



Monday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2017  
The Lion Hotel

## Summary

### o Introduction

The following is a brief summary of the topics under discussion today. My apologies if not all views are expressed but minute taker fuelled by painkillers so somewhat muzzy and not having taken minutes most of her working life.

*Marilyn C*

### o Discussion Topics

#### How should we choose a career? For love or money?

- The need for money to live was agreed in particular if a single parent and members discussed their various careers from the probation service to teaching to working in the church and the law and citizen advice bureaus. Most liked to work with people and had desired job satisfaction.
- University education in the past had been for the few and several members had experienced late education opportunities. Current working practices of shorter contracts, equal opportunities for men and women and the expectations of clients and parents had changed which linked to job satisfaction. Luck had a major part in opportunities as well and the ability to develop and find latent talent.
- Ideally one chose a career for love and money but this had not always proved possible.

#### For good governance which is more important – policies or personality?

- Personality is emerging as important but policies should be more important it was felt e.g. Donald Trump. A discussion was had on what is good governance and linked to success, accountability and competence.
- Various politicians were discussed but kept quite general given the obvious political differences in the room and the impending general election. Some interesting

parallels were made with Lenin on saying what he thought people wanted to hear and then the policies disappearing once elected and modern parallels to that.

- The importance of recognising types of personalities in politics was appreciated. The celebrity culture was discussed and whether politicians should be allowed to change their minds. The fact that insufficient knowledge of issues and understanding by the electorate and the influence of the media make voting very difficult for voters.
- Concerns and some relief was aired over the Trump era and what constraints over his behaviour exist because of the constitution.

### **Boxed sets or live television?**

- Young people stream a lot these days so timing of programmes is less relevant with many of us taking advantage of recorded programmes and services like the BBC iPlayer.
- There are social advantages of talking to colleagues the next day at work about the previous night's viewing but probably less so than in the past.
- The timing of programmes ruling our viewing is a thing of the past we concluded. Not many people owned boxed sets but concluded their value perhaps on holiday.

### **Should child benefit be restricted to two offspring? If so, are there any mitigating circumstances?**

- Some folk felt very strongly it should not be restricted but thought it might happen in the future.
- The size of a population can of course influence development positively or negatively. Catholic and immigrant families tend to be larger and this was linked again to development, history and infant mortality. Often poorer people did have larger families to help with their elderly and for economic reasons, but this is also fashionable amongst richer families again now.
- Girls have many more options now in careers and increased education and of course some actively opt not to have families at all.
- The question was posed, 'Can the state afford to pay for larger families?', and most people felt it should.

### **China, North Korea, USA, Russia: Who will unleash the next nuclear missile?**

- It was not thought it would necessarily be a deliberate act.
- No one knows where the fall out could end up and concern was expressed by everybody over this issue, recalling memories of Chernobyl and the environmental impact.
- Many jobs are actually reliant on the nuclear industry and discussion was had on the impacts of the cyber warfare possibilities in activating or preventing attacks. There is no doubt that many secret strategies are trying to prevent this scenario.

### What makes a nation great?

- It was explained that the name Great Britain was originally used to distinguish us from Brittany.
- Discussion was had on how one measures this greatness. Power, morality, commercial success, happiness indices and perhaps how a society treats its most vulnerable. Great nations are often the most prosperous ones.
- The Scandinavian ones were discussed and the past glories of empires. Economic reasons can dictate why people want to live in a great nation hence the issues of immigration.
- Some talk was on why one might also want to live away from one's own nation - for adventure, as an example.
- Does being great have to be at the expense of others? (e.g. Russia's aspirations with the former USSR and the past slavery trade).
- Many felt greatness is what one chooses to invest in, be it education or the health service. The UK was recognised as being highly inventive in the past which fuelled much of its relative success economically.

### Is it ever okay to refer to women as girls?

- There were really mixed views on this. Many members were not really bothered while others felt if young women referred to themselves as girls then it was not patronising.
- Is it demeaning? There are differences on how one refers to others and customers as opposed to addressing one personally. It was discussed how irritating it is to be called by one's Christian name by sales people who don't know you at all but most people did not seem to mind hospitals calling patients by their Christian names although it has been written how upset many older people can be by this.
- In an office situation, if it offends, don't use said expression, was the consensus.
- Some amusing discussion was had over regional expressions of familiarity which are not intended to offend e.g. ducks, love, hen.

### ○ Future Topics

- A list of suggested topics follows. If you have any more to suggest, especially last-minute topical issues, please email [vivienne.barker@gmail.com](mailto:vivienne.barker@gmail.com)
  - What are you optimistic about?
  - Should local government take over the NHS?
  - Is the system of paying in care homes fair?
  - Does the USA have the right to take independent military action regarding issues being addressed by the United Nations?

### ○ Next Meeting

The next Café Society meeting will be on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June at 10.00am at The Lion Hotel (Tudor Bar room). Harold B has kindly volunteered to compile the discussion summary at this meeting.