

How Political Correctness can be Defeated

Great is truth, and mighty above all things.

Book of Esdras

*I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death
your right to say it.*

attributed to Voltaire

There is nothing inevitable about the ascendancy of the ideology of political correctness, and indeed there are already chinks in its armour. The main one, mentioned before, is that political correctness has now become almost politically incorrect itself—few will defend it in principle, even though they will fight for it in practice. This unpopularity of political correctness more than anything represents a state of denial, with people not wanting to accept the way their thought processes have been moulded.

As mentioned in chapter 9, the sheer inconsistencies of political correctness, and its conflict with factual correctness, are leading more and more respectable US commentators to turn their guns on it.

Political correctness, as I mentioned in chapter 4, is essentially the product of a powerful but decadent civilisation which feels secure enough to forego reasoning for emoting, and to subjugate truth to goodness. However, the terrorist attacks of September 11th 2001, and those that followed in Bali, Madrid and Beslan, have led to a sense of vulnerability that have made people far more hard-headed about the real benefits and drawbacks of Western civilisation.

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In the Netherlands, where multiculturalism has descended into mosque and church burnings, government ministers now admit they 'were naïve' and there is such a backlash that Dutch children are now being taught Dutch history again (previously ditched for being too Dutch-centric). In Britain, and much of the rest of Europe, multiculturalism is taking a severe battering because of the threat it poses to social cohesion, putting its politically correct defenders on the defensive.

In the US, the fear of Islamic terrorism is one of the factors that led to the rightwards political shift that resulted in the Bush re-election in 2004, which is openly challenging many of the nostrums of political correctness.

Although most mainstream media, such as the *New York Times* and CBS, remain unable to break free of political correctness, the new media from talk radio to the internet have broken the media monopoly, allowing the spreading of subversive politically incorrect thoughts. Many blogs specialise in debunking political correctness.

Hollywood, once unable to rise above turning political correctness into pleasing images, has now started broadening its philosophical view. Cult films, such as *South Park*, have long poked fun at political correctness, but now major Hollywood films are sending out unprecedented politically incorrect messages. *Spiderman II* was an allegory on how, if you are sure of your own virtue and you have power, you have a right and a duty to use it, an extraordinarily un-PC (and very neo-conservative) message. *The Incredibles* was an extended critique of the intolerant egalitarianism of PC, which is the enemy of excellence, and a challenge to people to do the best they can without blaming others for their failings.

In Britain, people are rediscovering their country's extraordinary history, and learning that there is far more to be proud than guilty about. These little rain-swept isles off the west coast of the European peninsula have given an utterly disproportionate amount to the world, including

parliamentary democracy, industrialisation and football. Finally, the British are shrugging off politically correct guilt, with even the British Empire being popularly reassessed as not such a bad thing.

But these cracks in the PC edifice could soon close up again. What can be done to ensure the retreat of PC is not just a temporary aberration in the first few years of the twenty-first century? Just as PC embedded itself in the very fabric of the nation by creating armies of NGOs, pressure groups, laws and international treaties to make it almost invulnerable, is there anything that can be done to ensure that PC stays at bay?

In Britain, free speech could be protected with an equivalent of the first amendment in the US Constitution. The state should not try to censor or criminalise any speech unless it is a direct incitement to violence and there is a likelihood that violence will occur as a result. Likewise, democracy can be protected by a law that prohibits the party in government from curbing the activities and membership of other legal democratic political parties.

The oligarchy of political correctors can be curbed by the introduction of direct democracy, such as the citizen's initiatives so popular in the US. Within any legislative area, a binding referendum should be called on any proposal if supported by a certain percentage of the population, so long as the proposal doesn't infringe the basic liberties of individuals, and is fiscally neutral (otherwise people always support tax-cutting measures).

Such citizen's initiatives directly return power to the people, protecting them from being steam-rolled by an elite in hock to political correctness, for example on issues such as the right to defend yourself against intruders in the home, or curbing mass immigration. They provoke far greater political participation by citizens, and in the US have tended to support politically incorrect initiatives

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(such as curbing the rights of illegal immigrants to welfare) which no mainstream party dared touch.

Such citizens' initiatives are likely to prove very popular and create a far more motivated, less passive and less easily patronised citizenry. Once practiced for a few years, it would be very difficult for a future politically correct government to unravel it, for fear of voter retribution.

Just as PC promoted itself by promoting groups that upheld its values—such as left-wing charities—so unPC groups should also be promoted, representing the interest of ordinary citizens. The interests of taxpayers—and the cause of low taxes—should be presented by a taxpayers' alliance (there is a new, small, and very ineffective one in the UK; there is a far more successful model in the US, which offers financial services, etc.). The interests of homeowners should be represented by a Homeowners Association, offering services to its members and campaigning on the issues that affect them, from council tax to law and order.

The emotional roots of PC must also be challenged. PC is founded on western guilt and self-loathing, which can be countered by more objective teaching of history and western values. Foundations can be set up to preserve and promote Western heritage and values.

To some extent, the rise of the eastern powers, China and India, will ensure in coming decades that western guilt will shrivel: finally having equal powers to compare ourselves too, the West will no longer feel inclined to indulge in self-loathing, but will seek to reaffirm its sense of identity.

To gaze into a crystal ball is to get things wrong, but there is a fair chance that, in the long-run of history, political correctness will be seen as an aberration in Western thought. The product of the uniquely unchallenged position of the West and its unrivalled affluence, the comparative decline of the West compared to the East is likely to spell the demise of political correctness. Finally,

THE RETREAT OF REASON

Western minds may be free again to reason rather than just emote, to pursue objective truth rather than subjective virtue.