

# *Democratic Geopolitics*

## Henry Jackson Society

**Editor's Note:** *The British Moment: The Case for Democratic Geopolitics in the Twenty First Century* (Social Affairs Unit, 2006) is a foreign policy manifesto written by a group of young academics associated with the Henry Jackson Society. The editors thank the Social Affairs Unit, and the authors, John Bew and Gabriel Glickman, for granting permission to publish this introduction to the manifesto.

### Beyond the labels of Left and Right

For some time, there has been a bitter debate about the future of British foreign policy. This dispute amounts to something much more significant than a mere question of strategy or a subtle gradation of emphasis. The deeper one digs, the easier it is to detect increasingly polarised and divergent attitudes to the biggest issues on the global stage. Over the past ten years, these competing concerns and belief systems have flitted in and out of mainstream debate. But in Britain, the war in Iraq and the growing spectre of Islamist terrorism have raised the stakes irrevocably.

In the post-Cold War era, Britain and the rest of the world finds itself addressing new threats and unforeseen challenges. Of these, the terrorist attacks in New York, Bali, Madrid, London, Turkey and Iraq are the most obvious. But during the last decade we have seen numerous other tragedies, outrages and spectacular failures of governance etched onto our collective memories. This is an era of ideological and geopolitical flux. Familiar terms such as empire, democracy, sovereignty, liberalism and security have become hotly contested. It is, perhaps, the ultimate consequence of globalisation that it is no longer easy to deduce an individual's stance on foreign policy from his or her party political affiliation. [1] Increasingly, domestic polarisation takes place within a framework that reasserts the primacy of foreign policy.

Since 2001, divisions within the Labour party have resounded loudly across domestic politics. In the period preceding the invasion of Iraq, the 'Leftist' side of the anti-war coalition drew upon the institutional mantras of modern liberalism and barricaded itself behind 'the integrity of the United Nations,' 'the sovereignty of nations,' international law and principled opposition to 'imperialist' America. At its core, the logic of this position was that the removal of Saddam Hussein was of

much less concern than the frustration of George Bush's foreign policy. As London was hit by the terrorist attacks of 7 July 2005, the cry from the most outspoken exponents of this loose coalition was that 'we only have ourselves to blame.' Or, more precisely, we only have our own government's support for the US-led invasion of Iraq to blame. If we had stayed out of Iraq, so the argument went, we would not have been subject to the type of attack which Iraqi civilians face every day. At its most basic level, this argument holds that President Bush and an unrepresentative cabal in Washington remain the most serious threats to world peace. Britain, depending upon alternative versions of this narrative, has thus far played the role of co-conspirator, or honourable dupe.

This critique was not exclusive to the British Left. Conservative parliamentary support for the invasion of Iraq met with consternation from many senior commentators within the Tory ranks. Of recent contenders for the party leadership, Kenneth Clarke and Malcolm Rifkind were forthright in their opposition to what Norman Lamont has called, 'this country's biggest foreign policy disaster since Suez,' and a 'profoundly unConservative war.' Those of the 'realist' school of international relations – traditionally associated with the Foreign Office and a number of the self-styled 'big beasts' of post-Thatcher Toryism – remain deeply suspicious of what they see as fatal hubris: a utopian mission to bring democracy to areas where it has no meaning. Nixonian maxims reign supreme. The West, we are told, 'must never presume to tell the peoples of other nations how to manage their own affairs.' [2]

As old ideological divisions collapse, these tendencies on Left and Right have, perhaps unwittingly, coalesced into a rigid 'quietist' position, increasingly vocal in the mainstream media. Within this, there is much that is well intentioned and, given the continuing difficulties in Iraq, much that might seem prescient. But there are also elements that are disturbing and misleading. Not least among these is a tangible drift toward moral and political relativism, made apparent in deconstructions such as the BBC documentary, *The Power of Nightmares* (2004), in which the leaders of Western democracies and their advisors are presented as equally conspiratorial, self-aggrandising and bloodthirsty as any tyrant or terrorist. It remains absolutely vital that the behaviour of Britain, America and 'the West' is rigorously scrutinised. The great danger, however, is that we aim this scrutiny only at ourselves: seeing the mote in our own eye and not the beam in others.'

One consequence of this is a cynical 'equivalency' drawn between the values of liberal democratic states and those with an incomparable lack of moral, constitutional and

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electoral legitimacy. Another, glaringly obvious in the British media, is the failure to highlight instances of political oppression and human rights abuses beyond the regions where British and American foreign policy courts controversy.

Conversely, those who are stuck between the 'realist' Right and the non-interventionist Left – most notably the prime minister – have also found themselves in unfamiliar territory, part of an awkward nexus of opinion, forged in the ideologically unstable context of the last decade. The persistent failures of the international community in responding to humanitarian atrocities in Africa, the Middle East – and indeed Europe, within the last ten years – have precipitated a moment of departure for many. The support for robust, liberal intervention brings together influential figures of the Left – Christopher Hitchens, David Aaronovitch, Nick Cohen, John Lloyd and Oliver Kamm – with Conservatives seeking to rediscover a progressive Tory tradition of engagement and intervention in foreign affairs. [3]

While recent interventionist doctrines have been closely associated with the premiership of Tony Blair, these notions do seem to have some resonance on the opposition front bench. According to shadow Defence Secretary Liam Fox, recent shifts in policy-making have opened up the possibility of an inclusive 'Freedom Agenda,' highlighting 'unsung tragedies' and 'unheard-of crises,' to bring 'the benefits of freedom, economic liberty and human rights to the millions who currently do not enjoy it.' [4] The new Conservative leader David Cameron has attempted to locate Eurosceptic policies in the context of an optimistic and outward-looking role for Britain on the world stage, encouraging a stand against oppression, not just in the Middle East, but in Burma and across sub-Saharan Africa. Offering a Yeatsian appeal for Britain to confront the 'passionate intensity' of Islamist terrorism, he has argued that 'If we lack belief in ourselves, then we transmit a fatal lack of resolution to defend liberal values against those who would destroy them.' [5]

With the Blair premiership drawing to a close and Cameron's Conservative party still taking shape, there is no clear trajectory for the future of British foreign policy. It is, however, vital that the issues are taken beyond the constraints of personality-based politics. Arguably, as the American author Paul Berman has written, despite the prime minister's close personal association with the doctrine of liberal intervention, he has sometimes failed to articulate this case clearly enough. [6] The success of a principle-led foreign policy will most likely rest upon the convictions of British leadership in a post-Blair environment. With Labour and the Conservatives

both divided between rival quietist and interventionist traditions, the outcome of intra-party debates will have national and international implications.

Inevitably, the decision to invade Saddam Hussein's Iraq – and the grave difficulties that continue to be faced there – still poisons the debate. But the challenges of the world today refer to a context that predates, and will long outlast, the presidency of George W. Bush. An understanding of international relations dominated solely by Iraq (or America, for that matter) takes no stock of the increasing influence of China, the transformation of India or the continued instability in areas of South America. As the following chapters of *The British Moment* will argue, the legacy of the Srebrenica massacre, the ongoing problems of governance and genocide in Africa, as well as the instances of tyranny and instability in the greater Middle East, are crucial aspects of the question. The Western inheritance of liberal thought, freedom and democracy transcends party labels, and it is critically important that the most pressing issues of international concern are taken beyond such narrow parameters. The dissolution of old alignments in British politics and the emergence of new coalitions have produced a critical moment in the definition of Britain's role in the world. The Henry Jackson Society is a response to that moment.

### **The Henry Jackson Society**

Since the announcement of our 22 November launch in London, The Henry Jackson Society has been the subject of a steady stream of national and international media coverage. [7] In the comment pages of the *Guardian*, one writer depicted the endeavour as a 'neo-conservative' incursion into British politics, a truly cloak-and-dagger presence within Westminster. The Henry Jackson Society was identified as a key agent in the chicanery of British neo-cons behind the Cameron leadership campaign. Finding themselves 'faced with the nightmarish possibility that in a straight fight between David Davis and Kenneth Clarke, the more charismatic and anti-war former chancellor would prevail,' signatories of the society had schemed 'to undermine support for the latter by reinventing Cameron as the voice of Tory "moderation."' [8]

Others were more open about the bi-partisan support for the society and the potential cross-party appeal of a progressive foreign policy. A number of commentators on the Left of the political spectrum welcomed the initiative, as a contribution to a debate which has yet to be satisfactorily conducted in British politics. [9] However, it was with precisely such a response in mind that David

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Clark, former foreign policy advisor to the late Robin Cook, sounded a warning to left-of-centre interventionists against the temptations of Henry Jackson, with lessons from post-Vietnam America. Citing the prominence in the 1980s Reagan administration of 'neo-conservatives' whose careers had originated in the Democrat party, he urged 'bitter liberals' not to become duped by a scheme to split progressive politics down the middle and ensure the triumph of 'a new governing consensus on the right.' [10]

It remains one of the curious features of current political discourse that so many opponents of the Iraq war feel obliged to express their case through the medium of conspiracy theory. The very notion that a 'neo-conservative' cabal still holds sway in Washington, let alone Westminster, will be a surprise to serious observers of American politics. [11] The reality, we feel bound to acknowledge, is a little more prosaic. The Henry Jackson Society is an intellectual project, not a programme for power. We draw our support from all groups and parties, without desiring that our members renounce their prior allegiance. [12] In fact, rejecting any explicit party political affiliation, The Henry Jackson Society cautions against the restrictive mantras of Left or Right, as applied to Britain's future role in the world.

Above all, the foundation of The Henry Jackson Society is an acknowledgement of the severe problems faced in post-Saddam Iraq. If the progress of transition and democratisation had continued at the pace that seemed possible after the liberation of Baghdad, the logic behind the society would be greatly diminished. We are a post-war rather than a pro-war organisation. We came together in 2005 on the shared understanding that the continued difficulties faced in Iraq were leading to a dangerous restriction and polarisation of the debate on foreign policy: a tendency that has led many in America to decry the toppling of Saddam Hussein as the slippery slope into another Vietnam. [13] Contrary to the suggestions of our most alarmist critics, we see Iraq as, ideally, the last rather than the first in a series of major military interventions in the Middle East: not as a forerunner to invasions in 'Iran, Syria or any country the US decides to attack in five or six years' time.' [14] But we do see it as the first step in the democratic transformation of the Middle East.

The interventionist alliance that emerged around the time of the Iraq war is at present fluid and unstable; we hope to contribute to an environment in which it can gain lasting cohesion. Crucially, however, we aim to build a larger coalition still, and seek dialogue with those who supported military action in the service of freedom and democracy in Bosnia, Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan, yet

felt unable to commit themselves to the removal of Saddam Hussein. We strongly condemn the human rights abuses at Abu Ghraib, any erosion of civil liberties, and long-term alliances with oppressive regimes. We wish to reach out to those who may have opposed the war, but who hope to ensure that a post-war Iraq stands on a democratic foundation. We regret the sectarian rhetoric that has, at times, emerged from the US administration, and pay tribute to those liberal writers who have retained their support for a project of democratic transformation, often despite, not because of, the voices emanating from Washington.

### **The revival of a British tradition**

It is our contention that exponents of a principle-led foreign policy are constrained by the limits of current political discourse from giving effective expression to their creed. The contemporary obsession with neo-conservatism is a key symptom of the existing inhibitions. Neo-conservatism is a uniquely American label, which carries such wildly inaccurate connotations in the media that it serves no serious purpose in the debate over British foreign policy. In Britain, we have our own history, labels and traditions that belie the tendency to mock or to mimic all things American. Pacifism, interventionism, non-interventionism, imperialism or the spread of democracy – the dilemmas of modern international governance have been deeply woven into the formative debates of our own political nation. In most cases, these are issues that were discussed in Britain long before they were debated in the United States.

The genesis of The Henry Jackson Society's position is therefore situated within a uniquely British experience, encompassing the history of empire, nineteenth-century support for European liberals, as well as more recent lessons learned in Northern Ireland. If anything, it is the American exponents of neo-conservatism who have drawn on a strong British tradition of internationalist liberalism, embodied by figures such as the early twentieth-century Liberal statesman and ambassador to the US, James Bryce. [15] That Bryce, who did much to forge the language of international democracy in the age of Woodrow Wilson, was once charged with 'speaking for the cause of universal peace,' while 'perhaps unconsciously ... urging imperialism in the highest sense of the term,' is a reminder that the vocabulary of the current debates has a uniquely British inception. [16] More recently, Oliver Kamm has argued for the rediscovery of a left-wing tradition of anti-totalitarianism, specific to the British Labour party since the 1930s. [17] In his Chicago speech

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of 1999, Tony Blair declared his support for ‘nation-building’ and ‘humanitarian intervention’ long before these ideas were associated with President Bush.

For Conservatives, too, there is much within the blueprint of The Henry Jackson Society that resonates with their party history. [18] To their credit, this is something that has been duly acknowledged by Conservative critics of The Henry Jackson Society. [19] The recent rhetoric of Liam Fox and David Cameron is quarried from a rich Tory-humanitarian seam in global affairs: the school of Pitt, Canning and Wilberforce, whose policies brought an end to the slave trade and promoted South American freedoms against the autocracies of Europe. If the party’s tradition of intervention was taken to its height under Winston Churchill, the creed was hardwired into Conservative foreign policy doctrines of the 1980s, and extended by Margaret Thatcher’s vocal support for Bosnian democracy in the following decade. The concept of an ‘ethical foreign policy’ long predates the late Robin Cook. Against those who see interventionist doctrines as a foreign invasion of the body politic, it is equally possible to identify the Jacksonian blueprint as the extension of a very old British philosophy. Now is the time to bring it home.

### **In search of a progressive consensus**

The Henry Jackson Society shares the view that the world changed irrevocably on 11 September 2001, and that Britain, too, has a responsibility to acknowledge this and respond to it. The argument that it is often ‘in our interests’ to prop up tyrannical and failing regimes in other parts of the world was one casualty of the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington. But there was nothing revelatory about these lessons that we should not have, or could not have, recognised before. Now, those who maintain an exclusively ‘realist’ approach to international governance find themselves on the same terrain as President Bush in 2000. This was to oppose the use of American power in doing ‘social work’ beyond immediate American interests – to question humanitarian intervention in Africa or the Balkans during the 1990s.

From the British perspective, those who support the principles of humanitarian intervention, or the spread of liberal democracy, converge on the ground of what we would call a ‘progressive’ foreign policy. For many of its leading exponents, the origins of this position can be located just over ten years ago; its signature moment was the spectacular failure of the European Union, the United Nations, the West in general and Britain in particular, to respond to the Serbian campaign of ethnic

cleansing which culminated in the systematic massacre of nearly eight thousand Bosnian Muslims in Srebrenica. [20] Yet the neglect of the Balkans was just one symptom of a much more serious malady. Further shortcomings in Rwanda and Somalia, in the same decade, undermined the credibility of the United Nations as the only possible guarantor of intervention and collective security. During the legal and diplomatic wrangling that surrounded the action in Iraq, these experiences were all too readily forgotten. Yet they are crucial for understanding the build-up of frustration with a series of multilateral charades.

We recognise that, in most cases, a strong emotive loyalty to the UN derives from the right instincts. Nevertheless, to regard the UN as beyond criticism is to undermine that attachment. As Kofi Annan has regularly acknowledged, it is not to oppose the operation of a successful UN to recognise that it should be equally subject to criticism as any of its member states. Arguably, the long-term deficiencies of multilateral organisations were masked from view by the strategic priorities of the Cold War. In any case, a world-view that presents the United States (in tow with Israel) as the chief source of evil in the world and places the United Nations on a pedestal beyond reproach is absurd. The concomitant notion of a Western world divided between sophisticated Europeans and irresponsibly militaristic Americans is similarly redundant. The reality is that possibly tens of thousands of Muslims – Bosniacs and Kosovar Albanians – would now be dead if it had not been for the proactive diplomacy and military power of the United States in the Balkans in the mid-1990s. Many who are dead would not be if the UN had previously recognised the gravity of the challenge it faced. This was not merely a humanitarian but a strategic disaster, which gravely undermined the credibility of Western institutions, such as NATO and the EU.

In this analysis, we move in harmony with a growing belief that the multilateral structure of an unreformed UN – an apparatus that draws no distinction between dictatorships and democrats – creates almost as many problems as it solves. Philip Bobbitt, who advised the Clinton White House, has lamented the tendency of current supranational institutions – the International Criminal Court is another potent example – to tie the hands of only those who support their essential principles, leaving a comparatively free rein to others who fundamentally oppose their remit. As an alternative, we should consider the creation of ‘umbrella states,’ mobilising ‘coalitions of the willing’ to resist aggression and halt campaigns of ethnic cleansing, while opening up trade, increasing levels of environmental protection, and providing for the collective good of a larger area of the world. [21]

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The rationale would not be one of empire, but an insistence on pluralism as the guarantor of sovereign rights: a shift in thought, following the wisdom of Henry ‘Scoop’ Jackson, whereby the internal character of a nation state becomes a matter of concern outside its own frontiers.

For genuine progressives, the search for alternatives has never been about jumping into an unthinking alliance with the United States. Rather, it is to realise the importance of harnessing the power of America toward a principle-led foreign policy. At present, the USA alone has the resources, the resolve and the global reach to advance this agenda, but Britain is the country best placed to steer Washington in the right direction, enabling us to make our own substantive contribution in the process. Far better an America engaged with the world – with all that this entails – than a fortress Republic that leaves the rest of the globe to its own devices. The Henry Jackson Society believes, therefore, that a progressive foreign policy is not about championing George W. Bush; it is about championing democrats, trade unionists, women, children, religious, social and ethnic minorities, and, in so doing, acting beyond the comfort zones of our own domestic vision.

### **Governance and the future**

At this delicate and difficult moment, it is more important than ever for progressives to join forces to make a democratic Iraq a sustainable reality. This need not be to endorse the invasion, but to assist in the creation of a peaceful and stable state, with sufficient protection for minorities. One commendable model is Labour Friends of Iraq – composed of Labour party members who have set aside their differences on the issue of the invasion itself – which is committed to building progressive and protective links with workers’ organisations and journalists in Iraq. [22] In a similar vein, The Henry Jackson Society is committed to providing a forum and a platform for debate and discussion with pro-democracy campaigners where they are not afforded that right within their own states. Of course, it is right and wise to insist that reform should come from within and not be imposed from without. The Henry Jackson Society, furthermore, has no desire to see the unchecked spread of an unfettered corporate capitalism in areas where historical development and social traditions are unreceptive to it. Yet it is quite another thing to spend more time defending tyrants and nihilists than promoting the cause, the rights and liberties of peoples who do not share the comforts that we have in Britain.

Ten years after Srebrenica, to those who say, 'what right do we in the West have to interfere in the affairs of other states,' the progressive will ask other questions. If we can help, and if our help can be directed in a constructive way, what right have we not to? True, in the past, in the Middle East, the West has installed, tolerated and maintained tyrannical regimes. True also, that it is precisely such regimes – Saudi Arabia is the most obvious example – that have spawned so much of the radical Islamist ideology which has fuelled the global terrorist threat. But if this has been a retrospective source of rebuke from anti-interventionists or critics of America, surely it is also an imperative for action. Many of those who once set themselves – rightly – against General Pinochet's Chile, have a blind spot when it comes to some of the most tyrannical regimes of the twenty-first century. Absurdly, certain elements within the anti-interventionist camp in this country now protect their own 'pet' regimes, merely for the sake of resisting America. This is Cold War logic in reverse and a sobering example of how the primacy of foreign policy has made supposed liberals at home defenders of tyranny abroad.

The whole point of a principle-led foreign policy is that the means by which it is pursued are given as much importance as the ends to which it is aimed. Supporters of democratisation can advance the argument by calling for an end to the Cold War realpolitik that threatens to pollute a principle-led foreign policy with fatal compromises. Otherwise, the 'war on terror' threatens to become the perfect franchise for the oppressive regime. It was reassuring that public pressure was successfully brought to bear on the United States' accommodation with the Karimov government in Uzbekistan: a valuable ally in the defeat of the Taliban in Afghanistan, but a brutal regime, and a liability for the unity of policy in the region. [23]

The Henry Jackson Society also puts itself firmly to the forefront of any campaign to eradicate the use of torture against terrorist suspects. In the United States, Senator John McCain's recent Anti-Torture Bill is a crucial and highly commendable measure; we would have hoped that the initiative was also unnecessary and redundant. The White House's eventual, somewhat grudging acceptance of the legislation suggests that it has begun to absorb these lessons. The regret is that it has been so much slower than others in learning how to articulate them. While talk of hearts and minds can often seem trite, it is critical to acknowledge that the treatment of enemy prisoners represents not simply a matter of the West's 'image,' but an integral part of a contest of values. The context of our operations has changed because, in the words of Senator McCain, we are engaged in 'a war of ideas,

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a struggle to advance freedom in the face of terror,' in which immediate calculations must be fixed within wider moral and intellectual horizons. [24] We are now called upon to advance not just our short-term interests, but the fundamental ethos of Western liberal democracies.

The US has not always laid down the best imprint in the regions where it has sought to work its will; the instability on the wider American continent provides rueful evidence of past failures. But in the former Soviet bloc and the Balkans – the legacy of more recent intervention – the story is different. Here, the echoes of Western success can still be captured: in the process of democratic awakening at large in Kyrgyzstan, Georgia and the Ukraine, and in the chorus of pro-Western sentiments continually expressed across Bosnia and Kosovo, heartlands of European Islam. Starting in the Middle East, the need to 'shock and awe' must be matched by the need to foster and inspire. The model should be that of ideological victory in Eastern Europe, and not the short-term Cold War calculations applied across parts of Central America. National aspirations – among Kurds in Iraq, Ahwazi Arabs in Iran, Lebanese or Tibetans – should be seen as a potential vehicle for the spread of democratic values. At the same time, this should be conditional on full respect for minority rights; there are still valuable lessons from the Versailles settlement of 1919, which created a host of new national grievances.

A progressive, pro-democracy, liberal internationalism does not emerge from a utopian or evangelical project to impose our values on others. It derives from the failure – on strategic as well as idealist grounds – of a generation of 'realist' policies. For those of Right and Left who would prefer to take refuge behind a shield of sceptical 'realism,' the prospect of Britain promoting democratic transformation is extremely discomfiting. But the ground has moved beneath our feet and, in a world where external threats can be so swiftly exported from the margins of the map, any return to a laissez-faire foreign policy would be a deeply inadequate response. President Bush's administration has made some serious errors in its prosecution of the 'war on terror.' But we believe that he is right to argue that the 'survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands. The best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in all the world.' [25] It is our duty not to deride and disparage this rhetoric, but to keep America to its word.

### **Against the return of a Suez mentality**

It would be folly to pretend that the time of writing provides a comfortable context for supporters of an interventionist foreign policy. Sectarian violence, a rising death toll and the lack of a clearly defined exit strategy from Iraq are causes of grave concern; they have proved particularly challenging to those who were reluctant supporters of military intervention in the first instance. [26] This manifesto is an acknowledgement of that. But it also makes the case that we must formulate new responses and new approaches. The flood of retrospective wisdom from those who opposed the intervention is inevitable. To nay-say is one thing; but the failure to put forward serious, viable, long-term alternatives remains breathtaking. The attempt to keep the terms of debate fixed within an endless re-run of arguments from 2003 is indicative of a deeper malaise.

It is axiomatic to say that there are serious lessons from the invasion of Iraq that must be taken into account in the shaping of future British foreign policy. At the same time, in the rush to avoid being tarred with the brush of a failed neo-conservative policy, it is hoped that those who once predicted the 'end of history' will do more than fall in behind the battered shield of windy multilateral rhetoric. [27] More worryingly, within Britain, the residues of the anti-war movement have made little progress beyond reactionary alternatives: to withdraw troops immediately and eschew any further foreign 'adventures,' to argue that life was immeasurably better under a brutal dictatorship, or to suggest that some people are not 'ripe' for democracy after all. Among the current band of acclaimed foreign policy prophets, there has been little recognition of the fact that all was not right before. Any reminder of the reality of Iraq in 2003 – or the impotence of the UN in dealing with Saddam – undermines the 'peacenik' vision of a pre-conflict idyll, brutally shattered by Blair and Bush.

The chapters of *The British Moment* therefore take a stand against the creeping revival of a defeatist 'Suez' mentality in Britain's political consciousness: whether it takes the form of visceral anti-Westernism on the Left, or the derision of 'realists,' directed against 'turning the British state into a branch of Oxfam.' [28] As James Rogers and Matthew Jamison illustrate in the following chapter on Britain in the world, the restored global influence of the nation, allied to its economic and military strength, equips us to rediscover a tradition of successful, values-driven engagement beyond our own borders; the sense of mission that originally helped to propel Britain toward great power status. In Europe, as Marko Attila Hoare shows in Chapter Two, the self-doubt increasingly afflicting the old 'federalist' project

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has created a power vacuum, and a space to be filled by new political leadership: an opportunity to pioneer a process of liberal, eastward expansion and an increased level of European military integration under British leadership. In his chapter on Africa, Gideon Mailer argues that our legacy of imperial and humanitarian entanglements means that non-intervention is itself an evasion of historic responsibilities. Far from seeking to turn Britain into 'a branch of Oxfam,' he contends that aid alone is futile if it does not address the deeper problems of governance and patrimonial rule. It is our own nation that is in the strongest position, not just to enhance Africa's material welfare, but to assist its democratic development.

The Middle and Far East are also regions where our experiences can be called upon to advance the cause of freedom and representative government. It should be said that there are important areas of future discussion which will have to await more detailed investigation: UN reform (and the role of India), Latin America and, crucially, environment and energy. In the meantime, intellectual and diplomatic resources are finite and it is necessary to identify priorities. In Chapter Three, Martyn Frampton thus makes the case for the invasion of Iraq as the last large-scale military intervention in the Middle East. As such, then, our commitment to bolstering the nascent, fragile democracy of Iraq is of even greater importance. Nevertheless, on the understanding that we cannot impose democracy from outside, we must show active support for the indigenous democratic movements springing up across the Middle East. Finally, in his chapter on China, Tobias Harris argues that the forward march of Beijing represents 'a sustained assault on the ideological underpinnings of the Western-construed international order,' a threat made greater by the combination of pessimism and acquiescence that has characterised so much of Europe's current approach. A more proactive, strategic direction from Britain should bear fruit in a pattern of treaties and trade agreements designed to bolster nascent democracies in the region and to protect minorities from repression.

The core contention of The Henry Jackson Society is that realism and idealism can no longer be seen as incongruous, and that adhering to this false distinction has disabled Western foreign policies throughout the last generation. We do not criticise 'realists' on moral grounds, but for their lack of realism.

By all means, this position is open to challenge. But the first stage in engaging with it is to understand how and why we have reached this point. Our liberal, democratic tradition, at home and abroad, stands at a critical juncture. Despite all the setbacks in Iraq, it is likely that calls for intervention will intensify, not diminish. In Africa, the

Middle East, and the many other regions from which the international community once averted its eyes, the moral and material resources of Britain are needed more than ever. In the face of these challenges, it is no longer viable just to pull up the drawbridge, with a cry of 'not in our name.' Now, instead of becoming mired in the wrongs of a past era, the brief of a genuinely progressive foreign policy is to ask: what can we do right?

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### Notes

- [1] This was the argument made in response to the formation of The Henry Jackson Society by Stephen Pollard, 'What's left, right, centre and neocon all over,' *Sunday Times* (News Review), 27 November 2005.
- [2] Norman Lamont, 'Ken hits the spot on war in Iraq,' *The Times*, 5 September 2005.
- [3] The best recent example of this British progressive Leftist position is the online journal *Democratiya*.
- [4] Liam Fox, 'Address to Foreign Press Association,' 13 July 2005, available at [http://www.conservatives.com/tile.do?def=news.story.page&obj\\_id=123903&speeches=1](http://www.conservatives.com/tile.do?def=news.story.page&obj_id=123903&speeches=1)
- [5] David Cameron, Speech to the Foreign Policy Centre, August 2005, available at <http://fpc.org.uk/fsblob/560.pdf>
- [6] Stephen Malone, 'Interview with Paul Berman,' *New York Press*, 11 January 2006.
- [7] For the best international coverage, see 'Scoop's new fans,' *Financial Times* (US edition), 29 November 2005; Jürgen Krönig, 'Schöner neuer Tory,' *Zeit online*, 6 December 2005, available at <http://nurtext.zeit.de/online/2005/49/cameron?page=2>; 'New life for neoconservatism,' ABC Radio National Australia, 6 January 2006, available at <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/talks/brkfast/stories/s1542628.htm>
- [8] Neil Clark, 'Cameron is no moderate,' *Guardian*, 24 October 2005. See also Ros Taylor, 'Inside the hawk's nest,' *Guardian*, 22 November 2005, available at [http://blogs.guardian.co.uk/news/archives/2005/11/22/inside\\_the\\_hawks\\_nest.html](http://blogs.guardian.co.uk/news/archives/2005/11/22/inside_the_hawks_nest.html)
- [9] Pollard, 'What's left, right, centre and neocon all over'; John Lloyd, 'Democratic society,' *Financial Times Magazine*, 1 December 2005.
- [10] David Clark, 'The neoconservative temptation beckoning Britain's bitter liberals,' *Guardian*, 21 November 2005.
- [11] 'Scoop's new fans.'
- [12] This is a point that has been effectively reiterated by Gisela Stuart MP, 'Finding Neo,' *Progress*, January/February 2006, available at <http://www.progressives.org.uk/magazine/Default.asp?action=magazine&articleid=979>

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- [13] For a recent rebuttal of this view, see Stephen Biddle, 'Iraq: Learning the lessons of Vietnam,' *Foreign Affairs* 85, 2 (March/April 2006), pp. 2–14.
- [14] Clark, 'Cameron is no moderate.'
- [15] This point was made by Jonathan Dorfman, 'Review of Irving Kristol's *Neo-Conservatism: Autobiography of an Idea*,' *Washington Times*, 20 September 1995.
- [16] Sir Richard Temple, *Letters and Character Sketches from the House of Commons* (London, 1912), pp. 77–9.
- [17] Oliver Kamm, *Anti-Totalitarianism: The Left-Wing Case for a Neoconservative Foreign Policy* (London, 2005).
- [18] Douglas Murray, *Neoconservatism: Why We Need It* (London, 2005).
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- [20] Brendan Simms, *Unfinest Hour: Britain and the Destruction of Bosnia* (London, 2001).
- [21] Philip Bobbitt, *The Shield of Achilles: War, Peace and the Course of History* (New York, 2002); Philip Bobbitt, 'Better than empire,' *Financial Times Magazine*, 13 March 2004, pp. 16–24.
- [22] See <http://www.labourfriendsofiraq.org.uk>
- [23] For The Henry Jackson Society's position on this issue, see 'Uzbekistan: Democratic geopolitics, not (un-) Realpolitik,' 25 May 2005, available at [http://www.henryjacksonsociety.org/editorials/uzbekistan\\_ed](http://www.henryjacksonsociety.org/editorials/uzbekistan_ed) The unity of strategy and ideology in the region has recently been revisited by Alexander Cooley, 'Base politics,' *Foreign Affairs* 84, 6 (November/December 2005), pp. 68–78.
- [24] John McCain, 'Address to the Senate,' 18 September 2005, cited in David Aaronovitch, 'All right, it can work – but let's keep the thumbscrew under lock and key,' *The Times*, 6 December 2005.
- [25] George W. Bush, 'Inaugural speech ahead of second term,' 20 January 2005.
- [26] For a recent statement of these difficulties, see George Packer, *The Assassins' Gate: America in Iraq* (New York, 2005).
- [27] See, for example, Martin Jacques's review of Francis Fukuyama, *After the Neocons: America at the Crossroads*, 'Bush's foreign policy is under fire from a former prophet of neo-conservatism,' *Guardian* (Review), 25 March 2005.
- [28] To use the phrase of Corelli Barnett, 'Bring our troops home in 2006,' *Spectator*, 31 December 2005, pp. 10–11.