

This time, British really go ape

by Mark Burdman

In one of his recent prison writings, "On the Subject of God" (in *Fidelio*, Spring 1993), *EIR* founder Lyndon LaRouche took aim at Prof. Richard Dawkins, a lecturer in zoology at Oxford University who had made a speech in Britain on April 15, 1992, in which he characterized belief in God as a disorder of the brain analogous to a transmittable "computer virus." Dawkins declared then: "These are arbitrary, hereditary beliefs which people are told at a critical age, passed on from your parents rather like a virus." He claimed that "evolutionary theory" had removed any scientific basis for arguing the existence of God, and that people who believe in a God Who is responsible for the order and beauty of the universe are "stupid."

In the course of his devastating refutation of Dawkins, LaRouche wrote that the Oxford professor was exhibiting a "form of scientific incompetence, commonplace among academicians," and was acting like a typical member of the species of "putatively educated illiterates." LaRouche denounced Dawkins as "a hoaxster," and asserted, that were Dawkins consistent, "the whole of history, including the history of teaching biology at Oxford University, must appear to him as not a product of human behavior, as much as a virus-like infection of the collective mind by some potency."

Almost one year later, Dawkins seems more determined than ever to prove that his activity is "not human," and that, in fact, he does not regard himself as a member of the distinct species *homo sapiens* at all. The Oxford professor has now emerged as a chief scientific-philosophical spokesman for an initiative, launched in Britain, and unfortunately not a joke, to grant "equal rights" to apes, based on the premise that humans and apes are essentially equal, that "we are apes," and that it is a matter of "double standards" to have a specific morality for humans different from that for apes.

This is the substance of a "Declaration on Great Apes," authored by "The Great Ape Project," the latter also being the title of a book-length compilation of writings on the subject. The declaration begins with the statement: "We demand the extension of the community of equals to include all great apes: human beings, chimpanzees, gorillas and orangutans." One of the authors involved in this work, Dutch anthropolo-

gist Barbara Noske, defines the aim of all this activity as "deconstructing anthropocentrism."

Revenge on Declaration of Independence

This "Great Ape Project" was formally launched in London on the afternoon of June 14. The project was first heralded in the London *Times* on June 7, with an article by Princeton University Professor Alan Ryan entitled, "Do Great Apes Have Rights?" He noted that a "distinguished group of academics" had composed a document, modeled on the U.S. Declaration of Independence, and premised on the idea that "apes should be treated as our equals." Aside from Dawkins, this "distinguished group" includes Peter Singer, leading "animal liberation" and "animal rights" theorist and activist; Paola Cavalieri, an Italian "animal rights" fanatic; and Britain's famous chimpanzee observer Jane Goodall.

Although Ryan ultimately expressed disagreement with the "distinguished academics," he treated their activity with an almost awed reverence. He wrote:

"Americans are mildly embarrassed to discover that when the American colonies declared their independence from Great Britain, their ringing assertion that 'all men are created equal' didn't mean quite what it says. Black men were apparently created to become slaves; Native American men were created to be chased off their traditional hunting grounds, and women of all races and colors were created to be domestic helpers, and not, God forbid, to take an active part in politics, religion, or science.

"Now that we recognize racism and sexism for the evils they are, ought we to be embarrassed by speciesism? Having at last accepted that when we say 'all men are created equal,' we mean that *all* human beings have the right to be treated with respect . . . ought we to extend that respect to our nearest relations, the great apes?"

Ryan reported that *The Great Ape Project* "begins with a rousing Declaration on Great Apes modeled on the American Declaration of Independence. The great apes are to be incorporated into the community of moral equals, and that means that they must have the minimum protections that we demand for ourselves. They ought not to be killed except in self-defense, they ought not to be incarcerated except where they are a threat to others, and they ought not to be subjected to pain . . . nor, more contentiously, where hurting them might provide some benefit to human beings. . . .

"It was for many years debated whether Negroes, Hottentots, and Australian aborigines were really of the same race as ourselves. We are now ready to ask whether great apes are kin for legal and moral purposes. Perhaps after the passage of enough time, we shall move further, and extend our sympathies to mammalian life in general."

Obviously, all this is obscene, in a typically British way. It is a British insult to the American Declaration of Independence, which is premised on the concept of man being made

in the image of God the Creator and deriving certain "inalienable rights" from that *unique* quality of *imago Dei*. It may be more than coincidental, that Dawkins, Singer, et al. have chosen to go public with this lunacy precisely at the moment that associates of LaRouche in the United States, led by Rev. James Bevel, have launched an initiative for July 2-4 for citizens across the United States and around the world to "co-sign" the 1776 Declaration, as an act of commitment to the *imago Dei* principle and its application in methods and forms of government. In his "On the Subject of God" article, LaRouche had concluded with the confident forecast that "the *imago viva Dei* acting within men and women" would soon be unleashed, and that its power would overwhelm the Richard Dawkinses of this world.

On British bestiality

Otherwise obscene to African-Americans and other victims of the system of slavery, is the likening of the treatment of apes to the way black slaves were treated in former times.

It is a classically British tactic, at a time when their policies, as we see in Bosnia and other parts of the globe, are reducing human beings to the conditions and status of beasts, to propound the line that there is really no difference, after all, between men and beasts. That philosophy, that men and

beasts are ultimately not different, underlies *all* British liberal philosophy of the past few centuries, whether it be the philosophy of Thomas Hobbes, or John Locke, or—in a more extreme form—Jeremy Bentham (who was notorious for obscenely cavorting with apes) or Bertrand Russell, but is now being carried to its most extreme, logical conclusion. It ultimately derives from the fact that significant portions of the British elites *act like wild animals*, and are inclined to unleash bestiality whenever their baser instincts are not neutralized by stronger powers outside themselves—as, for example, was the case with those American revolutionaries responsible for the original Declaration of Independence who militarily defeated the British in North America.

It is, it should be stressed, an insult to the poor apes, who are after all not involved in this British operation except as tools, to enlist them in such a campaign. It could probably be proven, that most apes operate on a higher moral plane than Professor Dawkins and his cohorts.

'We seldom realize that we are apes'

Following Ryan's London *Times* piece, Dawkins's contribution was published in the British magazine *New Scientist*. The same magazine, some weeks earlier, had launched a hysterical, Luddite diatribe against the American Strategic



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The title of Dawkins's piece was, "Meet My Cousin, The Chimpanzee." "Most people take it for granted that humans are more important than apes. But this assumption has more to do with double standards than biology," it read.

Dawkins raved against "the automatic, unthinking nature of the speciesist double standard. To many people, it is simply self-evident, without any discussion, that humans are entitled to special treatment." He calls this a function of the "discontinuous mind," which believes that a "human" is "an absolute concept," differentiated from the concept "apes." From this, he claimed, "flows much evil." Evolutionary theory, by contrast, denies this "discontinuous" factor, arguing that there must be "intermediates" in between human and apes, and that in fact, "we seldom realize that we are apes. . . . There is no natural category that includes chimpanzees, gorillas and orangutans but excludes humans." The category "apes," if it excludes humans, is "artificial," according to Dawkins, since humans are "in the thick of the ape cluster."

Should a single "intermediate" survivor ever be found by archaeologists, Dawkins exclaimed, "our precious system of norms and ethics would come crashing about our ears. The boundaries with which we segregate our world would be all shot to pieces. Racism would blur with speciesism in obdurate and vicious confusion. Apartheid, for those that believe in it, would assume a new, and perhaps a more urgent, import."

He later moaned: "The melancholy fact is that, at present, society's moral attitudes rest almost entirely on the discontinuous, speciesist imperative."

Dawkins then "went ape": "And what if somebody succeeded in breeding a chimpanzee/human hybrid? I can assert, without fear of contradiction, that the news would be earth-shattering. Bishops would bleat, lawyers would gloat in anticipation, conservative politicians would thunder, socialists wouldn't know where to put their barricades. The scientist that achieved the feat would be drummed out of politically correct common rooms; denounced in pulpit and gutter press; condemned, perhaps, by an ayatollah's *fatwah*. Politics would never be the same again, nor would theology, sociology, psychology, or most branches of philosophy. The world that would be so shaken, by such an incidental event as a hybridization, is a speciesist world indeed, dominated by the discontinuous mind. . . . Ethical principles that are based upon accidental caprice should not be regarded as though they are cast in stone."

This diatribe was immediately followed by a second article with further madness on "The Great Apes Project," including speculation on how apes might be represented in legal courts to protect their "rights"; denunciations of attempts to draw a "moral boundary" between humans and apes as "indefensible"; the declaration that humans are "best classified as a third species of chimpanzee"; and so on.

British anticipate John Major's demise

by Mark Burdman

On June 10, the well-informed "Inside File" column of the London *Independent* newspaper reported that British Prime Minister John Major remains firmly opposed to western military involvement in ex-Yugoslavia because he is convinced that it would be "electorally suicidal" to pursue such a policy.

The irony of British politics, however, is that it is precisely the cowardice and absence of leadership displayed by Major toward the slaughter in Bosnia, which has contributed to making him the least popular prime minister since polls began to be taken in the late 1930s (the era of Munich appeaser Neville Chamberlain). Major's support ratings are in the 15-25% range. While such popularity polls have no authority in themselves, they do reflect a growing mood among elite "opinion makers" that Major's time is about up.

Not that there is a popular groundswell in Britain for intervention in Bosnia. Rather, the venality evidenced by Major, a function of his support for the bankrupt and impotent United Nations "global system," has become a symbol for the rottenness pervading all aspects of his incompetent government.

Et tu, Norman?

By mid-June, the most frequent form of speculation in the British press, in the corridors of power, and in London's influential eating clubs, has been not if John Major will step down from power, but when.

In a vindictive June 9 speech in the House of Commons, Major's former Chancellor of the Exchequer Norman Lamont declared that the Major government was "in office, but not in power," and was completely obsessed with "short-termism," rather than with making policy. The recently sacked Lamont charged that Major had manipulated British interest rates for venal political ends, and warned that unless the government's approach were to change, it "will not survive and will not deserve to."

The June 10 London *Times* ran a banner front-page headline, "Lamont's Bitter Revenge Puts Major's Survival in Doubt." Under the title, "Brutus's Dagger Runs Deep," a *Times* political commentary that day likened Lamont to "a Brutus embracing his leader and then plunging in the dagger. . . . Evoking shades of honorable men, Lamont left little