

ROBERT HENDERSON VERSUS TONY BLAIR: AN ABUSE OF PRIME MINISTERIAL POWER

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 **Libertarian
Alliance**

FOR LIFE, LIBERTY AND PROPERTY

ROBERT HENDERSON VERSUS TONY BLAIR: AN ABUSE OF PRIME MINISTERIAL POWER

SEAN GABB

The story that I have to tell is condensed from over a thousand pages of photocopied letters, articles and transcripts, plus many hours of tape recording. At times, it seems to resemble a baroque church, as the significance of a particular line of correspondence becomes hard to find and relate to the whole. However, I will do my best to simplify the story without doing harm to its essentials.

Briefly stated, what I hold in one drawer of a filing cabinet is an indictment of Tony Blair as damning and well-established as any of the claims made against Bill Clinton. The evidence clearly shows that Mr Blair has the moral outlook of a Mafia godfather. He has used the police and the security services to harass his personal enemies. For the same purpose, he has obtained the help of his friends in the media. If any future biographer were to need an example with which to show Mr Blair's full turpitude and unfitness for office, he would find none better than the case of Robert Henderson.

Let me explain.

THE WISDEN AFFAIR

Mr Henderson is a political writer whose work has been published over the years in a number of journals and magazines. Until the mid-1990s, his strong interest in cricket drew him to write occasionally for *Wisden Cricket Monthly*. His last article for that magazine was published in July 1995, and is a development of his views on the bad performance in recent years of the England Cricket Team. He believes that one reason for this has been the mingling of foreign with native players. However talented these former may be as individuals, Mr Henderson argues, they lack the shared commitment to their side on which success in team games like cricket depends. He explains:

The common experience of mixed groups makes it immensely difficult to accept that a changing room comprised of say six Englishmen, two West Indians, two Southern Africans and a New Zealander is going to develop the same camaraderie as eleven unequivocal Englishmen.¹

There are two things to be said about this argument. First, it is not an argument about race. Mr Henderson's cricket eleven is supposed to be bad not because it contains two black men, but because it contains five people who are not English, three of whom are almost certainly white. Second, whatever its validity, the argument seems to have been largely accepted by other writers on cricket — including David Frith, the Editor of *Wisden Cricket Monthly*,² and Matthew Engel, who edits the associated

Wisden Cricketers' Almanack and also writes a column for *The Guardian*.³

The article should have gone as unremarked outside cricketing as had all the other similar comments on that theme. But it was a bad time of year for other news, and the media had nothing better to do than take notice of the article and puff it into an immense "anti-racist" witch hunt. Mr Henderson found himself in the middle of a publicity storm as ferocious as it was unexpected. Without any sign of having read his article, journalists and public figures lined up to denounce him for having denied the patriotism of black and brown English players. Tens of thousands of words in the newspapers and hours on the wireless were given to the attack. It became a safe and easy way of showing one's own "anti-racist" credentials while throwing doubt on those of somebody else. Eventually, two black cricketers mentioned in the article — Devon Malcolm and Philip DeFreitas — sued *Wisden Cricketing Monthly* for libel. On legal advice, their cases were settled out of court. The affair had become something more suited to an anthropological journal than the history of a great nation.

Mr Henderson had to face this storm all alone. Smeared as a "racist" and a bigot, he was systematically denied a right of reply to any of the attacks on him. The press allowed him no reply at all. An interview that he gave to the BBC was edited into a parody of his views.⁴ *The Telegraph* newspapers showed the cowardice and hypocrisy usual of them when faced with an issue that the politically correct classes take seriously. They joined in the attack — even publishing obvious clues to Mr Henderson's address⁵ — and refused to print an unedited letter of reply from him.

Perhaps most shameful, he was abandoned by *Wisden Cricketing Monthly*. Mr Frith refused to let him reply to the five pages of hostile criticism that was carried in the following issue. Indeed, Mr Henderson was banned from all future issues. On the 14th July 1995, Mr Frith wrote to him thus:

... [I]n view of the furore (an understatement) which has followed publication of your article in our July edition, I have been told by the management of *Wisden* that I should not accept anything further from you. I hardly need telling, for the past fortnight has been probably the most difficult of my life.

A few months later, ending the libel suits, Mr Frith had his lawyer stand up in court and dissociate himself "entirely" from Mr Henderson's views.⁶ He seemed to have

forgotten his earlier endorsement of these views, and his own inflammatory retitling of the article from its original and more sober “Racism and National Identity”.⁷ His later account of the affair is an exercise in self-pity, filled with obvious untruths and with possible libels on Mr Henderson.⁸

ENTER THE POLITICIANS

If this had happened to me, I am likely to have brooded a few months on the unfairness of the media, and then to have moved on to other issues. Mr Henderson, however, is not the sort of man who regards unfairness as an unavoidable cost of trying to think clearly. Unable to afford the costs of a libel action, he spent the rest of 1995 taking *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Sunday Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, and *Wisden Cricketing Monthly* to the Press Complaints Commission. He also complained about the BBC to the Broadcasting Standards Commission. Needless to say, these complaints came to nothing. The purpose of complaints bodies is not to investigate complaints, but to provide sinecures for the Establishment and a vague feeling for the rest of us that the system really is fair.

Next, Mr Henderson approached Frank Dobson, his local Member of Parliament. He complained about the behaviour of the media, and asked for an intervention on his behalf. Mr Dobson replied with a vague promise, and did his best to avoid Mr Henderson thereafter — even to the extent of missing one of his regular surgeries. How the media had behaved was an issue of public importance. Raising the matter for discussion in the House of Commons was part of Mr Dobson’s duty as an elected representative. In his 1997 General Election literature, he was to boast about how

[o]ver the past 17 years I’ve tried my best to represent our area in Parliament — to try to make sure it’s a cleaner, healthier, safer, fairer and more prosperous place.

If the Trades Descriptions Act applied to politics, of course, half the House of Commons would long since have been locked away.

Mr Henderson had already received an unsolicited letter from the black Labour politician Diane Abbott. On the 3rd August 1995, she wrote to him complaining about “Is It in the Blood?”. He had, she told him, shown “no appreciation of acceptable terminology or mores”. She added:

As an ex-journalist, and someone who still dabbles, I believe that we have a duty to write on subjects we know about.

Bearing in mind Miss Abbott’s later objection to the employment of “blue-eyed blonde” nurses from Finland to look after coloured patients in her East London constituency, this was a surprising letter. It also implicitly showed a contempt for freedom of speech. But it probably made her feel good. Her letter was the private equivalent of the exorcism only just diminishing in the media. Mr Henderson sent a cutting response.⁹

At last, on the 4th March 1996, having got nowhere with the relevant complaints procedures and with his own

elected representative, Mr Henderson wrote his first letter to Tony Blair. He explained his case, asking Mr Blair to use whatever influence he might have with Mr Dobson, his colleague in the Shadow Cabinet, to take up an obvious case of media corruption. He ended his letter with the words:

You have made a great thing of moral behaviour in politics, Mr Blair. If that means anything you will help me to obtain a fair hearing, both in terms of natural justice and common equity. If you fail to do this, we shall know exactly what a Blair government will be, one based on the primitive idea that justice is for one’s political friends and injustice for one’s political enemies.

Mr Blair made no reply to this letter. Mr Henderson wrote again on the 19th March 1996. This letter received a four line reply from one of Mr Blair’s secretaries. So Mr Henderson wrote again. One of the great myths of British life is that we have an open and democratic political system. Our leaders are supposed to be drawn from the elected membership of the House of Commons, and every Member of the House is supposed to be accountable to his constituents and — on matters of national importance — to the whole people. The reality, of course, is that senior politicians are as inaccessible to the general public as if they were the functionaries of an absolute monarchy. An impression of accountability is given with the connivance of the media. But anyone who tries approaching a politician except through the media is bound to hit a rubber wall of secretaries and public relations officers. That has been my experience over the past year with William Hague. Before then, it was Mr Henderson’s experience with Tony Blair.

Undeterred, however, Mr Henderson continued to write to Mr Blair. He wrote to him at the House of Commons. When no proper response was made, he wrote to him at home. When letters of reply to these came from the same House of Commons secretary, he wrote to Mrs Blair at her work address in Gray’s Inn. He suggested that her husband was a hypocrite who said one thing in public and acted otherwise in private. One of his letters closed:

Your husband, Miss Booth, is a weak egoist who will behave both incompetently and viciously should he become PM. In particular, he lacks courage, and that is always a fatal lack in the long run.¹⁰

Still, there was no response. Frank Dobson had refused to do his duty as an elected representative. Mr and Mrs Blair were unwilling to intervene with him in spite of their public statements about openness and the nobility of public service.

In all, Mr Henderson wrote thirteen letters to the Blairs between March 1996 and February 1997. I have these letters in front of me as I write. They come to a total of 3,430 words. They show a rising irritation, as Mr Henderson realises that nothing he can do will bring a proper response. They contain flashes of contempt, as he dwells on the gulf separating public image from private reality. In my view, they labour a point that should have been obvious after the first three or four letters — that senior politicians do not like communicating with ordinary

people. Even so, there was nothing disreputable or threatening in his letters. He had every right to send them. I have written many more words to William Hague during this past year, and have said equally hurtful things to and about him. It is our right to insult our leaders if they will not serve us as they ought, and their duty to put up with our insults if they cannot bring themselves to do as they ought.

ENTER THE POLICE

But this was not the opinion of Mr and Mrs Blair. On the 13th March 1997, the Police were summoned to Mr Blair's office at the Palace of Westminster. According to the Crime Report made by the visiting officers, he complained about "an irritant like Henderson" who "holds extreme right wing views". He asked that, something should be done to stop Mr Henderson from disturbing his repose.¹¹

The Police considered bringing charges of Common Assault and of offences committed under the Malicious Communications and Race Relations Acts. For this purpose, they took the letters away for examination by the Crown Prosecution Service. A conference was held by the lawyers at the Horseferry Road Magistrates Court Section. It was decided that the letters "fell short" of any criminal offence. This is not surprising: England has not yet sunk to the level of Singapore. However, Mr Blair was advised that the "sheer volume" of continued letters might be enough to justify some criminal prosecution in the future.¹² The Crime Report concludes:

In summary, the allegation of Malicious Communication is 'NO CRIME', however the security of the ... [ellipsis in the released version of the Crime Report] has been put in the hands of the right people. There is no action to take at present by officers from Belgravia.

No crime had been committed. Nevertheless, action might be taken in the future, and "the right people" had been put on the case.

RE-ENTER THE MEDIA

The first Mr Henderson heard of these proceedings was on the 25th March 1997. On that day *The Mirror* newspaper (subheading: "Loyal to Labour, Loyal to You") carried on its front page the headline "Cops probe Blair pest". It followed this with "Exclusive: Fears over race hate mail, see page 7". The main story, "Pest targets Blairs", begins:

Police are probing a string of race hate letters to Tony and Cherie Blair. ... Insiders described them as 'personal and offensive'.

And they feared the letter writer could even become a stalker.

The article alleged that the letters had been arriving "at the rate of three or four a week". According to "insiders", they were "full of graphic racist filth", claiming that Mr Blair "would let in all the blacks and Asians" if elected. One "insider" added:

'MPs often get insulting or threatening mail which go in the bin.

'But this is different. It has become a campaign, a bombardment. The writer displays tendencies associated with stalkers.

'This writer is unusually persistent. The tone of the letters has become increasingly nasty.

'He uses sewer language. The letters are racially insulting.'

The article ends with the reassurance that the matter has been referred to Special Branch, which is a part of the Metropolitan Police, but to all intents and purposes, an arm of the British Security Services. Presumably, these are who the Crime Report calls "the right people".

In the first place, the article is clearly libellous. Mr Henderson did not write dozens of letters to the Blairs. Nor were they filled with "graphic racist filth". In particular, the "quote" that Mr Blair "would let in all the blacks and Asians" is a fabrication. I know this because I have seen all of the letters he sent. And I know that I have seen all the letters he sent. Nothing has been held back from me, because the Crown Prosecution Service always prosecutes where racial abuse is involved. The fact that there was not even a further investigation must be taken as settling any questions on this point.

In the second place, we can also be reasonably sure that no one at *The Mirror* had seen the letters. In October 1997, Piers Morgan, who edits *The Mirror*, admitted that he had not seen any of them. This indicates that there were no copies on file at the newspaper. Moreover, neither the author of the article, Jeff Edwards, nor anyone else at *The Mirror* has been willing to substantiate the story. The only sources mentioned by Mr Morgan are an unidentified police informant and some equally unidentified Labour "insiders".¹³

In the third place, the article is a very crude but effective smear. During the past few generations, journalists in the English-speaking world have been perfecting a style of subliminal propaganda that Dr Goebbels would have admired. Without actually telling lies, or taking sides in ways that can be clearly seen, journalists have learned how to frame and balance their sentences so that more is carried than is openly said. Like Addison, the father of modern journalism, is said to have done, they

Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer.

This form of propaganda reaches its heights in news magazines like *Time* and *The Economist*, where a victim can be brought down with scarcely an openly hostile word. The *Mirror* article is not in this league, but does quite well. Notice, for example, the repeated use of the word "stalker". There was a moral panic in the media about these at the time, and the politicians were bidding against each other to show who could produce the most terrible punishments.

Then there is the demonisation of Mr Henderson's letters. We are told that they were "posted in London", that they were signed, that they were "taken away for forensic

tests". The aim is to make something deeply sinister out of a dozen letters written by an aggrieved member of the public to a Member of Parliament. They become objects for criminal investigation, rather like explosives or obscene letters. Why signed letters which carry the writer's full name and address should need forensic examination — especially at a time of strained police budgets — is a mystery to me. But it makes for good yellow journalism.

As for Mr Henderson, he is described as an "ex-public schoolboy". Associations of madness, treason, homosexuality, class privilege, and much more, cluster round these words, which add nothing in themselves to the writing of the letters. And there is a large photograph of Mr Henderson above the article. He is casually dressed and looking startled. This is not surprising, bearing in mind that the *Mirror* photographers had almost mugged him on his doorstep the day before, taking reel after reel of pictures with a flash camera.

The story was also carried in Scotland. *The Daily Record*, which is a Scottish version of *The Mirror*, carried a much shorter piece on the 25th March 1997. This repeats the suggestions about stalking and the talk of forensic examinations, but takes the unusual approach of concentrating on Mrs Blair. Titled "Hate mail shock for Cherie", it describes how "[d]etectives were shown a bundle of 100 letters". It ends on an uncharacteristically generous note:

Cherie is thought to have declined to turn the matter into a criminal case.

Sadly, it is an untrue note. It was the Crown Prosecution Service that had decided the matter was not worth taking up.

ENTER THE BUREAUCRATS AND THE SECRET STATE

Ever since then, Mr Henderson has been working patiently away to expose the enormity of what was done to him. He has gone through all the motions of complaining to the Metropolitan Police, the Press Complaints Commission, and other bodies. At every stage, he has met a wall of bureaucratic obstruction. The Metropolitan Police, for example, refused to record a complaint against *The Mirror* about its use of a police informant, or to look for that informant — who is guilty of at least one criminal offence. When approached with a request to intervene, the Police Complaints Authority replied that it was unable to act unless a complaint had first been recorded.

Nevertheless, by sheer persistence and an understanding of how public bodies work, Mr Henderson has extracted dozens of admissions that clearly show how Mr Blair attempted to silence an embarrassing critic. Going through file after file of correspondence, I am impressed by Mr Henderson's achievement. It is like watching a wooden ship sail into the wind.

Others also have been impressed. We have seen how the security services were involved in March 1997. They have remained involved. Mr Henderson's post has been opened. His telephone has been tapped. He knows this latter because of the classic signs of interception: clicks and buzzing on the line, the occasional double ringing on

the telephone after he has finished a call. He knows this former because Frank Dobson virtually admitted the interference with post.¹⁴

AN OPEN PRESS IN AN OPEN SOCIETY!

But the media and politicians have taken no notice. Over the past few years, Mr Henderson has approached the following individuals and organisations:

- All current Tory MPs (164)
- Each Cabinet Minister
- Two dozen Labour "rebels"
- Paddy Ashdown
- The Leaders of every minority Commons Party
- Martin Bell
- Several dozen ex MPs
- A dozen cross-bench Lords
- The Speaker
- The Director of Public Prosecutions
- The Metropolitan Police Commissioner
- The Head of Special Branch
- Each Law Lord
- The Crown Prosecution Service
- The Metropolitan Police
- The Metropolitan Police Committee
- The Interception of Communications Tribunal
- The Security Service Tribunal
- All National Newspapers
- The Press Complaints Commission
- The BBC — ITN — Channel 4
- John Birt (BBC Director General)
- Each BBC governor
- The Broadcasting Complaints Commission
- Justice
- Liberty
- The Freedom Association
- Charter 88

All have failed to get involved. Admittedly, trying to get organisations like Liberty and *The Daily Telegraph* to investigate an Establishment abuse of power is about as much good as asking the Gestapo to investigate allegations of anti-semitism in the Nazi Party. As for writing to Conservative MPs on such issues, that is — with one or two possible exceptions — a waste of postage stamps. A more spineless and dispirited rabble never took up space in the Commons. But there ought to have been someone in that list willing to look into the matter. That there was no one at all says everything we could wish to know about the country in which we live.

As ought to be apparent, Mr Henderson is not helpless. He has accumulated a solid case. Any journalist who wanted one could find a fully documented scandal in Mr Henderson's archive. So far, only three people have taken the matter up. There is Derek Turner, who edits a magazine called *Right Now!* There is Paul Anderton, who edits *The Individual*, the journal of the Society for Individual Freedom. And there is me. And there is the Libertarian Alliance, which will be issuing a printed version of this article together with a news release. None of us is a "real" journalist. But each of us, in his own way, is trying

to drag the matter into the public arena for discussion. Sooner or later, it will get there.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CASE

Though he insists that he cannot be placed within the conventional spectrum, Mr Henderson is plainly a man of the "right". He is concerned about things like tradition, national identity, and even race and racial politics. His writings show that he is not a "racist" in the senses alleged against him after the *Wisden* article. But neither is he the sort of person likely to appeal to many of the readers of this article. Libertarianism is to some extent a *species* of the "liberal" *genus* that Mr Henderson so despises.¹⁵

But whatever his views, they are irrelevant to the matter in hand. Mr Henderson is able to prove, with a mass of evidence, that the Prime Minister of this country has behaved in ways that range from the cowardly to the corrupt. For nearly a year, Mr Blair refused an entirely reasonable request to reprimand Mr Dobson for failing in his duty as a constituency MP. In doing so, he revealed himself as a hypocrite. Then, as soon as the 1997 general election was called, he used the fact that he was certain to be the next Prime Minister to set the authorities on to Mr Henderson. As a lawyer himself and the husband of a senior lawyer, he ought to have known that no crime had been committed, and that any prosecution would be vexatious. Now, as Prime Minister, he has allowed a continued persecution by the security services.

This is political corruption. It is an abuse of power.

So what? it may be asked. In the past two years, Mr Blair has already been revealed as a vain, cowardly, fundamentally stupid traitor. He has surrendered in Ulster to the terrorists of the IRA, and is cynically releasing armed murderers onto the streets there. He has broken up the United Kingdom. He is preparing to break up England into bite size chunks for the European Union to digest within the next decade. He has comprehensively disgraced our foreign policy by endorsing the bombing of an aspirin factory in Sudan, and by ordering British servicemen to take part in war crimes against the Iraqi people. He is a religious bigot who has just had a man sacked from public office for daring to believe in reincarnation. What more do we need to know about the man who rules us?

The answer is that the Henderson case is all Mr Blair's own work. His larger policies derive from the fact that he must toady to Brussels and Washington and a cloud of special interest groups, and is not bright enough to balance the conflicting pressures. Anyone in his position might lack the principles or strength of character to fall into the same errors. But the persecution of Robert Henderson is not something required of him. He is doing it simply because he thinks he can get away with it.

And there are wider implications. I have said that politicians do not like to have to communicate with ordinary people. Following the precedent laid down by Mr Blair, I imagine that all the others will now start setting the Police on their more determined tormenters. Mr Henderson sent fewer than 4,000 words to the Blairs. I have sent over 10,000 to Mr Hague in the past year, and am planning to

send many more. How convenient for him if, instead of having his Correspondence Secretary send me another five line reply, he could run sobbing to Scotland Yard and have me done for "stalking".

THE GREG PALAST CASE: AN EXAMPLE FROM THE "LEFT"

Indeed, the precedent has already been taken up. Look at the case of Greg Palast, the left wing American journalist. Last year, he revealed the "cash for access" scandal — where senior policy advisers in the Prime Minister's office were selling access to and influence with people in authority. This caused huge embarrassment in Downing Street. Last autumn, while covering the Labour Party Conference in Blackpool, Mr Palast was accused of having broken into the bedroom of a Mrs Margaret Payne, who is a Labour Councillor and who wishes to become a Labour MP. *The Mirror* published a front page attack on him, accusing him of "stalking" Mrs Payne. No criminal complaint was made against him to the Lancashire Police, but his Conference Pass was withdrawn.

Parts of this case remain obscure, but Mr Palast is unshakable in his claim that it is an attempt to get even with him for his earlier revelations. He is supported in this claim by Christina Odone, a former Editor of *The Catholic Herald*, and now Deputy Editor of *The New Statesman*. She says:

He maintains that it is not a coincidence that this should happen when he was single-handedly fighting against Labour's control freakery and cronyism. He definitely feels himself to be the victim, not the Pest.¹⁶

We are not looking here at a single lapse, but at a new way of dealing with criticism. It has been used against Mr Henderson. It has been used against Mr Palast. Who next?

Do you write to politicians? Do you send them letters about things that you feel are of public importance, or send them photocopied articles? Are your views unfashionable or opposed by wealthy and powerful vested interests? If the answer is yes, watch out. In the wonderful "New Britain" that New Labour is building for us, our democratic rights extend as far as acclaiming the right set of politicians every four or five years — and no further. Any attempt by "little people" at interfering in affairs of state will be punished with increasing severity.

Once this article has been published, I accept that I shall have my bins gone through by Special Branch and my telephone calls actively monitored. I am used to this. I have been under state surveillance on and off for years. But I do feel rather nervous. I may have been born into a free country. But I know that I now live in a police state.

Readers interested in discovering another opinion on this matter should read "The Third Way of Justice" published in the latest edition of *The Individual*.

Mr Henderson can be contacted via the Internet: philip@anywhere.demon.co.uk

NOTES

1. Robert Henderson, "Is It in the Blood?", *Wisden Cricket Monthly*, London, July 1995, pp. 9-10.
2. Extract from a letter dated the 30th March 1993, David Frith, *Editor of Wisden Cricket Monthly*, to Robert Henderson:

Let me just assure you that I was one of the earliest to feel a sense of unease as the number of 'foreign' players piling into the England XI. It's hard to separate oneself from the personal side of it all. I know them all — even the reclusive Caddick — and like them almost without exception. But the principle seems wrong, and I think there has been some sort of dislocation in the public psyche. How can a true Englishman ever see this as his representative national side, despite all the chat about the commitment of the migrant?
3. In the 1995 *Wisden Cricketers' Almanack*, Mr Engel wrote:

It cannot be irrelevant that to England's long-term failures that so many of their recent Test players were either born overseas and/or spent their formative years as citizens of other countries. In the heat of Test cricket, there is a difference between a cohesive team with a common goal, and a coalition of individuals whose major ambitions are for themselves. ... There is a vast difference between wanting to play Test cricket and wanting to play for England. (Quoted by Mr Henderson, "Is It in the Blood?")
4. On the 21st May 1995, Mr Henderson was interviewed for BBC Radio Five by Caj Sohal. Asked what for him constituted an unequivocal Englishman, he answered:

I take the Matthew Parris line on this. Matthew says that part of being an Englishman is being white. Now I think that's reasonable, not just from my own experience, but it seems to me that you don't get someone taking on the whole of a new culture when they come to a country. That doesn't of course mean that they cannot be British and of course if they are representing Britain there may not be the same problem that you've got if they are representing England. But if they are representing England they've got to feel that there isn't something which spurns them, which thrusts them out from society, which I am absolutely certain that the majority of blacks and Asians do feel. I can sympathise with them because any minority anywhere is going to feel under stress.

This was edited down to:

... [P]art of being an Englishman is being white. Now I think that's reasonable, not just from my own experience, but it seems to me you don't get someone taking on the whole of a new culture when they come to a country.
5. See, for example, Scyld Berry, "Fresh Chance to keep up appearances", *The Sunday Telegraph*, London 9th July 1995.
6. John Ezard, "Malcolm accepts damages over slur", *The Guardian*, London, 17th October 1995.

See also Mr Frith quoted in "Wisden editor apologises for race article", *The Guardian*, London, 8th July 1995:

I tried all along to make it clear that I did not support the majority of the sentiments expressed by Mr Henderson.
7. Extract from a letter dated the 15th May 1995, David Frith, *Editor of Wisden Cricket Monthly*, to Robert Henderson:

I'm going to try to get Racism and National Identity (I'll think up a more racy title, if you'll excuse the pun) into our next (July) issue, though its length terrifies me.
8. See David Frith's autobiography, *Caught England, Bowled Australia: A Cricket Slave's Complex Story*, Eva Press, London, 1997.
9. Extract from a letter dated the 13th August 1995, Robert Henderson to Diane Abbott MP:

The age of liberal internationalism is drawing to a close, perhaps in five years, perhaps in ten. Nothing anyone does will prevent this process. What we have is the choice between a benign nationalism and authoritarian government, probably fascism. If we are to save ourselves from fascism all races must begin to talk honestly. That is what I am trying to achieve, the honest discussion of Race. (Do not think, incidentally, that Britain can live in a cocoon shielded from the racial events on the continent, particularly in Germany — within ten years Germany will be displaying all her old racial arrogance. You are, I presume, aware that *de facto* black and Asian British citizens already cannot travel freely throughout the EU.)
10. Extract from a letter dated the 27th January 1997, Robert Henderson to Miss Cherie Booth — this being the name under which Mrs Blair continues to practise as a lawyer.
11. Mr Henderson used section 21 of the Data Protection Act 1984 to compel the Metropolitan Police to release the computer files relating to the complaint. In a letter dated the 30th January 1998, R. G. Farley, a Data Protection Officer working at Scotland Yard, confirmed as follows:

The phrases 'holds extreme right wing views' and 'an irritant like Henderson' have been established, through enquiries with the reporting officer, as being the opinions of the complainant.

For obvious reasons, the "complainant" must be Mr Blair. The Police can only respond to complaints by alleged victims of crime. Therefore, it must have been one of the Blairs. It is unlikely to have been Mrs Blair, as she would have received the Police in her chambers, not at the House of Commons.

To settle any reasonable doubts, it is worth reproducing the whole Crime Report as released to Mr Henderson under the Data Protection Act:

Following entered by DC

This allegation relates to a series of letters received at the Palace of Westminster. On 13th March a request was received from ... that police should attend the Palace of Westminster to discuss letters received on that date.

DS ... attended and met ... and ... who handed over a quantity of letters received by the office from the suspect, Mr Henderson. He is a part time journalist who regularly writes to left wing MPs, and who holds extreme right wing views.

The letters were examined and taken to the CPS, where a consultation took place with ... all lawyers from the Horseferry Road Magistrates Court Section.

It was felt that the letters fell short of an offence under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, or the Race Relations Act. At that stage the allegation was in fact 'NO CRIME'.

Advice was given should the letters continue, that the sheer volume of them may constitute a nuisance.

... did not wish, with an election campaign looming, to start collecting evidence from an irritant like Henderson was advised re civil remedies, especially an injunction, against Henderson.

In view of the personalities involved, DS ... attended Islington Police Station and spoke to DCI ... and DI ... Their details were passed to ... staff, who were advised to deal with them in the future, as ... home address was on their division, and it was that venue that they were most concerned about.

DCI ... is believed to have appointed Inspector ... to liaise with the ... re security.

In summary, the allegation of Malicious Communication is 'NO CRIME', however the security of the ... has been put in the hands of the right people. There is no further action to take at present by officers from Belgravia.

12. Mr Henderson has attempted to discover exactly what letters the Police and Crown Prosecution Service were shown by the Blairs, but both the police and CPS refuse to answer the question. It is conceivable that the Blairs exaggerated the number and content of the letters. Certainly to claim that thirteen short letters sent over nearly a year constituted a massive volume is distinctly strange.
13. Admitted in a letter dated the 16th October 1997 from Piers Morgan, Editor of *The Mirror*, to Christopher Hayes of the Press Complaints Commission. This letter contains the following gem:

Far from ignoring any of [Mr Henderson's] correspondence we have written to him on the 20 May, 22 July and 6 August. We have consistently made it clear that we have no intention of entering into any further correspondence with him.

Who says that newspaper editors have no sense of humour?

14. In a meeting with Mr Henderson on the 18th July 1997, Mr Dobson enthusiastically endorsed the idea of state surveillance for people who "threatened" the Prime Minister. When told that this admission had been recorded, he wrote his longest single letter to Mr Henderson. In this letter, dated the 6th August 1997, he "clarified" his admission thus:

When you complained that your post was being interfered with, I said that was what the security services should do with people who are alleged to have threatened the Prime Minister.

Though in the taped meeting, Mr Dobson spent much of the time shouting and banging on a table, he had received

enough information from Mr Henderson to know that the only threat posed to the Prime Minister involved his reputation.

15. Let Mr Henderson speak for himself. In a recent e-mail, he explained his views as follows:

What am I? I am not Tory, Liberal nor good red Socialist. I support the nation state because I believe it to be the most efficient way of delivering the means to democracy. I also see it as the political entity best designed to fit Man's natural tribal inclinations. But I abhor aggressive nationalism. I am neither free trader nor protectionist. My instincts are libertarian (I eschew the word liberal because it has been hijacked and perverted by authoritarian bigots), but I am acutely conscious of the constraints which social behaviour puts on individual freedom. I see no contradiction between supporting supposedly incompatible political ideas, for example both a strong welfare state and a fully fledged voucher system for state education. I feel a strong sympathy with the Levellers and Chartists. You tell me what species of political animal I am?

16. Quoted from "It's all a smear says 'sex pest' reporter", *The Evening Standard*, London, 29th September 1998. See also a "Street of Shame" item in *Private Eye* on the 16th October 1998:

At last, on 11 October, the *Observer* ran a brief editorial defending Greg Palast, author of the 'cash for access' scoop about Labour lobbyists, against a grotesque front cover smear in the *Daily Mirror*.

During the Labour party conference the *Mirror* alleged that Palast had behaved like a 'sex pest' towards Margaret Payne, an unsuccessful candidate in Labour's NEC elections. Labour party officials, who hate Palast for his damaging 'cash for access' allegations during the summer, helped the *Mirror* with its smear.

The *Observer's* investigative reporter Jonathan Calvert conducted a full-scale investigation into the *Mirror* smear, exposing the whole story as a tissue of lies and inventions.

Mr Calvert's article was not published. This country under Labour is becoming more and more like the plot of some *film noir*.