

Australian Adam Smith Club (Melbourne)

President: Timothy Warner, Editor: Mannie Gross, P.O. Box 950, Hawthorn, 3122

Wherever is found what is called paternal government, there is found state education. It has been found that the best way to ensure implicit obedience is to commence tyranny in the nursery.

Benjamin Disraeli (*Speech in the House of Commons, 15 June 1874*)

The great secret of education is to direct vanity to proper objects.

Adam Smith (*The Theory of Moral Sentiments, VI, 1759*)

Cheryl Lacey

on

Moving Forward to Fundamentals

Reclaiming Our Great Nation Through Vital Education Reform

**The Adam Smith Club will host a meeting on Thursday the 28th of March, 2019
at Bohème Restaurant Bar, 368 Bridge Road, Richmond.**

Cheryl Lacey is a very proud mother of two, an educationalist, author and speaker. Her work in education began in primary schools and includes early childhood through to tertiary positions, consulting, business ownership and work in radio and print media. Her weekly, thought provoking newsletter has a strong international readership. She holds membership in a number of organizations including the Rotary Club of Melbourne. She is recipient of the Royce Abbey Award and is the first member in the club's history to hold the position of Vice President for two consecutive years. (See www.cheryllacey.com)

Education impacts every portfolio and every portfolio impacts education. Yet, Australia remains trapped in a quasi-education improvement cycle of spending over investment, intervention over prevention and distraction over enterprise. Vital education reform requires a vantage point strategy that breaks through this complacency we have become accustomed to. Moving Forward to Fundamentals isn't rocket science, it's a vital action requiring nothing more than an unapologetic commitment to reclaiming our great nation. Cheryl is a passionate educationalist and advocate for change in Australian education.

Attendance is open to both members and non-members. Those desiring to attend should visit Trybooking (see below) no later than the Tuesday 26th of March. Those attending should arrive at 6:30pm for dinner at 7:00pm. The cost is \$45.00 per head for members and \$50.00 per head for non-members.

For those who wish to pay by cash or cheque - please ring or email.

Enquiries to Hon. Secretary, mob. 0403 933 786

email: asmith@adamsmithclub.org

online booking at:

www.trybooking.com/BBLWY

by Tuesday 26th of March

LAISSEZ FAIRE ON THE WEB

This newsletter has an address on the web: <http://www.adamsmithclub.org/laissez.htm>. The Club's web site can be found at <http://www.adamsmithclub.org/>.

(LONG DELAYED) DINNER REPORT

The October Adam Smith Dinner of 2017 will long live in the memories of many attendees. Not often do we find a speaker who gives their all to the extent of being carried out of the room by MICA paramedics! The meeting by former President Dr Michael James was well attended and the topic was and still is engaging - the issue of BREXIT – “Can the European Union Survive?”. Both the address and the Q & A went well, with Michael's key point that the Europeans need the UK, but not vice versa. During the Q & A and just after Michael was starting to feel distressed and we called for an ambulance as many of the members and guests started leaving. The very good news is after a quick trip up Bridge Rd to Epworth Michael didn't suffer any irreparable damage from the evening. He did have to put off the return to the UK by a fortnight but in the arms of private health he has made a good recovery. A copy of the address and some further items will be up on the website straight after this newsletter. *TW*

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Many apologies. The year 2018 has slipped by and the Adam Smith Club has not given the necessary intellectual and social kick up the rear to statist and those who just prefer the state to the individual.

We did have two near events - but with speakers or dates that didn't work. The President has had some health issues - but we are all back on deck. The Editor has placed a request for anyone who likes

wine, cheese, conversation and **committee work** to put up their hand to be considered for the Club committee, as age and changing cities thin the current ranks. Please contact the Hon Secretary by email (asmith@adamsmithclub.org) or by phone (0403 933 786).

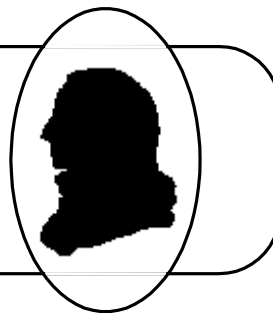
We hope to have at least one event more before the federal poll and a full set of dinners for the year! *TW*

VENUE ARRANGEMENTS

For the March 28th dinner at Bohème Restaurant Bar, there will be a two-course dinner (main and dessert, followed by tea or coffee). The restaurant is fully licensed (no BYO). A separate (upstairs) room has been reserved for the dinner meeting. We hope these arrangements do not cause inconvenience and we welcome your feedback. Please note that because the Club must provide final numbers of attendees to the restaurant on the 26th of March, **we are unable to admit anyone to the dinner who has not notified the Club of their attendance by Tuesday 26th of March.**

Laissez Faire

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FREE TRADE

The English and Their History (Robert Tombs. Penguin, London, 2015) offers an insight into the history of politics and economics. The most profound dislocation in the political economy of nineteenth century England was the abolition of the Corn Laws. “Corn” is the English term for grain. What we call “corn” should more properly be called maize. From the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815 to 1846, food and grain imports were restricted by tariffs. This meant that there was a net transfer of resources from the urban poor to landed interests.

The impact on agricultural producers of the repeal of the Corn Laws was not immediate. Grain was short worldwide in the “Hungry Forties.” A million people died in Ireland during the Great Famine (1845-1849) and another million emigrated. As the nineteenth century progressed, grain imports expanded as grain rich producers, including Australia, shipped their surplus grain to England. Refrigerated shipping of meat from Australia, New Zealand and Argentina enriched the English diet.

The role of grain in rural England is explored in Thomas Hardy’s epic novel *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. Hardy set his novel in the fictional county of Wessex, although this is clearly a fictionalised setting for Dorset, on England’s southwest coast, where he was born. The mayor, Michael Henchard, was a grain merchant. The grain merchant was an important man in an English town.

The Corn Laws were a mercantilist policy designed to transfer wealth from urban areas to the landed interests. Those who suffered most from this restriction on trade were the urban poor. With the abolition of the Corn Laws, food became cheaper. The poor of England ever after associated free trade with cheap food.

The repeal of the Corn Laws was not due to an accident of nature. Richard Cobden founded the Anti-Corn Law League in Manchester in 1830. Cobden (1804 – 1865) believed that the Corn Laws were economically disastrous and morally wrong. Unlike many of his followers, who were Dissenters, Cobden was an Anglican. Cobden’s most effective ally was John Bright (1811 – 1889), a Quaker. Bright was described as one of the most brilliant orators of his generation. He was described as “orator, agitator, and statesman.” Together they founded the Manchester School, which promoted free trade and limited government. The Manchester School helped turn the economic theories of Adam Smith (1723 – 1790) into government policy. Cobden and Bright argued for pacifism, the abolition of slavery, free trade, the separation of Church and State and freedom of the press. They were two of the most effective advocates for laissez-faire economics and liberty of their age.

Cobden sought achievement over preferment, no matter what the cost. Negotiations with France over a pioneering trade agreement were so arduous that they almost killed him. The bilateral trade agreement between Britain and France, concluded in 1860, was Cobden’s second great achievement in the furtherance of his crusade for trade reform. The most remarkable feature was the inclusion of a “most favoured nation” clause, by which a concession offered to one party must be offered to all other parties.

Cobden was a modest man. He refused honours and acted to promote peace and prosperity, based on limited government and free trade. Cobden sought to reconcile England and France through trade, England and France had been competitors for dominance of Europe for 1,000 years. Despite the endemic suspicion of France in the British Parliament, Cobden believe free trade could bring them closer together. Cobden was a man of uncommon vision, but his enemy, mercantilism, was scotched but not killed. *JRB*

DO WE NEED PRIVATE POLICE FORCES?

We accept that the revolution in government services and privatization means that most services are supplied by private companies or public for-profit corporations, including transport, utilities such as water and electricity, and rubbish collection by contractors on behalf of municipal authorities. Why then should we allow the police to have a monopoly on law enforcement?

When we say “police” we mean that armed officers can make arrests and act to enforce the law. The number of private security guards may match or even exceed the number of police who are employed by the State. To call them “police” is to use the term very loosely. By police we mean men (and increasingly women) who can act with the authority of the State. These can be police, as we understand the term, or protective service officers or revenue protection officers on public transport. Crowd controllers, night club bouncers and security guards have a policing function but have minimal training. We must ask, do we need elite law enforcement personnel in the employ of the State?

In days gone by, the English ruling class did not want police officers paid by the State. They saw such officers as a threat to civil liberties. Policing in London was, until 1829, in private hands. If your house was broken into you hired a “thief taker” to recover your goods. Before the passage of the Metropolitan Police Act (1829) law enforcement in London was in the hands of the Bow Street Runners, a detective force who were promoted by the novelist Henry Fielding, a former magistrate. The Marine Police Force, dating from 1798, preceded the Metropolitan Police Service, and was credited with curbing theft on the docks. The progenitor of the Metropolitan Police Service was Sir Robert Peel, British statesman of the Conservative Party. The officers were known as “Peelers” and “Bobbies.” The Metropolitan Police is commonly known as Scotland Yard, from the location of its headquarters. Initially they were not popular.

England’s ancient foe, France, is very different. Contrary to popular belief, the gendarmes are not police as we understand the term. The gendarmes are a military force and exist to enforce order throughout the country. The police – a civilian force -- mainly preserve order in Paris and other large cities. The gendarmes and the police both precede the Anglo-Saxon model by many years. The dual system of the gendarmerie and police seems to be a typically French arrangement that is impenetrable to outsiders and

working out who does what is not always easy. The English imperative to avoid statism on the French model is the reason why England had no organised police force for many years.

In days gone by, the alternative to having a police force when crowd control was needed was to call out the troops. The anti-Catholic Gordon Riots of 1780 were perpetrated by Protestants who were motivated by the Papists Act of 1778, which was intended to mitigate official discrimination against Roman Catholics. Some 285 demonstrators were killed in the melee when the troops opened fire. London was shocked by the bloody response against unarmed demonstrators.

Perhaps we may then see why a State police force may be of value. The armed forces are trained to inflict maximum damage on the enemy in a minimum of time. The aim, put simply, is to kill as many of the enemy as possible through the application of lethal force. Police are trained to use persuasion and the application of minimal force. They are trained to control public disturbances without the application of lethal force. When Sir Robert Peel’s “Bobbies” were enrolled, they carried nothing except a truncheon and a rattle. The public still had visions of armed troops in the streets of London in their minds. Debate continues in England as to whether police should be armed.

One of the characteristics of the State is that it has a monopoly on the use of force. Only those delegated by the State can use force. Should we allow private contractors to have the ability to use lethal force? Security companies such as Blackwater act as private armies in dangerous places. They can – and do – lose men in action. Should we have Blackwater and other similar companies providing public security in Australia? The difference between the armed forces and the police lies in the propensity to use violence. When the police get jumpy because of criminal violence, such as the premeditated gunning down of Constables Damien Eyre and Steven Tynan in central Melbourne, the police may over-react if they feel threatened. But they are trained to cope with threats. Companies such as Blackwater train their men to be soldiers, not policemen. They are unlikely to have the extensive training in peacemaking and knowledge of the law required by a trained and sworn policeman. There is more to being a policeman than using force. We can thus say that the police force has value but the police force is a public asset that should be used in a frugal manner. *JRB*