a new armed service, preferably, like the Coast Guard, outside the Department of Defense. This service would be trained in and maintain readiness for such duties to the exclusion of war fighting tasks. The regular armed services could then maintain readiness for war fighting, really their only *raison d'être*. Contrary to popular wisdom, the troops, whether Army, Marines, Navy or Air Force, are *not* enamored of peace keeping.

A few minor errors and deficiencies surface here and there. For example, on page 177, the author erroneously states that the president appointed Admiral Frank Kelso, the then Chief of Naval Operations to be Secretary of the Navy. Actually, Kelso was appointed Acting Secretary to serve until a permanent secretary could be found, approved by the Senate and sworn in. Serving officers cannot be permanently appointed to civilian offices. Although she alludes to it, the author neglects the huge problem of gangs. For obvious reasons the services, even the Marines, are plagued with gangs on many bases and in the aircraft carriers. They too constitute a major headache for service leadership and are very hard to deal with in the present political climate. But this criticism is carping.

The larger question is “How reliable are the author’s facts and interpretations?” Where they overlap independent sources available to this reviewer—and the overlap is very large—the consistency is near perfect. In other words, the book falls into the overall pattern in a very consistent manner.

I could go on and on citing additional topics that the author discusses at length, but the foregoing gives the flavor of this extremely important book. Everyone, especially sociologists and psychologists interested in current difficulties in the armed forces, should read Gutmann’s book.

—Robert C. Whitten

Robert C. Whitten is the chairman of the National Community Education Committee, Navy League of the United States.

Sellout: The Inside Story of President Clinton’s Impeachment, David P. Schippers, with Alan P. Henry. Regnery Publishing, Inc., 2000.

One of the questions this book doesn’t answer is just why it was that David Schippers, a long-time Democrat from Chicago who had once been head of the Justice Department’s Organized Crime and Racketeering Unit under Attorney General Robert Kennedy, was moved to become so eloquent a spokesman for the impeachment of President William Clinton at a time when virtually no other Democrat at any level was willing to break ranks. Schippers accepted an invitation from Chairman Henry Hyde of the House Judiciary Committee to conduct an investigation of the Justice Department, and when Independent Prosecutor Kenneth Starr’s referral came to the committee relative to impeachment Schippers was asked to drop that investigation to take on the job of Chief Counsel for the Republican majority on Hyde’s committee. He went on to serve as Chief Counsel

for the House Impeachment Managers as they prepared and presented their case to the Senate. One of the unforgettable episodes in the impeachment process was Schippers' presentation of the case to the House committee before its vote on the impeachment articles.

Coming from such a source, *Sellout* itself takes its place as an historic document that gives the inside story as seen by one of the central figures. It provides an excellent summary of the entire process from the time of Starr's referral to Clinton's acquittal by the Senate on February 12, 1999. The full text of Schippers' first report to the House committee, and forty-eight pages of excerpts from his detailed presentation of the case, are included. An appendix gives photocopies of several documents relating to the scandal that Schippers was first investigating involving the Justice Department and the Immigration and Naturalization Service's actions in 1996 to naturalize "more than a million aliens . . . in time to vote in the 1996 election." Significantly, this rush to bring in immigrant voters was headed by then Vice President Al Gore. The rush involved irregularities that ranged from truncated interviews, manipulated testing to assure a passing grade, and the failure to act on fingerprint checks to determine aliens' criminal backgrounds. This information itself makes the book important.

The title *Sellout* is explained when Schippers says that

. . . the Republican leadership in the Senate and House sold out the House [Impeachment] Managers. . . Democrats in both Houses sold out basic principles of law and decency. . . But, most distressingly, the President and his White House water boys sold out the American people.

He might as well have included the cabinet, the Democratic Party, the major media, and most of all the millions of amoralists among the public whose studied indifference and readiness to be manipulated drove the whole process.

More than anything else, the book should be pored over in graduate seminars for centuries as a prime case study in the decadence that looms so large as a central fact of American life at the turn of the new millennium. Lessons from this Aesop's Fable of actual history: how one of the two main political parties had evolved into what was in effect a Leninist-style party with iron-clad discipline, abundant sophistries and no abiding sense of public decency; how the other party, and especially its leadership, was so timorous that it vacated its role in favor of equivocation, in effect depriving the American people of a two-party system; how the mass media spread this spirit of equivocation to a large segment of the electorate; how by consensus information of vital importance was withheld from the public, a fact that in itself raises serious questions for seminars about "democratic theory"; and how the overturn of sexual morality that was part of the counterculture of the 1960s had by the end of the century so widely changed attitudes in the United States that there was little sense of outrage about Clinton's behavior even in and about the Oval Office.

There are reasons to place evidence of scandal under seal, withholding it from the public for a number of years. One is if the information will place in jeopardy

the lives of secret agents overseas whose identity would be revealed; another is if the information would cause a diplomatic or military crisis with another country. *Prima facie*, however, there is no reason why

. . . a great deal of evidentiary material. . . will remain under seal for fifty years unless the House Judiciary Committee releases it.

From whom is the information being hidden except the American people? Why would a Republican majority on the Judiciary Committee want to seal it? Why is there no hue-and-cry to have it released?

Sellout is intrinsically important, certainly easily readable, and an excellent summary of a complex process the details of which necessarily escape us as time passes. But it falls short of what this reviewer had hoped it would amount to as an “insider’s revelation” of information we have not had before. Schippers, perhaps as an aberration brought on by his own decency but no doubt to some extent also by Schippers’ own absorption of some of the equivocation, accepts the remarkable shibboleth that Clinton’s sexual misconduct was his private business, so that only his lies and obstruction of justice were important. This means that there is no explanation of the censoring out of Monica Lewinsky’s testimony about oral-anal sex and of why, inconsistently with that censorship, reference to that sex was included in the footnotes to the Starr Report. It means also that there is no detail about the DNA test on the blue dress, even though Schippers acknowledges briefly that the results of that test were what forced Clinton to abandon his infamous insistence that he had had “no sex with that woman.”

There is more to the story. It is interesting to speculate what our great-grandchildren will think of us when they come to know it.

—Dwight D. Murphey

God, Guns, & Rock ‘N’ Roll, by Ted Nugent. Regnery Publishing, 2000, 315 pp., \$25, ISBN: 0-89526-279-5.

When I received this book, I hesitated to do the review. I was aware of the public debate on the evils of gun ownership. However, there is evidence that the elimination of guns in the populace was very important in the takeover of Russia and China by Communism. It is also well known that almost everyone in Switzerland carries a gun, including students; yet it is the world’s safest society. Aberrations such as the Columbine School massacre are unrelated to gun control; the students had already broken nineteen gun control laws. Subsequent evaluation of the families of Eric and Dylan revealed the near absence of the highest form of caring—discipline. These parents felt they were not allowed to even enter their children’s bedrooms. The liberal contention for the need of another gun control law was to control society rather than save human lives. Gun control legislation gave these students the time needed to taunt and kill their captors slowly. They knew no one else would have guns. As David Horowitz wrote in *Politics of Bad Faith*, the left is at war with the basic structures of society and, since we don’t fully comprehend this, it makes them even more dangerous. The left thinks they can

bring heaven on earth with the power of Congressional lawmaking that often includes regulations devised by the HHS, CDC, HCFA, FBI, BATF, FDA, even the Supreme Court, but unrelated to congressional intent or constitutional constraints.

Now comes Ted Nugent, a rock 'n' roll star, who, in total defiance of the liberal left agenda, emblazons "God & Guns" on the title of his book. His frontispiece is Genesis 9:3: "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you," and Genesis 27:3: "Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out and take me some venison."

Before he delves into acquiring his venison with bow and arrow using standard hunting practices, he "rocks" into saving an off-duty police officer using a weapon concealed in the small of his back. The story unfolds as he is taking his wife Shemane to their tenth anniversary dinner. As they stand beside the cab, a truck "rocks and rolls" to a stop, angled across the congested traffic. Two muscled men jump out yelling outrage at the driver of another car. Nugent, always in "Condition Yellow" (relaxed awareness), is jolted into "Condition Orange." He shoves his wife behind the opened cab door, the best bullet-stopping shield available, and speed dials 911 on his cell phone. Entering "Condition Red," he yells at the taxi driver to get down. As he observes the off-duty Dade County policeman struggling to control his .357 magnum, he describes the situation, Nugent style, to the dispatcher.

After Ted Nugent saves the officer's life, he reports that he would have been helpless, like most of the public, had he not been carrying a concealed weapon.

To my mind, it is totally irresponsible to go into the world incapable of preventing violence, injury, crime, and death. . . . Only a coward would want fewer good guys with guns on the streets in today's world.

Nugent feels it is pointless to put 100,000 new cops on the streets, but refuse to allow millions of dedicated, trained law enforcement and licensed citizen warriors to carry guns legally across the country. He concludes, "Criminals celebrate when politicians clear the path for their destructive ways."

Nugent moves from one massacre to another pointing out how one armed citizen could have prevented the Columbine and other school massacres where up to twenty-two innocent citizens were needlessly killed. Although Nugent uses words that are coarse and in the vernacular, he makes a forceful point for gun ownership that is difficult to refute. It does create a balance for what we read in the daily press. He emphasizes the importance of instruction in gun safety to family members, relatives and school children.

Nugent's quote from George Washington probably sums up the message the best:

Firearms stand next in importance to the Constitution itself. They are the American people's liberty teeth and keystone under independence. . . . To insure peace, security and happiness, the rifle and pistol are equally indispensable. . . . The very atmosphere of firearms everywhere restrains evil interference—they deserve a place of honor with all that's good.

Or as Nugent says about living in today's society,

How can it be considered good when "the clueless and defenseless public" can be killed at their most vulnerable moment, without a chance for defense?

Nugent gives us the rationale of how we can't protect the innocent if we protect the killers.

—*Del Meyer*