
DISCUSSION

Crosland Reconsidered

The Man Who Took too Much for Granted—By COLIN WELCH

In his politics David Marquand is a representative figure for his generation. Anti-Tory by background and temperament, he was convinced by the Labour revisionist creed of Mr Anthony Crosland, and The Future of Socialism became his bible. . . . It is a sad thing, he says, that Mr Crosland's The Future of Socialism could not be written today, simply because those who are active and committed to Labour politics do not have the time or the energy to stand back and see clearly what is going on.

THE TIMES (London)

IS IT TOO FANCIFUL to suppose that across the last years of Mr Anthony Crosland's life, so tragically cut short, a certain shadow fell? Gone or waning was that former self-assurance and inner certainty, amounting at one time almost to arrogance. In conversation he retained at will his wit and charm. Yet a certain weariness and indifference, a growing detachment, showed itself in the increasing gladness—or at least tolerance—with which he suffered those he would once have thought fools. Was he perhaps no longer convinced of his own wisdom and good judgment? In some ways he seemed to have become more human, more fallible, more genial, more gently quizzical, even in a way more apologetic. Yet one felt—perhaps wrongly—that a spring had broken, that an inner light had gone out, that purpose and bearings had been lost, that—as once for another distinguished and clever politician—it would never be glad confident morning again.

Is it too fanciful? Perhaps; but, if not, it would be silly to search in his personal life for any cause. Just before his death he told Ivan Rowan of the *Sunday Telegraph* how he and his wife had agreed that if they were killed together (say, in a plane crash)

they could have no regrets—everything had been worthwhile. He added: "What a marvellous life it has been!" Friends all testify to his domestic happiness.

Was it the strain of high office? We may doubt whether a man so capable was ever overstretched by any of the positions he held.

Was it, then, thwarted ambition? This too we may doubt, at least in part. Indeed he must have been aware of his intellectual superiority to most of his colleagues. He may well have thought himself in particular better qualified to be Chancellor than any of those who were preferred to him. He would have been a very unorthodox Chancellor, perhaps, who proclaimed that "rapid growth requires a reversal of these priorities [i.e. growth must be given a higher priority than the value of the pound and a healthy balance of payments] and a Government which really *believes* [his italics] in expansion", and who proposed to hold down inflation not primarily by monetary restraint but rather by fiscal measures and direct controls. Or has bitter experience taught us by now to regard such Chancellors as orthodox?

He must himself have relished the irony which placed instead at the Foreign Office a man like himself who, to judge from his published works, had little interest in international affairs, and who regarded foreign countries primarily as examples (often ill-chosen for his purpose) to us of how to conduct the domestic economic affairs which pre-occupied him or, alternatively, as recipients of the lavish British aid he was always eager to dispense.

Perhaps he had higher dreams still. Certainly he never went out of his way to offend those of his colleagues who differed from him and whose support he might yet need in any eventual serious bid for the Labour leadership. (He stood last time and came bottom out of six, with only 17 votes.) His commitment to our joining Europe, for instance, quite explicit in those massive works from which few of his colleagues could probably quote at will, became in practice at the crunch conveniently ambiguous and unimportant to him. Yet, on the other hand, he never stooped to the base intriguing

C. A. R. CROSLAND died on 19 February 1977 in Oxford at the age of 58. See in ENCOUNTER (August 1977) the three appreciations from writers in the tradition of "the Left"—Michael Young, John Vaizey and Daniel Bell.

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and ingratiating arts by which people like Sir Harold Wilson and Mr James Callaghan became leader: his grand indolent manner¹ and independent character probably forbade it.

A QUESTION REMAINS, moreover. Could an intellectual of this sort, who thought so much, who wrote and achieved so much in the world of the mind, who had such influence and changed so many minds by persuasion; whose *Future of Socialism* was described by Dr William Pickles as "the most important on its subject since Eduard Bernstein published his famous work in 1898" and by Hugh Dalton as "brilliant, original and brave . . . by far the most important book on Socialism in England since the War"; who was so refreshingly right about so many things that his works were read with approval by many who can hardly have shared, perhaps did not even notice, his general purpose; who 20-odd years ago did so much to make socialism seem respectable, undoctinaire and safe, clearly the most sensible and humane if not the only way of running our affairs—could such a man ever know the sheer unadulterated greed for power which obsesses men who have no other means of winning eminence? Surely not: we may think of him rather like Bishop Blougram, musing with a smile,

*I am much, you are nothing; you would be all,
I would be merely much. You beat me there.*

YET IF WE DO BELIEVE that some shadow fell on his last years, and if we seek a reason for it, perhaps we have already stumbled on it. Was it the shadow thrown by *The Future of Socialism* (1956) and by its lesser successor, *The Conservative Enemy* (1962), in which various of its themes are developed and varied? For this future, this "future of socialism" was no remote millennial Utopia, to be achieved in distant years to come by the patient selfless work of generations or, if sooner, by some shattering cataclysm. No, it was the immediate, practical and attainable future, to be started at once and to be pushed rapidly and effortlessly through, bringing in its train no paradise indeed, no finite Utopia, but valuable and measurable benefits to all save the rich and wicked few, with the prospect of more to come. It was painless socialism, socialism without tears; or so it said. It is recognisably, in outline if not in detail, the socialism that has prevailed in this country, apart from the first part of Mr Edward Heath's bizarre interregnum, since 1964. Of all that this socialism has by intent done, much was explicitly or implicitly urged upon it by

Mr Crosland and nothing that I can think of expressly forbidden.

Yes, even the so-called "social contract" (Wilson's version, not Rousseau's) was his child in all but name.

"We must have a prices and incomes policy [he told trade unions in Copenhagen in 1971]. Such a policy is only possible within a framework of government policies for greater social and economic equality as a whole. It is no good simply asking the trade unions to cooperate in a prices and incomes policy against a background of reactionary social policies. . . ."

In other, more cynical words, the unions demand and are to get, in return for something valueless which they cannot deliver, the ruin of the nation—"the social con-trick", as Jock Bruce-Gardyne has called it.

Mr Crosland was thus condemned to live in his own future. He saw it, and it didn't work. As a younger man he had always been shrewd and percipient, ever ready to re-examine the evidence, conspicuously unready to take old dogma on trust—his major works give short shrift to old twaddle and new, from Marx to Galbraith. Could such a man fail to notice that most of his major benign predictions had come unstuck; that what he had once taken for granted now shook and crumbled beneath his feet; that some of those people and views he had once scoffed at were beginning to look a bit wiser; that what he had advocated, wherever it had been put into effect, had produced few of the foretold blessings and many of the disastrous consequences he had pooh-poohed; and that his own reservations and hesitations, by no means few even if unemphatic, were being endowed by the grimly and inexorably unfolding future of socialism with an ever greater and sadder significance? It must have been like living in a haunted house, a place built in a sunnier season for comfort and beauty, yet infested now by the spectres of hopes blasted and dark fears crowding in.

It is true that in 1974, in essays and speeches reviewing the first Harold Wilson régime² and plotting the way ahead, his understanding of what had gone wrong, the extent of it and why, seemed most imperfect. His pages abound indeed with lamentations and breast-beatings: "nobody disputes the central failure of [Mr Wilson's] economic policy"—"the performance (and I must take my share of responsibility) did not live up to the hopes which we . . . had entertained"—"general disappointment"—"this dismal record creates a public mood of discord and discontent"—"the economy is in a state of semi-permanent crisis, and inflation is rampant"—"this wretched showing, for which all of us who were in government must share responsibility"—"the record of growth has been

¹ "Indolent manner", yes, but those books were not written by an indolent man!

² *Socialism Now and Other Essays*. Edited by Dick Leonard (Jonathan Cape, London).

lamentable; the facts are dreary and familiar", and so forth. What renders these confessions and apologies sterile is his failure to examine possible connections between policies he thought good and developments he recognised to be bad. The real cause for all that went wrong for Harold Wilson was, I think, in Crosland's view "the basic decision not to alter the exchange rate", i.e. not to devalue the pound: from this mistake all other evils flowed. And indeed, if it was a mistake, it was one for which Crosland for all his protestations could bear only nominal, formal responsibility—for he had certainly never bothered himself much about the value of the pound. Thus self-absolved, the blame shifted implicitly on to one major but inessential error, not to be repeated and not really his own, he is free to justify his own and Labour's general record.

For instance, the rise in public expenditure under Wilson from 41 to 48% of G.N.P., so pregnant with evil as some might think, is regarded by him as "solid progress" . . . "impressive" . . . "a brave performance."³ About education he is more crudely specific:

"expenditure in education rose from 4.8% of G.N.P. in 1964 to 6.1% in 1970. As a result, all classes of the community *enjoyed significantly more education than before.*"

(My italics, to emphasise the iron link in his mind between money spent and value got, as though in this case spending *equals* learning; by such standards the housewife who is continually diddled in the shops enjoys significantly more goods than the one who is not.) He quotes with approval Michael Stewart, who referred to "a measurable improvement [*sic*] in the distribution of income" as one of Prime Minister Wilson's "main achievements"—an "improvement" marked by a fall in profits from 15.6 to 12.3% and by a "large increase" in social benefits, producing "a favourable effect." With the same grim complacency might an alcoholic sadly review a past year of disasters, of declining health and mental powers, of mounting debts, of failure and ruin approaching inexorably, and yet conclude that the picture was not *wholly* black: after all, he had managed to keep up his alcohol intake, even to "improve" it, a "brave performance" in the circumstances.

THE PREVIOUS OPTIMISM has gone; full self-realisation is yet to come. Did it ever come? How can we know for sure? The Costa Rica lecture of 1975⁴ denies it; it keeps up a brave front. Yet is it not a fact, apparent to us all as we grow older, that

³ In 1976 it was about 54 per cent of G.N.P.—braver still!

⁴ C. A. R. Crosland, *Social Democracy in Europe* (Fabian Tract 438, 1975).

the capacity of the mind for really new thought, for constructive self-criticism, grows atrophied? We tend to repeat and develop what we once thought, modified as little as experience and disillusion will permit. Not to be envied is the man who in youth equipped himself with a *Weltanschauung* which, however imposing, does not fit the times through which he is later condemned to live. What he thought and said he thinks still and says. But his heart is not in it; the season is unpropitious, and he shivers at the nip in the air; the party is over.

BUT I go too fast. Let me return to the two books which made and consolidated his reputation, not least because they appeared initially in part in these ENCOUNTER pages.

"My political misfortune", he confessed in Costa Rica, "is that I was born an optimist." Despite their sometimes impatient, exasperated or even petulant tone, *The Future of Socialism* and its successor seemed at the time extremely *optimistic* books. They seem almost incredibly so now, in darker times. All problems were solved or readily soluble, all hopes securely grounded, all dangers illusory. With confidence the Captain Crosland of those days tapped the barometer, stuck at "set fair." In such weather it seemed to him perfectly safe to neglect all traditional precautions, to take on cargo and passengers till the Plimsoll line was well below the surface, to run down the fuel reserves and to steer near the rocks. What was needed was boldness, "verve and determination"; the risks were negligible. In 1956 it was clear to him that "the British economy is behaving in a reasonably buoyant and productive manner and there is certainly no sign of imminent collapse. The present rate of growth will continue." This being so,

"material want and poverty and deprivation of essential goods will gradually cease to be a problem. We shall increasingly need to focus attention . . . not on the economic causes of distress but on the social and psychological causes. We shall want the advice not of the economists but of psychiatrists, sociologists and social psychiatrists."

Crosland characteristically foresaw a time, "as material standards rise, when divorce law reform will increase the sum of human welfare more than a rise in the food subsidies. . . ." The dismal science, in his own hands so far from dismal, would make way for pseudo-science, the benign rule of crackpots presiding over more and more broken homes. He noted "a world-wide change in the economic climate."

"The business community [he went on] accepts the fact that prosperity is here to stay, not only because full employment will be maintained but

also because we have entered a period of rapid growth in personal incomes and consumption."

In these happy circumstances, he no longer regarded "questions of growth and efficiency as being, on a long view, of primary importance to socialism. We stand, in Britain, on the threshold of mass abundance." He took too much for granted.

By 1962 his optimism had by no means abated, though he himself in retrospect thought it had. He thought then that by 1964 prosperity, hitherto a Tory prerogative, might be taken for granted by an electorate which might thus feel itself free to vote Labour again. Perhaps it did so take it for granted; certainly he did. He mocked those Labour MPs who decried the then prevailing prosperity as "bogus" or "phoney", due to be "engulfed in an inevitable slump." They had "no warrant" for such a view. "Something approaching full employment will be maintained in Britain", he assured them, "if only because the Conservatives know that a failure here would lead to defeat at the polls." At this point as elsewhere he displays his conviction that full employment can in all circumstances be maintained by government action, such as a "continuing mild inflation", so swift and sure and harmless in its effects that it would be madness for any government not to take it. He thus ignores the possibility that inflation, in order to perform (or rather to strive vainly to perform) the beneficent tasks allotted to it by him and its other advocates, must become less and less mild, more and more rapid and progressive, always a little bit more than expected; for "expected" inflation is discounted in advance and produces no effect on demand. He was fated to see an unprecedented inflation and high and rising unemployment—a combination he must have found puzzling and disquieting.

IN COSTA RICA he referred to "pessimists" who "fear the consequences for democracy of a combination of slow economic growth and rapid inflation in societies where rising expectations have developed from aspirations into fierce demands." In this malign development he himself had played his part, by continuously inflating aspirations and expectations into *rights*, not reasonably to be withheld. Add then to the witches' brew of slow growth, inflation, and "fierce demands" a further ingredient, unemployment, and indeed those silly old pessimists might well shake in their shoes.

He further deplored in 1962

"a strange sad alliance between the Conservatives and the extreme 'Left', both contending (falsely) that we are at the limits of taxable capacity in the mixed economy. The Conservatives . . . maintain that higher taxation would inhibit economic growth; the extreme

'Left' . . . maintains that it would be incompatible with the existence of a private sector."

Turning to corporate taxation, he found also

"a united front between the apologists of business and the 'New Left', both maintaining that profits cannot be heavily taxed without catastrophic results. . . . For [he is here paraphrasing the Jeremiahs of business and the Left] if taxed beyond a certain point the profit system will break down; the 'oligopolists' will refuse to invest, send their capital abroad and precipitate an economic crisis."

He scorned all such fears and hopes. Tax on, he cried; taxation is good for you. He was in no way inferior to Mr Denis Healey as a pip-squeaker. He himself conceded that "personal taxation must at some point impinge on the supply of ability, effort and risk taking, and cause individuals either to emigrate or opt for leisure." He saw no sign, however, "that we in Britain are at or near this limit—with the one *possible* [my italics] exception of direct taxation on marginal earnings." How he would have recognised that limit when it came we do not know. How hard it is to measure such impalpables as effort withheld, enterprise thwarted, hopes blasted, skills unacquired or left dormant, leisure preferred, though emigration figures are more precise! Meanwhile his words could be used to justify tax piled upon tax, like some ignorant peasant loading more and more on to a half-starved donkey till it expires—when it is too late to unload. As for profits taxes, he agreed with "most economists" (Lord Kaldor is the one he quotes) that they "tend in the long run to be passed on to the consumer in the form of higher margins and prices", leaving the profit system "unaffected by the whole operation." That is, presumably, as long as the poor old consumer goes on doing his stuff. Our consumers seem of late to have let us down.

Anyway at that time he declared that

"we have all become wearily familiar with the unending lamentations about the 'crippling' level of taxation, the 'crushing' burden of government expenditure, the alleged disincentives to growth, investment and efficiency, and so on *ad nauseam*."

In other words he proclaimed the British economy to be fundamentally in rude health, able easily to bear not only existing burdens but others innumerable soon to be imposed upon it; indeed, that with these further burdens its health could be expected to become even ruder. All this he took for granted.

WHAT KEPT HIM so cheerful? It was not, I fancy, any faith in any sort of socialism, his own sort or any other, though I do not question his

sincerity. No, paradoxical as it may sound, it seems rather to have been an incongruous, profound and comforting faith, itself irrational, in the ability of capitalism—or at least of the late-capitalist or managerial system which he described and favoured—somehow to keep going, to maintain growth and to enhance prosperity, even when deprived of *rationale*, of all the discipline and rewards, the rules and conditions, the sticks and carrots hitherto thought essential to its success. He often derides Marx's belief in the inevitable collapse of capitalism; is his own belief in its inevitable survival any less absurd? Is it not indeed rather more absurd, in that Marx at least proposed to give the odd helpful nudge to historical processes which he thought inevitable, while Crosland does everything he can think of to render false his own more sanguine expectations?

Now take the profit motive, for instance, the mainspring of capitalism, the devil's work to all good socialists (or, since Anthony Crosland, to most). It was Crosland who first, or most memorably, suggested that profit need not be a dirty word to socialists, thus causing a widespread rearrangement of demons on the Left and commending his work to all non-doctrinaire "men of goodwill." And indeed, as I have said, he was so refreshingly and unexpectedly right (or at least non-Left) about so many things that non-Left people tended to overlook his flaws. For mark now with what qualifications he defends the profit motive. Profits and the market system for which they supply the moving force are perfectly in order, yes—but only on two harsh conditions. One is that effective demand must be equalised, i.e., that incomes must be rendered more equal than the market system would supposedly have arranged unaided.⁵ As he puts it elsewhere, "production for use and production for profit may be taken as broadly coinciding now that working class purchasing power is so high."

The other condition is that profits must be retained and not distributed, the penalty for the latter crime being swingeing taxation. This continuous "ploughing back" must, of course, have very adverse effects on the raising of capital for

new firms and industries. If existing firms hang on to all they gain, where is new risk capital to be found? Crosland everywhere neglects the needs and role of *new* businesses, and seems to overlook their importance to growth and innovation. Dr Ludwig Erhard took the opposite view, and actually taxed retained German profits more than distributed profits, thus encouraging money to move rapidly about. He was wise to do so if, as there is reason to suppose, retained profits are often or usually uneconomically invested.

Now we can readily see that the profits Crosland tolerates are profits which have lost much of their purpose, in so far as that purpose was to elicit and reward skill, hard work, risk-taking. The word "profit" remains, but the lure, the reward have disappeared. Little reward will find its way into private hands; what does will promptly be redistributed in order to ensure that production, if any, is of "necessities" rather than of "luxuries", i.e. is for "use."⁶ The greater part of these pseudo-profits will be retained and ploughed back into the business, leaving the original entrepreneurs and their successors as mere spectators of what they have set in motion—even in a sense prisoners of it. For, should they seek to escape from their ill-rewarded bondage, whether by death or by trying to realise their capital in the hope of some gain, real or illusory, for themselves or loved ones (a gain which must be greatly reduced by the incidence of the high taxes urged by Crosland on distributed profits and "unearned" incomes), then he is waiting for them with an electric fence, dogs, and machine guns at the gate. Taxation, he cries, must be made "to bite more deeply and more fiercely"—my italics, yet surely the savagery of his imagery is not without significance? "The two most important requirements are a comprehensive Capital Gains Tax and a tax on gifts *inter vivos* to restore reality to the death duties", in order to appropriate "a proportion of all gains accruing anywhere in the economy"—of all gains, that is to say, real or, under continuing "mild" inflation, illusory.

THESE MEASURES and the like were designed by Crosland to correct an inequality or inequity (he used the terms interchangeably) in the distribution of wealth. The extent of this inequality, this "maldistribution of property", he grossly exaggerates:

"Less than 2% of adult persons own 50% per cent of total personal net capital; 10% of persons own nearly 80%."

Polanyi & Wood (in the Institute of Economic Affairs' *How Much Inequality?*) estimate that 10% probably own about 40% of the wealth, but that if each member of that 10% has on average one dependant, then that 10% should be 20%. The "inequity" is not then so vast. That it is to Crosland an

⁵ I use the word "supposedly" because I suspect that Pareto, Hayek and others are right in arguing that the free market economy has powerful equalising forces built into it, forces which pseudo-egalitarian interference may actually have damaged or atrophied. Crosland by contrast argues that inequality, unless continuously checked and corrected, will naturally and progressively increase.

⁶ If we point out that much of this redistributed profit is itself squandered on television sets, drink, and the betting pools, we are reproved by Crosland as prigs and prudes, which indeed we would be, with knobs on, were the cost of these luxuries *earned* rather than "redistributed" on high moral grounds. He himself is very priggish and prudish about the alleged pleasures of the rich!

inequity is illustrated by his contention, after arguing that “some differential rewards for talent and ability” are to be tolerated, that “justice must here be tempered with efficiency.” The inference is clear: justice equals equality, and talent, ability and effort have no claim in *justice* to any differential reward whatsoever. Expediency alone secures their gain, if any, just as it is not justice but expediency which causes us to hand our watches to the mugger.

Inequality even in earned income is to him far too great, also presumably to be corrected by the increased personal taxation which he elsewhere regards as dangerous. The idea that “just” rewards, as some might define them, could actually be more unequal still is naturally to him not worth discussing. He is everywhere concerned to preserve “reasonable rewards”, “small and medium savings.” He cares nothing for the exceptional rewards which may be required by exceptional efforts and ability, and neglects the contribution to society of exceptional men—even of exceptionally awful men, as he and I might think them. He has little sympathy for any economic aspirations and appetites which he, as a “normal” man, does not share. The average, the mean, the normal, the “reasonable” (the mediocre, some might say) dominate his mind and command his allegiance. Even in the field of education he is of the view that “we need less concentration on an educational élite and more on the average standard of attainment”—two aims of which the first and more disastrous, as we have learnt to our cost, is easier to achieve than the second.

To what extent recent heavy taxation has contributed to equality is still debatable. The poor pay taxes as well as the rich; and the tragedy of those who owned businesses now bankrupt must be measured against the tragedy of those many more thereby thrown out of work and the tragedy—more imponderable—of those who are denied the jobs which could have been provided in new enterprises which prospective entrepreneurs, surveying the odds now against them, the imbalance between risk, effort and reward, have reasonably decided not to launch. It is difficult or impossible to make the rich less rich without making the poor poorer still, and the effort may end with an Eskimo-equality in universal poverty.

BEHIND WHAT Anthony Crosland urged may be discerned a failure to recognise any logical or just connection between production and distribution. They are to him quite separate phenomena.

⁷ It was so far hidden from Crosland that he at one point suggested that in Russia increasing affluence is likely to *bring about* some sort of free market, thus putting the cart firmly before the horse.

What is produced is produced: that may be taken for granted. What is produced, including profits if any, may then be freely distributed according to egalitarian or other whim. “In the end”, as he says in another context, “the proper division of the surplus depends simply on one’s own view of the right distribution of total income.” Someone created the vineyard, you might say; someone now owns the vineyard; some toil in it; some sell the grapes; some make the wine; but someone else altogether may fitly decide on the proper division of the reward.

The logic and justice of the free market economy is indeed dauntingly complex and obscure.⁷ It must seem to ordinary people to distribute its favours and brickbats much as Ophelia distributed her flowers. Yet surely we had a right to expect from a man so clever as Crosland, often so wise, a slightly more sophisticated view of the distribution of wealth than this: that, if wealth is not strictly distributed by the government according to its own system of social priorities, then it will “fall where *economic chance* [my italics] dictates”—that it will “remain with those so placed in relation to the productive process that they initially receive it . . .” As elsewhere, he speaks contemptuously of “the accident of birth” (which is in fact only an accident to those who view the process coldly from outside, from a long way off, ignoring the chains of mutual love and inherited qualities and attitudes which normally bind parents and children together), so the free economy appears to him a mere lottery, as such also contemptible. He notes with resentment the prizes it offers; he notes with some complacency the efforts it elicits and the wealth it creates. But he does not recognise, or if he recognises does not emphasise, any link between the two. The first can safely be diminished, almost abolished, without affecting the supply of the latter. He does not see any conflict (as others do) between equality and prosperity; if he did, he would presumably choose equality.

Characteristically he regards inherited wealth as particularly and self-evidently indefensible. Certainly it is slightly more difficult to defend than wealth still in the hands of whoever created it. There seems at first glance (and Crosland is in too much of a hurry to give it two glances) little to connect an old lady living comfortably in Bournemouth with any sort of wealth creation. Yet the connection is there all right, but usually buried in the past, a whole period to which in his haste Crosland pays too little attention. Someone created wealth to ensure—perhaps *inter alia*—that this old lady should not want. She has at least as much right to part of the wealth which she in part caused to be created as Crosland or any of his proposed beneficiaries, who had nothing whatever to do with it. She is, so to speak, a retired incentive and, as such, entitled to her pension.

C. A. R. CROSLAND'S economic sports day is thus one without prizes, or rather with only the most modest prizes, such as might be thought appropriate by some don or the like, not primarily moved by hope of gain; and these prizes are to be held only temporarily, on sufferance, like the school running cups which have to be handed back at the end of the year. To achieve any sort of durable financial success in such a world, were it possible, is to expose oneself not only to Mr Crosland's icy disapproval but, more important, to the envy and resentment of the masses—ugly and unconstructive sentiments which, so far from rebuking, he fully endorses, tries even to share, and proposes to assuage by levelling down the objects of envy.⁸ Did it not cross his mind that, the greater the relative equality prevailing, the more all surviving inequalities (and he permits some) will be resented? If, moreover, greater enforced equality is accompanied by or actually causes (as many would expect) a relative or absolute decline in general prosperity, then will not envy find in economic failure its most fertile soil? Long ago Adam Smith defined a healthy society not as an equal one but as one in which most people are getting better off, or can reasonably hope to do so. In such a society equality is of little interest, envy no problem. Should Crosland perhaps have noted a profound book I must commend to all—Helmut Schoeck's study of *Envy*?⁹ Professor Schoeck contends that the progress and prosperity of the Western world has only been made possible by the suppression of envy (a suppression which we owe in part to Christian doctrine), of that envy which prevents innovation, which punishes excellence, which falsely suggests that one man may prosper only at another's expense, which prevents individuality, inequality and progress and which, wherever it

rages unchecked, wherever in particular it is used as a basis for policy, produces nothing but stagnation and poverty.

IF ANY OF THIS BE TRUE, it is a sinister horse indeed on which Crosland rode. He did so with complacency on account of his oft-expressed contempt for the rich.

"Only a rather insignificant fraction of surtax incomes is directed towards any intellectual activities whatever; the bulk goes on expensive cars and houses, holidays in Cannes, servants, gin, hotels and restaurants, dances, lavish parties and the like. Indeed Britain can perhaps claim in recent times to have had one of the most illiterate wealthy classes in history."

Private patronage, he declares, "could hardly be said to have had a uniformly splendid record."¹⁰ He chides the rich even for failing to preserve "innumerable Georgian buildings", without bothering to reflect on who put them up in the first place or on how many have been destroyed by public activity and compulsory purchase. Beyond the first generation at least, the rich he regards as totally functionless or, if performing any function, then only one which can be performed as well or better by public authority. He scornfully remarks that

"it does not require that we preserve all our millionaires on the off chance that one of them may fight an occasional battle for freedom, any more than on the off chance that one of them may prove an enlightened patron of the arts."¹¹

Very well: but let us look at this from the other side. Are not freedom and independent art and thought in all their variety, the future of ENCOUNTER itself, if you like, are they not certainly in far less danger if they can rely for their protection and patronage on one or more millionaires of varied interests and tastes or, better still, upon the variously cultivated members of a whole wealthy and leisured class rather than just upon the monopolistic and monopsonistic State alone, which is all that Crosland proposes to leave them?

TO DO HIM JUSTICE, even he shows signs of disquiet at the proletarianisation of culture which has followed the massive transfer of purchasing power from the educated to the uneducated. His remedy is of course to educate the uneducated—yet this somehow without imposing upon them the "middle class ethos" he elsewhere modishly deplores. To do him further justice, it is indeed possible that our rich have recently to some extent let us down. But he should not ignore the part which he and his envious friends, with their deep and fierce taxation, have played in bringing about this betrayal. It certainly

⁸ Is not this prevalent endorsement of a deadly sin a real *trahison des clercs*? Was not Mr Crosland surely guilty of another such treason when, in these pages (ENCOUNTER, March 1961) he forbade Britons and Americans to complain "when an underdeveloped country pursues nationalistic or protectionistic economic policies, or seeks to expropriate its foreign-owned basic industries or divagates from the orthodox canons of liberal international trade theory. All these things are natural and inevitable in the early stages of development. . . ." Surely wherever such things are regarded as "natural and inevitable", there also will poverty and underdevelopment endure. Did Crosland really wish poor countries well, surely he could have offered them better advice than such toadying to their characteristic defects.

⁹ Helmut Schoeck, *Envy: A Theory of Social Behaviour* (Secker & Warburg, 1969).

¹⁰ What about the Arts Council then, we may ask; and did ever any private patron pay a fool or fraud to sit on top of a pole or to arrange ordure or dirty nappies in heaps? If so, he at least wasted his own money, not ours.

¹¹ For a comparable statement, try this: "We need not preserve all our university students on the off chance that one might do some worthwhile research." What would Crosland have said to that?

makes more sense to drink gin at lavish parties in Cannes if you know that you can leave little or nothing to your descendants or to your pet cultural activities.

Moreover, what Crosland was light years from seeing is that even these gin-swillers perform, despite themselves, various functions. He himself refers to one important function, though without noting its full significance. He quotes Woodrow Wilson as complaining that "nothing has spread socialistic feeling . . . more than the automobile, which offers a picture of the arrogance of wealth." Today, Mr Crosland shrewdly comments, "Leftists wonder ruefully how rapidly it is spreading non-socialistic feeling!" Indeed, he does himself rejoice most openheartedly and unreservedly—it is greatly to his credit—at the motors, washing-machines, and other consumer durables now within easy reach of the working classes. He has little of the sour puritanism of those middle-class socialists who regard it as the function of the poor to remain poor and thus dependent, a constant object of false sympathy and self-gratifying paternalism. Yet we must ask him how many of these desirable objects would now be within the workers' reach if the rich had not existed to buy them, test them and find them good when they were novel and astronomically expensive? He notes elsewhere that education is a social good, not just a private one; it has consequences far beyond the enjoyment of the individual "user." Is it really absurd to regard private wealth as equally a social good, conferring unintended benefits far and wide?

For the idle worthless rich have another function still—to act as a magnet, powerfully influencing the conduct of innumerable others, less rich. There are people so base (did Tony Crosland never meet them? I have met some, and like them on the whole little better than he did, especially those prominent in Labour circles) that their creative entrepreneurial talents are elicited, and perhaps can only be elicited, by the prospect of drinking gin one day at lavish parties in Cannes. One might wish them otherwise, spurred on by cooperative zeal for the common good. But that is how they are—their children might be different. If society abolishes gin and parties, or puts them out of mortal reach, then it must do without the services of such people and without such growth, whether valued by Crosland or no, as they might have engendered. At one point he speculates on whether Mr Charles Clore, said to have made £47m. in 10 years, would "have foregone the deals and lazed about on the Riviera, if taxation had cut this by a half or more. . . ." The answer is to him self-evident, to others less so. He has chosen an unfairly loaded example, since the public utility of Mr Clore's operations is not obvious to all. This example is used to justify heavy taxation on all capital gains, many the result of vast risks taken, of successes

won by great effort and indubitably to the public good. Many typical entrepreneurs take almost nothing in income out of the various ventures which they launch in succession; their sole reward comes with the capital gains, if any, on sale. These Crosland would "cut by a half or more", boldly declaring that this would not "inhibit efficiency or risk taking." Why on earth should it not? Nobody is going to cut the risks by "half or more."

"We know too little about incentives", he concedes at one point, "to make firm statements"—firm statements about whether "equality and rapid growth are hard to reconcile" and about whether "socialist policies must necessarily slow down the rate of growth." Such doubts would induce in other less confident men, if they valued growth as he did, an extreme caution in enforcing equality, in destroying existing incentives and in pressing ahead with socialist policies. Not so in him.

HE APPEARS THROUGHOUT to proceed on the assumption that economic man is dead or dying or never lived—an assumption fair enough only in that man's motives have always been various and complex and undoubtedly include all the motives on which he prefers to lay emphasis and on which he relies to supply the energies formerly or allegedly elicited by the acquisitive instinct. Economic man, after all, was only a model—a working model, if you please. In general Crosland declares there to be

"no reason to believe that an acquisitive and individualistic pattern of behaviour is an essential condition of rapid growth. . . . The fact is that advances in productivity and technical innovation do not come characteristically from people working competitively for individual profit, but from people working on a fixed salary in a large managerial structure."

I think that Professor Jewkes for one would not find this true; and, even if it were, can one be sure that the salaried innovators would go on innovating if it were not for the threat presented by "people working competitively for individual profit"? I would view this "fact" rather as another expression of Crosland's continuous bias in favour of the salaried employee as against the independent operator and in favour of large firms against small. "Progress", he writes, "often demands both a scale of capital investment and an expenditure on . . . research which are beyond the resources . . . of any except large concerns. . . . A system of taxation which favours large established companies is not necessarily bad for economic progress." "Very large companies", he declares elsewhere, "dominate . . . the economy . . . and represent (given the inexorable increase in average size) the clear trend of the future."

His picture of the modern manager is of an almost entirely non-economic or post-economic or pseudo-economic man. Indeed this manager may still seek to maximise profits (or nowadays to minimise losses): but to what end? Not to distribute these profits to the owners, to the shareholders, indeed, to whose claims "many managements today are at the least indifferent and occasionally even actively hostile"—a fact noted by Crosland with approval. No, this manager maximises profits mainly

"from a mixture of psychological and social motives. He tends to identify himself closely with his firm, which comes to him to have a definite personality of its own, with interests quite separate from those of the shareholders. And not only all his corporate loyalty to the firm but all his personal motives—professional pride, desire for prestige in the business world, self-realisation, desire for power—find their fulfilment in high output and rapid growth, and hence in high profits, these being both the conventional source of business prestige and the ultimate source of business power."

Perhaps Crosland is rash to link high output, rapid growth, and high profits so tightly together: many grandiose business follies mock him. But we must certainly notice that profits are thus here reduced by him to mere tokens, Monopoly money, the symbol of other things, of prestige and power, without use in themselves except to be "ploughed back" to produce more prestige, more power. Those who agree with Dr Johnson that a man is seldom so innocently employed as in getting money will wonder whether this emasculation and deformation of British managers is welcome, to the extent that it is real. For Crosland, to my mind, persistently overestimates the powerlessness and functionlessness of shareholders, whose power is none the less real for being so rarely exercised. He contradicts himself neatly when writing about the cooperative movement:

"Ultimate democratic control is not necessarily lost because so few attend or vote. The inactive members still retain their full democratic power in reserve; and they can exercise it at any time they choose."

Yes, and so can shareholders, as some dozy or arrogant managements have suddenly found to their cost. Shareholders can also vote with their money, by selling shares, thus reducing non-economic managers' prestige.

Yet it is undoubtedly true that, in the increasingly controlled, bureaucratised and centrally directed economy now prevailing and always favoured by Crosland, managers may well feel that

they have more to fear or hope for from governments than from shareholders and adjust their conduct accordingly, as Crosland describes:

"Now perhaps most typical amongst very large firms is the company which pursues rapid growth and high profits—but subject to its 'sense of social responsibility' and its desire for good public and labour relations. Its chairman will orate on the duty of industry not to the shareholder alone, but also to the consumer, the worker and the public at large. And some at least of this talk is reflected in company policy."

Such a firm will hang on to its profits, export more than is economically justified, butter up its trade unions, never dismiss redundant workers, charge only "fair" prices, site new plants where the government wants it to, operate expensive welfare programmes, make gifts to education, patronise the arts, and participate in local community affairs: "Its goals are a 'fair' rather than a maximum profit, reasonably rapid growth, and the warm glow which comes from a sense of public duty"—and a title doubtless for the chairman to boot.

CROSLAND DOES NOT ALTOGETHER deny the economic waste and losses caused by such pliant and amiable policies:

"On the one hand, management becomes slothful if it is spurred on neither by a personal stake in profit nor by the pressure of shareholders; on the other hand, we have a less efficient allocation of resources if profit maximisation is abandoned and decisions are taken on non-economic criteria. I am inclined to think this is true. Yet I doubt if it is more than a small part of the explanation of our poor economic performance; and in any case it is easily outweighed, in my view, by the social gain."

By now this non-economic motivation must surely be viewed as a much greater cause of our much poorer performance. Certainly one of the joys of being rich is that one can afford to be wasteful and inefficient within reason; alas, we do not seem to have been as rich as Crosland sanguinely supposed, and the social gains are now themselves outweighed, in my view, by the resultant unemployment, stagnation, and frustration of all legitimate aspirations.

Crosland thus sees managers as floating rudderless in a sort of vacuum, blown hither and thither by alternate gusts of public duty and non-economic self-interest, responsible to nobody in particular and to everyone in general. They thus become exceptionally biddable and responsive to preponderant government pressure (or "bullying"—the word he himself uses). He refers with mixed complacency and contempt to the "other-directed organisation-men of Shell and

I.C.I., jelly-fish where their predecessors were masterful . . . slaves to their public relations departments", terrified of parliamentary questions, the Board of Trade, the unions, the Press, a Labour government, the consumer movement, old Uncle Tom Cobbleigh and all—all of which "counter pressures" should, according to Crosland, "be stronger still." Surely never was such an armoury of terrors deployed against a few other-directed jelly-fish!

THIS CONTEMPT explains his revisionist doubt that "the pattern of ownership will uniquely determine anything", his conviction that "the question of ownership is of less importance than other factors", and his consequent rejection of nationalisation as a panacea for all our woes—a rejection which brought him much non-socialist acclaim and must have won many non-doctrinaire recruits for the new non-doctrinaire Labour Party he appeared to represent. What indeed is the point of nationalisation if one can without it direct every jelly-fish in the land by a judicious mixture of bribes, threats, arbitrary prohibitions, regulations, tax concessions, pressures and counter-pressures? His point is really a simple one: that the government is now so powerful and businessmen so wet that the former can control (or, if you please, mess up) the whole economy without owning any part of it, or certainly no part it does not already own.

Indeed he does seem to scorn not only nationalisation but also most of the other institutions and attitudes which we associate with the Labour movement. He upbraids the trade unions for becoming "increasingly unpopular" and generating "an unfavourable public image, some of which rubs off on to Labour." They should look to this, and engage public relations officers. He berates the cooperative movement for being associated with "a drab, colourless, old-fashioned mediocrity", and for betraying "a somewhat patronising and insulting attitude to the wants and expectations of the ordinary cooperative member." What is required here, it seems, is "a change of attitude." He deplores the complacent parsimony of the Left:

"The trade unions, the cooperative movement, the nationalised industries, local government and the Labour party itself have all been gravely weakened by the twin beliefs that all jobs can be done by laymen and amateurs, and hence that no need arises to pay adequate salaries to attract scarce expert talent—whether in top management, public relations, economics, research staff or what. We should not confuse egalitarianism with anti-professionalism; but the constant harping on managerial rewards, understandable as it

is [and so it should be, to an old harper like himself], encourages us to do so."

He does not spare State education: "In some overcrowded secondary modern schools, where the staff changes frequently, children are scarcely being educated at all. Moreover, there is no free choice"—nor does he advocate any. The behaviour of some Labour-controlled councils is to him "the subject of anxious study." The whole public sector falls under his lash—schools, hospitals, roads, mental homes, universities, housing. Whatever the State does it does badly, he admits; wherever it interferes the results have normally been unfortunate.

MANY OF US WOULD AGREE with some or all of these strictures. We accordingly place ourselves at some distance from the Labour Party, which seems to us to stand precisely for what is here criticised. Mr Crosland seems to see no necessary connection between the Labour Party and what he deplores. He does not see all these advantages, as we do, as part of the very essence and purpose of the Labour movement, the inevitable fruits of its thoughts and actions, the price of its achievements. No, they are to him regrettable but dispensable adjuncts, inessentials, the result of "attitudes" now to be changed, part of an "image" no longer appropriate and accordingly to be discarded like a used paper handkerchief. Like so many other socialists, less intelligent and more extreme, he is compelled to say that his sort of socialism too is not what exists, here or anywhere else (save perhaps in a Sweden seen through rose-tinted spectacles), but something quite different and much better. What is and what should be are not connected in his mind.

A LIKE FAILURE TO CONNECT is evident in his oft-expressed admiration for the United States of America, for instance, and for Marks & Spencer. He is more than fair in noting what is good about these two great free enterprises. He even notes, without any apparent consciousness of irony, that the distribution of wealth in America is (allegedly but quite possibly) notably more equal than in Britain (and this surely, I must add, largely by the operation of free market forces, for nothing like the down-levelling measures which he advocates was in his day known there). What he does not note is that both America and Marks & Spencer are run on principles which are quite alien to his own, and that their virtues in consequence cannot simply be filched from them and screwed on to politics and undertakings conducted on lines harshly inimical to those virtues. He praises generously, but does not seem to reflect on or profit by it. He wants in many ways to get nearer to America; but, like the rolling

English drunkard trying to get to John O'Groats, he is travelling eastwards to his destination, unlikely therefore to arrive.

ABOUT NATIONALISATION ITSELF his mind is similarly equivocal and ambiguous. He reviews its past without enthusiasm:

"Some of the anticipated advantages did not materialise: while certain unexpected disadvantages emerged.

Control over the nationalised public boards, moreover, is difficult to exercise. "We now understand rather better that monopoly, even where it is public, has definite drawbacks." (Others might say "*especially*" rather than "*even* where it is public": for a public monopoly is far more durable than a private one, protected as it normally is by statute and government interference from all change and competition.) Crosland deplored the restriction of free choice of goods and suppliers, and had second thoughts about largeness of scale: "Before the War it was treated as axiomatic that... large-scale production, especially when conducted in large-size firms and plants, results in maximum efficiency. Today we are not so sure—at least beyond a certain size." (He later had third thoughts, commending the merger-mania of the Wilson government.) He pointed to the dangers of over-centralisation, and quoted with approval the doubts of some Left-wingers: "We cannot disguise the fact that the public corporations have not, so far, provided everything which socialists expected from nationalised industries." "The continuous proliferation of State monopolies" would be in Crosland's view "economically irresponsible." It would be bad for exports and the balance of payments: in other words we cannot afford to play the fool while foreigners are still in their right mind!

Yet nationalisation, thus firmly shown the door, soon comes clambering back in modified, but not less alarming, form through the window. It is now to be "supple, flexible and relevant... to achieve certain definite socialist ends." Vast funds would accrue to the state from that deep and fierce taxation—i.e. from the ruin of many independent businesses. These funds would be used "generally to increase the area of public ownership" and to "extend public investment *in any direction*" (my italics). Public boards would be set up to manage these funds and operations, at once "independent of the Government in their day-to-day operations" (a phrase we have heard before) and yet responsive to legitimate Government requests, for instance, "to play a consciously stabilising role in the [stock] market."

Outright nationalisation itself was by no means ruled out by Crosland. The insurance industry, for instance, should be nationalised, in order to

promote a more "venturesome" investment policy and to ensure that its first duty is no longer to its policy holders—tough luck on them! Indeed by 1974 Mr Crosland had inconspicuously become a thoroughgoing nationaliser again. Encouraged by various illusory or temporary "successes" in the public sector, he proclaims that "public ownership... can now be used more freely", with land, oil, privately rented housing, and "parts" of the construction industry at the top of his shopping list. Nationalisation is also favoured where it is necessary to force a firm to "spend more money, or spend it differently": "it should be a constant pre-occupation of government to bully backward industries into spending more on research, investment and the developing of new products." Old-style monopoly nationalisation would not normally be necessary: "the object could usually be attained by selective or competitive public enterprise", by which the nationalisation of one or more individual firms "would be expected, by the force of example and competition, to galvanise the whole industry into raising its standards of research, efficiency and innovation."

EVEN FROM Anthony Crosland's own gloomy reflections on our institutions, we might have derived some inkling of the resultant shambles. "A dogged resistance to change", he wrote in 1960, "now blankets every segment of our national life. . . . Our Parliament and civil service . . . are in fact in need of drastic modernisation." Why, then, should these bodies, outmoded and inefficient as he thinks them, be thought fit to supervise or carry through "the galvanising of whole industries"? Has any part of private industry, without grave penalty, displayed such incompetence in the control and expenditure of funds as recently have Parliament and the Civil Service? When these have sponsored "research and innovation", such as Concorde and arguably the advanced gas-cooled reactor, has not the resultant waste been not merely scandalous, but even gravely damaging to the nation's prosperity? And again, when have Government bodies intervened to "stabilise" anything without destabilising everything? What indeed are these boards of Crosland's but a proliferation of organised projectors and speculators, the more irresponsible for playing about with other people's money not their own, a wild bevy of Leylands, Ryders and Crown Agents, all floundering about out of their depth?

We may do well to look more closely also at the principle of "selective competition." These competing state firms will trade with a bounty. They will presumably have at their disposal the full contents of the taxpayer's purse (I was about to say

"bottomless purse", but that cliché now rings false). For when, if failure looks imminent, has the state ever neglected to rally to the aid of its own children? This is to say that the private firms with which the state firms compete will themselves have to finance in part, directly or indirectly, their own competitors. If the state firms compete successfully, their private competitors will lose their markets. If they compete unsuccessfully, the burdens on their successful private competitors will be by taxation increased. In either case, the prospect before private competitors looks less like any sort of galvanisation than ruin, swift or slow. They will then have "failed the nation." As such, they too will become candidates, more or less willing, at least resigned to their fate, for nationalisation or public aid and "participation."

CROSLAND HIMSELF mercilessly ridiculed the Labour Party's frivolous and ever-changing nationalisation proposals, which do indeed recall the indecision of a muddle-headed housewife in a supermarket and also, as he said, constitute a damaging, if vague, threat to the whole of private industry.

"Thus sugar and cement were in the programme in 1950, but not in 1955 or 1959. Chemicals were on the list in 1955, but not in 1950 or 1959; while insurance, meat-wholesaling, machine tools, mining machinery, aircraft and heavy electrical engineering have all made transient appearances at different times."

There was also the threat to "the 600 largest companies." Very well, but what comfort could private industry derive from Crosland's own approach, a bludgeon in both hands, taxation in this one, subsidised competition in that, the first ready to fall everywhere, the second anywhere, "in any direction", setting in train a process which (unlike any one of Labour's ridiculous but relatively precise proposals taken by itself) has no limit or term till the whole economy has fallen by design or accident into the hands of the ever-swelling state?

He himself in his Costa Rica lecture declared that "a mixed economy is essential to social democracy" and that "complete state collectivism is without question incompatible with liberty and democracy." A private sector is as essential to a mixed economy as milk is to white coffee. How long then can how much of the private sector survive if existing Croslandite trends are maintained? Not long, perhaps, and not much; and we may add that, if complete state collectivism is incompatible with liberty and democracy, then partial or preponderant state collectivism must be gravely dangerous to liberty and democracy. He loved them both, but put them both in mortal peril.

HAVE I GREATLY OVERSTATED the case? Had he lived, Tony Crosland could have argued so, or indeed he could have rowed back and back until in the end his proposals were more in line with the "mixed-up variegated pattern of ownership" which he thought essential to "guarantee personal liberty and the fragmentation of power" and which he continuously, and I am sure sincerely, favoured.

Bitterly do I regret that he is not with us to do one or other of these things, did he think fit to do so. It would not seem to me even seemly thus to argue with a recently dead man (least of all in these columns which he so often graced) from whom I personally received nothing but courtesy and kindness and whom I shall always remember with pleasure and respect, were it not for the importance of the issues involved (which he could hardly deny) and were it not for his own well-remembered joy in controversy, which he always conducted as he vainly advised his Labour colleagues to do, without rancour, malice, or hatred, without personal bias or intrigue, with self-control, in a tone "temperate and even comradely."

On the other hand, our national experience over the past 14 years, in which so much has gone ill in ways which should have puzzled and disturbed Crosland, does not suggest the case to be overstated; and, if it is not, then Crosland may be seen as offering willy-nilly not so much *alternative* ends to those of the extreme Left as an alternative route to the *same* ends. He repeatedly (and I am sure rightly) scoffs at Marx's prediction of the inevitable crisis and collapse of capitalism, due to its own inner contradictions. Indeed, there is nothing obvious and incorrigible in capitalism itself to make such disasters inevitable. No, it is Crosland and his like who seem to me to render them likely by supplying external contradictions, from outside; they are thus anti-Marxists yoked to Marx's chariot, Marxists *malgré eux*.

He himself described the revisionism he urged as destroying

"the simplicity, the certainty and the unquestioning conviction that come from having clear-cut crusading objectives to fight for and a hated, easily identified enemy to fight against. It makes everything complicated and ambiguous. . . ."

His road to socialism is in exactly these ways less simple and certain than that of the Left, more complicated and ambiguous, less obviously hostile to liberty and prosperity, the more insidious and ingratiating, thus all the harder to resist. It does not present itself as "a hated, easily identified enemy to fight against." Indeed, many non-socialists have surveyed it with a certain bemused and hesitant goodwill, thinking it perhaps more friend than foe, as truly it contains elements of both.

HOW COULD SUCH non-socialists fail to be reassured by a man who calls not only for higher exports and old-age pensions but also for

“more open-air cafés, brighter and gayer streets at night, later closing hours for public houses, more local repertory theatres, better and more hospitable hoteliers and restaurateurs, brighter and cleaner eating houses, more riverside cafés, more pleasure-gardens on the Battersea model, more murals and pictures in public places, better designs for furniture and pottery and women’s clothes, statues in the centre of new housing estates, better-designed street-lamps and telephone kiosks,¹² and so on *ad infinitum*. . . .”

What an enlivening prospect: Paris rather than Moscow, more Toulouse-Lautrec than socialist

¹² Were the present kiosks designed, incidentally, by Lutyens? If so, have we better designers than he?

realism! Yet Crosland characteristically ignores the role of private means in ensuring the survival, *ambience* and prosperity of many of these charming amenities. That riverside restaurant which we can afford to go to once in a while, on special occasions, is in fact kept going by those who can afford to eat out there often and well: no rich, alas, no restaurant.

Tony Crosland’s typical neglect may in part explain the fearful contrast between the enlivening prospects he offers and the shabby, decaying slum, the haunted house, in which we have been condemned (as I argue) by his egalitarian fervour to live. All around us we see frustration, failure, hopelessness, the very soil in which alone can thrive (apart from punk rock, and whatever *that* rough beast may portend) those sour and mad fanatics whom he detested so much, whom he aimed to out-flank and thwart, and for whom he has unwittingly paved the way.

They flee from me that sometime did me seek

At this moment in time
the chicks that went for me
in a big way
are opting out;
as of now, it’s an all-change situation.

The scenario was once,
for me, 100% better.
Kissing her was viable
in a nude or semi-nude situation.
It was *How’s about it, baby?*,
her embraces were relevant
and life-enhancing.

I was not hallucinating.
But with regard to that one
my permissiveness
has landed me in a forsaking situation.
The affair is no longer on-going.
She can, as of now, explore new parameters—
How’s about it? indeed!
I feel emotionally underprivileged.
What a bitch!
(and that’s meaningful!).

Gavin Ewart