

“The Nineteenth-Century Conservatives confront Anti-Semitism and Race”

I am just completing a study on conservative political discourse in the United Kingdom, especially in the national press, between 1832 and 1895. Its overarching theme is the secularization (or even the de-Christianization) of the idea of “conservatism” during the period. Among the issues which I am discussing in this manuscript are reactions of this specialized press towards Jews and towards non-Western races. The general Conservative attitude towards what at least in the twentieth century would come to be seen as the twin human rights abuses of anti-Semitism and racist intolerance (if not worse) towards colonial populations via imperialism, underwent a reversal of opinion during the course of the Victorian period. While the Conservative press had generally sympathized with the plight of colonial populations earlier in the period, by the end of Victoria’s reign the tone was nastier and more social Darwinistic. The exact opposite situation occurred with Jews. Earlier in the century they were treated in the conservative press (often at least) as vicious, malevolent and un-English. By the end of the century, their treatment, unusual amongst European Conservative movements, was usually expressed in the language and discourse of toleration, approbation, and, often, self-identification.

Examining first, the Jewish situation, the Conservative (or after 1846, the Protectionist) leadership in Parliament was always conflicted on the issue of emancipation. Lord Stanley, later the fourteenth earl of Derby and thrice Conservative prime minister, sometimes supported emancipation, as did more enthusiastically, Lord George Bentinck, the Protectionist leader in the House of Commons. Less enthusiastic, perhaps, but still speaking for the emancipation bill in 1847, was Disraeli himself. But the issue was controversial enough that by 1849, Lord Malmesbury, second in command of the Protectionist party in the Lords, was prepared to see it as an “open question” for the party as a whole. Such a stance probably reflected a realization on Malmesbury’s part that while the party leadership was divided on Jewish emancipation, the rank and file of the parliamentary party was to varying degrees opposed to the question. The Conservative press, however, in the three decades leading up to the qualified political emancipation of Jews in 1858 was much less conflicted than the upper leadership of the Conservative/Protectionist party. Once in a while, one might find a brief favorable reference to emancipation in the Conservative press, such as in two Disraelian-influenced periodicals, the monthly *Young England* in the 1840s or the weekly *Press* in the 1850s, but the vast preponderance of the Conservative and Protectionist press was against, sometimes violently, the lifting of Jewish disabilities.

Some of this press discourse was largely economic in character. Since the Rothschild banking family was at the forefront of the struggle to lift disabilities, there were often explicit attacks on them. Then too, an attack on Jews often fit into a ubiquitous Conservative discourse of the period which belittled economic modernity. Hence, *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, always remembering that the “Jew Ricardo” was behind the deflationary 1819 Act, which ended the halcyon days for British farmers, asserted that the Jews had no country but the counting house. And the *Morning Post* saw Jewish bullionists and jobbers behind not only the 1819 Act, but of Free Trade and the New Poor Law, which were all part of their “grand scheme to abase the value of labour

and enhance the value of money.” Other Conservative press outlets pictured Jews as both hyper-powerful in Europe and as revolutionary agents. The *Church of England Quarterly Review*, when arguing in 1846 against the lifting of parliamentary disabilities, reminded their readers that Jews had their foot on the neck of kings and cabinets throughout Europe. The king of Hanover, until 1841, the heir presumptive to the throne of the United Kingdom, in 1848, in his wide correspondence with English Tory notables, blamed the contemporary European revolutions on the Jews. As the king was close to S.L. Giffard, the editor of the daily *Standard*, that newspaper began to equate Jewry with revolution and the overthrow of dynasties. As part of their long screed against the removal of Jewish disabilities, that paper in 1849 recalled the rulers of France and Prussia who had given the Jews high places; the Austrian emperors who had given them titles of nobility; the ill-starred Pius IX who had in the Papal States made them citizens. The Revolutions, said the *Standard*, were their collective rewards. Two years later, even more emphatically, the paper bemoaned that failure of the rest of the press to fully expose the role of the Jews in 1848 and 1849. “But we see enough to trace their working. Everywhere the great apostles of infidelity have been the most active promoters of disorder.”

The chief discourse regarding Jews in the Conservative and Protectionist press, more than economic or geo-political rationales for discrimination, involved specific religious grounds. In general, with a few exceptions such as the hardly respectable weekly *Age*, which liked in the 1830s to denounce the “Christ-killing Jews,” before the mid-1840s, the religious discourse against Jewish emancipation was moderately civil. For example, *Fraser’s Magazine* was almost regretful in 1830 that the Jews were outcasts, and hence ineligible to sit in Parliament, because they had rejected the Messiah. This tone substantially changed after the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846. The Jews were identified with economic modernity and hence blamed, like the factory owners, for declining agricultural rent roles. After 1848, the Jew was often the revolutionary “other.” Then too, after the Liberal electoral victory of 1846, more or less replicated in 1852 and 1857, the issue of Jewish emancipation was progressing from the merely theoretical to the profoundly possible. Whatever, the rationales for opposing Jewish emancipation became decidedly nastier after 1846, *John Bull*, a weekly, while still insistent that it did not oppose Jews for racial reasons, but because they had rejected Christ, denied that the blaspheming Jew was fit to be entrusted with power over a Christian people. *Blackwood’s* in 1847 decided Jews would be more dangerous in parliament than their peculiar bete noire, the Roman Catholics. The *Morning Post* saw the Jews in 1849 as stark enemies of Christianity. The *Morning Herald* saw the Jew Bill in 1847 as “hateful to GOD” and favored forming a Christian party devoid of Bentinck, Disraeli, and other emancipationists. The weekly *Britannia* saw the Jew as under divine condemnation, with the Church representing the declared servants of Christ and the Jew as the declared enemy. Hence, it advised never allowing a “clique of money traffickers” into Parliament. The evangelical Tory *Record* now regarded emancipation as simply “evil.”

By 1848, with Conservatism and Protectionism a decidedly minority flavor, especially after the withdrawal of the Peelites from the party, the *Morning Post* was suggesting that the ventilation of the House must be improved if the Jews were to be allowed in! The two chief Conservative newspapers of the 1850s, the *Standard* and the

Morning Herald, were particularly unhinged when the subject of Jews was brought up. The former saw the Tory promoters of the Jew Bill as “bloated money gatherers calling themselves Conservatives,” and wanting to conserve all but the gospel. Its sister paper, the *Herald*, in 1853, denounced Jews in a leader, for their wickedness, their taking the clothes of plague victims and selling them in bazaars; their forestalling of grain; their gauging of the teeth of the dying in order to sell them in the market place. Unlike the Hindu, the Buddhist, or the Moslem, the Jew had no redeeming feature. This discourse was accompanied by a wide-spread call in Conservative press circles for the British Jews to be relocated, voluntarily or not, to Palestine.

The paradox of course is that at the very time, the late 1840s and 1850s, when the Conservative press was exhibiting perhaps the most serious dose of British anti-Semitism since the 1750s, the career of B. Disraeli as the Tory leader in the House of Commons, and in 1852 and 1858, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, was seriously flourishing! Although Disraeli, who was after all a Christian, was rarely attacked openly as a Judaizer, often a not very subtle reminder was present in this anti-Semitic press of his Jewish origins. For example, the *Weekly Mail*, amidst paeans to other Conservative leaders such as Lord Derby and Malmesbury, thought Disraeli had a “Mephistophelean, Ratsch-like look which only belongs to fiends in a melodrama and billiard-markers in the Haymarket.” So, if the Conservative press is at all indicative of wider party feeling, the Conservative party of the 1850s and beyond, having circles run about it by its Peelites, Liberal, and Radical opponents, might well have emerged from its doldrums, as did other right-wing European political groupings, as decidedly anti-Semitic. That it did not, that public anti-Semitism in the English conservatism press was practically non-existent by the 1880s and 1890s, is probably owed to the quixotic career of Benjamin Disraeli. Despite being surrounded by those Tories who were either avowedly anti-Semitic or who at least had little hesitation about making belittling comments about Jews, William Beresford, C. N. Newdigate, Lord Derby, Lord Salisbury, A.J. Beresford Hope, James Lowther, Disraeli himself, in his novels, speeches, in the biography of his chum, Lord George Bentinck, never tried to either understate, underplay, or in any way hide his background. He rather flaunted it for all it was worth before the wider Victorian public. He even developed his own, eccentric, version of a semiticized Christianity, in which, as he put it in *Tancred*, a Jewess was Queen of Heaven and where the Jews deserved emancipation not for freedom of conscience sake but because of their special relationship with Christianity. And an important component of Disraeli’s view of his people was to acknowledge, and indeed to scream if from the rooftops, that not only were Jews an ancient, honorable, and aristocratic folk but that they were also just as powerful as their detractors claimed. Disraeli, had he ever read it, which is doubtful, would have agreed perfectly with the Conservative *Church of England Quarterly Review* that Jews had their foot on the neck of kings with the control they exercised over all European cabinets. Far from disagreeing with the king of Hanover’s view that Jews bore responsibility for the 1848 revolutions, Disraeli found the Jewish elements everywhere in those years, driven by persecution perhaps into secret societies, but nonetheless potent revolutionaries. Far from questioning their power over finance or diplomacy, Disraeli gleefully exaggerated it. He went on of course to become one of the most successful prime ministers of the modern era and perhaps the most stunning memorial to Disraeli-the-Jew was the virtual absence in the Conservative media of the late nineteenth century

of any sustained or even causal anti-Semitism. This is not to suggest that after *circa* 1880 anti-Semitism disappeared or ceased to be a part of conservative British political culture. Only that the Jews ceased to be discussed in a negative way in Conservative newspapers and magazines of the late-Victorian period, despite the presence of noted anti-Semitic editors and writers in the Tory and Unionist milieu. The Conservative public sphere at least had become philo-Semitic. This philo-Semitism came out particularly in British Conservative opposition to human rights abuses against Jews in Russia and to a lesser extent in the German empire. To the Tory *London Evening News*, in 1882, Jews were a peaceful and inoffensive race and the paper pointedly wondered why Gladstone refused to speak out on the plight of Russian Jews as he had for Bulgarian Christians. *John Bull* suspected that the Blessed Virgin would be persecuted in Russia. The *St. James's Gazette* thought the Russian persecutors of Jews to be "Christian savages." The *Morning Post*, returned to the Conservative newspaper fold in the late 1870s, supported both German and Russian Jews. *The Times*, also returned to Conservatism during the Disraelian period or shortly thereafter, thought Alexander III's anti-Semitic policy the scandal of the civilized world. The *Quarterly Review* took to delivering paeans to the Jews and the *Standard* was full of denunciations of Pastor Stocker and his anti-Semitic policy in North Germany. The Tory *Whitehall Review* thanked God that Britain was not infected by the anti-Semitism of Russia, France, and Germany. *The Pall Mall Gazette*, under the editorship of Balfour's friend Harry Cust, denounced the furious and slanderous anti-Semitism within German conservatism. The *St. Stephen's Review* defended the Prince of Wales's friendship with Jews and hoped that all of humanity would rise up against his brother-in-law in Russia. The *Record* supposed Russia put humanity to shame and Alexander III was one of the cruelest rulers in history involved in "nothing less than a war of extermination" against the Jews and that they "with all their wealth, with all their power in directing the policy of the Governments of half the world, are helpless" before the cruel Czar. Even the Conservative press not particularly supportive of emigration into Britain, Jewish or otherwise, the *Morning Advertiser*, the *Globe*, the *London Evening News*, made certain to qualify their opposition to emigration with support for the suffering Russian and Polish Jews.

There were no doubt other reasons than Disraeli's icon status in right-wing circles that account for such a sea change of opinion in regards the Jewish question. In the 1880s, as William Rubenstein has emphasized, the City of London, with its prominent Jewish component, was changing from Liberal to Conservative. And the Tory support for, especially Russian Jewry, flowed to an extent from that fact. Then too, by the 1880s and 1890s, there was a substantial if not dominating Jewish presence in the Conservative press, with Levy Lawsons, Sidney Lows, and Edward Steinkopps flourishing on or owning important newspapers or magazines. Perhaps, more important than any of these factors was the wide-spread Russophobia in Conservative circles in the late nineteenth century. Put crudely, due to Russian advances in Central Asia, closer and closer to India, bashing Russians was a Conservative sport and the best whip at hand was the Czar's treatment of their Jewish subjects. One wonders too to what extent, given the change of Conservative public discourse towards Black and Brown races within the wider world in the nineteenth century, almost the mirror opposite of their relatively enlightened change of opinion regarding Jews, this philo-Semitism, possibly also reflecting the secularization and even at times de-Christianization of the Conservative

idea, might have been due to a greater tolerance for (sometimes) wealthy, intelligent, and sophisticated white people on the part of the Tory elites?

This general and gradual secularization of the Conservative political ideal during the late nineteenth century is possibly reflected also in a change in attitude on the part of significant sections of the Conservative media towards what would today be called Third World peoples. Douglas Lorimer, in a challenging work on Victorian racism, locates in the 1850s and 1860s a new scientific racism, largely reflecting a change in domestic values, gradually replacing the tradition of protective benevolence towards Blacks that had prevailed in the earlier nineteenth century. From a religious point of view, Lorimer also emphasizes the extreme atheism, which even more than Huxley's agnosticism, effected the leading English proponents of the new scientific racism. Lorimer does not particularly discuss these cultural changes from a party political viewpoint. Yet, his general thesis fits tellingly into the intellectual moorings of elements of nineteenth-century Conservative thought.

The general Tory attitude, as exemplified particularly in the press, towards non-European races in the 1830s and 1840s, if not beyond, was largely formed within a Christian humanitarian backdrop. This was largely true even in the substantial sections of the Conservative press, whether subsidized or not by the West Indian interest, which supported slavery. It was a Christian or biblical injunction after all to be kind to one's slaves! John Wilson Croker, arguably the leading Conservative ideologue of the early and mid-nineteenth century exemplified this mood. Croker was never an abolitionist and regarded slavery as a status as old as the world and encompassing races of mankind seemingly predestined to it. Yet, Croker always insisted on the necessity of protecting Blacks from harm or destruction. I do not however mean to overdo this goodwill. *John Bull* in its first two decades, under the control of Theodore Hook, was nearly as racist as latter nineteenth-century Conservative periodicals---minus only, perhaps, the incessant tolerance for exterminatory rhetoric. William Maginn's *Fraser's Magazine* too, in its jokey ambience, was very supportive of slavery, full of denunciation of "niggers," and so forth. Still, around the time when the term and ideology of "conservatism" was invented, after 1830, some degree of benevolence was a more common motif within the Conservative zeitgeist than extreme negrophobia. For example, that stalwart of the *Quarterly Review*, Robert Southey, while he opposed immediate emancipation still urged White West Indians and their American confreres "not to regard the people of colour as an inferior race, to open the way for them to respectability, offices, and honours, and to make it as possible for a slave or a mulatto, to work his way up to this . . . as for an operative in England and in America." The daily organ of the Wellingtonian Conservatives in the early 1830s, the *Albion*, was resolutely anti-slavery and pro-emancipation, albeit gradual, and the Tory *Bell's Weekly Messenger* was so anti-slavery that it, alone I think in the Conservative press, opposed giving compensation to the planter class.

After the vexing slavery issue was settled much of the discourse in the Conservative press of the early and mid-Victorian era tended to be paternalistic and humanitarian towards non-White people. I do not mean to suggest that this beneficence was ever a major factor in expressed Conservative political ideology but it was still noticeable. The *English Review*, which represented the old High Church ideal in the age of the more radical Oxford Movement, terming itself one of the "friends of humanity,"

vigorously denied in one of its earliest issues that the Hottentots or Bushmen were in any way naturally inferior to Europeans. All humans, it insisted “were of one blood.” The newly evangelical *Press* in 1859 discussed the radiance of John Brown’s martyrdom for the anti-slavery cause. Archdeacon Denison’s *Church and State Review*, in 1864, not only condemned the United States for its Indian clearance policies, but, closer to home, termed the Maori of New Zealand free men fighting oppression. On these grounds the Whig imperialistic policy in the Antipodes was evil and wicked. The *English Churchman*, another High Church newspaper, appealed, in 1845, to public opinion and the Peel administration to severely control a colonial tendency towards exterminating native peoples and it totally disagreed with the controversial views of J. A. Roebuck, who frequently opined in public on the inevitable fate of savages to disappear before civilization.

Much more important than such relatively obscure publications discussed above was the generally humanitarian stance of the well-subscribed Conservative periodicals, *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* and the *Quarterly Review*. The former wrote that help must be brought to the North American Indians, “where the knavery and strength of civilized man have encroached upon the lessening domain . . . a blot on the glories of American enterprise and industry, that ages of benevolence and humanity will hardly be sufficient to wash away . . . Whole races have perished. Their lineage, their names, their very language have been blotted out from human memory . . . Outcast in the land of their fathers, the Iroquois are now begging their bread. The tribes that once wondered over New England, those who, a hundred and eighty years ago, touched the hand of Penn on the banks of the Delaware in signs of peace, which they have kept ever holy, are no more.” The *Quarterly* too was relatively consistent in publishing articles urging a humanitarian policy for the empires’ (and America’s) non-White races. For example, in 1840, it expressed the sentiment that while the annihilation of the Red Man in North America had excited no more sympathy than was felt for the melting snow of winter, it was “an act of barbarism unexampled in history.” Britain’s part in this sorry drama will bring upon her a day of retribution “the justice of which we shall not be able to deny.” Nine years later, the *Quarterly* defended Negroes as of the same species as Whites and, most probably, equally descended from the First Parents. The reason they had not advanced in literature and philosophy was merely due to lack of much intimate association with Europeans. Once such association became a fact, “their capacities and habits became altered and enlarged, and their attainment approach closely to those of the same classes in the most civilized countries.” Even in 1866, in the midst of Conservative enthusiasm for the illiberal cause of Governor Eyre of Jamaica, the *Quarterly* warned its readers not to despair of Negro advancement.

Douglas Lorimer’s thesis that a hardening and coarseness in racial matters increasingly infected British society in general after the 1850s was certainly reflected among Conservatives. Press organs, which exhibited humanitarianism and benevolence towards non-White peoples in the age of Wilberforce and Shaftesbury, became more prone to vindictive and slighting references to non-Europeans after 1860 or thereabouts. In this process, Disraeli, if indeed he ever did educate his party, seemed to lead the way. In his novels and in his (more or less) non-fiction work, *The Life of Lord George Bentinck* (1852), he was quite consistent in his view that while “progress and reaction are but the words to mystify the millions . . . they mean nothing; they are nothing; they are

phrases and not facts. All is race.” Going along with his idealization of European and Semitic peoples, who formed the positive foundational models of Disraeli’s race theorizing, was a negative view of Blacks and American Indians. With his negative opinions, Disraeli was far in the forefront of where most major British politicians were prepared to go, at least publicly. In the early 1850s, Disraeli’s attack upon the anti-slavery movement, at the same time as he first achieved the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, pointed him out as one on at least these issues who was far outside the political consensus. What other major British politician in the 1850s would describe the anti-slavery folk as ignorant, unjust, blundering, engendering waste and havoc not easily paralleled in the history of man? Disraeli believed Negroes were a deteriorated race and hoped that the White population of America would not racially mix with them. In 1856, in the House of Commons, he described the American Indians as “an indolent and unintelligent race of men” and praised the American expansion over their territory. When Disraeli became prime minister for the first time, in 1868, the Carlton Club paid for cartoons of savage Blacks and simianized Irish to be sent out as political propaganda.

When Christine Bolt maintains that William Rathbone Greg when discussing the possibility of “ultimate extermination” for freed Blacks, was expressing a “normal Conservative viewpoint,” she may have been unfair to the generation that oversaw the construction of conservatism after 1830. However, looking ahead a generation or two and the comment becomes more defensible. The Tory *Morning Herald*, in 1865, opined in a leader that, recently, a great change had come over British opinion on matters of race. The old abolitionist slogan “Am I not a man and brother?” “would nowadays be answered with some hesitation by many—with a flat negative to its latter half by those who regard the blacks as an inferior race.” And the *Herald* and its sister Tory newspaper, the *Standard*, both bought in 1857 by James Johnston from the churchy Edward Baldwin, had already taken great strides to push British opinion in that direction. Both papers had made clear at an early stage after 1857-8, their intended separation from traditional Conservative-Christian moorings. The *Herald*, unlike the *Standard*, never a terribly successful daily newspaper, regarded the Negro as inferior intellectually from Whites, and, as early as 1863, saw reasons for classifying the two races as distinct specimens, as different as asses and zebras, with Negroes closer in family relationships to apes. All through the 1860s, through its demise in 1869, the *Herald* kept up a drumbeat against cowardly, brutal, savage Negroes, or “niggers,” as was their preferred term, coupled with paeans to the racial views of Thomas Carlyle. The racial views of the well-subscribed *Standard* after 1857, while not quite as vulgar as its sister morning paper, was equally insistent on the rights of Caucasians, by the law of civilization, to destroy the ruder vestiges of savage life. The *Standard*, Social Darwinistic before the *Descent of Man*, seemed quite content to view, in 1868, the “final and utter extinction of Red Skins in North America with no prospect of it ceasing until the last Indian vanishes from the continent.”

Much of the quality Conservative press was equally prepared with the *Herald* and the *Standard* to accept the new discourse on race after 1860 or thereabouts. *Blackwood’s* led the way. Two years before *Origin of Species*, it was lauding the migration of the “White race” throughout the world and rejoicing that “everywhere the native races have disappeared before it—the Red men of America, the Caffirs of the Cape, the Aborigines of Australia—or, like the Hindoos and Negroes, do it reverence and

survive. A great natural law is marked by the various settlements of the white race. In temperate climates it colonises, and the inferior races die out before it," in tropical climates it reigns as the superior caste by "moral, physical, and intellectual superiority." *Blackwood's* seemed to revel in its formal call, which it highlighted in upper case type, "EXTERMINATION, gradual but sure." The future indeed would lead to the extermination of Negroes and other natives. Christianity was impotent to stop this. The extermination would take place amongst "lazy" Red men in North America, the Aboriginal peoples in New Zealand and Australia, and the mentally inferior Negroes in Southern Africa. By the 1870s, this leading Conservative monthly had elevated these views into an iron law of history. "When the man of white skin goes forth to remote regions . . . he goes as a superior being, assumes possession by the right, if not by the divinity, of his colour, and will listen to no terms on the part of the original possessors of the soil but absolute submission to his sovereign will. . . If they put themselves into a state of permanent rebellion, they must be exterminated. This seems to be the law, above all other laws, which the Caucasian race has imposed upon itself." *Blackwood's* claimed that it was the universal American viewpoint that Indians should be exterminated. "Statesmen have not held this language—members of Congress have refrained from giving it utterance—it has never found its way into State papers, or been openly avowed, -but it has, nevertheless, been the common thought and expression of all white men of the Anglo-Saxon race ever since the discovery and colonization of America." Contributors to the *Quarterly Review* too, while never or rarely going as far into the interstices of racial discourse as *Blackwood's*, also began, as in 1885, to insist upon the "inevitable expansion of the whites" and the futility of struggling against such "natural tendencies" and "irresistible influences." Indeed, to resist this process would be as futile as setting "limits to the action of leaves in a mass of dough." The ultra-Malthusian Tory weekly of Frederick Greenwood, *St. James's Gazette* was extremely negrophobic in the 1880s. Negroes in general engaged in "fetish rites and inhuman practices" and lacked the ability to civilize. History, intoned the *St. James's*, "gives no example of the sudden elevation of a race from a lower to a higher level at a bound." Much of the rest of the late nineteenth-century Conservative press, to a greater or lesser extent, embraced the racial discourse discussed above.

Such as discourse was no doubt genuine and strongly held by its practitioners. But it played a wider role for some at least of the Conservative leadership, intent upon presenting an alternative definition of Conservatism, less Christian, more scientific-oriented, more imperialist, to attract the followers of Darwin, Spencer, and Huxley, as they so markedly did in the last few decades of the century. Perhaps, the prevalence of this racial discourse in important parts of the Conservative media, was but another sign to anti-clerical Liberals that they were no longer in Toryism dealing with a fundamentalist Christian party as in the 1830s and 1840s and before. The intellectual mindset of Lord Salisbury, Conservative prime minister three times during the last years of Victorian Britain, is perhaps a good barometer to briefly discuss these matters.

There is accumulating a good deal of evidence that in his early politics and in his early journalism, young or early middle aged Lord Robert Cecil (or Lord Cranborne) was not at all (on this as on other matters) Disraelian or "modern" on racial questions. Indeed, he seems to have harkened back to the age of Croker or Southey or the qualified Tory humanitarianism of the 1830s and thereafter. In this he was at one with his close

friend and college contemporary, and fellow High Churchman, Lord Carnarvon. Andrew Roberts, whose access to the Hatfield House correspondence of the Marquis of Salisbury makes his semi-official biography of the prime minister an important source for late nineteenth century Tory politics, maintains that the youngish Salisbury disliked America's Founding Fathers for their slaughter of the Red Indians. His study of Salisbury's tenure in the 1870s, under Disraeli, as Indian Secretary, has also convinced Roberts that the Marquis eschewed race prejudice. Also, Michael Pinto-Duschinsky, who has undertaken the most complete study of Salisbury's massive journalistic career in the 1850s and 1860s, argues that he consistently upheld Maori rights and disliked any racial prejudice. Yet, on matters of race, it is somewhat difficult to reconcile the young Lord Robert Cecil with the old Marquis. Salisbury was not necessarily one to heedlessly bend with the times. However, by the 1880s, torn by quarrels over first of all the Eastern Question, and then, and more lastingly, over Home Rule, the liberal influence of Carnarvon over Salisbury on matters racial, was finished. Also, Salisbury, as a shrewd politician of his times, might simply have been playing to the gallery. The 1880s and 1890s were the decades of Salisbury's notorious Hottentot speech (1886); his ruthless "dying nations" speech before the Primrose League, upholding Darwinism in foreign policy (1890); his public reference to Asian Indians at the Albert Hall as "cultural baboons" (1892). Michael Bentley, who has recently written an important study of the intellectual makeup of Salisbury and some of his Conservative confreres, suspects that the prime minister was preoccupied by this period by racial differences between Whites, the Irish, Indians, and so forth. Bentley, however, very severely distinguishes Salisburian paternalism towards what he perceived as inferior races, despite his ever-more-frequent use of "niggers," to describe Black and Brown people, with the exterminatory language of other late Victorian worthies such as J.A. Froude or Leslie Stephen. Yet by the period of his greatest influence, for whatever reason, Salisbury was at least wading in what one suspects would have been for the younger Lord Robert Cecil uncomfortable waters. And, for those who wonder to what extent the political press influences politicians, Salisbury in his own person certainly represents an individual whose increasing and sustained use of racial discourse seems to follow the lead of a press which had pioneered such tropisms.

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