

resurgence

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Resurgence is a voice of new civilisation, it is a journal of new politics, concerned with small nations, small communities, decentralisation and ethnic cultures. It is a philosophical, ecological and spiritual forum.

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POLITICS OF EXPEDIENCY

AN OPEN LETTER TO TONY BENN

Dear Tony Benn,

Congratulations for exposing, in your recent speeches, the facade of freedom which Mrs Thatcher has built around her and used to conceal her true repressive nature. You have challenged her monstrous onslaught on the rights of women (what irony); their right to marry a man from abroad, their right to return to work after having a child, their right to control their own bodies. Further you have attacked the present government's repressive policies on immigration and civil liberties. You have also shown courage in demonstrating that the record of the various Labour governments has been very disappointing indeed: authoritarianism, centralisation, bureaucracy and paternalism is common to both parties. But this critique is still not far-reaching enough. You have not dealt with the real issues which face the whole nation. You have recognised that 'this is the moment of truth' but you do not seem to face that truth. You do not seem to have any clear suggestions as to how to transfer the structure of power from the multi-nationals, the Common Market, the International Monetary Fund and the media to ordinary people.

The present structure of power tilts towards the ownership of capital and industry. The power structure which you envisage seems to lean towards bureaucrats, administrators, unions and the State instead; changing very little. You have mentioned centralisation and bureaucracy in the same breath as authoritarianism but you have not succeeded in removing the fear from the minds of the people that a state controlled economy will not lead to greater centralisation and greater bureaucracy. You have hardly spoken about the local control of economy and political power in smaller units. Furthermore you still seem to be sitting on the fence about the issue of nuclear power and quietly watching Mrs Thatcher going for a total nuclear state. You do not, at least to our knowledge, have any alternative to increasing consumerism and the growth economy and you have said very little about the limited resources of the planet which we believe should not be consumed and destroyed in our lifetime, but of which we must leave a fair share for coming generations. Are you prepared to speak for a reduction in living standards to create a better balance between the rich west and the third world?

Unless you can deal with these fundamental questions more courageously and undogmatically, without setting your eyes on the seat of power or closing yourself in an ideological fortress, you may be a very good match for Mrs. Thatcher and may even be able to defeat her in the next General Election but, in our view, you will not truly be able to change the power structure and your politics will remain politics of expediency.

Yours in anticipation
Resurgence

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