

Editorial : It was really great to see so many friends, old and new, at the annual Chiang Mai Cricket Sixes. Memories are made of encounters like this and I am eternally grateful for the ability to play cricket and meet so many damned nice people. Thanks everybody - here's to the 2010 Competition, God willing, I'll be there. Get well Norma Hollibone, we missed Peter, the grand master of cricket friendship.

Big Brother Britain or Civil Liberties Britain - It's Your Choice

A new political consensus appears to have emerged for the chattering classes. Lawyers, celebrities, writers, politicians and lobbyists took part in a series of meetings across Britain, organised by the umbrella group Convention on Modern Liberty, to discuss their fears about the erosion of Britain's historic rights and freedoms by the 'surveillance society'. The convention brought together such stalwart Lefties as the human rights lawyer Baroness Kennedy with the former Tory home affairs spokesman David Davis - who resigned his post specifically to devote himself to campaigning on the civil liberties issue. Even the former Home Secretary David Blunkett, who is regarded as a security hawk through his strong backing for a national identity card scheme and tough anti-terror laws, warned of the danger of a 'Big Brother' state through data-sharing between public bodies. Like all bandwagons, however, this one needs a beady eye cast over it, not least because of its occasional note of hysteria.

Its alarmism over closed-circuit TV and DNA profiling pays scant regard to their usefulness in catching criminals. And there's more than a whiff of an underlying agenda to paint Britain as worse than the tyrannies and rogue states that threaten its interests, with a corresponding anxiety to downplay the terrorism threat against this country. Some local councils are making wholly inappropriate use of anti-terrorist legislation to snoop on citizens, while other public bodies - such as the Charity Commission, the Royal Pharmaceutical Society and the BBC - are able to make deeply questionable use of further surveillance powers. There will soon be compulsory CCTV cameras tracking people as they shop in supermarkets for a bottle of wine, and pubs are being told they will only get a licence if they agree to train their security cameras on their customers.

One of the main reasons the State has resorted to gathering intelligence within Britain on such an alarming scale is the collapse of the ability to control our borders. And that was brought about by the systematic refusal by the courts, on human

rights grounds, to keep out or deport a range of undesirables. The reason this country never had the identity card system common to so many European states was the fact that it used to have robust border controls. Once those barriers came down, the only way to protect the country's security became internal surveillance.

Of course, this runs wholly contrary to the historic principles of English liberty. But that is the inevitable outcome of human rights law - which has ridden roughshod over those principles - because many of those now campaigning against the erosion of liberty also claim that 'universal' human rights principles trump Britain's own. Under that law, judges have been handed the power to balance rights against each other. And time and again, they have come down in favour of the rights of terror suspects, illegal immigrants and common criminals against the rights of indigenous, law-abiding people. So it's a bit rich for the liberty campaigners to claim that fear of terrorism has eroded human rights.

It's even harder to take when such campaigners claim they are passionate about defending the English common law. This is, indeed, the bastion of our liberties by holding that people are free to act unless the law expressly prohibits them from doing so. But the human rights law these campaigners foisted upon us has taken a judicial axe to that principle by making judges the arbiters of our freedoms. In doing so, they deliberately transferred power from Parliament to the courts. The inevitable consequence has been that MPs lost power to the judges. This weakening of Parliament has enabled the Labour Government to use Parliamentary procedure to short-circuit debate and force through legislation without proper scrutiny. A more robust Parliament would have prevented the Government passing those laws which threaten our fundamental freedoms. But over the past few years, Westminster has had the stuffing knocked out of it by a series of measures, including human rights law, whose purpose was to destroy this country's constitutional settlement and powers of

democratic self-government. Devolution took away Parliament's power to decide many laws for Scotland and Wales. Above all, EU membership - whose impact upon Britain has greatly increased during the past decade - has taken away more and more powers of self-rule and made Parliament increasingly irrelevant. Most of today's liberty campaigners are also supporters of this constitutional revolution. That's because the dominant creed in such progressive circles is the belief that the historic values of this nation should be superseded by international laws and institutions - which will apparently usher in the utopia of the brotherhood of man. In fact, this is profoundly anti-democratic and anti-freedom because it upholds the rights of some preferred groups against others. As such, it is responsible for the real curtailment of our liberties through anti-

discrimination laws and codes against 'hate speech', hijacking freedom by deciding who is or is not entitled to have it.

Accordingly, such liberty campaigners have been notably silent over, for example, the banning from Britain of the Dutch MP and anti-Islamism campaigner Geert Wilders. They have been silent over the erosion of the rights of men accused of rape to be presumed innocent until proven guilty. They were silent when a Christian was forced off an adoption panel because she opposed gay adoption. Such selectivity undermines their claim to be the true defenders of liberty.

Some of the concerns they are now raising are valid. This country's bedrock principles of freedom and democracy are, indeed, being eroded. But the campaigners should look in the mirror if they want to know who is to blame.

Editorial: This is such an important issue that I make no apologies for longevity. It is for you all to decide. Erosion of the British way cannot be tolerated, but it's happening, in front of your very eyes. ACT.



HRH : Yours or mine !!!!!



A Lottery winner perhaps ??



Hmmm, Trades Description ??

Parrot Indicted To Prove Ownership

An African Grey parrot has been ordered to appear before a judge to help decide who is the rightful owner of the bird. Palm Beach County Judge James Martz ordered the \$2800 parrot to appear in his court to help decide which woman owns the bird. On one side of the legal battle is 52-year-old Angela Colichieski, who insists she purchased the parrot 13 years ago. She alleges her parrot flew away three years ago, only to reappear in the possession of 47-year-old Sarita Lytell. Lytell alleges she found her parrot, also an African Grey, around the same time of the disappearance of Colichieski's bird, but refuses to hand over her beloved pet. Colichieski's attorney, Spencer Siegel, said his client hopes to win her lawsuit by having Lytell bring her parrot into court. "The bird wears an identification ring on his claw," Siegel said. "And we feel that it's necessary (to prove ownership) if the numbers on the ring become essential.

Ed: Could only happen in America !!

Doorman, have a word with the, v. *To butter up the bald headed bouncer in order to be allowed into the premises he is guarding. To cumulously nimbate the clematis.*

Don King in a headlock sim. *Descriptive of a foreign lady's armpits.*

Head for the hills exclaim. *To be forced to hide your soldier in the Dutch Alps because the redcoats are in the valley.*

Algerian Deportee Back In Uk Second Time In Two Years

A prolific bag snatcher twice deported from Britain has made a mockery of lax border controls for the second time in two years. Hakim Benmakhlouf, 27, who has a string of convictions for stealing from rich tourists at five-star hotels and airports, has returned to London only days after being kicked out.

He was first thrown out in July 2007 when, while serving a three-and-a-half year prison sentence for theft, he was given £3,000 by the Government to be released early and fly home to his native Algeria. But 24 hours later, he returned to London to continue his one-man crime wave.

He was re-arrested in April last year and jailed for three years the following month after admitting two thefts and asking for five similar offences to be taken into consideration. But, incredibly, he was released from prison last month after serving just a third of his sentence and deported to his homeland. Escorted by at least one immigration officer, he was flown back to Algeria at taxpayers' expense - only to return to London a few days later.

Police had no idea he had been freed until he was spotted in central London by two officers two weeks ago. Immigration officers were alerted that he had slipped into the country again and an inquiry has begun. Police warned that the father-of-two is almost certainly up to his old tricks again.

A furious Home Office source said: "This is a major, major embarrassment. This man has made a mockery of our border controls and the criminal justice system."

Efforts to trace Benmakhlouf were last night focusing on the St John's Wood area of North-West London, where the conman - who is rarely seen in anything but designer clothes - has previously rented luxury flats. It was there, while drinking coffee at a restaurant near his home, that he was arrested on April 9 last year.

Prosecutor Helen Thomas told Southwark Crown Court in London last May that Benmakhlouf was a 'prolific thief'. "The defendant targets high class hotels or airports," she added. "He targets tourists who are likely to have large amounts of currency and other valuables."

The former rent boy, who uses 12 aliases, apparently began stealing from his clients to fuel a cocaine habit. In December 1998, he was sentenced to two months in a young offenders' institution. He received 15 months in March 1999, a year's probation in December 2000, 21 months in February 2001, 30 months in June 2003, 12 months in August 2003, 18 months in October 2004 and 42 months in December 2005. Miss Thomas said it was during this sentence that he was handed £3,000 to accept voluntary deportation - only to return.

In October 2007, he was caught on CCTV stealing from guests at the Churchill Intercontinental Hotel in Portman Square, central London. Benmakhlouf's other audacious thefts included a bag snatch at Madame Tussaud's wax museum, where he sprayed his victim with tomato sauce to cause confusion.

Detective Sergeant Andy Swindells, who dealt with Benmakhlouf's case last May, refused to comment on his return to Britain. The UK Border Agency said: "As soon as we receive intelligence of a foreign lawbreaker in the UK from the police, we will investigate as a matter of urgency. We have teams of officers working with police forces up and down the country to track down those with no right to be in Britain."

Ed: Make up your own minds, but just look at the facts. New Labour is not working, and never will. Kick them out before its too late. Its all bollocks !!

Worker Dead At Desk For Five Days

Bosses of a publishing firm are trying to work why no one noticed that one of their employees had been sitting dead at his desk for five days before anyone asked if he was feeling ok. George Turklebaum, 51, who had been employed as a proof-reader at a New York firm for 30 years, had a heart attack in the open-plan office he shared with 23 other workers.

He quietly passed away on Monday, but nobody noticed until Saturday morning when an office cleaner asked why he was working during the weekend.

His boss, Elliot Wachiaski, said: "George was always the first guy in each morning and the last to leave at night, so no one found it unusual that he was in the same position all that time and didn't say anything. He was always absorbed in his work and kept much to himself." *Ed: One helluva boss.*

A post mortem revealed he had been dead for five days.

Check This Man For Signs Of Life



Going



Going



Going



Gone !!!!!

From The Horse's Mouth

The BBC has apologised to Grand National winner Liam Treadwell after presenter Clare Balding made fun of his teeth. In a post-race interview, Balding urged the jockey to show his teeth and told him he could afford to "get them done" after winning the biggest race of his life.

Balding urged Treadwell "just give us a big grin to the camera". When he smiled, keeping his lips firmly closed, she told him: "No, no, let's see your teeth. "He hasn't got the best teeth in the world, but you can afford to go and get them done now if you like."

Treadwell, who looked embarrassed, replied: "Well I could do, but I ain't complaining. It might be bringing on bad luck if I do that, though. Neighhhhhhhhhhhhh !!!!!

Curryoakie *n.* An enthusiastic but tuneless poot performed after a gallon of bitter and an Indian meal. A blanket ripper.

Drop a tadpole in her beer *v. Aus.* To make a lady pregnant. 'Her Majesty the Queen is pleased to announce that after several years of trying, HRH Prince Edward, the Duke of Wessex, has finally succeeded in dropping a tadpole in the Rt. Hon. Sophie, Countess of Wessex's beer.'

Moonwalk *n.* The optical illusion of walking without moving achieved by someone trying to wipe a dog's egg off their shoes onto the grass.

We were all born mad. Some remain so.

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An orange-coloured man from outer space



It's actually Italian fashion designer Valentino. I think he got a bit carried away with the fake tan. The human being is Anne Hathaway, au naturel !!

For The Outdoor Enthusiast With Very Big Pockets !!



If Only The Upstarts New What Gave Them The Chance



A STUNNING SENIOR MOMENT

A self-important college freshman walking along the beach took it upon himself to explain to a senior citizen resting on the steps why it was impossible for the older generation to understand his generation. "You grew up in a different world, actually an almost primitive one" the student said loud enough for others to hear. "The young people of today grew up with television, jet planes, space travel, man walking on the moon. We have nuclear energy, ships and cell phones, computers with light speed....and many more."

After a brief silence, the senior citizen responded as follows.

"You're right son. We didn't have those things when we were young....so we invented them.

*Now, you arrogant little sh*t what are you doing for the next generation?*

The applause was amazing!

This Is A 'Must' Read

It's the little things, always the little things, that get you in the end. For me, it was having to be police checked to take my child on a school trip to our local High Street. Sure, I realise that for quite some time the usual suspects have been banging away about erosion of our civil liberties, but it's easy to turn a blind eye when you are not being actually arrested. Laws were being passed one after another, changing our rights. But, to be honest, most people just don't understand or have enough time to read the small print of legislation. Not even the MPs who vote it through.

A lot of the time we feel it is nothing to do with us. We noticed the smoking ban as we huddled under patio heaters, but took little notice of the odd person being locked up for 28 days for having a beard and having looked at some odd websites. We have become so hardened to the continual health warnings that emanate from this Government of puritans that sometimes I think our culture of public intoxication is, in itself, a simple form of resistance to it all.

We were led to believe that the world changed so much after September 11 that endless checks on freedoms were necessary. We were scared and therefore allowed security to trump liberty, as there is no liberty for the dead, is there? We accepted this notion passively but are now agitated in airport queues. I always struggle with the difference between lipstick and lip gloss as a matter of national security. The armed police stalking around frighten rather than reassure me. Now, they have the right to stop and search anybody and any car in designated areas, but I do not feel safer.

Should I want to protest about this, I could, of course, go on some kind of demonstration, as long as I pre-arrange it with the police and if I make sure that I do not go within 1km of the Houses of Parliament. This is part of another ridiculous new Act. And there is a law that means that if I took a picture of a policeman standing still I could be liable for a ten-year prison sentence. Why? We are now all suspects and subject to a massive amount of surveillance. Thousands of CCTV cameras record endless footage. They don't prevent crime but blurrily remind us that no space is unobserved. We have sleepwalked into a society in which, because technology watches us, we no longer watch out for each other.

All of us will have felt the chipping away of small freedoms. I was astonished to know that because I had more than 20 people to my last party it was legally classified as a rave. At my age!!!

Perhaps, though, freedom of expression and of association are rather vague terms until some New Labour apparatchik starts reining them in, all the while talking to us as if we were five.

This weekend, all over the country, The Convention on Modern Liberty organised a series of events to discuss these issues. Have we left it too late? I think not. Now is the right time to put our feet down. Why, for in-

stance, must I be made to think of myself as a potential paedophile, rather than a parent? Something has gone badly wrong. Culturally we could read the runes. Although we have less faith in politics and institutions than ever before, they have been shoring up their power.

Simultaneously we have been bombarded by advice from lifestyle experts. Smoking, eating and drinking are no longer regarded as private choices but subject to public scrutiny. Much of what we do is bad for us. Television reinforces this with experts who make people examine their own faeces or get 'made over'. We have not been nannied but bullied on to the naughty step, forever infantilised.

More seriously, we have been lied to. While freedoms have been curtailed at home we have flown people round the world to be tortured. In the dying days of this administration, Jack Straw and David Blunkett have been wheeled out to tell us that comparisons with a police state are crazy. No one is saying that, we are simply staging a fight-back.

Liberty does not belong to any particular party. The Convention on Modern Liberty brings together Left and Right in a powerful coalition. Something that has been fairly abstract in people's minds is being made real. And part of that is surely connected to the economic downturn. Every day it becomes more clear that where this Government, and indeed the one before it, should have regulated our monstrous financial institutions, they didn't. They gave them freedom. The free market, remember, would save our souls and supposedly our public services. Now it all looks crazy because instead they over-regulated everywhere else. We cannot know the data kept on our own children. Surveillance is hard-wired into every aspect of our lives.

All this is done because we need protecting, not only from terrorists and criminals, but from ourselves. The truth is, though, no one feels more secure, they just feel their liberties shut down bit by bit. As Joni Mitchell sang all those years ago: 'Don't it always seem to go / That you don't know what you've got till it's gone.' But we are starting to know, because though we feel bewildered by all the jargon and legalese, we feel in our bones we are losing what made this country great. Times have changed, yes, but ancient and hard-won freedoms, which may make things difficult and messy sometimes, are part of our quality of life.

The challenge for the next Government is how far it is prepared to restore what has been lost. Freedom is not a theory, it's a practice. It is precious. We don't need protecting from ourselves. We need protecting from those who would take away our freedom. The enemies of freedom have shown themselves to be not simply murderous bombers but smiling legislators who know what is best for us. In the name of keeping us safe, they have imprisoned us. Time to break out. [Anon.](#)

Ed: This writer has balls, serious balls ! Very well said.