

In the past days, Charles Kennedy, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party, has publicly called for the “decriminalization” of cannabis, and for the establishment of a “Royal Commission,” to study and reform drugs policy in Britain.

The situation in the main opposition party, the Conservatives, has become completely insane. At their annual party conference earlier this month, a crucial moment came when the “shadow” Home Secretary, Ann Widdecombe, called for the police in Britain to impose a mandatory fine, for someone caught in possession of, and/or smoking marijuana. While her policy is consistent with the current state of British law, and correctly adheres to maintaining the illegality of marijuana, her statement backfired—and only partially because Widdecombe, who physically resembles a cross between a Sherman tank and a pit-bull terrier, tends to make a caricature of law enforcement toughness, whenever she speaks.

In the days following her speech, a herd of Tories rushed to declare that marijuana smoking is fine. No fewer than eight shadow ministers or leading party spokesman publicly announced that they had, in earlier times, used cannabis. Agriculture spokesman Tim Yeo exulted, about how much he had enjoyed (assuming he still doesn’t) cannabis. Conservative leader William Hague made an embarrassing renunciation of Widdecombe’s cannabis policy, making himself and his Thatcher-loving party look more foolish than it already is.

Did Tony Inhale?

As of this writing, two current Cabinet ministers, members of Blair’s “New Labour” government, have also announced that they had used cannabis when they were younger. More can be expected to follow suit, as they pander to the current frenzy.

The government is nominally committed to holding firm on its anti-drug policy. But Blair, ever the political prostitute, has begun to shift ground. Interviewed on British television over the Oct. 14-15 weekend, he softened his views, declaring that “it is up to people to do what they want to do,” and that it would be “wrong” for him to advise parents to tell their children not to use drugs, if the parents don’t agree.

Blair was attacked for this retreat, by both the Metropolitan Police Federation and the Association of Chief Police Officers. Leading British anti-drugs campaigner Paul Betts, whose teenage daughter Leah had died of drug use in a highly publicized case some years back, said of Blair’s statements: “This is really unhelpful, and it worries me.” He said that it would be irresponsible, and wrong, to leave the matter up to “parental or user choice,” stressing that young people were getting into “deep trouble through cannabis,” and noting that, in his speaking tours throughout Britain, he had come across growing numbers of cases of young people “dropping out of college, or suffering psychological side effects” because of cannabis use.

For the moment, Blair is sticking to the story that he never

smoked marijuana, even in his days as a counterculture rock ’n’ roll freak, claiming that he would not, then, disobey his father’s disapproval of dope-smoking. The story is hard to believe, especially given the report in the Oct. 15 *Sunday Times*, accompanied by a photo of the scraggly, long-haired young Blair, that his 1970s rock group, “Ugly Rumors,” was named after words in a song by the Grateful Dead. The Grateful Dead specialized in what is called “acid (i.e., LSD) rock,” and was notorious, as one of the main promoters worldwide, of both “soft” and “hard” drugs.

Should Blair find it to his advantage with “the public,” he will change his story overnight, perhaps adhering to the infamous phrase of a certain American President whom he has befriended, that he “smoked, but didn’t inhale.”

How Thatcher Wrecked ‘The Common Good’

by Mark Burdman

During the week of Oct. 9, former British Prime Minister, Baroness Margaret Thatcher, celebrated her 75th birthday. It is appropriate, on this occasion, to ask, how will she be seen by historians of the future?



wreaking havoc on nations and peoples, with her anti-social fanaticism for the unbridled free market, and the imperative of greed and selfishness. Indeed, for civilization to survive, it is urgent that the Barrenness’s ideas be decisively repudiated now.

Happily, Thatcher has received some pre-birthday commemorations, in a couple of hard-hitting insights into the destruction she wrought as British Prime Minister.

The first, elements of which have already been reported in *EIR*, was a program aired in Germany during the first days of October, on both the Arte television network, and then on the second national television channel, ZDF. This was a

“docu-drama,” composed for the tenth anniversary of German reunification, which occurred on Oct. 3. The actress who played Thatcher, weird bouffant hairdo and all, depicted her ranting against the “German threat,” at one point pulling out from her handbag, a map from 1939, showing Germany’s borders then, and warning that domination of Europe, and perhaps the world, would always be Germany’s aim. She was also depicted conniving with an actor playing the sly and immoral late French President François Mitterrand, to come up with ways to stop, at all costs, the unity of West and East Germany. Thatcher, the world-renowned “anti-Communist,” frantically tried to devise formulas to bolster the decrepit and dying Communist regime of the German Democratic Republic.

‘Hatred of Culture and Civilisation’

Also on Oct. 3, a political bombshell against Thatcher was exploded within Britain, by a peer, another woman member of the House of Lords, Baroness Mary Warnock. It came in the form of an extract, published in the London *Times*, from Baroness Warnock’s new book of memoirs. The *Times* extract was published under the title, “The Iron Legacy,” a play on the description of Thatcher as “The Iron Lady.” The sub-title read, “Ten years after Margaret Thatcher left Downing Street, the educationist Mary Warnock blames her for having destroyed our sense of the common good.”

As Lyndon LaRouche has stressed, “the common good”—or, more exactly, “the general welfare,” as is written in the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution—is the basis for all positive policies of the sovereign nation-state, as the nation-state evolved out of the 15th-Century Golden Renaissance. It is the essential idea, that differentiates humankind from beasts; eliminate it, and man is reduced to bestiality.

Admittedly, Baroness Warnock, a senior figure in the British Establishment, is hardly innocent of some of the vices of that species. Among other things, she has been involved in a number of dubious projects concerning “bio-ethics” and “medical ethics,” and has specialized in “existentialist philosophy.” Also, right before Christmas 1995, she presided over a “jury” which decided that apes should have equal rights with human beings (although she insisted, in a later discussion with this writer, that it was all an elaborate joke). But at the same time, she is one among those British Establishment figures, particularly among the older generation, who believe that Britain should maintain some bottom-line educational, moral, and cultural standards, and should not descend into outright barbarism.

Even though Baroness Warnock’s understanding of “the common good” or “general welfare” does not exactly conform to that of LaRouche, her critique of Thatcher on this point is devastating—and on the mark.

She opens by asking, “What was it that made so many of us detest Margaret Thatcher?” She answers: “Partly it was her deep philistinism, amounting not just to a failure to under-

stand, but a positive hatred of culture, learning, and civilisation.” Warnock lambasts Thatcher’s “ego-centricity,” as well as “the crudity, philistinism, and aggression that made up her character.”

Warnock reports her “total despair” at what Thatcher and her government did to British higher education. Thatcher was wont to claim, that she was steadfastly opposed to the “centralised, managerial, bureaucratic, interventionist style of government.” In reality, Warnock charges, the practice of sending in bureaucratic “experts,” who would override qualified individuals in order to judge the “output” of academic departments, “was like the Stalinist cultural experts sent in to ‘evaluate’ ” Russian music.

In Warnock’s view, “the condition to which higher education was reduced was . . . one of the worst effects of Thatcherism. . . . The concept of learning, the respect for higher education for its own sake, as something intrinsically worth having, an essential part of any civilised society, had been thrown out.”

Warnock acknowledges that, in the years before Thatcher’s 1979-90 reign as Prime Minister, British education suffered from horrible problems. But Thatcher’s means of dealing with them, made the situation far worse.

‘Harmful to Society as a Whole’

Warnock notes that, under Thatcher, “the free market would operate. . . . Parents, it was assumed, wanted their children educated to form a workforce. . . . Of course, in real life, the market could not possibly function as intended. . . . The Thatcherite attempt to supply the language of the free market to education (and, one may assume, to health) not only could not work, but was intensely damaging. The true purpose of education was lost in the commercial jargon of cost-effectiveness, value for money, and quality assurance.”

Warnock charges that “perhaps of all the legacies of Margaret Thatcher, the most pervasive was the assumption that nothing matters except the non-squandering of money. . . . Thatcherism increasingly, as the 1980s went on, became associated with the yuppie culture, the admiration for the upwardly mobile. But ‘upwards’ meant ‘richer.’ In such a culture, it becomes increasingly easy to cross the line between honest and dishonest means of becoming rich.”

The author argues: “If personal wealth is generally seen as the highest value, then the means to attain it may gradually become a matter of indifference. The legacy of Thatcher, then, is still pervasive and harmful to society as a whole. The idea of the common good . . . has simply become lost.”

Baroness Warnock concludes: “Out of her character and her tastes arose a kind of generalised selfishness hard to reconcile with the qualities of a truly civilised society; and since Thatcherism is by no means dead, even under a Labour government, the damage is widespread indeed.”

In other words, “The Iron Legacy” is very much alive under current Prime Minister Tony Blair and Company.