



Australian Adam Smith Club (Melbourne)

President: Michael Warby, Editor: Regina Bron, P.O. Box 950, Hawthorn, 3122

The press, like fire, is an excellent servant, but a terrible master
J. Fenimore Cooper, 1838

Tim Blair

on

Old Media is Left, New Media is Right. How the Internet is Reviving Conservatism and Liberalism

The Adam Smith Club will host a dinner meeting on Thursday the 14th of March 2002, at Nikitas Greek Tavern, 258 Swan Street, Richmond.

Tim Blair is a former editor of Truth newspaper, a former senior editor of Time, and ex-chief of staff at The Daily Telegraph. He is currently a freelance opinion writer for The Age, the Australian, the Australian Financial Review, and is editor of the Australia edition of Sports Illustrated -- but mostly writes for his own free website, <http://timblair.blogspot.com>.

While traditional media is declining in influence and circulation, journalism on the Internet is becoming ever more popular and powerful, and not just because the Net is more immediate, cheaper, and more personal. A key to the Internet's rise as a communications power is that it allows conservative, libertarian and classical liberal voices a space so long denied in the mainstream press.

The largest Internet forums are dominated by the right. The most popular personal commentary websites are all right-wing. Attempts to produce left-'liberal' online journals -- staffed with journalists from the print mainstream -- have been embarrassing failures.

What lessons can readers and journalists draw from the online rise of the right? Why has the influence of the left in traditional media not transferred to the Internet? Who are some of the major players? What effect is the right's power online having on politics and elections? And can anyone figure out how to make some damn money out of this?

Attendance is open to both members and non-members. Those desiring to attend should complete the attached slip and return it to the Club no later than Tuesday the 12th of March 2002. Tickets will not be sent. Those attending should arrive at 6.30pm for dinner at 7.00pm. The cost is \$35.00 per head for members and \$40.00 per head for non-members (PTO for explanation of arrangements).

**Enquiries to Ms Regina Bron, tel 9859 8277 (AH)
or Dr Tom Jellinek, tel 9706 7400 (BH)**



detach and return

The Secretary,
Australian Adam Smith Club (Melbourne),
PO Box 950, Hawthorn, Victoria 3122.

Please reserve place(s) at \$35.00 dollars per member andplace(s) at \$40.00 per non-member for the March 14th meeting of the Australian Adam Smith Club. I enclose the amount of \$..... in payment for the same.

NAME (please print):

ADDRESS:

.....

SIGNATURE: TEL:

LAISSEZ FAIRE ON THE WEB

This newsletter has a new address on the web: <http://www.economic-justice.org/asmith.htm>. The Institute for Economic Justice has been created by David Sharp a former president (and current committee member) and Timothy Warner the current Treasurer of the Club. As stated on the web site, "The Institute has been founded to assist those who have been subject to economic injustice, and to increase both public and professional awareness of remedies available under the Law."

FALL OF THE CASTLE?

Four centuries ago leading English jurist Sir Edward Coke (pronounced Cook) is quoted as saying, "The house of everyone is to him as his castle and fortress, as well for his defence against injury and violence as for his repose." Two centuries later British Prime Minister William Pitt said, "The poorest man in his cottage bids defiance to all the forces of the Crown. It may be frail, its roof may shake, the wind may blow through it, the storm may enter, the rain may enter but the king of England cannot enter - all his forces dare not cross the threshold of the ruined tenement."

They, and the innumerable others who in the past fought to establish it as a cardinal principle of Anglo-Saxon law that a man's home was his castle could be forgiven, if today they were to return, for thinking that their struggles have largely been in vain.

Once, the right to uninvited entry into an individual's home in Australia was

only available in the most stringent of circumstances and then typically subject to first successfully obtaining a judicial warrant. Serious penalties both civil and criminal awaited one who wilfully or ignorantly breached such prohibition.

Today a bewildering array of officials and government-sanctioned persons in a bewildering array of circumstances have a right often routinely to enter uninvited into a person's home, even without prior warning and if necessary with recourse to force. In areas as diverse as welfare, public utilities, local government, animal rights, fire protection or whatever various individuals have a right of entry.

Ironically uninvited entry to members of the police continued until recently to be largely denied. However in recent years, often by use of the analogy of war; the war on drugs, the war on terror and so forth this barrier has also been brought down.

It has been announced in W.A. that

the fortification of homes is to be prohibited. Ostensibly the measure is aimed at bikie gangs which have been proliferating in recent years and have been responsible for perpetrating some particularly nasty and violent acts sometimes culminating in pitched battles. As so confined and directed the measure seems fine, even laudable. But such measures are rarely, if ever, kept confined. Every home will be subject to scrutiny to see if it is being fortified, however that may be defined. Yet as Lord Coke observed four centuries ago the very purpose of a home is to provide security for its inhabitants. The distinction between offensive measures such as the setting of man traps capable of killing or maiming, and defensive such as steel doors and barricaded windows is readily drawn. The individual homeowner's right to pursue the latter should not readily be interfered with. *DBS*

A TAX IS A TAX IS A TAX

The Victorian Government has recently introduced Operator Licensing for all powered craft in Victorian Waters. The measure was to 'improve the safety' of our water ways. There are two levels of license a General license and a license for jet skis and other Personal Water Craft (PWC). The system, operated by VICROADS consists of a short multiple guess quiz (costing \$20) and then the granting of a permanent license with a \$20 per annum renewal fee. The PWC license has more questions about whether you should ride a jet ski through bathers.

The real fun has started now that the professional users of the sea have been told that the holding of Coxswains Certificates, International Proficiency Certificates and Master Mariners Certificates are all inadequate demonstrations of the holders' capacities. The Victorian authorities have finally admitted that a twenty question multiple choice quiz may not

equate with a Master Mariners exam but they have stated that you must still apply for the license and pay the annual fee. Why? Ahhh - because it is necessary to pay for boating facilities.

The license was to raise levels of public safety and the money raised was meant to deliver facilities and training to improve safety. The immediate upshot of the license has been (1) Surf Life Saving clubs had to restrict or cancel operations whilst members passed the quiz, those under 18 now being ineligible for the license needed to operate the Surf Boats in the required fashion (2) The License fund has been pilfered to pay for air ambulances for Central Victoria (where there are a large number of marginal seats), because - they may be useful in a future marine emergency.

Trust me - I'm from the Government and I'm here to help you. *TW*

VENUE ARRANGEMENTS

In order to control costs the Club is attempting a number of new formats for our meetings. Drink is not included in the price but can be purchased at the venue. BYO wine only. A function room has been reserved for the dinner meeting. We hope these arrangements do not cause inconvenience and we welcome your feedback.

The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian Adam Smith Club.