

Tony Blair's contribution to the lumpenisation of society

A fragment of what should be a long piece

Have we been made lumpen by the powerful? Possibly 'lumpenisation' encapsulates the intentions and effects of people of power. Is society intended by the powerful to be a conglomeration of manipulable people to serve and respond as required? If you cannot position yourself to stand among the powerful then what are your choices? Tony Blair made it very clear that if one word summed up New Labour it was 'choice.'

Who decides what can be chosen? Can we all choose the same thing? Are we sometimes persuaded to choose unwisely? Do we choose to empower those that disempower us? We enjoy the Welfare State and the NHS given to us by Robin Hood so why do we vote for the Sheriff of Nottingham?

If we do not like our responses to the above set of questions what can we do about it?

Control of language is very important to Blair and Blairites. Their influence remains strong in both major parties. We should always watch out for words such as **MODERATE** or **CENTRE** or **REFORM** or **CHOICE** or **MODERNISATION**. The purpose of capturing such labels is to ensure that they apply to the policies of those in power, thereby labelling as extremists those that think differently.

Another dangerous word is **CONTROVERSIAL**. Take a war crime for example. If you can successfully get people to refer to it as controversial you take the sting out of it. You leave the impression that it is debatable, that there is a valid alternative interpretation.

In my view the BBC has been a bad misuser of language in pursuit of its notion of **BALANCE**. Too often this has meant that despite stark staring guilt a denial of that guilt must be given equal treatment and, therefore, respect.

It is inside this linguistic landscape that Blair and his courtiers continue to operate. Too many of us fall at the first hurdle when a Blairite asks us: "Surely you are not against **REFORM**?" Naturally we say we are not. But once we agree we have tacitly accepted a manipulated definition and so lost the argument. We have crossed the border into their landscape where all the signposts continue to carry the same names but now point to somewhere quite different.

Blair constructed a linguistic obstacle course that is still in use. Too many people waste energy coping with it. We should tell it like it is. There is no other way to nail him. And nailing him is what we must do, not merely for war crimes but also for his adaptation of Thatcher's notion that there is no such thing as society, only individuals. Although not expressed like Thatcher Blair's society was composed of those that were enabled to make choices and those that were not.

AERON DAVIS' NEW BOOK, *Reckless opportunists, Elites at the end of the Establishment* is now out (2018). The picture of Boris on the front might put you off. Pages 114-115 are on the Iraq adventure, though there is more elsewhere. I would not say that he provides anything stunningly new but, once again, we see the damage done to the shrinking civil service corporate memory and expertise as people are rotated and, very notable, the huge pressure upon Labour MPs to toe the line. They too were thought to be lumpen: the lumpen parliamentariat.

Having read what Gordon Brown has to say on the crucial vote in his book my belief that Brown was being disingenuous has been reinforced. According to Davis it seems that Blair threatened to resign and that many Labour MPs, Brown included, convinced themselves that if Blair lost the vote the reputation of the government would be ruined. I do understand that obtaining and keeping power are important but does the price not matter? These were MPs unconvinced about WMDs, often totally disbelieving Blair. And yet they gave him their votes.

When Britain submitted to US pressure to take part in the Korean War funds were diverted from welfare and the NHS to double our spending on the military. Nye Bevan, John Freeman and Harold Wilson resigned because of this. It did their careers no harm at all, just the opposite. I often say that Blair poisoned politics. I am prepared to admit that he was not unaided. Nevertheless, even carrying with me history's pinch of salt, I do believe that when it comes to values politicians are not what they used to be.

Nailing Blair would make such a difference! He continues to contaminate the Labour Party and we saw how much influence he had upon Cameron, Gove and company who referred to him as 'the master'. Today Blair encourages Labour MPs to vote against Jeremy Corbyn on the issue of Brexit: this from the man who shoved tuition fees and Iraq down the political throats of his party. He also shamelessly encourages the artificial accusations of anti-Semitism in the Party. Clearly he has not noticed the lengths a government run by Netanyahu will go to in order to prevent a supporter of the truly Semitic indigenous people of Palestine becoming prime minister. Blair was, remember, a Peace Envoy garlanded with weeds. As Peace Envoy he was top of the league: the Poisoned Ivy League.

Cliff Jones 30th. March 2018