



Old Hickory's Diary - 7

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This time Old Hickory looks at:

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The BNP and the Local Elections.

The Death of Lord Bauer.

The Court of Appeal Judgement against Farrakhan

The black power leader, the Reverend Louis Farrakhan, has been banned from the UK since 1986. On 30 April 2002 the government won its appeal against the ruling that the controversial American political leader should be allowed to enter Britain. The Appeal Court overturned a High Court decision made in 2001 to quash a 16-year ban on the *Nation of Islam* leader. It was feared that the 68-year-old could threaten public order if he were allowed to enter Britain. However, this is not the end of this affair, for the lawyers acting for Farrakhan said they would appeal to the House of Lords. Farrakhan has been banned by successive Home Secretaries since 1986 when the Tories banned him on the grounds he had repeatedly expressed racist and anti-Semitic views. He has especially upset the Jews in his attacks, as have other

black power leaders like Jessie Jackson who have kept to Christianity. This is one aspect of the laws against racism that

has backfired on the Jews. Maybe the black power leaders think the Jews are too rich to be spared their attacks. Many British Jews were upset that the High Court repealed the ban last year.

Every Home Secretary since 1986 has been set against Farrakhan entering the UK. Blunkett is no exception. Three Court of Appeal judges headed by the Master of the Rolls, Lord Phillips, backed him up in that judgement. The judges thought that the ban “did not involve a disproportionate interference with freedom of expression.” This is not quite true, nor even can it be so, and the judges haply should have admitted as much. Maybe they really do feel that motivation matters greatly to the nature of a ban. But the plain fact is that motivation is rarely, if ever, germane to the truth. Blunkett welcomed the result by saying: “I am very relieved that the view taken by successive Home Secretaries has been vindicated and the Home Secretary’s right to exclude someone from the country whose presence is not conducive to good public order has been upheld.” In their ruling, the appeal judges said that since Mr Justice Turner’s 2001 decision about Farrakhan being safe “the events of September 11 had intervened”. They said it was a personal decision of the Home Secretary which was within his “wide margin of discretion”, and that he was in a far better position to reach an informed conclusion than was any court. Blunkett seemed pleased with the result.

But there were some that were not so pleased. Dr Hilary Muhammed, Farrakhan’s representative in the UK, said the Appeal Court had acknowledged the minister posed no threat. Similarly,

Sabiq Khan, solicitor for the *Nation of Islam* said, “He is preaching a message of self-discipline, self-reliance, atonement and responsibility. He’s trying to address the issues and problems we have in the UK, black on black crime and problems in the black community. It’s outrageous and astonishing that the British Government is trying to exclude this man.” Farrakhan’s lawyers had argued the ban scotched the European Convention of Human Rights, which is also, nowadays, enshrined in British law. Farrakhan has visited Nelson Mandela in South Africa, Israel and Libya. But the appeal case overturned Justice Michael Turner’s ruling that there was no evidence of racial, religious or ethnic tensions between the Muslim and Jewish communities in Britain.

But others welcomed the decision. Lord Janner, chairman of the *Holocaust Educational Trust*, said: “I am delighted that the law has acted justly, realising the damage that Farrakhan could have done to Britain, particularly now at a time of political unrest in the Middle East, Europe and here. With our local elections this week, the BNP do not need encouragement from the likes of Farrakhan.”

Farrakhan’s brand of Islam differs from the orthodox religion, which its founders did not really master – as Malcolm X discovered when he left the organisation and went to meet Muslims in Africa. The Black Muslims of USA regards Elijah Mohammed, who died 27 years ago, as the last prophet, not the seventh century Mohammed, who founded Islam in Mecca. But that is not quite how Islam worldwide sees it. It has been Farrakhan’s aim to bring the Nation of Islam closer to the pristine creed, which itself is not short of members in the USA where there is the Muslim American Society. This enables Farrakhan to learn without having to break away from the upstart creed. Farrakhan’s followers

defend him as a respectable role model to young black men. The members are always dressed very smartly and behave in a way far more dignified than that of the black power movement in the 1960s. They preach the virtues of self-respect, the family and Islam.

Farrakhan is certainly a demagogue and has repeatedly attacked Jews with the result that in the USA and the UK they now hate him. They say that he is racist and anti-Semitic and that seems to be true enough. He has mellowed of late but in the past he has called white people “devils” and called the Jews “bloodsuckers”. He has said that Judaism was a “gutter religion” and that Adolf Hitler was a “wickedly great man”, maybe in the rap sense of wicked. But this has not been known to end in violence so far. And, now he has decided to foster good will, he may never repeat his firebrand days. But this is something the authorities never did want to risk.

The BNP and the Local Elections.

On Thursday the local elections went underway but the result was rather muted, with very little overall change amongst the parties. The elections are staggered over a four-year cycle rather than having all the councils up for grabs at one time. This year none of the shires were contested. A mixed night left Labour, the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats with little to celebrate. The result was that Labour has 63 councils with 2,402 councillors, the Tories 42 councils with 2,006 councillors, the Liberal Democrats 15 councils with 1,262 councillors with the others having 2 councils and 96 councillors. The British National Party’s [BNP] result was described by Le Pen as very encouraging on Friday because of their three new councillors – though they controlled no councils. There were 52 councils with

no overall control. The Tories were up by 238 councillors and the Liberal Democrats by 44 councillors but the loss of 339 councillors for the Labourites was not as bad as they feared.

The turnout was 35%, the highest for any local election since Labour came to power and up significantly from the 29.6% in 2000. It was highest in the areas that tried out the postal vote and a leading Labourite, Charles Clarke, predicted that the General Election would be by post within a decade. In Iain Duncan Smith's first major electoral test, the Tories gained Adur, Swale, Peterborough, Wokingham, and Enfield, where Michael Portillo lost his seat in 1997. But they lost power in Cheltenham, Worthing and Eastbourne. Shadow Foreign Secretary Michael Ancram called the Conservative performance "workmanlike". He added: "We are at a very early stage in building our policies and I think we can be satisfied with last night." But there was talk in the press of discontent with the leadership over there being less progress than expected. Smith pressed on with his reforms in the party (Sunday 5 May) by sacking Ann Winterton for telling a racist joke that had the punch line that the Indianids were ten a penny.

A number of mayors arose but hardly enough to make the reform anywhere near complete or the new norm in the towns and cities of England. The Liberal Democrats achieved a mayoral victory in Watford. Labour now has mayors in Newham and Doncaster. The Conservatives have a mayor from the closely fought mayoral contest in North Tyneside. Two new mayors were elected that caused a stir. The one that many thought brought politics into disrepute was campaigning in a monkey suit. He got the suit in his job as a football team mascot where he was known as H'Angus the Monkey. But his actual name is Stuart Drummond. He is now mayor of

Hartlepool. But he immediately threw off the monkey suit and announced "I have resigned as H'Angus." He is 28 single and still lives with his parents. The media loved it. They asked all sorts of people what they thought of him. The local MP likes him and looks forward to working with him and that is Peter Mandelson. He told the *Today Programme* that he was quite a bright fellow with considered policies and that the gimmick did not matter much. *The Monster Raving Loony Party* thought that it was a wonderful event and they wish they had thought of it.

The other mayor that mattered was the one they call Robocop. He is Ray Mallon, the pioneer of *Zero Tolerance* in the UK. He is mayor of Middlesborough and that is not far from Hartlepool where Mallon was suspended as a police chief after making a success in the role in Middlesborough. He is popular in both places but was tied up in what many hold was a trumped up charge – a result of envy at his success. He now has little to do with policing as mayor but that is not how he sees it. He said "I intend to use every local authority power possible to translate the fear of crime from the public to the criminal." The eight million pounds spent on the corruption enquiry that involved Mallon and sixty others was thrown out earlier this year.

The Liberal Democrats won Norwich which had been a Labour stronghold for almost 70 years. Labour got more of their supporters out to vote in some of its traditional heartlands but the party still lost 20 seats. They lost overall power in Hull, where their deputy leader John Prescott is the MP. They also lost control of Stoke-on-Trent. The party's vote dropped 14% in London boroughs, where it lost Lambeth, Enfield and Harrow. However, they did win back Bexley. The NHS support group that arose in the General Election continued their success at the council level. The

Kidderminster campaign to save the town's hospital repeated its victory at the general election. The Greens put up their best performance since the 1989 European elections by winning 7% where they stood and that was up two points up on 2000.

The Independent featured the threat from the British National Party [BNP] on the front page, taking up the whole of it, on Saturday 4 May. They clearly think it is big news. The BNP last had a councillor elected nine years ago. The BNP victories are the first time a far right candidate has won a seat since Derek Beackon in the London borough of Tower Hamlets in 1993. This time they got an average 27% of the vote in Oldham but failed to win any seats there. However, civil engineer David John Edwards did triumph in Burnley and was later followed by his party colleague, Carol Hughes. Their anthem is *The Dam-busters March*. Like Eric Coates, they are more typical in outlook to the 1950s than to pre-1939 Germany. After recounts on Friday, Terry Grogan joined them to make three councillors in the UK for the BNP – all in Burnley. Terry Grogan won by just four votes. He had suffered five recounts. The turnout was higher than in most other places at 53%. Similarly, the turnout in France on 5 May was high. This phenomenon is good for democracy. It is not often that over 50% of the electorate turn out to vote. Edwards polled 898 votes. Carol Hughes, a 43-year-old divorcee and sometime Labour Supporter, won a seat in Rosegrove with Lowerhouse with 751 votes. She used to be a care worker but she is now a section leader in a local car parts factory. In her election leaflet, she denied being a racist but she said that New Labour had lost touch with the people of Burnley. Both refused to speak to the media as they claimed to have been unfairly treated by them in the run up to the local elections. She has a sixteen-year-old boy, and Paul Harris

(*The Daily Mail*, 4 May 2002, p7) reports that her neighbours like her and they say the BNP is no longer as it used to be. The BNP had run in 13 of the 15 Burnley wards. The town's Labour MP, Peter Pike, said the voters had been conned by "racist" candidates but the BNP said they had been open on all the issues. Labour chairman, Charles Clarke, who was on the ITV *Dimbleby* programme on 5 May, said that the BNP's success was "disappointing". They were only interested in strife. But the BNP leader Nick Griffin called the result a "triumph". He said that the BNP's objective remained "an all white Britain". He added, "It is very good news for us. It is an amazing victory."

The BNP averaged 18%, roughly the same as Le Pen was reported to have had in his 5 May 2002 play off with Chirac in France. That result was their best so far and not so far off the peak the National Front reached in the late-1970s. They fielded only 68 candidates for the almost 6,000 seats contested in England.

The Sad Loss of Lord Bauer.

I was going to respond to *The Economist's* piece on Lord Bauer before I heard the sad news of his death, on Thursday 2 May 2002. He was born on 6 November 1915. If there is a chance to write about Bauer, I usually take it. His books have been a great boon. The occasion of *The Economist* piece was related to the Friedman prize valued at \$500,000 (£342,500), due to be awarded exactly a week later than his death. *The Economist* article was way kinder to Bauer than the rather hostile book reviews of the 1980s that said he was largely repeating his old ideas and that they were not particularly true anyway. This week's article admits that Bauer was basically right about markets when it was not fashionable to say so in the 1950s and 1960s. It holds that Bauer

was to the idea of the Third World as Hayek was to the USSR, or to socialism (p93). The piece is well titled as *A Voice for the Poor*. He correctly saw that the free market made the poor way better off.

On Friday night, Ed Crane, president and co-founder of the *Cato Institute*, got it right when he said: "The world has lost a great man". His books against the tide were great in their affect on many, such as Bill Warren who wrote a handy book on Imperialism in 1980 on the spadework of Peter Bauer. Crane added, "Peter Bauer was one of the most courageous advocates of liberty I have ever known. While this is a great loss I am so pleased that Peter lived to learn he had won the prize. It is recognition at the highest level of his life's work." The dinner to award the prize was due on Thursday 9 May 2002. John Blundell, the director of the *Institute of Economic Affairs*[IEA], will now be at the dinner instead of Bauer. The prize money will go to Lord Bauer's estate. Milton Friedman, the Nobel prize-winning economist after whom the prize is named, will still be there.

Bauer was against corruption. I once wrote to him to ask if he had published anything of late in magazines that I could cite in a University essay as they now considered his books as old. He replied saying that my concern with up-to date citations was corrupt if the ideas in them were still germane. But his book *The Development Frontier* (1991) just happened to be hot off the press. I duly got it and was able to impress the lecturers with an up-to-date book.

However, it still seems to be the case that most students think that there is some form of exploitation where the lands that are rich today got so by making other lands poor. They still think in zero-sum terms that has it that arithmetic applies to all things and the positive sum game is alien to their outlook. If some are in

poverty then it is owing to others being better off. That may be true *ipso facto* but it is not germane. Non-economists, like Peter Singer, have held that not only is aid a duty but that equal shares are also a duty so that most of what we earn should go in aid. ["Famine, Affluence, and Morality" in *World Hunger and Moral Obligation* (1977) p22ff]. The affect of this on students is to extend their feelings of guilt, a result that Bauer was out to counter. Reinforced dogmatism on the part of the guilty makes this something of an uphill task. Students have long been quite determined to see the market as harsh in some way and bigotry on the topic has been thought to be the correct response. We should show we are kind by supporting state aid rather than by giving to charity, which would truly be to put our money where our mouth was. However, Bauer showed that state aid was not so much aid to the poor as aid to killer states that often sought to cut a supposed population problem by killing off some of the people within their domain. To aid the state in many lands was to aid an anti-social institution and if it was by taxation, then it was cheap words rather than actual aid in any case.

The heroes of the left in Africa, like Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, get a very different write up in Bauer's books to what one might expect. Students liked Nyerere as he echoed their own zero-sum outlook thus "If the rich nations go on getting richer and richer at the expense of the poor, the poor of the world must demand a change.." [*Equality, the Third World and Economic Delusion*(1981) p69] but the reality was that the West built up the land that Nyerere ruled over. The basic point was lost a bit in the Monty Python film *Life of Brian* but still largely put over in the *What have the Romans done for us?* sketch. The most developed of the poorer countries are those that have the most interaction with rich countries, through trade and the

exchange of ideas.

And aid given to the likes of Nyerere ended up in being used for his many political executions (p95). He also forced mass migration, and confiscation that impaired food production rather than stimulating it (p106). Why was all this overlooked? It was owing to guilt and the fact that Nyerere opposed the West that the students had to come to hate, haply owing to their guilt. In any case, even if the money was used with more care, it took more than just money to develop a country. People had to develop the institutions from the bottom up and the state was bound to be remote from this development.

The Economist article has Bauer as next only to Hayek and Friedman as champions of the free market. Bauer was born in Budapest in 1915 and arrived in the UK in 1934 to study and later teach at Cambridge, and then at the LSE. Mrs Thatcher got him into the Lords in 1982 but he is reported as not wanting to do much there. He did occasionally make a speech that was worth listening to on *Today In Parliament*. Bauer characteristically flattened the argument of the vicious circle with the question of “how did any land ever get rich then?” If the market were allowed to develop it would aid progress. If the vicious-circle theory were true, we would all still be living in the Stone Age, or rather, a few of us would. The only equality that Bauer had time for was equality before the law. He rightly saw that economic development on the market tended to make the luxuries of today the household goods of tomorrow, even if a few fresh luxuries emerged to give the very rich a temporary access to things the masses might not have for a few years. He was for limited government little or no inflation and a night watchman state.

Foreign “aid” maintained the Third World rather than helped it to find its

feet. “Aid” was “an excellent method for transferring money from poor people in rich countries to rich people in poor countries.” Bauer did not like the expression and was fond of pointing out that the lands so described were by no means uniform, but very diverse. A few years ago, many Libertarian Alliance members were present at a talk he gave to the IEA. He characteristically welcomed all questions, the more critical the better. He was a bit physically weak so he needed to sit down but his brain remained lively. He was on fine form that night and he gave some stimulating answers to the questions. That is how I will remember the author as I often re-read his many books.

OLD HICKORY

“The advocacy of redistribution clearly implies a basic similarity of requirements between those affected by it. But on a global level there is not even the semblance of such a similarity. People in the Caribbean area require fewer clothes and less fuel than people in Canada. Hence international comparisons of conventionally measured incomes are abstract to the point of being meaningless.” P.T. BAUER