

An Asian Threat?

The Third Wave: Australia and Asian Capitalism, by Abe David and Ted Wheelwright (Left Book Club Co-operative, 1989). *Australia and the North-East Asian Ascendancy - the Garnaut Report* (Australian Government Publishing Service, 1989). Reviewed by Gavan McCormack.

It is a fact of late-20th century life that Japan is the world's major creditor nation (and the US its largest debtor); and that Japan's banks, stock exchanges, securities companies, and even advertising agencies, not to mention manufacturing industries, tower colossus-like over the world.

Intelligent and scientific-minded citizens might be expected to be intensely interested in understanding what this means, how it arose and what significance it holds, particularly for us here in Australia. Yet, by and large, intellectual and political attention remains fixed on the culturally familiar worlds of Europe and North America.

The Australian economic dependence on Japan is decades old. No one objects to Japan's buying Australian coal and iron ore, wool, wheat and beef, though some are not happy with their buying uranium and wood chips. But, for the most part, Australians seem not to want to know more.

The recent Japanese proposals for the construction somewhere in Australia of a Future City, to be known as a 'Multi-Function-Polis', will not have much impact on the existing economic relationship; but it may turn out to be a momentous issue anyway, because it is being seen as symbolic.

As such it may be the issue which draws public and political attention,

and which will cause people to want to study and understand the issues.

When this happens, it will be necessary to turn first to the literature generated in recent years in the United States, the so-called 'revisionist' Japanese scholarship. In the US the 'Japan Problem' has long been seen as central, even before the collapse of the 'Evil Empire', and much of this new scholarship is trenchantly critical of Japan's internal and external policies. The analytical and policy prescriptions of scholars like Karel van Wolferen, Chalmers

poratism, or even communism in Japan's make-up. Chalmers Johnson accuses it of "adversarial" trading practices and calls it a "supply-side monster", while James Fallows calls for a policy of "containment" to be directed against it. 'Containment' is the policy which, for long, was directed at the Soviet Union.

Little of this debate is refracted in Australia, where the books themselves are expensive and hard to find. But a starting point for Australians wishing to consider the issue of Japan is provided by two recently-published works, Abe David and Ted Wheelwright's *The Third Wave: Australia and Asian Capitalism* and the federal government sponsored Garnaut Report entitled *Australia and the North-East Asian Ascendancy*.

These two works complement each other nicely from diametrically opposed viewpoints. One is the inaugural volume from the presses of the Left Book Club; one author is an economist with long and close links with the labour movement, and the other a worker, indeed, a construction rigger at that. The other volume was launched by the Prime Minister himself and reflects some very high level thinking on strategic economic questions for the nation.

It is instructive to look at the similarities and differences between the two approaches. Both agree on Pacific dynamism and the shift of power to the Western Pacific, on the importance of the rise of Japan and the Asian New International Economies, on the dangers of protectionist trading blocs, on the weakness and vulnerability of Australia, on the crisis of foreign debt. But the agreement stops there.

Garnaut, in the government-sponsored report, thinks the best Australian approach to what the other book calls the 'Third Wave' of Asian, particularly Japanese, economic influence in Australia is basically to let it roll in, remove barriers, open the



Johnson, James Fallows and Clyde Prestowitz might be considered extreme by many in this country, especially in our Japan lobby, but they are studied and used as the basis for policy debate at the highest levels.

Japan is seen as a mysterious country different from other capitalist nations in the West, formally democratic, but scarcely so in any substantial sense, governed by a collective process that van Wolferen calls "the system". Others of the revisionists see strong elements of fascism, cor-

sluices, learn to swim. It is a liberal, free-trade prescription. As Australia liberalised its financial markets in 1983, so now it should liberalise everything by the year 2000 and integrate itself fully with the North-East Asian dynamo of the world economy.

Wheelwright and David, however, do not see any panacea. The basis of their position is solidarity with, and closer co-operation with, Asia; not with the economic and political leadership so much as Asian, especially Japanese, workers, consumers, farmers and ordinary people. However nice a sentiment this is, it has to be said that this is not really very helpful.

Garnaut, and David and Wheelwright, agree that Australia has to learn from Japan and North-East Asia. But whereas Garnaut sees the lesson as more opening, David and Wheelwright see it as the opposite, pointing out that the growth of Japan, South Korea, and other countries owed little to free trade and a great deal to militarisation, centralised bureaucratic control, the 'developmental state' and nationalist policies even, indeed, to the late and unlamented 'Cold War'. Free trade, as they

point out, is the prescription by the strong for the weak, and commitment to it is a very recent phenomenon in Japan.

David and Wheelwright also claim that "much of the analysis of reconstructing the Australian economy has neo-fascist overtones", and they note that, while Japan's leaders join the chorus calling for Australia to change its ways, at the same time Japan fiercely resists calls from outside to do the same. They note that "fully-fledged global capitalism means the end of democracy as foreign investors and capital markets really run the economy, not the elected representatives".

The wave of foreign investment from Japan in particular, which Garnaut welcomes, they point out is flowing not to manufacturing industry where it might be welcome, but to real estate, tourism and construction where its need is doubtful, and the social and environmental impact great. But presumably Garnaut would draw the line somewhere before accepting a Japanese offer such as that which David and Wheelwright report: to buy all the private golf courses in the Sydney area. The "casinoisa-

tion" of the world economy is also discussed by David and Wheelwright; it is something that Paul Keating did not predict and to which Garnaut pays little attention.

Everyone would agree that foreign investment which helped to foster a truly productive culture rather than the service sector would be nice, but neither of these books has any real suggestions on how to achieve such a result.

And although David and Wheelwright raise the question of how much the delicate ecosystem of this country can stand in terms of 'development', with its implication of resource depletion, pollution and population increase, neither they nor Garnaut seriously question the conventional assumption that more growth is the only way to go.

These are, however, two important documents attempting to respond critically to a world which has changed fundamentally. Their perspectives are different, but they deserve to be read together.

GAVAN McCORMACK is Professor of Asian Studies at the University of Adelaide.

Nincompoops & Heroes

A History of Cricket, Benny Green. Barrie & Jenkins (London; 1988). *A La Recherche Du Cricket Perdu*, Simon Barnes (Macmillan London, 1989). *Border's Heroes: Australia's Ashes Triumph of 1989*, John Huxley (ed) (Lester-Townsend Publishing, 1989). Reviewed by Jane Inglis.

Express more than a passing interest in cricket and you're fair game: cricket books for your birthday, and more for Christmas. Each of these books is a fabulous gift for wildly different reasons.

I first discovered cricket about ten

years ago, when studying for university finals and putting the finishing touches to essays - or was supposed to be.

There, on TV, was an intriguing game which went all day - for up to five days at a time! What better way to disguise procrastination? Though the game was shrouded in mystery and seductive ritual, the TV commentary was less than enlightening (still is, really) unless one is interested in - indeed, found great significance in - the field placing of seagulls relative to various fielders. But once a friend put me on to the ABC radio commentary I was hooked.

These books have come along not a moment too soon in my cricket education. From Green's wonderfully writ-

ten socio-political history of the sport's development; to Huxley's account of the 1989 Ashes Tour replete with records and statistics and a fair smattering of action photos; and with Barnes' mad parody of cricket writing 'by' such greats as Shakespeare, PG Wodehouse, Dylan Thomas and Hunter S. Thompson, to name a few.

Each book has its singular appeal, but Green's is perhaps the best, particularly as it provides an understanding of cricket as more than a game.

For those who may scoff at cricket and its devotees (through ignorance, of course) *A History of Cricket* gives an appreciation of the sport in its various guises: as a clear expression of class divisions; as a useful tool, along with

religion, for colonialist expansion and suppression of other cultures; and, more enduringly and importantly, a cultural pastime. Throughout its development, the sport has demanded an increasingly high degree of physical and tactical skill, and is one in which homicide is undesirable, unlike American gridiron or even rugby. (No correspondence will be entered into.)

This book serves to confirm such bias towards the gentleman's game; though Green makes no bones about the dual role of team games in Imperial policy. Cricket, in Green's hands, is more than a metaphor through which Imperial Britain lampoons itself. He only queries whether "the pacifying, colonising, apostatising potential of team games" was sheer good luck or part of a "grand design".

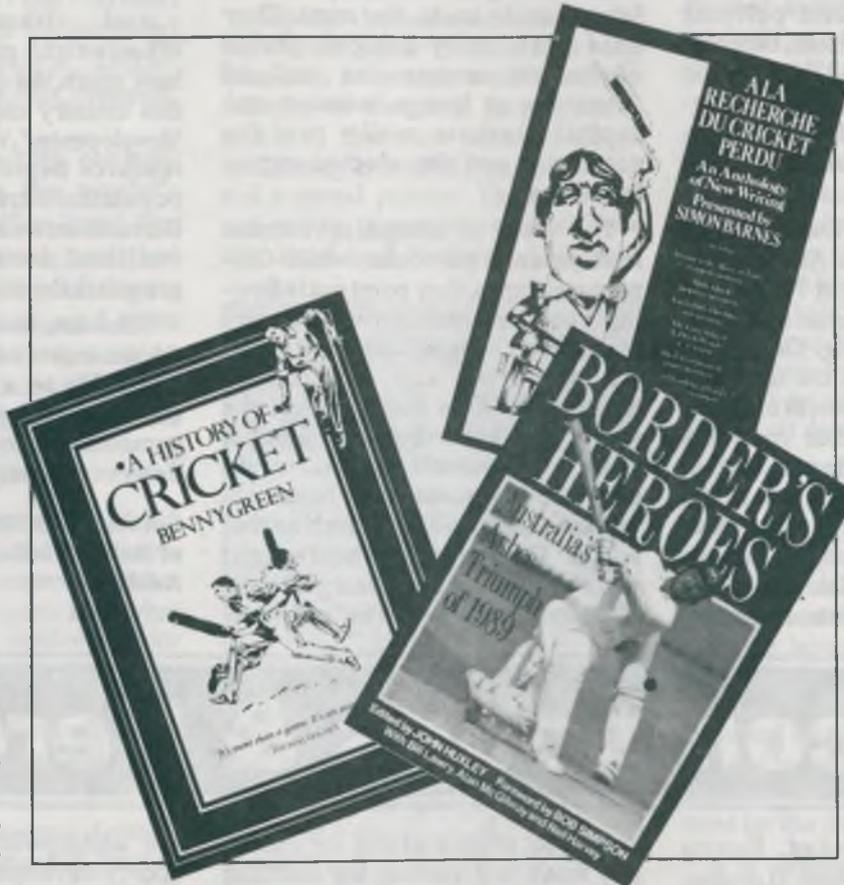
"Its very illogicalities were endearing, and as for the tight formalism of its rules and regulations, what better engine to train subject races in the etiquette of polite submission?"

Through the export of cricket Imperial Britain flew its double standards high alongside the banners of the Horse Guards. The 'code of conduct', as expressed in cricket, was sacrosanct.

The English gentleman didn't have to behave like one because, Green states, he was one and remained "confident in the knowledge that (he was) expected only to administer (the code), not to live up to it. The code was an account of their own conduct, not as it really was, but as they liked to imagine it, and perhaps in some extreme cases of moral dementia, sincerely believed it to be." Indeed, as Green points out "The English taught that on the field of play all men were

equal, and were still insisting on white captains for West Indian sides nearly forty years after Grace's death." - truly reflecting English society's hypocrisy. Green cites an example of British imperialism imbuing a respect for "the canons of an imported code", as one colonial subject stated:

"Before long I acquired a discipline for which the only name is Puritan. I never cheated. I never appealed for a decision unless I thought the batsman



was out. I never argued with the umpire, I never jeered at a defeated opponent ... My defeats and disappointments I took as stoically as I could. ... From the eight years of school life this code became the moral framework of my existence. It has never left me." This subject also said:

"We lived in two worlds. Inside the classroom the heterogeneous jumble of Trinidad was battered and jostled and shaken into some kind of order. On the playing field we did what ought to be done ... Eaton or Harrow had nothing on us." - Marxist historian, Trinidadian cricketer and strong advocate of independence for his country, CLR James.

A La Recherche Du Cricket Perdu is highly entertaining, even if one doesn't know much about cricket or its more infamous/famous practitioners. A passing acquaintance with those writers whom Barnes, a sports columnist for *The Times*, feels ought to have been cricket commentators will suffice. For example, 'The Importance of Being Captain' by Oscar Wilde:

LADYPETRONELLAMAY (leader of the selectors) to Jack Worthing, cricketer: What is your record against Malcolm Marshall?

JACK: I was out lbw twice while offering no stroke.

LADYMAY: To be out lbw while padding up once may be regarded as a misfortune. To do so twice looks like carelessness.

Or 'The Tale of Gatti the Dwarf and Lubo the Elf' by JRR Tolkien:

"which was told in the Latter Days whenever the hairy-toed race of Journos gathered. It was a tale told with many a merry laugh and many a tankard of goodly ale. It tells also of Bothorn, son of Bothorn, and of the mighty wizard,

Brears the Grey."

Huxley's *Border's Heroes*, of coffee table size and glossy appearance, is self-explanatory. The Aussie heroes won back the Ashes for the first time since the 1934 tour (still under the cloud of the infamous Bodyline tour).

The book is full of statistics, test scores and performance biographies of all the players. There's the unavoidable urge to compare the 1989 and 1934 teams, but Alan (*The Game Is Not The Same Without...*) McGilvray provides a cautious and thoughtful assessment of players and playing styles.

Well worth a look.

Lest we forget

Sanctuary! Nazi Fugitives in Australia, by Mark Aarons (Heinemann. 1989. \$39.95). Reviewed by David Greason.

When Michael Pawlowski, 72, was recently sent to trial in Canada for the murder of 410 Jews and 80 non-Jews in Byelorussia in 1942, his neighbour was asked what the old man was like. Was he evil? Was he psychopathic? Was he grumpy? "Well," said the neighbour, "he kept a nice garden."

To many people, that is all that needs saying about those among us, who, having spent their latter years tending their rose bushes in the nondescript suburbs of Toronto, Chicago, Manchester and Melbourne, now find themselves before the courts charged with mass murder. We're talking about old men here. Surely it's time to forget.

It is illuminating to hear the explanations which surface when these old men come to judgment: it was all so long ago, there was a war on, a lot of cruel things were done on both sides, it's a witch-hunt, why don't the Jews let it be, ad infinitum, ad nauseam.

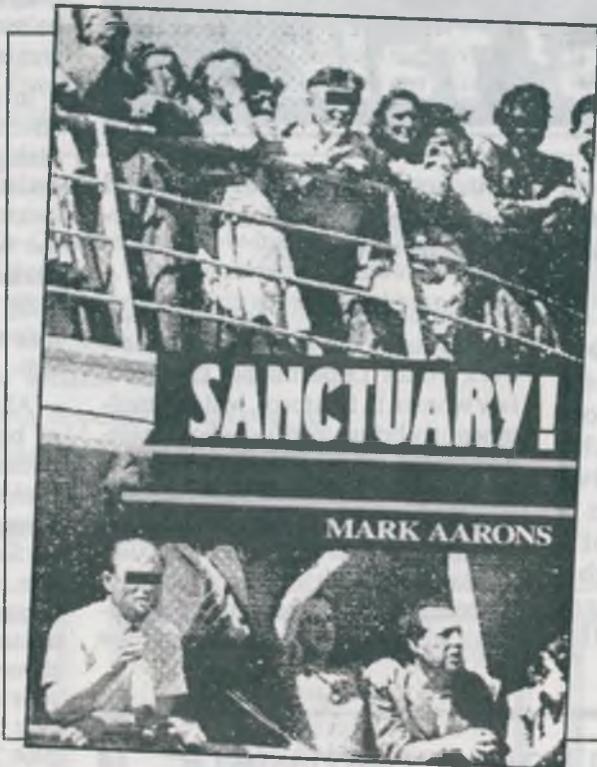
Mark Aarons tackles these concerns in *Sanctuary! Nazi Fugitives in Australia*. The book arose from Aarons' 1986 ABC Radio documentary series *Nazis in Australia*, which exposed the presence of numerous Nazi war criminals and collaborators in Australia, as well as the official deceit employed first to allow these people entry into Australia and later to encourage them to remain here.

And as Aarons shows, Australia is littered with minor and not-so-minor

functionaries of puppet regimes throughout Eastern Europe.

A number of questions arise from the history, most of which Aarons answers ably. How do you define a Nazi? Most of the cases referred to by Aarons are not Germans but Central and Eastern Europeans, willing tools of Nazism. "The Nazi war criminals and collaborators you will meet in these pages were not draftees, they offered their services to the Nazis voluntarily and eagerly, either from ideological conviction, racial prejudice or because they saw the chance to advance themselves," Aarons writes.

How do you define a war criminal? Can a propagandist, no matter how



offensive his or her writings, be bracketed in the same category as one who has dashed babies' heads against walls?

Aarons at times appears to take this for granted, devoting considerable space to the wartime activities of people like NSW Liberal Lyenko Ur-

bancic, who wrote and broadcast anti-Semitic and anti-Allied propaganda for a pro-Nazi puppet regime in Slovenia.

The propaganda was particularly vile. Urbancic spoke of "the truth which is older than I, which is already centuries old. That is the truth about all the vile intentions of the chosen people, the 15 million Israeli race roaming the world. Rarely is one of their number a tradesman, labourer or farmer, however it is an everyday and common fact that these people are dealers in arms, owners of the film industry, and people who have in their hands practically the whole world press."

That is the language of genocide - vile enough when uttered at any time - profoundly evil in June 1944 as thousands of Jews were being sent to their deaths. But does that make him a war criminal?

This has been asked by some critics of Aarons, such as the former editor of *Australia/Israel Review*, Michael Danby, who argues in the December issue of *Quadrant* that Urbancic, "currently working out of a seedy railway carriage to influence a few NSW Liberal Party branches, does seem on a different moral plane to a mass killer". Yet in light of the unwillingness by some to accept the need for war crimes trials, such dilemmas must be answered one way or another for the successful prosecution of the real criminals and collaborators who made it to Australia.

Danby also accuses Aarons of "dubious taste, to say nothing of ethics, to use a topic as sacred as the Holocaust for profane issues like Australian domestic politics. Jewish corpses must not be used for the cheap aims of discrediting conservatives or security services".

That is not, I would think, Aarons' reason for exposing the curious alliance between collaborators and conservatives since the war. There is surely nothing wrong with demolishing the poisonous myth that all op-

ponents of communists have the one cause. Such a myth allowed people like Urbancic to thrive in the Liberal Party for many years.

Nor is Aarons' anger solely directed at conservatives. "The real genesis of the illegal immigration of ostensibly barred fascists is found in the immediate post-war period when the ALP was firmly in power in Canberra," he writes.

At times, the book is difficult going. Wading through the complexities of Central and Eastern Europe's politics has provoked more than one reviewer to question Aarons' aim: is he writing a book about Nazis in Australia or the wartime politics of Balkan neo-fascism? I would have thought the answer was simple: regrettably the two are intertwined.

Indeed, the suggestion that these are little countries far away of which

we know nothing is unfortunate: so, for that matter, is Australia (which could explain why so many of their less savoury citizens turned up here).

The day after the Queensland elections, I was sitting in Brisbane's King George Square, watching a hundred or so Croats parade past. It was probably the first demonstration of the post-National era, which added a certain touch of irony to the scene. Some of the marchers carried banners denouncing the Belgrade government as fascist, a suggestion at best impudent, at worst obscene.

One of the demonstrators, who appeared to be in charge, wore a T-shirt featuring a picture of the Croatian Ustashi leader Ante Pavelic. Beneath the portrait was the Ustashi slogan "Za Dom Spremnii" ("We are ready!").

Ready for what? Let Mark Aarons tell us. "The Ustashi would sometimes

gouge out the eyes of their victims before killing them; in other cases they cut off limbs, lips, noses, ears and women's breasts. Sometimes the entire population of a Serbian village would be herded into the local Orthodox church which was then set alight. Ustashi guards in the concentration camps were notorious for their propensity to kill inmates by smashing their heads with sledgehammers. By the end of their four years of power, Pavelic's followers had slaughtered over half a million people."

If we can't recognise evil when it wields a sledgehammer, we will be unlikely ever to recognise it. Those who wear T-shirts fondly remembering mass murderers haven't forgotten. Nor must we.

DAVID GREASON is a sub-editor on the *Sydney Sun-Herald*.

Boys' Talk

Sea of Love, directed by Harold Becker. Featuring Al Pacino and Ellen Barkin. At Greater Union. Reviewed by Lyndell Fairleigh.

Sea of Love is a man's film - but that isn't necessarily a criticism of it. Its strength lies in how openly it investigates the violent and manipulative aspects of masculinity from a male point of view. By that I mean that *Sea of Love* thoughtfully uses a flawed central (male) character within the

structure of a thriller to reveal the subjectivity of men's perceptions of women.

From its beginning *Sea of Love* immerses us in the world of the New York Police Department. There are few women in this force, which simultaneously brings into focus how male-dominated policing in the US still is and the peculiarities of male bonding in this environment. Because much of the dialogue is in the local vernacular I found *Sea of Love* initially alienating. Not only did I find the particulars difficult to follow, but considering the

inane, childish attitudes of the policemen to sexuality, I wasn't sure I wanted to.

In this way, however, *Sea of Love* effectively sets its scene. None of the dialogue is gratuitously violent or sexist. The obsession with dicks, the inextricably violent attitude to sex in the word 'fuck', highlighted in the phrase 'Fuck you', is emphasised. Fully a part of this world is Frank, a man struggling with a drinking problem.

Alcoholism, with its particular sets of behaviour, and yet so socially widespread and so often implicated in men's violent behaviour towards women, makes an interesting locus for *Sea of Love*. Frank is at the centre of the action, as the investigating reporter in a series of murders and as a man unsuccessfully living with divorce and seeking, yet fearing, a new attachment. That need for, and fear of, intimacy is what propels the plot. The murder victims have all been men, they have all sought female 'companionship' through the singles column, and they have probably all met the same unknown woman. She becomes the main suspect.

Is it Frank's daring and effective approach to policing - an example of which opens the film - or his need for

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intimacy which shapes his plan for catching this woman? He and his partner go undercover. Noting that all the murdered men had written in verse for a particular singles column, they insert their own. As it happens, it is a poem written by Frank's mother when his parents were courting.

When Frank becomes sexually involved with a major suspect, the personal and public inextricably mesh. Frank's fear of intimacy is played out as the threat of murder. Helen, the woman with whom Frank is becoming involved, is shown to be assertive - sexually and otherwise. Is this another *Fatal Attraction*? No, because we are made to doubt Frank's perceptions.

Frank's treatment of his ex-wife early on provides clues to how we must read his subsequent behaviour. Sufficiently drunk, he will ring her at three o'clock in the morning and make up stories of appendicitis. She is now married to one of Frank's colleagues, whom Frank baits and on one occasion bashes. Distorted with guilt and his sense of inadequacy, Frank knows only how to lash out and blame

others. Drawn within this perversity of hatred is the image of a female murderer.

It is this doubt which makes *Sea of Love* a far superior thriller - perhaps even a rejoinder - to *Fatal Attraction*. In the latter film, of course, a woman's need for love and fear of ageing and infertility were raised to the level of psychopathic disturbances. The film allowed no compassion for her, siding unquestioningly with the 'hero' and his set of values.

Sea of Love does ask us to view Frank with compassion, but not unquestioningly or without compassion for those he injures - most particularly Helen, who may or may not be in the image of the murderess he has created. As the film proceeds, her reactions unsettle preconceptions about her character. Her increasing fear of Frank is justified by his wild behaviour, her confusion by his lies. Because she is a suspect, Frank does not tell her he is a policeman. Although he has some qualms about this, he proceeds warily with their affair. Despite the advice of colleagues, Frank does not take the other option - not to embark on the

affair at all - by which he would both protect himself and protect Helen from an exploitative relationship. He is too needy and too selfish.

Undercover or under the covers, Frank has access to powers as a police officer and a man that he refuses to acknowledge. He prefers to see himself as a victim. Is he flirting with death? Ultimately, however, we question who, if anybody, is the victim.

In posing these questions, *Sea of Love* is a subtle and clever film. While it does put the lid on some of them with a typical Hollywood conclusion - though I hasten to add there is a twist - others are highlighted. Perhaps it is most successful in the way in which it makes (particularly male) viewers complicit with Frank. Not only is he the 'hero', but he displays some likeable characteristics and there is the strong evocation of male camaraderie which opens the film. Having fallen in with that camaraderie, even from a cinema seat, have some felt the questions hit home?

LYNDELL FAIRLEIGH is a freelance journalist on film.

APOLOGY

In Tim Rowse's article 'Do-Gooders and Blow-ins' in *ALR 113*, several passages of citation were mistakenly rendered as part of the text of the article. This was an unfortunate side-effect of our changeover to desktop publishing late last year. The following passages in the article should have been indented as citation:

1. From 'It would have' to 'representative' on p 67, col 1.
2. From 'The purveyors' to 'socialist' on p 67, col 2.
3. From 'those (including)' to 'oppositional' on p 68, col 1.
4. From 'Given this' to 'white hegemony' also on p 68 col 1.
5. From 'Thus do-gooders' to 'the solution' on p 69 col 2.

Apologies to Tim Rowse and to readers.

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