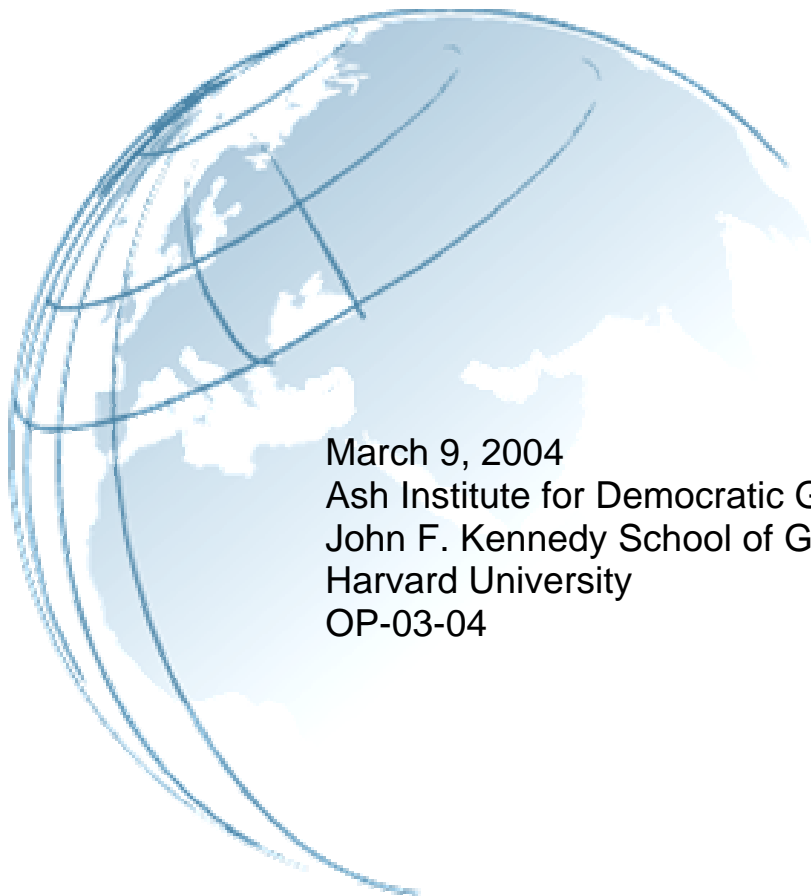


# Renewing Democracy Public Address: Why Government Must Reinvest in Civic Renewal

by

**David Blunkett**



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**JOE NYE:** Good evening. I'm Joe Nye, and it's my pleasure to welcome you this evening, and to welcome the Right Honorable David Blunkett to the Kennedy School. Mr. Blunkett's visit has been made possible by the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation, and we're very delighted to have Roy and Lila Ash here with us tonight in the front row.

In his role as home secretary, David Blunkett is one of Britain's best known and most influential politicians. He became Britain's chief law enforcement official just months before the September 11 attacks focused attention on terrorism and its relationship to crime, civil rights, and immigration. A self-described social democrat, he is nonetheless won praise from some conservative commentators for his tough antiterrorism measures. Before becoming Home Secretary, Mr. Blunkett served as Secretary of the State for Education and Employment from '97 to 2001. And one of his colleagues, Peter Mendelsohn (?), a fellow member of Parliament remarked about him, David Blunkett is one of those politicians who will instinctively understand the world's have-notes. Mr. Blunkett has summed up his commitment to the poor with a question: The test is, do I enable those who are at the bottom end of all the indices to better their lives?

He entered electoral politics, winning the election to the Sheffield city council at age 22, and rose to national prominence by becoming the city council leader 11 years later. He was elected a member of parliament in 1987. In 2001, he published *Politics and Progress: Renewing Democracy and Civil Society*, which reflected his evolution as a political thinker. Arguing that today's challenges cannot be met by state-centric systems of the past, he wrote that, in his words, "The long-term challenge is not finding better ways to provide for people, but creating the best ways to invest in people." His ideas offer a blueprint for a new democratic politics that emphasizes individual empowerment and active citizenship in local communities. Please join me in welcoming the Right Honorable David Blunkett to the Kennedy School.

**DAVID BLUNKETT:** Well, Dean, ladies and gentlemen, firstly, my thanks for inviting me to share in the celebration of the Ash Institute. And I'm very pleased indeed that Roy and Lila and their family are there this evening, and I consider it a great honor. I'm also very pleased to be in Boston. I understood yesterday when we arrived why so many of the founding fathers had died when they reached these shores. It was the snow blizzard and the cold that obviously did it.

My own family were brought up near to Boston. My father spent his early years there. It was just a different Boston. It was Boston, Lincolnshire, from which it derives its name. And of course, we've taken your police chief-- Well, just across the border from here in Cambridge, we've taken the police chief, Paul Evans (?), to be the head of our standards unit, to endow the police force of England and Wales with the community policing ethos that he developed in Boston. And we'd like to apologize, but say we're very grateful for the transfer. The theme this evening is, does government matter? And I shall be brief, because firstly, I put a longer version in hard print and on the Web, if people are interested; secondly because I understand the traditions quite rightly in this, the forum, is that people should raise questions and engage in debate, so let me give time for it.

Well, self-evidently, I wouldn't be in politics, and I wouldn't have been keen to get into government if I didn't believe it mattered. But what sort of government, and how does it relate,

and how can it make a difference? And therefore, how can it matter to people who are switched off from political debate, often from current affairs, often cynical and encouraged to be cynical about what politics and democracy can offer.

When I was a student at the University of Sheffield many moons ago, and I studied political theory and institutions, my old professor, now Professor Bernard Craig (?), wrote a book called *In Defense of Politics*, back in the 1960s. It was about the case for how politics was the essential oil of democracy, and how democracy was crucial to resolving conflicts, to determining prioritization, to settling differences in a way that didn't allow people or encourage people to resort to violence and to the disintegration of our society through anarchy. And I think we do need to keep reinforcing and making the case, not simply for what kind of government-- important as that is-- but that politics and government itself is a positive gain, not something to be disparaged, is an essential part of ensuring that we have a glue that holds us together as communities, as a society, as a nation, and that that glue has to be reinforced and reinvented at different times as it has in our history.

We face a situation where we try to re-engage the family with being part of the glue of the building blocks of society. We have to cope, in this ever-changing world, with a greater rapidity of change, the challenge of an ever-changing world. Economically, socially, politically, the world has never changed so quickly. The Internet, globalization, and now terrorism bring new insecurities to already insecure families and communities, insecurity that many of us here this evening would not be familiar with unless our background had equipped us to do so: insecurity of unemployment, insecurity of relationship, insecurity in terms of what appears to be a disintegration of old social values, disintegration and insecurity in terms of world politics, all of which, not necessarily overtly, but often subliminally, change people's view of the world and their willingness to reach out into the neighborhood in which they live, and into the global village, in terms of opening their hearts and minds, and being prepared to listen and respond.

How can you ask people who are grossly insecure in their own lives-- How can you call out to people who cannot walk safely down the street, and are afraid even to be in their own living room? How can you ask them to reach out to difference in terms of religion, ethnicity, or social class? How therefore do we have to put in place the basic securities-- the safety, the order, the stability-- in people's lives, including in terms of policing, and the safety of the community around them, before we can ask them to intellectualize, to understand the call that we make for tolerance, for an understanding of difference?

And I think certainly on the center/left of politics across the world, certainly in Europe, I suspect here in Harvard, people have not always understood why being liberal in one's attitudes is not somehow a contradiction to wanting to reinforce security, order, and stability in the neighborhood and the nation-state, why it is absolutely crucial that we should be interested in ensuring that people live in that ordered society if we are then to reach out for progressive governance in terms of other activity, but even more than that, to actually be able to engage people in their own solutions. To be involved in your neighborhood and community, you have to have the prerequisite of people having the space in their own lives, the confidence, the potential for leadership, to be able to do so. Family breakdown, greater mobility, community

disintegration and dysfunctionality (sic) have all contributed to the disintegration of those building blocks, and that foundation in security.

It's not simply that people in dysfunctional communities, often with a core of dysfunctional families, have a difficulty in surviving. It's that people who can get out of those communities, who have the wherewithal, the resource to move, will move. So the community that is disintegrating around them is one which potentially they're likely to leave. So the first, and absolutely crucial element of government is order and stability. The second is to try and intervene to build the capacity for communities to hold onto the capital they already have. And the capital they already have is their people. The capital they have are those with leadership skills and confidence. The capital they have are people who have a stake in the community around them.

And that stake has to be reinforced by government at every level-- in your case, federal, state, city, county, in our case from Westminster through local government and the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, Northern Ireland-- to empower people, to give them confidence, and to give them knowledge and information on which they can build. I was the Education and Employment Secretary from 1997 to 2001, in the Blair government. I reinvented the term-- because it's not new-- lifelong learning, because I believe that education was one of the absolutely essential building blocks. It is social capital at its best. We who are educated have a stake in the world around us. We who are well educated have the potential to earn, to be independent, to be self reliant, to be able not only to look after ourselves and our family, but the space to be able to contribute back to community. We have a stake in a way which allows us to identify and belong, not necessarily to old-fashioned neighborhoods, although I'm nostalgic for them, but also to identify with wider communities built through the Internet, built through social contact, built through this global society of ours, in which so many of those who are here this evening will know people not just across the United States but across the world, almost as intimately as people 100 years ago knew those two streets away from their home.

So, we need to use government to reinforce a sense of identity and belonging, but we also need to ensure that we reinforce it by recognizing what it is that gives people that stake. Pulling them together is not easy, but it is happening right across the world in our own country, in the United Kingdom. Families in Focus, in the London borough of Camden, have transformed their own society from one of crime, social disintegration, young people alienated, to one where crime has dramatically fallen by over 30%, where young people are now seen as being part of the solution, rather than feared.

In Bosull (?) Heath in Birmingham, a multiethnic community that was literally falling apart. The community itself, with the backing of the police and local government-- actually, less local government for several years, because local government feared the rise of the neighborhood and community at that time-- with the help of the police, rid themselves of the red-light district, which made it impossible for people to walk around at night without being propositioned by prostitutes, by the associated hard-drug culture which of course goes with that sort of community, with a disintegrating society, where those who had social capital in the form of ownership of housing, a bank balance, a decent education, were leaving. And just with the

handful of community leaders, with the pulling together of the faith communities, as has happened in cities across the United States, transformation has been brought about. So not only the social capital has increased. The economic capital has increased, what we call gentrification, in a non-gentrified community, where people can now sell their houses for a great deal more than they bought them, but don't want to.

I saw, in Red Hook, in New York last year, an example which of course the Ash Institute are engaged in, in terms of new forms of engaging answers to criminality and solutions within the criminal justice system, that engaged all those, involved the prosecutors-- I just had a tremendous debate in our country about the obviously revolutionary issue of whether prosecutors should be on the side of the public, and work in the community-- probation, who are so often in offices waiting for the released criminal to come for a weekly or monthly interview, instead of being out in the community, the local district judge and in our case magistrates being part of the solution within the community. All these things we're learning and sharing can make a difference. And I saw it at Grove Hall today, in terms of a community turned round, a policing policy that engaged with youth and social services in new ways. It can and must be done.

And it has to be done quickly enough to stop people wanting to separate themselves out from what they see as the problem. We are already seeing, in our country, what you have here, gated communities, shut off, albeit temporarily, from the fears of the world around them, temporarily because you have to come out of gated communities, even the most extensive ones, to work, even with the Internet, to come out and work, occasionally to socialize, to meet, visit, eat with those who are not in the gated community. It's true globally. We cannot live in a gated community. Countries cannot withdraw from the uncertainties and difficulties around us. So how to engage government nationally with governments internationally is the challenge of the first half of the 21st century.

Forget for a moment the disagreements over-- just for a moment, the disagreements over the intervention in Iraq. Think of Rwanda 10 years ago: mass genocide as the world stood by and watched it. Would we have watched such activity, such genocide, the destruction of most basic human values, the chopping off of arms of children, the disfigurement of old people, if it were taking place within our own community, or even within our own zone of influence? Well, we didn't in Europe, with your help, in Kosovo. And Britain didn't in Sierra Leone. Let us find a new form of government and governance for our communities which understands our mutuality and interdependence without being our brother or sister's keeper, and let's try and find that internationally together as well, learning the lessons, understanding the challenges, and as Tony Blair said last Friday in a major speech in relation to terrorism, being prepared to take on those challenges despite the disagreements inside and outside our countries.

So, think local, act global, seems to me to still be an apposite slogan. Local and national coming together, social capital being built, a new compact between government and governed. We examined the longitudinal survey, the child development study, which showed that those who are engaged, who have a sense of belonging, inevitably wish to have influence and are prepared to be involved in politics and in our democracy. But of course, the obverse is true as well. Those who disengage, have no influence, do not vote, are detached from community politics and democracy. And who do we as politics hear? Who do we take notice of? Who do we-- I nearly

said genuflect to. I don't think that's quite the term. Who do we respond to in presidential or general or local elections? Those who will engage, those who do vote, those who seek or already have influence, is the simple answer.

So, in regenerating community in a compact that engages people in their own solutions, in actually finding ways of new influence in the neighborhood, street level and beyond, we're also re-engaging people with those wider values of participation that changes the nature of our democracy, because we as politicians have to hear those who have disenfranchised themselves by disengagement. And here is the paradox: Isn't it true that the cynicism that's peddled about politics, democracy, and the role of government actually disempowers those who cannot distinguish most easily between the cynicism of those who do vote, who do participate, who are interested, and those who are genuinely opening up and exposing the hypocrisy of politics and politicians? In other words, the people who are in the know are the people who are the very people who so often, through the way in which they present politics and our democratic disagreements, actually disenfranchises the people who are not in the know.

And I believe if we're going to get this right, we need to reinforce our mutuality by saying one or two very simple things. Firstly, rights and responsibilities go hand in hand. If we believe that people should have a stake, then of course the response we make in order to reinforce and support them gaining that stake has to be one of expecting something from them as well. You in the United States and we in the United Kingdom have a history which correctly places enormous influence and emphasis on individual rights. We have so often, in my view, lost the issue of duty and responsibility alongside it, not some sort of medieval duty that we had at the time of Magna Carta, but a willingness to understand that we cannot detach ourselves from each other's perils, disadvantages, hopes, and aspirations. We share them.

So, we share our sovereignty as individuals. We share the potential to find solutions. We begin-- just begin-- to get government to re-engage with people in ways they can understand. We need to speak the language that people understand. Why is it that those who are ridiculed by many of us who are in the know for the way they speak to the electorate get a better response from the electorate? How do we square the circle of speaking simply, but with underpinning gravity? How do we say things in a way that people understand, without losing the gravitas? How do I, in my own position, adopt a stance which allows me as Home Secretary to be able to address the fears, the feeling of injustice, of disempowerment, of disengagement of the constituency I represent, without undermining the gravity of the position that I hold? These are the paradoxes of modern communication in a very different world.

So, how we practice our democracy, how we use the power of government to reinforce good, to provide the resources, the know-how, the information, the sharing of best practice, is in my view the challenge that faces us now. And to challenge those-- and we have it so often as you do-- who demand small or no government, but always want government to intervene in issues, actions, that they think is right. How do we avoid small government at home and big government abroad, or big government at home and disengagement abroad? How do we deal with the contradictions of those who understand very well the power of government when letting contracts, but don't seem to understand the power of government in reinforcing community? Let us take on these challenges, because they're ones for all of us, here in the US and in my own

United Kingdom, powerful challenges of stopping the disintegration of democracy, the disengagement from participation, the terrible drift away from voting in elections that in the end will disempower all of us. And how do we do so in a world more insecure, because of the threat of new forms of terror, than ever before?

That is the challenge that I hope that you continue to address through the Ash Institute, in really engagement, at local level, in community and governance, and here at Harvard, in a center of learning without parallel, using the intellect you have to engage with those who really do need the answers from those of us who have the temerity and the confidence to stand on platforms, ask for election to govern, and also have the temerity to indicate that we have the answers to some of these very difficult questions. Thank you for the opportunity this evening.

**JN:** Thank you for that inspiring message. We now have time for questions. We have two microphones to the left and the right on the floor, and two in the left and the right on the balconies. If you would like to line up behind them, I will recognize you in order. And let me ask you, when you raise a question, to please identify yourself, and preferably your relationship to the university, and also to keep your questions brief and to the point. So, let me start on the left here on the floor.

**Q:** Hello. Good evening. Thanks for being here. My name's Dawn. I study religion, health, and healing at the Divinity School. And I hope you'll forgive me for asking you about something I only vaguely know about, but feel is very important, and that is, what has been your involvement in the legislation that was proposed in Parliament requiring HIV tests for immigration? What's been the outcome? And does this set a precedent for other nations facing the same problems?

**DB:** Yes, I can deal with that very easily, and you were kind enough to indicate that you were timorous in asking the question. We do not have any legislation in relation to precluding those with HIV from entering our country, either as economic migrants, visitors, or as asylum seekers. We are examining the very real difficulty of how when someone has failed their asylum claim, or come to the end of their work permit or their visa, they should not be able to claim permanent residence on the basis of being HIV positive, on the grounds that we have the retroviral drugs and the treatment available, but in their country of origin, they may not get that standard of treatment. And that is a very difficult issue, and we're exploring that at the moment. Because if we don't explore that with a health service that is free, that isn't based on either social insurance or the demand to pay at the point of entry for the service, you'll understand that in such circumstances, we would be providing a health service for the whole of the developing world.

**Q:** Thanks for clearing that up.

**JN:** The next question is in the balcony to the center left.

**Q:** Hi. My name is Jeff Masters (?). I'm a Masters student here at the Kennedy School, and from the UK. You talk about empowering communities, but your Labor government sent sort of mixed messages on this subject. On the one hand, you devolved power to Scotland, Wales, and to London and other cities. But on the other hand, you've tried to control the people who run

those institutions. As you allude, some of the objections that have been raised in the press may have been a function of the press, and perhaps exaggerated them. But some of the disquiet was real. So my question is, you talk about empowering communities, but what do you say to someone who questions whether Labor really has the power to let go?

**DB:** I say that within our own party, within our own family, political framework, we're not going to let go. If someone's elected as the Labor leader of Scotland, or of Wales, or, now that we've invited Ken Livingston (?) back into our party, to London, that we would really expect them to be part of that family. We'll have disagreements within the family. We'll thrash out policies and ideas. But when we've determined on them, if we don't want dysfunctionality and disintegration leading to disillusionment, we'll expect those people to follow the values and the policies we've laid out. That is the only way in which a political party can hold together and provide a coherent platform on which people can not only vote but judge their actions in practice.

We are prepared to countenance, of course, disagreement in terms of those who are elected on other platforms. And were other parties to be elected singly to run Scotland, Wales, or London, then of course we'd have to live with that. We are, in Scotland, in coalition with the Liberal Democrats, so we've had to let go. We were in coalition in Wales, until the last election, with the Liberal Democrats. I'm not sure who we're in coalition with in London, because it's a real mixture of forces. But we'll know a little better after the 10th of June, when we have our elections.

So, there is a real issue of pluralism. There is a real issue of not seeking diktat (?) on every single subject area from the center. But there is also an issue of coherence and messages that people understand. Because with the communications we have in our own country-- and you'll be familiar with this-- you only have to have what looks like the most trivial disagreement for it to be built up into a major conflict within the party, a major clash, a confusion. The words these days are confusion, misunderstanding, conflict, whatever it is that creates a political story. So we tentatively walk this tightrope of being able to speak our minds, have open disagreements, and not be painted as disintegrating.

**Q:** Hi. My name is Christina Lund (?), and I work for Citi Year Boston, an AmeriCorps program that allows for full-time community service. It's a one-year program for young adults. And my question to you is, what is the potential for Britain to form a similar national service organization that allows for youth to aid in the renewal of democracy.

**DB:** I think very considerable. I wrote myself, just over 10 years ago, that I thought we should create a civil corps for all young people. I was persuaded by the younger members of my party that forcing people to do this would not be a good idea, that we didn't want a nonmilitary service, but that we should encourage, support, facilitate young people in this endeavor.

So, when I became the Education and Employment Secretary, I established something called Millennium Volunteers, which is a rough equivalent of the AmeriCorps, not as extensive, but giving young people the opportunity, as I discovered with Community Service Volunteers-- I was a trustee of that organization for 25 years in the United Kingdom-- to encourage, support

young people, firstly because it was right for them to make a contribution in supporting others, but secondly because it was liberating and critical for themselves to build the confidence, and the sense of giving and duty and responsibility that I was speaking about. And I've built that into the curriculum of the education service, the state education service in Britain with the new citizenship and democracy programs which all secondary schools, all post 11 schools in our country are now following.

And Gordon Brown (?), the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I are seeking to develop a more extensive program of mentoring and volunteering which he may say a little more about when he stands in the Parliament for our annual budget presentation in just over a week's time. And I'd better not give any of that away.

**Q:** Hello. My name is Jason Coffield (?). I'm actually a student at Boston College Law School. First of all, thank you for coming. You talked about getting people involved in politics, and getting people involved in civil society again. How do you address the issue of people choosing to be involved by voting and supporting the British National Party?

**DB:** Well, we've not banned the British National Part, which-- I think all of you will know, but I'll just reinforce-- is a neo-fascist party based on wishing to remove immigrants from our country, and stirring up racial and other hatreds and tensions. We need to take them on by firstly examining what it is that resonates in our communities from their hatred and their call for votes of such a nature. And I think I dealt with some of this earlier on, in terms of the fact that we need to hear, understand, and act on the insecurities that exist, the fear of difference arising out of a fear for one's job, for one's social position, for one's sense of identity, and instead of pandering to it, actually deal with those issues head on, provide the security and stability.

See, one of the ironies is that people-- I think my party have now very clearly got the message, although Social Democratic and Socialist parties across Europe are struggling to get the message, which is why, apart from Sweden and Germany, the United Kingdom is the only left-of-center government left in the European Union as it stands prior to the 1st of May. I'm not sure they've got it yet, because there was a tradition on the liberal left of not believing that these issues were central to our core values. That is why the Weimar Republic allowed Hitler to rise to power, or the Spanish Second Republic disintegrated in the way we know, leading to the emergence of a fascist state, which was still in power when I first entered politics as a counselor in the city of Sheffield, so not so long ago. And in dealing with those issues, and securing their confidence, to then be able to deal with, head on, the racism and prejudice, and to be able to face it down.

**JN:** The next question on the floor, the center left, is from Dr. Dorothy Zinberg (?), who is a member of our faculty.

**Q:** Thank you, Joe, and thank you, sir, for putting the challenge in such succinct terms. I have a question about your use of the word families. And the reason I bring it up is that two years ago, I was at a meeting with David Stanton (?), who was then the chief of statistics on domestic affairs in Great Britain. And the statistic he gave was that in the year 2000, 40% of all births in England were out of wedlock. Already that sounded like a very quaint term. And my question to you is, if you're going to be working on developing social capital, what is your government doing with

what is now a major shift in the structure of families? Let me just add that of that 40% of children, they were born into families where only 15% had someone living in a continuing relationship in the family.

**DB:** And that, if I might say so, is the crucial statistic. Because the issue of stability, of role model, of certainty, has such a dramatic impact on the child, on the children, their framework within which they grow, their understanding of the nature of themselves, their own immediate surroundings, and the world outside, that we need at all costs to reinforce that sense of stability and belonging for themselves. We've got a major Sure Start program, which myself and the current Culture Secretary devised when we were in opposition, and the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, was prepared to fund, which engages, from the moment a child is born, not with traditional professional intervention, but with reinforcing the forces of support within the community immediately around the family, so that we develop what I think traditionally was called the extended family, not just in terms of those with a direct relationship, but the neighbors, what we have as health visitors, the local general practitioner, the doctor, the people who are immediately around being part of the support system.

Secondly, to overcome child poverty, which has been a very big theme of our government-- We're not there by any means yet, but we've made substantial progress in terms of providing tax credits for the reinforcement of children, very substantial benefits available to those on the lowest incomes, the reinforcement of childcare so that women are able to work and earn their living and be independent, and feel that confidence that goes with it, and a challenge to men, that those who father children have a responsibility to care for those children, to stay engaged with those children not just financially, but in terms of emotion, time, and commitment, not just quality time on the telephone once a week, but to be engaged with them.

And as someone who's divorced, and who's stayed in touch with my three older boys, I can speak from some experience. Because the commitment that my former wife and I made that the benefit and the welfare of the children was more important than anything we may have fallen out about was an absolutely key commitment to their growth into young men of whom I'm very proud.

**Q:** Mr. Blunkett, my name's Andrew Lee. I'm a Ph.D. student at the Kennedy School. The past 10 years has seen the Republican party become the natural party of government in the US, while the Labor party has clearly become the natural party of government in Britain. Why do you think that is? And do you think the different ways in which the parties have handled wedge politics has anything to do with it?

**DB:** No. I think our two policies, our two political societies are very different. I'm not entirely sure-- Let me be very cautious how I answer this question. None of us are going to enter into the presidential election here. But let me just pose a hypothetical. Say the United States had not had a rule that a president could only serve two terms. Other issues apart, would the nation here have reelected Bill Clinton for a third term? I just pose it as a question. Would that therefore have changed the balance, in relation to your question, if we hadn't had Tony Blair as the leader of the Labor party from 1994. Would the Conservatives have stood a better chance? I don't think they would have won the '97 election, but would they have stood a better chance of recovering quickly to win the 2001 election? These are complex issues.

There are underpinning social changes. There are of course the balances that I described earlier: the balance between the emphasis on securing security and opening up progressive issues and progressive governance. If we get it wrong in Britain, we won't be elected for a third term. And I simply pose it from our own standpoint, not from the US's, that these are the issues we're struggling with, and this is what we're endeavoring to transmit to the left-of-center press in Britain, who are still struggling with the idea that it really does matter to secure people's confidence, in terms of what we do economically, in terms of stability, what we do in terms of policing and security and order and migration on the national issues, and what we do to secure peace and confidence and stability internationally. Because all three go hand in hand.

**Q:** My name is Rawi (?). I'm a fellow at the Shorenstein Center of the Kennedy School. You had made the point earlier that being liberal and being pro security are not contradictory. I was just wondering if the pendulum hadn't swung too far, in terms of, say, restrictions on immigration, greater surveillance powers, greater powers to law enforcement, and so on. I was wondering if, using 9/11 and subsequent event as an excuse, law enforcement and security agencies had somehow persuaded the political establishment to grant them powers which they've always wanted, but which the democratic system had resisted earlier.

**DB:** Well, I can tell you from the heart that in holding my advice surgeries (?), and in initially living in, then representing the community in which I was born, the issue of security and order has been uppermost in their minds long before the 11th of September, 2001, which is why I referred back to the Weimar Republic. Was the dithering of the left-of-center Social Democrat government not a contributing factor to allowing the rise of fascism? Was the disorder, the economic disintegration, partly responsible, created and holding responsibility by the victorious governments in 1918, responsible for the rise of fascism? Is not economic, social, and structural insecurity something that inevitably will turn people not to progressive politics, but to the very opposite? And therefore, is it not right that we should be willing to address those issues?

Of course, post 11th of September, they've been brought into stark focus. And as I was indicating when I spoke in a separate lecture last night, the balance, the proportionality, the key issue of ensuring that rights and freedoms go hand in hand with protecting ourselves from terror is absolutely crucial. But we cannot underestimate how people feel, in terms of that international, new global suicide threat, and how that equates to their greater insecurity in the community. We've, in the United Kingdom, tried to maintain that balance. We initiated a debate almost a fortnight ago in Parliament, in terms of finding longer term solutions, and challenging people to come up with solutions that are non-draconian, that actually do address the kind of fears that you're rightly and understandably raising.

But we also are trying to do so with a dramatic shift in policy on migration, because you mentioned it. We are trying to get a grip of clandestine entry whilst increasing, what, fourfold, the number of work permits the United Nations' route for asylum seekers from the regions that they come from, to be able to enter the country legitimately as refugees, and to tackle the social cohesion within our communities that allow that to take place, difficult issues in which our own press know that they can sell more newspapers-- One newspaper managed to sell 20% more copies one day when they managed to get asylum and the fall in house prices into one headline.

So, we walk this tightrope together, and we do so in our democracy by open and honest debate about the difficulties.

**Q:** My name's John Foley (?). I'm from Boston, Massachusetts, and I'm involved in a number of Irish-American organizations. In the pamphlet we have tonight which has your biography, there's also a note that Martin McGuinness (?) from Sinn Fein will be here on Friday. And the topic is, "Will Britain Ever Keep Faith?" You talk about reaching out and empowering people. In the situation in Northern Ireland, your government dissolved a freely elected governmental body. How do you justify that?

**DB:** In order to ensure that there was a long-term solution, that there wasn't immediate disintegration in terms of the governance of Northern Ireland. In such a circumstance, the ability to re-engage all parties who have a key role in making that happen, in being able to maintain their consensus, which had been with great difficulty forged, seemed to us to be the only way of proceeding. And difficult as it is, that dialogue continues, and that endeavor to put together again the executive and the assembly in circumstances where the balance within the unionist framework has shifted. And I think we all know that with that kind of delicacy, compromises are being made. Dialogue is even more difficult than it was a year ago, and we tread the path with a great deal of uncertainty. So we choose our words and we choose our actions knowing that they are not ideal, but with continuing hope that we can find our way forward.

**JN:** We have time for one more question, which is on the floor on the center left.

**Q:** My name's Callan Docty (?). I'm from Glasgow, and I'm a first year student at Harvard College. This question has to do with migration and the implementation of the citizenship test in the United Kingdom. A lot of immigrants, in Scotland anyway, do tend to live within their own communities. And I was wondering how the immigrant tests-- and what measures the national government was taking to forge social cohesion with immigration and migrants into the country? How would that build a multiethnic community?

**DB:** Dean, could I say it was the great pleasure to take the last question from the center left. It's indicated the internationalism of Harvard to hear the different accents tonight that we've had. I think it's a very, very relevant question. I'm, through the citizenship charities (?), which have existed in the United States for a very long time, are endeavoring to ensure the sense of belonging and identity is reinforced, not simply for the person seeking naturalization, but for the host community, to say to the host community, "You are born with your relatives, but you choose your friends." These people who are seeking naturalization are choosing their friends. They are committed to our country, to our community. And we should offer a major welcome.

I'm also reinforcing it, as you have done in the United States, with future programs for language and citizenship, because that's what I've done in the schools. And that's what I endeavor to do with those who didn't come through our school system and are seeking either economic or asylum refuge. It's an apposite question for a Scot, because the First Minister in Scotland and the Scottish Parliament are very keen indeed to encourage migrants to Scotland, and we've worked them on launching a program which I hope we can reinforce. Their demographic change makes

this an economic necessity, but it's also an extremely welcome social and cultural endeavor in Scotland, and reaching out.

So I think we need to be much, much clearer about integration programs that actually at local level understand the different cultures that will be emerging, and are able, through information, explanation, education, and positive programs of engagement, to get people to be part of what I call diversity with integration. We are not, in the United Kingdom, endeavoring to enforce some form of assimilation, which is the policy of some countries on the continent of Europe, within the European Union. We are endeavoring to provide diversity, but with integration, so that people do feel, know, and display that they are part of our country. And if we can get it right, then we will have an answer for the future, which I hope we can be proud of.

**JN:** Please join me in thanking David Blunkett for this wonderful inaugural speech for the Ash Institute.

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