COURT AND SOCIAL

Court Circular

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
June 7th

The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh this morning arrived at Liverpool Lime Street Station and were received by Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside (Mr Alan Waterworth) and Commodore Ian Berry (Deputy Lieutenant of Merseyside).

Her Majesty drove to Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts and was received by Mr Mark Featherstone-Witty (Chief Executive), Mr Anthony Field (Chairman) and Mr and Mrs Paul McCartney (Patrons).

The Queen toured the building and watched dance and music performances by the students, before officially opening the Institute.

Her Majesty and His Royal Highness afterwards visited Conway Park, Birkenhead, to view the redevelopment of the area and were received by the Mayor of Wirral (Councillor Mrs Myrra Lea).

The Queen, accompanied by The Duke of Edinburgh, opened Europa Pools and visited Europa Square.

Her Majesty and His Royal Highness subsequently visited the International Business and Management Centre and were received by the Principal (Mrs Jennifer Shackleton).

The Queen, with the Duke of Edinburgh, toured the Centre's teaching and community facilities and attended a Luncheon, before officially opening the new building.

Her Majesty this afternoon attended a Concert in the Philharmonic Hall and was received by the President, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Society (the Earl of Derby), the Chairman (Mr Brian Thaxter) and the Lord Mayor of Liverpool (Councillor Frank Doran).

Afterwards The Queen officially re-opened the newly restored Hall.

The Duke of Edinburgh this morning opened the new European Technical Centre for Champion Spark Plug, Upton

His Royal Highness this afternoon opened the Delco Electronics Overseas Corporation's new factory in Kirby.

The Duke of Edinburgh, Trustee of the Council, this evening attended the 1996 St George's House Lecture at Windsor Castle.

Sir Marcus Worsley, Bt (Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of North Yorkshire) was present at Royal Air Force Linton on Ouse this afternoon upon the Departure of Her Excellency President Mary Robinson and Mr Nicholas Robinson and bade them farewell on behalf of The Queen.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
June 7th

The Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall, this morning visited Gul International, Bodmin.

His Royal Highness afterwards visited St Minver School, Wadebridge.

The Prince of Wales this afternoon visited the Royal Cornwall Show, the Showground, Wadebridge.

KENSINGTON PALACE
June 7th

The Princess of Wales this morning arrived at Heathrow Airport, London, from the United States of America.

Viscountess Campden was in attendance.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
June 7th

The Duke of York this morning attended an Ecumenical Service in York Minster and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of North Yorkshire (Sir Marcus Worsley, Bt).

His Royal Highness, Patron, this afternoon opened the Northern Police Convalescent Home, Castlebrae, Auchterarder, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross (Sir David Montgomery, Bt).

The Duke of York, Patron, Jubilee Sailing Trust, later attended the Keel-Laying of the new Square Rigged Ship at Merlin Quay, Woolston, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire (Mrs Mary Fagan).

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
June 7th

The Princess Royal this morning opened the new Junior School Building, George Heriot's School, Lauriston Place, Edinburgh, and was received by Mr James Hastie (Deputy Lieutenant of the City of Edinburgh).

Her Royal Highness later opened the joint National Library of Scotland and National Museums of Scotland Burns Bicentenary Exhibition entitled "Pride and Passion" at the Royal Museum of Scotland, Chambers Street, Edinburgh.

The Princess Royal, Patron, the Cranfield Trust, this evening attended a Jubilee Ball at Cranfield University and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Bedfordshire (Mr Samuel Whitbread).

KENSINGTON PALACE
June 7th

The Duchess of Gloucester, accompanied by The Duke of Gloucester, this afternoon named the Swan Hellenic Cruise Ship *Minerva* at Thames Quay, West India Dock, London E14.

Their Royal Highnesses were received on arrival by the Viscount Slim (Deputy Lieutenant of Greater London).

ST JAMES'S PALACE
June 7th

The Duke of Kent, President, the Football Association, this evening attended the UEFA Banquet to mark Euro 96, at Guildhall, London EC2.

THATCHED HOUSE LODGE
June 7th

Princess Alexandra, Patron of the Centenary Year of St Mary's Convent and Nursing Home, Chiswick, this morning attended a Solemn Mass of Thanksgiving in the Convent Chapel, Burlington Lane, Chiswick, London W4.

Her Royal Highness, accompanied by the Hon Sir Angus Ogilvy, this evening attended the St George's House Annual Lecture in St George's Chapel, Windsor.

The Duke and Duchess of Kent today celebrate the 35th anniversary of their marriage.

BIRTHDAYS

Today: Sir Ian Morrow, company chairman, is 84; **Mr Graham Watson,** literary agent, 83; **Sir Julian Ridsdale,** former Conservative MP, 81; **Mr Hugh Faulkner,** Director, Help the Aged, 1961-85, 80; **Prof F.H.C. Crick,** winner (jointly), Nobel Prize for Medicine, 1962, 80; **Mr A.J. Mottram,** tennis player, 76; **Lord Campbell of Croy** 75; **Sir Alwyn Williams,** Principal and Vice-Chancellor, University of Glasgow, 1976-88, 75; **Dame Jean Maxwell-Scott,** Lady in Waiting to Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester, 73; **Sir Iain Glidewell,** former Lord Justice of Appeal, 72; **Sir William Barlow,** Chairman, BICC, 1984-91, 72; **Sir Cranley Onslow, MP,** Chairman, 1922 Committee, 1984-92, 70; **Sir Michael Levey,** Director of the National Gallery, 1973-87, 68; **Dame Anne Warburton,** President of Lucy Cavendish College, Cambridge, 1985-94, 69; **Earl Ferrers,** Minister of State, Department of the Environment, and Deputy Leader of the House of Lords, 67; **Mr Michael Codron,** theatrical producer, 66; **Lord Kirkwood,** a Senator of the College of Justice in Scotland, 64; **Mr Ray Illingworth,** former England cricket captain, 64; **Prof Robert Stevens,** Master of Pembroke College, Oxford, 63; **Mr Roger Murray,** Chairman, Cargill, 60; **Mr Justice Poole** 58; **Mr Derek Underwood,** former England cricketer, 51; **Mr Martin Taylor,** Chief Executive, Barclays Bank, 44; **Miss Lindka Cierach,** fashion designer, 44; and **Miss Mary Thomson,** three-day eventer, 35.

Tomorrow: Col J.F. Williams-Wynne, Constable of Harlech Castle, will be 88; **Gen Sir Geoffrey Musson,** Adjutant-General, 1967-70, 86; **Mr Edgar Evans,** tenor, 84; **Sir Douglas Smith,** Chairman, ACAS, 1987-93, 64; **Mr Jeremy Hardie,** Chairman, W.H. Smith, 58; **Mr Peter Wilson,** Chairman and Chief Executive, Gallaher, 55; **Sir Nicholas Lloyd,** Editor of the *Daily Express*, 1986-95, 54; and **Mr Charles Saatchi,** advertising executive, 53.

Today is the anniversary of the birth of Robert Stevenson, the Scottish Engineer, in 1772.

WEDDINGS

Mr A. Brown and
Miss J.M. Archer

The marriage took place on Friday, June 7, at the Church of St Thomas of Canterbury, Woodford Green, Essex, between Mr Andrew Brown and Miss Judith M. Archer.

The bride, who was given away by her father, Mr David Archer, was attended by Victoria Archer, Stephanie Archer and Rebecca Archer. Mr Paul Greaves and Mr Richard Haworth were best men.

A reception was held in Great Baddow, Essex, *and the honeymoon is being spent in* Italy.

Mr D. Cousins and
Miss C. Millar

The marriage took place quietly in Derbyshire on Friday, May 24, between Mr David Cousins, elder son of the late Mr David A. Cousins, and of Mrs Margaret Watson, of Sheffield, and stepson of Mr James Watson, and Miss Caroline Millar, only daughter of Mr and Mrs David R. Millar, of Sheffield.

SERVICE LUNCHEONS

19th King George V's Own Lancers

Former officers of the 19th King George V's Own Lancers and their ladies held their annual luncheon at the St Ermin's Hotel yesterday. Brig John Woodroffe presided.

The Central India Horse

The annual luncheon for retired officers of The Central India Horse and their families was held yesterday at Claridge's. Brig C.T. Edward-Collins presided.

Skinner's Horse

Officers of Skinner's Horse (1st Duke of York's Own Cavalry) and their ladies held their annual luncheon at the Cavalry and Guards Club yesterday. Lt-Col Douglas Gray presided.

Poona Horse

Officers of the Poona Horse Regimental Association and their ladies held their annual reunion luncheon yesterday at the Cavalry and Guards Club. Lt-Col Michael Weippert presided.

FORTHCOMING MARRIAGES

Capt N.A. MacDonald and
Miss C. Ditchfield

The marriage has been arranged and will take place shortly between Neil Alasdair, son of Major General and Mrs John MacDonald, of Kirkneston, West Lothian, and Catrin, daughter of Mr and Mrs Paul Ditchfield, of Honington, Warwickshire.

Mr J.G.D.J.H.S. Ramsey
and Miss R.J. Joseph

The engagement is announced between Jim Guy Dominic Jex Haylett Stephen, son of Valentine Bagot Rudolph Haylett Walker Ramsey, of Horsham, West Sussex, and Shirley Mary Claire d'Esterre Hewson, of South Woodchester, Gloucestershire, and Rachel Jacqueline, daughter of the late Mr Victor Robin Joseph and of Mrs Margaret Elizabeth Joseph, of Hamstead, London.

Mr D.E. Meadows and
Miss P.R. Chalstrey

The engagement is announced between David Edward, youngest son of Mr and Mrs Roger Meadows, of Bath, Somerset, and Penelope Ruth, daughter of Mr and Mrs Frank Chalstrey, of Haslemere, Surrey.

Mr A.E. Fellows and
Miss J.C. Brown

The engagement is announced between Adam Edward, son of Mr and Mrs Mervyn Fellows, of Rockfield, Monmouthshire, and Jane Catherine, daughter of Mr and Mrs David Brown, of Lavenham, Suffolk.

Mr J. Whitaker and
Miss D.A. Duborg

The engagement is announced between Jason, elder son of Mr and Mrs Barry Whitaker, of Lodsworth, West Sussex, and Dana, daughter of Mrs Thomas Jones and stepdaughter of Mr Thomas Jones, of Madison, Wisconsin, USA.

Mr E.J.T. Brett and
Miss O.R Morley

The engagement is announced between Edward, son of Mr and Mrs Tim Brett, of Chilham, Kent, and Octavia, daughter of Mr and Mrs Michael Morley, of Priston, Bath.

Mr A.R. Rispoli and
Miss C.A. Steane

The engagement is announced between Andrew Raymond, younger son of Mr and Mrs Raymond Rispoli, of Bexleyheath, Kent, and Caroline Anne, daughter of Mr and Mrs John Steane, of Barnehurst, Kent.

Mr W.J. Andrews and
Miss J.J. Westmoreland

The engagement is announced between William, younger son of Mr and Mrs John Andrews, of Church Stretton, Shropshire, and Joanna, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Robert Westmoreland, of Leeds.

Mr R. Blackburn and
Miss S. Kingston

The engagement is announced between Richard, son of Mr and Mrs Ian Blackburn, of Goddards Green, Sussex, and Sally, daughter of Mr and Mrs John Kingston, of Pangbourne, Berkshire.

Mr C. Davis and
Miss M.J. Weston

The engagement is announced between Clive, only son of Mr and Mrs B. Davis, of East Leake, Loughborough, and Melanie Jane, only daughter of Mr and Mrs W. Weston, of Chopwell, Newcastle upon Tyne.

Mr S.M. Bennett and
Miss K.S. Bowes

The engagement is announced between Simon, eldest son of Mr and Mrs Bob Bennett, of Shrewsbury, Shropshire, and Katherine, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Richard Bowes, of Banstead, Surrey.

Mr J.E. Cornwell and
Miss S.M. Hayes

The engagement is announced between James Elwin, elder son of Mr and Mrs D.G. Cornwell, of Ightham, and Samantha Mary, second daughter of Mrs C.M. Hayes, of Kuwait.

Mr E.P.N. Fletcher and
Miss K.J.E. Williams

The engagement is announced between Edward, elder son of Mr and Mrs Peter Fletcher, of Coedkernew, Gwent, and Katie, daughter of Mr and Mrs Geoffrey Williams, of Lisvane, Cardiff.

MEDITATION

Priorities

by EDWARD NORMAN

MODERN people have little respect for the wisdom or judgment of the people of the past. In this we are unlike most societies, who looked back to the past as a resource of stored truths and remembered wisdom. In particular, the men and women of today see their predecessors as given over to prejudice and intolerance, and this can be especially evident when assessing the record of religious bodies and the effects of religious ideas. Christians now tend to denigrate their predecessors — and in doing so their own roots — for having practised an exclusivity, so cultivating "sectarian" strife. But the truth is that the modern world has its own exclusivities and is no more tolerant than traditional societies: it is just that the kinds of things about which they express their intolerance have changed.

The past believed in God and protected that belief from attack; today we believe in humanity and protect it in exactly the same way. We do not tolerate racism, violations of "human rights", sexism, and so forth — and we do not extend toleration to their practitioners. In the past people regarded religion as the area of their most deeply felt values, and it was their religious belief which was subject to legal regulation and control, just as we now have legal restrictions in human rights issues. It may even be said, in fact, that modern people promote tolerance only in areas that no longer seem important in daily life, and that their tolerance over religion (called for, for example, over Bosnia or Northern Ireland, where people *do* think religion important) is not some great advance in human vision, but simply an indication of a general decline in religious belief. In modern Islamic societies, in contrast, as Western observers are dismayed to notice, the area of religious tolerance is diminishing.

So is tolerance a "virtue", as we so often suppose, when we do not practise it in relation to our own favoured values? It is a question without an answer, since no one really imagines that enlightenment can tolerate barbarism, and yet at the same time everyone seeks to leave to the individual as much space as possible to cultivate personal moral preferences. The point, in the present context, is that no good, and some harm, is done by Christians themselves to their own religion when they depict its past record as a lamentable catalogue of intolerance and persecution. For that is to employ the emotive demonology of present usage to destroy the integrity of the past. Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also: the words of Christ remind us that what men and women really value they will protect at great cost. Today that seems to be "caring" about human material welfare; once it was about the eternal welfare of the human soul. Time will tell whose values are the more enduring.

OBITUARIES

Glyn Worsnip

GLYN WORSNIP, who has died aged 57, was a broadcaster best known for his appearances on *That's Life* and *Nationwide*.

His career was cut short in 1987 when he was diagnosed as suffering from *cerebella ataxia* — a rare, incurable degenerative brain disease which affects muscular control.

Worsnip's slurred speech and occasional loss of balance were initially misconstrued by his colleagues as the symptoms of a drink problem. Later he earned high praise when, in March 1988, he disclosed the full extent of his condition on Radio 4's *A Lone Voice*, which was based on the tape-recorded diary of his daily struggles.

The gradual loss of control of his speech seemed bitterly unfair for such an accomplished presenter and reporter. But he had always been a fine writer for theatre, radio and television, and as his illness took hold he returned to his desk.

In 1990 he published a frank and moving autobiography, *Up the Down Escalator*, in which he concluded: "I was famous once, and am again, this time for being ill. That is the truth of the matter. The trappings of fame that go with radio and television have proved a chimera indeed."

Glyn Worsnip was born at Highnam, Gloucestershire, on Sept 2 1938. He went to Monmouth School where he was known as either Snipsie or Wispy Worsnip.

After national service he went up to St John's College, Oxford, where he was well-known for his ebullience and generosity. He joined the RAF as a photographic intelligence officer in 1956, but after two years he left the force to become an actor.

A versatile performer, Worsnip appeared in everything from farce with Frankie Howerd to Royal Shakespeare Company productions. After roles in such West End musicals as *Our Man Crichton*, *Oliver!* and *The Canterbury Tales*, Worsnip went through a lean period and worked as a clerk for £20 a week. But in 1974 he landed a job on *That's Life*, which made intermittently humorous investigations into consumer problems.

Employed as a reporter, Worsnip was surprised how often the *That's Life* stories seemed to write themselves. He was once able to advise a man whose car had been damaged by a herd of bullocks that he was able to sue anyone connected with the bullocks under a special order named after a Mr Bullock. When the judge inquired under which order the request was being made, counsel could justifiably reply: "Bullock's, m'lud".

Worsnip also investigated the claims made for a variety of gifted animals. He interviewed a dog in Lancashire which could, indeed, count, and a Lincolnshire crow which rejected any beer it was offered unless it were real ale. But a cat which was allegedly able to predict the weather by waving its tail disdained to perform for the cameras.

His autobiography portrayed a fluctuating relationship with the programme's queen bee, Esther Rantzen. They had been at

Worsnip: versatile broadcaster

Oxford together when Worsnip had let her copy his English essays. At one programme conference he had the impudence to answer her back: "Considering the difference in our respective positions, Glyn," she informed him while rapping the table, "it's amazing to think that you are actually older than I am."

But at the party given in January 1988 to celebrate the programme's 15th birthday, he was grateful for the understanding of his difficulties shown by Rantzen and by his other old colleague, Kieran Prendeville.

Worsnip worked for the daily news magazine *Nationwide* from 1976 to 1984. As host of his own television show he involved fellow thespians in some memorable round-the-table anecdotage. He also worked as a freelance presenter on such radio programmes as *The Press Gang*, *Help Yourself* and *Joint Account*.

In 1983 he won critical acclaim for his series *Paras* which documented the good and bad times of the élite fighting force.

He first became aware of difficulty with his balance in the summer of 1986 when, for example, he toppled backwards as he reached the top of an escalator and sent the 30 people behind him falling like dominoes.

In March 1987 his diary recorded bleakly: "Today I started to slobber". That May, Dr Anita Harding of the National Hospital for Neurology confirmed the seriousness of the problem.

Glyn Worsnip was a modest, amusing and gallant man, and a broadcaster of real quality, always concerned to resist cliché and to fight against facile categorisations.

He was married and had a daughter.

Stephen Jones

STEPHEN JONES, who has died aged 41, was a gifted and original museum curator, responsible for reviving the fortunes of Leighton House Museum in Kensington.

This was formerly the home of the Victorian painter Frederic Leighton, who was created Lord Leighton in 1896. Jones was appointed curator in 1981, and immediately set about transforming what was then a rather dusty and seldom visited local museum.

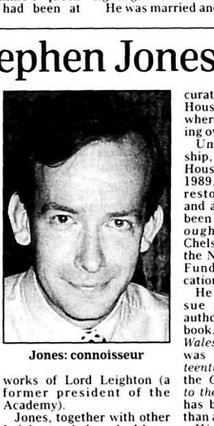
By the end of the 1980s he had raised sufficient sponsorship to restore Leighton House to its high Victorian aesthetic. He had also established it as a vibrant and amusing centre of fashionable London life.

Under Jones's inspired leadership, Leighton House became the setting for some of the more outré aesthetic events held in the capital in recent years. There were evenings of salon opera, haute-bohemian vernissages, fashion shoots by Norman Parkinson for *Vogue*, and private parties — at one of which Hugh Grant appeared in the guise of a waiter.

Perhaps the apogee of these lively events was the Aesthetes' Ball, which was held in the mid-1980s. The revellers included a male fashion editor, whose peacock costume was so delicate that he had to be carried in — clad in body-stocking, feathers, green facial make-up, and very little else.

Jones was an aesthete, but a pragmatic one. Energetic and humorous, he combined artistic sensibility with a hard-headed, well-organised approach to art history, museums and exhibitions.

This combination was never seen to better effect than in the events leading up to the recent Royal Academy Centenary Exhibition of the



Jones: connoisseur

works of Lord Leighton (a former president of the Academy).

Jones, together with other Leighton scholars, had been working on the exhibition for several years. When the Royal Academy announced that, due to lack of sponsorship, the exhibition could not take place, he successfully mobilised a last-minute rescue operation.

The exhibition was much admired, for the serious reassessment it offered of Leighton's importance, and for the superb presentation of the works.

Stephen Richard Jones was born at Chislehurst, Kent, on Sept 24 1954. From St Dunstan's College he won an exhibition to Magdalene College, Cambridge, where he read English and History of Art. He was one of the group of Cambridge art historians who gathered around David Watkin, of Peterhouse.

Jones's first job was as curatorial assistant in the education department and national library at the Victoria and Albert Museum. After a brief spell as an assistant to Denys Sutton, the editor of *Apollo*, he became curator of the Gainsborough House Museum at Sudbury, where he remained until taking over at Leighton House.

Under Jones's stewardship, funding for Leighton House more than doubled. In 1989, after the museum's restoration was complete and a respectable profit had been made for the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Jones moved on to the National Art Collections Fund, as editor of publications.

He also found time to pursue a parallel career as author and editor. His first book, *Frederick, Prince of Wales and his Circle* (1981), was followed by *The Eighteenth Century* (1982), part of the *Cambridge Introduction to the History of Art*, which has been reprinted in more than a dozen languages.

His other publications include *Ackerman's Regency Furniture and Interiors* (1984), and *Five Centuries of Taste and Collecting in the Royal Houses of Europe* (1991). At the time of his death, which resulted from a brain tumour, Jones was working on a catalogue raisonné of Lord Leighton's Drawings, on which he had spent 10 years.

Jones's last major post was as director of Spencer House, a position created by Lord Rothschild, which brought together curatorial and other staff under the umbrella of Spencer House Ltd. Jones brought the company into profit by dint of letting Spencer House for corporate and private entertaining, while at the same time maintaining rigorous standards of curatorship.

The post at Spencer House suited Jones's love of the neo-classical, as well as his highly developed sociability, and enabled him to exercise his talents to the full.

Stephen Jones was unmarried.

Rukhsana Sultan

RUKHSANA SULTAN, who has died in Bombay aged 50, led a ruthless campaign of sterilisation during the Emergency of the mid-1970s.

A glamorous Delhi socialite, Sultan was one of the coterie close to Sanjay Gandhi, Indira Gandhi's eldest son. She established herself as the leader of Sanjay's "task force" in the Delhi area, and would parade through the Old City's crowded, narrow streets with an entourage of policemen.

"Wherever I went in the walled city," she recalled, "there were stampedes. People fought with one another to stand next to me. One day a young man came up and said he had not washed his hand for days after he shook hands with me. My meetings were like Cleopatra's durbar. People worshipped me."

Chosen by Sanjay to lead the sterilisation campaign in Delhi, Sultan threw herself into the task with gusto. "Imagine me walking through the stinking lanes convincing the *burqa*-clad women that sterilisation and abortion were not against Muslim religion," she said.

"But what an ordeal it was! I used to pour a bottle of perfume on my body before I went out every morning so that I could not smell anything but my own perfume."

In less than a year, 13,000 sterilisations were carried out in one district of Delhi. Surgeons working in improvised clinics could complete the operation on a man in three minutes.

Sultan boasted that she had secured the sterilisation of two prominent imams. One of them suffered a haemorrhage after the operation; hundreds of others died following the hastily-made incisions.

Rewards were offered not only to individuals volunteering for the operation, but to those who delivered the volunteers. Ten volunteers were worth a bicycle; 100 a television set. Indian newspapers reported that Sultan "motivated" 8,407 people in this way, earning herself 84,210 rupees.

Sultan stood as a Congress Party candidate in the general election of 1977 which swept Mrs Gandhi from power. Defeated, she vanished from public life.

Born Meenu Bimbet in 1946 at Jullunder, Punjab, she was the daughter of Paddy Bimbet, a diplomat and an officer in the Indian Air Force. Her mother was the elder sister of Begum Para, a Bombay film actress.

She attended Miranda House University for a few years, but left before taking a degree. She ran jewellery shops in Delhi and Goa before she met Sanjay Gandhi and entered poitics.

She is survived by her husband and one daughter.

WAY OF THE WORLD

AUBERON WAUGH

Very decisive

THE MOST worrying aspect of Rod Richards's resignation from the Welsh Office is not that he might have had an extra-marital affair — Tory politicians are human, too, we must suppose — or that his pecadillo should be dangled pruriently before readers of Mr Murdoch's disgusting *News of the World*. I simply do not believe the figure currently being put about that the average Briton has sex 3·2 times a week. Sex starvation breeds this combination of voyeurism and censoriousness which is such an unattractive feature of the new Britain.

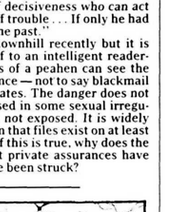
In the context, there was nothing particularly worrying about the decision of Mr Murdoch's *Sun* to gloat over the incident, identifying the MP who is alleged to cheat on his wife as "a clear case of the exposure of private action being in the public interest".

Mr Major's lack of politeness was slightly worrying. He is a likeable, well-mannered man or he is nothing. The speed of Richards's resignation was also worrying. It would seem to give rather a lot of power to the tabloid press, with their advanced surveillance techniques and readiness to pay large sums of money for information of this sort, if the editor of Mr Murdoch's *News of the World* has only to point a finger at any member of the Government for the minister concerned to disappear, as if by magic. Most particularly, it seems to give rather a lot of power to Mr Murdoch, as the only tabloid publisher with a global agenda.

What worried me most was a leader in *The Times*, which also belongs to Mr Murdoch, warmly approving the Prime Minister's action under the Walrus-like exclamation: "Private lives today affect public credibility, alas." "Mr Major's swift action," we read, "has... shown that he can be a man of decisiveness who can act with due ruthlessness to see off trouble . . . If only he had shown such determination in the past."

The Times may have gone downhill recently but it is still supposed to address itself to an intelligent readership. Anybody with the brains of a peahen can see the serious risk of improper influence — not to say blackmail — which the new situation creates. The danger does not arise from the ministers exposed in some sexual irregularity, but from those who are not exposed. It is widely believed among newspapermen that files exist on at least two senior cabinet ministers. If this is true, why does the press not publish them? What private assurances have been given, what bargains have been struck?

Don't shoot the babies



I CAN see that anyone born with the ancient and honourable name of Hamilton may feel a little uneasy in the wake of the Dunblane massacre, but in my view Dr Colin Hamilton, a public health consultant in Cardiff, may well have gone too far in supporting a British Medical Council resolution that no member of the public should be allowed to possess a handgun in his own home.

In Los Angeles, Dr Hamilton said, more babies die from gunshot wounds than any other cause. Can this be true? I have never been there — perhaps it is time I went — but there is a tendency in this country to believe anything we are told about California in general and Los Angeles in particular. I have even heard a rumour that Mr Murdoch lives there, which may help to explain something, although I am not quite sure what. Perhaps Californian babies are more irritating than those born elsewhere, but even so I refuse to believe that their commonest cause of death in Los Angeles is from being shot.

There was a time when we accepted unquestioningly anything a doctor told us, but I feel we are beginning to get over that.

Gummer's vile crime

THE most sinister aspect of the Royal Fine Art Commission's choice of the Queen's Building at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, for its Building of the Year Award is not that the award went to one of the RFAC's commissioners. Nor is it that the chairman of the panel of judges, Lord St John of Fawsley, who is the Master of Emmanuel College, was also the man who commissioned the building.

Both men behaved impeccably. Lord St John withdrew from the panel as soon as the shortlist was chosen, and the architect, Sir Michael Hopkins, did not sit on the panel at all.

No, the most sinister aspect of the award is that the building is repulsively ugly. This is what passes for good design among the Fine Art establishment.

When we read of this government's determination to impose a higher standard of design on its mass gummerisation programme, destroying large parts of the green belt and anything left of our urban environment, this revolting travesty represents the height of the art.

Gummer's determination to appease the developers with planning permission for 4·4 million new homes in the next 22 years is commercially questionable. Few of the 3·5 million people said to wish to live alone will be able to afford them. It is also morally wrong.

Quite apart from the wickedness of destroying the countryside, there is a great wickedness in encouraging people to live alone, a state in which they will become lonely, miserable, selfish and mad.

The reason so many English people are unable to share with anyone else is to be found in the collapse of manners. If nobody is prepared to teach them good manners, they must learn the hard way by squeezing in as best they can.

DINNER

Corporation of London

The Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress, Ald and Mrs John Chalstrey, accompanied by the Sheriffs and their ladies, received the guests at a dinner held by the Corporation of London, last night at Guildhall in the presence of the Duke of Kent to mark Euro 96, the 1996 European Football Championship Finals. The speakers were the Lord Mayor, the Duke of Kent and the President of UEFA, Mr Lennart Johannson. Among others present were:

The Ambassadors of Romania, Spain, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Bulgaria, Portugal and Turkey, Lord Aberdare, Lord Howell, Mr Michael Heseltine, MP, Mrs Virginia Bottomley, MP, the Hon Peter Brooke, MP, Mr David Mellor, QC, MP, Mr Justice Popplewell, Sir Robert Bellinger, Gen Sir Martin Farndale, Sir John Quinton, the Chairman of the Football Association and Lady Millichip, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, the Lord Mayor of Westminster, the Lord Mayor of Sheffield, the General Secretary of UEFA, other UEFA representatives, Football Association Council Members, representatives of other sporting bodies, distinguished guests, Aldermen, Common Councilmen and officers of the Corporation of London.

SERVICE DINNERS

Royal College of Defence Studies

Lt-Gen S.C. Grant, Commandant, was host at a ladies' dinner night held by the Royal College of Defence Studies last night at Greenwich. Cdr Jonathan Maughan, Commander, Royal Naval College, Greenwich, and Mrs Maughan were principal guests. Rear-Admiral Louis Armstrong presided and Lt-Cdr Charles Addis also spoke.

The Royal Norfolk Regiment

The annual dinner of The Royal Norfolk Regiment Officers' Dinner Club was held last night at the Norfolk Club, Norwich. Maj-Gen Sir David Thorne presided.

SERVICE REUNION

PMRAFNS

Members of Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service Officers' Association, serving and retired, held a reunion cocktail party last night at the RAF Club following their annual general meeting. Gp Capt R.H. Williams, Director of Nursing Services (RAF), and Matron-in-Chief, PMRAFNS, presided.

SERVICE RECEPTION

Lord Newall

Lord Newall entertained members of the Indian Cavalry Officers' Association and their ladies at the annual reunion held at the House of Lords yesterday.

RECENT WILLS

Recent wills include:

□ **Sir Richard Hugh Sedley Allen,** KCMG, of West Wittering, West Sussex, Ambassador to Burma, 1956-62, who died last January aged 92, left estate valued at £219,494 net.

He left £750 to the West Wittering Private Nursing Home Staff Fund.

□ **Katherine Evelyn Constance Bigham, Dowager Viscountess Mersey,** of Pulborough, West Sussex, widow of the 3rd Viscount Mersey, who died last October, left estate valued at £829,893 net.

□ **Rev Donald Bertram Harris,** of London SW1, vicar of St Paul's, Knightsbridge, 1955-78, who died last January aged 91, left estate valued at £608,061 net.

He left £1,000 each to St Paul's Church, Knightsbridge, and the Community of St Mary the Virgin, Wantage.

Other estates (net before tax):

Lt Col Robert Charles Henry ARMISTEAD, retd, of Ludlow, Shrops £815,400

Mr Douglas Philip AULMAN, of Buckhurst Hill, Essex £2,017,282

Mr Kenneth BERRY, of Lytham St Annes, Lancs £1,514,196

Mr Stanley Clifford BIGGS, of East Preston, W Sussex, retired company director £1,108,135

"Rukhsana Sultan." Daily Telegraph, 8 June 1996, p. 19. The Telegraph Historical Archive, link.gale.com/apps/doc/IO0700871281/TGRH?u=tou&sid=bookmark-TGRH. Accessed 9 July 2024.