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Under professional guidance and consultancy of Alan Pulverness, the team of Russian teachers contributed to British Council BritLit project (<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/britlit>). BritLit is a collection of resource kits which contain original stories written by modern writers for kids and teenagers and downloadable materials to help teachers using literature in the English language classroom grow interest in reading for pleasure.



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**Е**сли бы мы решили ограничиться в преамбуле нижеследующей публикации Алана Пулвернесса лишь вот таким сухим слогом написанной информации, то вряд ли можно было бы рассчитывать на успех у читателя. Разве что внимание читателя привлекло бы количество статей и книг, и не так много говорящие неискушенному читателю их названия... Возможно, кого-то из вас зацепит знакомая аббревиатура ТКТ (Teacher Knowledge Test), и тогда вы подумаете, что этот автор безусловно имеет отношение к коммуникативным подходам в обучении языку. Вчитавшись в другие названия работ г-на Пулвернесса, вы сможете понять, что этот человек безусловно имеет отношение к литературе...

На самом деле я хочу порекомендовать всем, кто держит этот журнал в своих руках и кому безразлично, насколько успешным в изучении языка будет каждый из его учеников, прочесть статьи Алана, написанные по следам его недавних выступлений в Ярославском педагогическом университете на методическом семинаре для учителей города и области, а также на очередной конференции LATEUM (Ассоциации преподавателей английского), проводимой на филфаке МГУ.

Вы получите удовольствие от соприкосновения с прекрасной, изысканной английской письменной речью, сможете погрузиться в философские переживания представителя „читающего“ поколения и ищущего пути для обращения молодых людей нового поколения назад к книге и письменному тексту.

Как сделать так, чтобы оторванный от жизни учащегося учебный текст на иностранном языке оказался близким, понятным, прочитанным с интересом, критически осмысленным? Какими методологическими приемами обеспечить проникновение читающего в суть прочитанного, обеспечить осознание собственной причастности к тому, о чем написано?

На примере использования в качестве учебного материала газетных текстов, автор статьи предлагает серию приемов, обеспечивающих погружение в современные реалии, провоцирующих отклик у читателя, формирующих навык критического осмысления описываемых событий и явлений, и высказывает свое отношение к ним.

Кроме того, у вас появится возможность во время общения с автором через чтение текста статьи на деле потренироваться в использовании профессиональной лексики и терминологии, в том числе попытаться найти, как определенная профессиональная лексика может быть интерпретирована в русском языке, в российской методике (например, 'language awareness', 'critical readers', 'reading skills' etc).

Alan Pulverness

## Unreliable Narrators and Hidden Agendas: developing critical reading skills

In the nineteenth-century novel, of course, people are always handing other people journals and diaries and documents. They tend to sit back, light their pipes and wait for the recipient to read them in the sure and certain knowledge that because the thing is written down, it is liable to be true. These days the reverse is the case. Nowadays we approach a piece of writing as we might a dodgy piece of meat. What is its provenance? Is it really anything like it says it is?

Nigel Williams, *Stalking Fiona* (1997)

Language awareness can be defined as an understanding of the human faculty of language and its role in thinking, learning and social life. It includes an awareness of power and control through language, and of the intricate relationships between language and culture.

Leo van Lier, *Introducing Language Awareness* (1995)

Van Lier's definition, with its extensive social, cultural and political implications, seems to relate to a far broader educational constituency than is typically addressed by the literature concerned with English Language Teaching. Within the ELT community, the term 'language awareness' has largely been adopted to denote the linguistic knowledge that it is believed should form the essential core of the foreign language teacher's professional expertise. The timetables of the Cambridge certificate and diploma courses (the 'CELTA' and the 'Delta') routinely feature slots labelled LA, although the approach taken in these LA sessions tend to suggest that the A should stand for 'analysis' rather than 'awareness'. In EFL teacher training, language awareness has become a very loosely defined label used to refer to the explicit structural and functional knowledge that underpins effective language teaching. Indeed, 'language knowledge' might be a more appropriate term to describe the language study component of most EFL teacher training, devoted as it is to learning about the forms and the systems of the language. Interestingly, the idea of developing awareness seems to be restricted to what takes place within the teacher, and often does not extend to any growth of awareness within learners, who tend to be assessed strictly in terms of their ability to use language accurately and appropriately. It might, of course, be argued that such ability proceeds from awareness, but this would ignore the question of what kind of awareness we believe that learners — and their teachers — should have about language.

Closer perhaps to van Lier's definition is the tradition of 'language awareness' that exists within British state school education. Prompted by government dissatisfaction in the early 1980s with the teaching of English and foreign languages, and chiefly associated with the work of Eric Hawkins, the concept of language awareness went beyond the conventional first and foreign language curriculum, promoting greater understanding by learners of the social nature of language in general. The move towards this broader sense of language awareness extended to consideration of language across the curriculum and involved collaborations between teachers of English (as both a first and a foreign language) and teachers of other languages.

In **Awareness of Language** (1987) Hawkins outlines a curriculum in which students would learn about basic aspects of sociolinguistics, such as language variation and language change. They would practise general language awareness skills, for example, identifying patterns in language or listening for specific language features. It was felt that the general appreciation of what language is and how it works, would equip students with fundamental understandings that would enhance their ability to learn both their own and other languages. Underlying this approach there is also a benign political agenda: awareness of language — and indeed awareness of languages — should deflect any tendency towards linguistic prejudice, and should lead teachers and learners to view the presence of other languages in multi-ethnic schools as a valuable resource rather than a pedagogic

obstacle. Students would be encouraged to exchange explicit aspects of their knowledge of their own language with fellow-students from different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, to their mutual benefit. It should also be noted that this process of sensitisation to the nature and function of language was intended to begin at primary level, and Hawkins and his colleagues produced *Using Language* (1987), a series of textbooks for this purpose.

**'Knowledge About Language'** — or KAL — was a controversial element of the recommendations made in reports by the National Curriculum English Working Party in the late 1980s. KAL was intended to introduce students at secondary level in England and Wales to topics such as: differences between spoken and written English; literary language; language change; accents, dialects and standard English; registers and varieties of English. The reports were widely misunderstood and created one of the moral panics about falling standards in education that seize the British at regular intervals. From Prince Charles to the editor of *The Sun*, leading public figures expressed their antagonism to a version of language awareness that relativised traditional notions of absolute standards of correctness, and suggested a degree of legitimacy for non-standard varieties of English. The then Conservative government subsequently modified the Working Party's recommendations, replacing the focus on learning about language as social practice with an emphasis on a more traditional kind of knowledge about language, concerned with parts of speech, sentence grammar, correct spelling and punctuation. As subsequent New Labour and Coalition Ministers of Education have followed much of the philosophy and practice of their predecessors, KAL and language awareness in Hawkins' sense have remained marginalised.

**Critical Language Awareness** — CLA — can be seen as a reaction against the tendency to treat language, particularly in foreign language teaching, as a neutral and value-free code. CLA aims precisely to do what van Lier talks about — to raise students' "awareness of power and control through language, and of the intricate relationships between language and culture". Critical linguistics proceeds from the belief that language is always value-laden and that texts are never neutral. Language in the world is commonly used to exercise 'power and control', to reinforce dominant ideologies, to evade responsibility, to manufacture consensus. The most blatant examples occur during times of national or international conflict: if as the widely quoted maxim goes, "truth is the first casualty of war", then language is all too often the second casualty. As readers in the real world — i. e. the world outside the classroom — we should always be on our guard, 'suspicious' of texts and prepared to challenge or interrogate them. However, in the foreign language classroom, texts are routinely treated as unproblematic, as if their implicit authority need never be questioned. Their single function is to provide a contextual backdrop for the presentation and practice of language, and the development of language skills, and consequently, they tend at best to be comfortably bland. Foreign language learners, who may be quite critical readers in their mother tongues, are textually infantilised by the vast majority of EFL coursebooks and the classroom approaches that proceed from these books.

A CLA approach implies what Catherine Wallace (2005) calls "a methodology for interpreting texts which addresses ideological assumptions as well as propositional meaning", which would require students to develop sociolinguistic and ethnographic research skills, in order to become proficient at observing, analysing and evaluating language use in the world around them. It would lead them to ask and answer crucial questions about a text: *Who produced it? Who was it produced for? In what context was it published?* It would encourage them to notice features such as lexical choice, passivisation or foregrounding that reveal both the position of the writer and the way in which the reader is 'positioned' by the text. It would offer them opportunities to intervene creatively in texts, to modify them or to produce their own 'counter-texts' in ways proposed in the work of Clare Kramsch (1993) and Rob Pope (1995). It would empower students to become active participants in the negotiation of meaning, rather than passive recipients of 'authoritative' texts. In short, it would transform language training into language education.

I want to look at a few representative examples of different text-types, to see how they are loaded with ideological assumptions and how they are constructed so as to influence their intended readership for political or social or commercial purposes. I also want to suggest that our notion of what constitutes 'reading skills' needs to be expanded to take account of the skills of critical thinking and interpretation that form an inevitable part of our daily response to texts, but are usually elided in the foreign language classroom.

## Robin Cook: chicken tikka & multicultural Britain

The first illustration I have chosen is a political speech, which will serve to illustrate a fairly overt kind of rhetoric, yet one which is not without its hidden agenda — and perhaps its unreliable narrator. The first questions to be asked about any text are about the discourse context: the identities of — and the relationship between — addressor and addressee; the genre whose conventions it adheres to or departs from; the circumstances of its publication. If this might seem to suggest a rather predictable questioning routine in the classroom, this is quite intentional: it ought to become a habit of critical reading to ask and answer these contextual questions, since they will determine the speaker/writer's linguistic and textual choices.

So, the speech was given by Robin Cook — the former Foreign Secretary, a leading member of Tony Blair's first cabinet, after the 1997 election.

A day or two after New Labour's landslide victory in May 1997, Mr Cook announced that the government's foreign policy was to have an 'ethical dimension' and declared himself strongly opposed to the 'xenophobia' of past administrations. Over the next four years he frequently returned to the same theme in various speeches and articles, although critics on the left questioned whether the government's policies had been consistent with these ideals. The issues of race, immigration (and by extension those of multiculturalism and British identity) were prominent in the months leading up to the 2001 election campaign, and the speech needs to be seen in this context, and also in the context of *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain*, a major report published in 2000 by the Runnymede Trust, an independent think-tank "devoted to the cause of promoting racial justice in Britain".

The extract is from Mr Cook's 'chicken tikka masala speech', as it rapidly became known. The speech, which was widely reported and discussed, was delivered to the Social Market Foundation, another independent think-tank, chaired by an economist, Robert Skidelsky. The central element of the Foundation's philosophy is to promote the idea of a free market tempered by a limited measure of state intervention. Of course, when a leading politician makes a major public speech, there are always two audiences — the immediate audience sitting in front of them and the wider secondary audience of newspaper readers, radio listeners and TV viewers, who will probably only be exposed to 'soundbites' or at most short extracts from a relatively long speech. (Even *The Guardian* only published a 2½-thousand-word extract from the chicken tikka masala speech.)

The first half of the extract works through a series of oppositions: *not a race, but a gathering...*; *not their purity*

*that makes the British unique, but the sheer pluralism of their ancestry; The great cathedrals... were built... by Norman bishops, but the religion... was secured by the succession of a Dutch prince; Richard the Lionheart... A symbol of British courage and defiance. Yet he spoke French...; This pluralism is not a burden... It is an immense asset...* Up to this point, Mr Cook seems to be using these contrasts to dispel a myth about national homogeneity and to be laying the foundation for an argument against racial discrimination and in favour of a multi-ethnic, multicultural conception of what it means to be British.

However, the speech then takes a significant turn through a kind of implicature that should make us do what we often talk about, but rarely encourage students to do — to 'read between the lines'. The phrase *legitimate immigration*, foregrounded for emphasis, implies an unspoken contrast with immigration that is somehow not legitimate. (I did not hear the speech, but I would be surprised to learn that Mr Cook did not stress the adjective.) Thus *legitimate immigration* becomes a coded reference to the social panic about so-called "bogus asylum seekers". This has become such a well-established collocation that most politicians and journalists have dropped the "bogus", so that the originally neutral "asylum seeker" now inescapably carries the shadow of the missing adjective. But let's give Mr Cook the benefit of the doubt for a moment and assume that *legitimate* was unstressed. There remains the question of why the adjective was chosen at all — how would the meaning be altered if the theme was not *legitimate immigration*, but simply *immigration*? But then the complement leaves little room for doubt: *Legal immigration is the necessary and unavoidable result of economic success*. 'Unavoidable' — in other words, it's something we might have liked to avoid, but it's the price we have to pay for a healthy economy. The Foreign Secretary's distaste for xenophobia and begins to look a little half-hearted, to say the least.

The economic argument is developed in terms designed to appeal to both his primary and secondary audiences, though perhaps particularly to the members of the Social Market Foundation: *demand for labour; birth-rate of a modern developed country; their contribution to our growth and prosperity; specialists in information technology; linguistic variety of... staff*. Immigration — assuming always that it is *legitimate* — is constructed here as a matter of economic self-interest — *their contribution to our growth*. Woven into this justification for a half-open door to economic migrants is a digression on the immigration laws and the activities of those who smuggle illegal immigrants into the country. There is an implied sub-text between *Every country needs firm but fair immigration*



laws and the condemnation of the *evil business of trafficking in human beings*, as though Mr Cook is pre-empting his audience's revulsion at the *trafficking*, with its connotations of the slave trade and *trafficking* in drugs, by defending the government's *firm but fair* immigration policy. The sole consequence mentioned of the illegal traffic is the 'corrosion' of *social cohesion* by the *furtive underground of illegal migrants beyond legal protection against exploitation*. In Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes story "Silver Blaze" Holmes deduced the solution to a case when he noticed that something *didn't* happen: a dog didn't bark at night, proving that there had been no intruder. There is a similarly revealing silence in this text — the consequences for the illegal migrants themselves, to take just one example, the suffocation of 58 Chinese illegal immigrants in a sealed container lorry in June 2000. But Mr Cook's speech was intended to be emollient and reassuring to both of his audiences and devoting just a single affirmative sentence to the need for *firm but fair immigration laws*, he deftly moves the ground to the traffic in illegal immigrants, drawing on the emotive lexicon of tabloid headlines.

At this point the speech moves away from the primary economic reasoning and introduces what was clearly intended to put a secondary positive spin on the proposition that Britain is *de facto* an increasingly multi-cultural

society — chicken tikka massala. As Mr Cook is at pains to explain, this dish, now the most popular in Britain, is an adaptation of an Indian dish, enhanced with a sauce to make it more palatable to British tastes — although it is unknown in India. Selected by Mr Cook as a metonym for multiculturalism, *chicken tikka* has become as disparaged a phrase as Mrs Thatcher's 'Victorian values' or Mr Major's 'Back to Basics'. The problem for many black and Asian Britons is that this kind of gesture towards inclusiveness appears to be simply patronising. (For example, the Asian British journalist, Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, a member of the commission that produced the report on the future of multi-ethnic Britain, wrote an article in *The Independent* shortly afterwards, entitled "Don't give me all this guff about chicken tikka multiculturalism".) But here again, it is the language that tells the story: Mr Cook's use of possessive adjectives — *our economy; our national life* — and transitivity — *Britain absorbs and adapts external influences* — to say nothing of the (presumably unconscious) association of food and sexuality in his choice of metaphor — *to satisfy the desire (of British people to have their meat served with gravy)* — all reveal an underlying ethnocentricity that is at odds with the apparent message of cultural enrichment and broadening horizons.

## Post strikers delay millions of letters (*The Daily Mail* 23 May 2001)

*The Daily Mail* is a mid-market national daily paper, which downsized to a tabloid format a few years ago. It is often identified as 'the voice of middle England' and Tony Blair's Old Labour detractors tended to accuse him of doing everything he could to win over the readers of *The Daily Mail*. The article was written by the paper's 'Industrial Correspondent', a staff journalist, whose speciality is reporting on industrial stories. The background context is an industrial landscape where legislation brought in by Mrs Thatcher's government in the 1980s, and not rescinded by New Labour, imposes tight restrictions on most forms of industrial action. Strikes are only legal when the trade union has gone through a process of negotiation, held a postal ballot and given notice of the intended action. The strike reported here by some postal workers was an unofficial — or 'wildcat' — strike. Interestingly, this strike was about changes to working conditions rather than being a dispute about pay. Another background element, highlighted in the report, is the reorganisation of the Post Office, 're-branding' the parent company and renaming

it 'Consignia'. This meaningless name was ridiculed when the changes were announced and there was a good deal of public criticism of the cost (estimated at £2m) of bringing in the firm of consultants responsible for the re-branding exercise. The other factor, also mentioned in the report, was the loss of the company's monopoly, so that they were potentially open to competition.

It is first worth considering the headline — and its potential transformations: as it stands — *Postal strikers delay millions of letters* — the transitivity announces the responsibility of the postal workers for millions of letters being delayed. Passive voice is probably rather more common in newspaper headlines — and slightly more economical, but *Millions of letters delayed...* would shift the focus to the delayed letters, whereas the effect chosen makes the strikers act upon the letters in a deliberate way, creating an image of a phalanx of striking workers physically barring the progress of the mail. *Postal strike* would be another alternative, whether in an active or a passive headline, but this would take the personal sting out of the headline altogether. We should also note the apparently

gratuitous inclusion, next to the headline, of the Royal Mail logo, though perhaps this is not so gratuitous, with its crown emblem hinting at a kind of republican defiance of royalty.

The report itself appears to be factual, but one of the slippery characteristics of much British journalism is its tendency to conflate fact and opinion, and it is this that I would like to focus on. One very powerful way of colouring a factual report is through lexical choice. Here the writer draws upon a stock of vocabulary that suggests both military conflict — *have been hit; have hit; a further blow; action; under fire* — and disease — *spread across the country; the action could spread further*. Another ‘colourful’ effect in the text is personalisation — the millions of delayed letters and packages are *on their way to families and businesses*. Flouting Grice’s maxim of quantity, this is telling us more than it needs to — who else could they be on their way to? But we should have been touched by the vision of expectant families waiting on the doorstep for letters and packages (birthday presents perhaps) that never arrive. Two indications of the writer’s attitude can be seen in the fourth column: a statistic informing the reader that postal workers are responsible for more than half of the strikes in the UK every year is preceded by the

qualifier *Astonishingly*; and a couple of paragraphs later, the information that the new shift systems have successfully been introduced *in many parts of the country without action* is linked to information about the origin of the strike not just by *though*, but by *even though*. I have not so far referred to the substantial part of the report that is made up of direct quotation, for which the writer cannot be held responsible. Or can he? The issues here are what is excluded, what is included, how much space is accorded to the different voices involved and where that space is located. We have two paragraphs (in the third and fourth columns) of direct quotation from the chairman of the consumer ‘watchdog’ body, Postwatch, and two paragraphs (in the last column) one of direct quotation, one indirect, from the managing director of Royal Mail. Only in the final paragraph do we hear the voice of the senior union official, condemning what he sees as an autocratic management style, but significantly calling for *national level negotiations*, rather than explicitly endorsing the strike. One suspects that Mr Keggie refused to be provoked into a more outspoken statement, and since the reporter had only this mild rebuttal, it was relegated to the very end of the article.

## Schreiber kitchens ad

The advertisement for fitted kitchens, which appeared in a glossy consumer magazine, designed primarily for a middle-class, middle-aged female readership, at first sight perhaps seems rather banal — not a particularly witty or striking example of the copywriter’s craft. If, instead of just the plain text, we look at the way in which the advert originally appeared, we see immediately that text and illustration are interdependent the idea of having *a kitchen in your head* is realised literally by the designer, who has cropped the photo of the kitchen so as to give the right-hand edge the appearance of a human face in profile, somewhat androgynous, but rather more feminine than masculine.

Both in the text and the visual the kitchen is thus *in your head*. The verbal trigger for the whole ad is in fact the familiar collocation ‘dream kitchen’ — never quite mentioned, though hinted at in the final paragraph of the copy: *...if you’ve got a new kitchen in mind, keep dreaming...* Perhaps the most striking verbal characteristic of the text is the lexical chain *head* ➔ *brains* ➔ *mind* ➔ *dreaming* ➔ *scheming*. The reader is intended to read

‘against the grain’ of the text and accept the fantasy that the *kitchen in your head* — your dream kitchen — can magically be [turned] into the [actual] kitchen in your home. If we ‘read’ the advertisement naturally from left to right, the apparently real kitchen on the left-hand page is revealed as just a mental image when we reach the right-hand edge. But then if we accept the proposition contained in the text, we are meant to return from right to left, our fantasy thus becoming reality.

So the ad depends for its effect on a kind of ‘dialogue’ between visual and textual elements. But what about the verbal qualities of the text itself? We have already noticed a thread of lexical cohesion and a sub-textual allusion to a strong collocation — (You could have a ‘dream bathroom’ or a ‘dream bedroom’, but the usual dream room is a kitchen!) Let’s suppose for a moment that this is a literary text. What would we as linguistically sensitive readers notice about it?

Well, first of all, the headline, which serves as a title and sets up an implicit question (“How are you going to do that?”) which we imagine the text will answer. So, as

with a poem or a story, the ‘title’ serves as a prompt for anticipation and prediction.

Then there is the discourse relationship, an intimate three-cornered affair between the ‘we’ of Schreiber (the manufacturers), the ‘they’ of MFI (the retailers) and the ‘you’ of the potential customer. We are addressed by a corporate author who establishes a kind of complicity between writer (or narrator) and reader — *Take the superb hi-gloss wall units... Beautiful, aren't they?* This complicity extends to a third party — MFI — and in fact the ‘authorship’ of the ad becomes rather fuzzy — the body copy seems to come from the manufacturers, but *to see new Schreiber range*, you either visit the MFI showroom or post the coupon to MFI.

The whole direction of the text is predicated by the conditional of the headline, which assumes that if we are prompted to go on reading, we do have *a kitchen in [our]*

*head*, but if this is the case, as in the song, ‘all [we] have to do is dream’ — and Schreiber and MFI will do the rest.

The text also works through linguistic effects such as syntactic parallelism — *They won't just help you choose a kitchen, they'll help you create one* — and rhyme — *keep dreaming and let us do the scheming* — which are euphonic and hence intended to be memorable.

All of these features certainly do not amount to a neutral message. The text has a complex authorship, it positions its reader(s) in a deliberate way and it exploits certain characteristics of the language to achieve particular effects. I have deliberately refrained from using the terms ‘literary’ or ‘quasi-literary’, but I have no doubt that on one level, at least, we respond to advertising texts, graffiti, jokes etc in much the same way as we read literary texts — and such texts are constructed using many of the same stylistic features as literary texts.

What I have tried to suggest is that, unless they are purely functional, as in the case, say, of an instruction leaflet, texts are inevitably ‘loaded’ in some way. They are rarely, if ever, as neutral as they are made to appear in ELT textbooks. There are always questions to be asked, about authorship, about readership, about lexical choices and syntactic forms, about textual organisation. Students can be encouraged to ask — and answer — these questions; they can be invited to ‘disturb’ or ‘intervene’ in the texts, as they often do in literature classes when they are asked to provide alternative titles or alternative endings, or to re-tell a story from a different point of view. Texts should not be regarded as sacrosanct the key to critical language awareness is a healthy disrespect for the text.

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## Appendix 1

### The 'chicken tikka masala' speech from Robin Cook's speech to the Social Market Foundation in London 18 April 2001

The first element in the debate about the future of Britishness is the changing ethnic composition of the British people themselves. The British are not a race, but a gathering of countless different races and communities, the vast majority of which were not indigenous to these islands.

In the pre-industrial era, when transport and communications were often easier by sea than by land, Britain was unusually open to external influence; first through foreign invasion, then, after Britain achieved naval supremacy, through commerce and imperial expansion. It is not their purity that makes the British unique, but the sheer pluralism of their ancestry.

London was first established as the capital of a Celtic Britain by Romans from Italy. They were in turn driven out by Saxons and Angles from Germany. The great cathedrals of this land were built mostly by Norman Bishops, but the religion practised in them was secured by the succession of a Dutch Prince. Outside our Parliament, Richard the Lionheart proudly sits astride his steed. A symbol of British courage and defiance. Yet he spoke French much of his life and depended on the Jewish community of England to put up the ransom that freed him from prison.

The idea that Britain was a 'pure' Anglo-Saxon society before the arrival of communities from the Caribbean, Asia and Africa is fantasy. But if this view of British identity is false to our past, it is false to our future too. The global era has produced population movements of a breadth and richness without parallel in history.

Today's London is a perfect hub of the globe. It is home to over 30 ethnic communities of at least 10,000 residents each. In this city tonight, over 300 languages will be spoken by families over their evening meal at home.

This pluralism is not a burden we must reluctantly accept. It is an immense asset that contributes to the cultural and economic vitality of our nation.

Legitimate immigration is the necessary and unavoidable result of economic success, which generates a demand for labour faster than can be met by the birth-rate of a modern developed country. Every country needs firm but fair immigration laws. There is no more evil business than trafficking in human beings and nothing corrodes social cohesion worse than a furtive underground of illegal migrants beyond legal protection against exploitation. But we must also create an open and inclusive society that welcomes incomers for their contribution to our growth and prosperity. Our measures to attract specialists in information technology is a good example.

Our cultural diversity is one of the reasons why Britain continues to be the preferred location for multinational companies setting up in Europe. The national airline of a major European country has recently relocated its booking operation to London precisely because of the linguistic variety of the staff whom it can recruit here.

And it isn't just our economy that has been enriched by the arrival of new communities. Our lifestyles and cultural horizons have also been broadened in the process. This point is perhaps more readily understood by young Britons, who are more open to new influences and more likely to have been educated in a multi-ethnic environment. But it reaches into every aspect of our national life.

Chicken Tikka Massala is now a true British national dish, not only because it is the most popular, but because it is a perfect illustration of the way Britain absorbs and adapts external influences. Chicken Tikka is an Indian dish. The Massala sauce was added to satisfy the desire of British people to have their meat served in gravy.

Coming to terms with multiculturalism as a positive force for our economy and society will have significant implications for our understanding of Britishness.

The modern notion of national identity cannot be based on race and ethnicity, but must be based on shared ideals and aspirations. Some of the most successful countries in the modern world, such as the United States and Canada, are immigrant societies. Their experience shows how cultural diversity, allied to a shared concept of equal citizenship, can be a source of enormous strength. We should draw inspiration from their experience.



Appendix 2

# Post strikers delay millions of letters



**MAIL** deliveries were in chaos last night as wildcat strikes spread across the country.

The disputes will delay millions of letters and packages on their way to families and businesses.

Already some five million items are waiting to be delivered in Watford, where the illegal strikes began on Friday.

At least ten major sorting and delivery offices have been hit, including Manchester, Liverpool, North Wales, Stockport and Chester.

Strikes at depots in Nine Elms, Watford and Whitechapel have hit deliveries in large parts of south, east and north London.

Some workers claimed that almost half the country is affected – and although Royal Mail chiefs deny this, they fear the action could spread further.

The action is a further blow to the Post Office, Royal Mail's parent company, which was renamed Consignia this year. Its bosses are already under fire over the controversial rebranding and for providing a poor service. The company is also facing the prospect of widespread competition after new laws ended its monopoly.

Consignia and consumer groups condemned the walkouts as unacceptable and irresponsible.

Peter Carr, chairman of the watchdog body Postwatch, said: 'It is time that workers recognized that this type of behaviour does nothing to an already deteriorating service. Postal workers cannot continue to deprive customers of the universal postal service and expect to get away with it. They risk forcing customers away.'

'Millions of customers will have their postal services affected by the strike. Some of that mail will be very important: tickets, invitations, job application forms, passports and so on. The strike will cause real problems for business and individuals.'

A Daily Mail investigation recently revealed that more than 14million letters of the 80million posted each day arrive late – or not at all.

Much of that disruption is due to wildcat strikes by postal workers. Short local strikes are happening somewhere almost every day of the week.

Astonishingly, action by postal workers accounts for more than half the UK's annual total of strikes.

About 6,000 workers have joined the latest action and there is no sign that it is likely to end soon.

'It started when 800 union members at Watford stopped work in a dispute over changes to working patterns, even though similar shift systems have already been introduced in many parts of the country without action.'

Postal staff in Liverpool refused to handle mail diverted from Watford and started taking wildcat action in support. The Liverpool walkout was followed by action in Stockport, Chester and east and south London.

Mick Linsell, Royal Mail's managing director, said: 'We are very sorry for the delays to our customers' mail. It is totally unacceptable that union members are attempting to hold customers to ransom by denying them service.'

He said it was 'particularly disappointing' that workers had gone on strike when an independent team

**'We need new negotiations'**

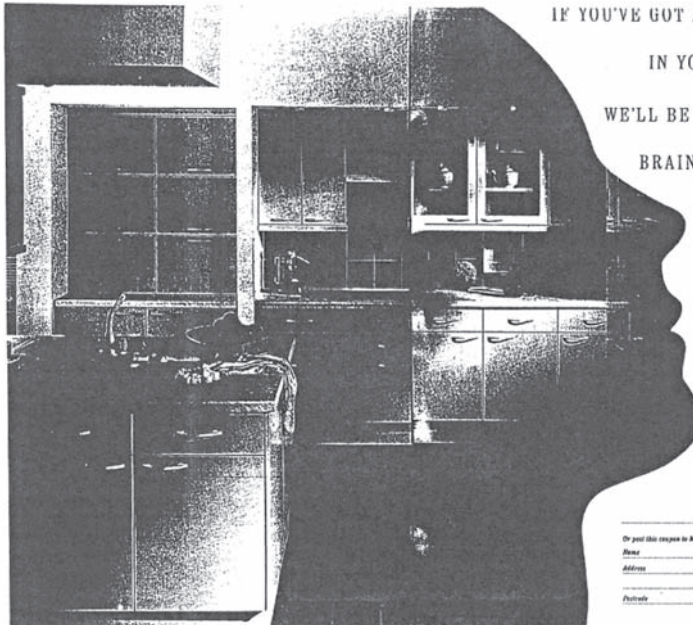
had recently been appointed to review industrial relations.

The review, supported by the Royal Mail and the Communication Workers Union, has been asked to assess the present 'unsustainable' level of industrial relations.

John Keggie, deputy general secretary of the CWU, said: 'What we need is national level negotiations. We do not need senior managers issuing statements condemning postal workers as militants and wildcats.'

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Appendix 3



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