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LETTERS

BRITAIN AND THE FALKLANDS

T. F. Evans (March) claims to review a book about the Falklands war as an impartial observer. He concludes that the war was "fundamentally irrelevant". He says that agreement is possible only on the bravery of the combatants and the sadness of their deaths and injuries. I believe a wider agreement is possible.

In the same issue of "The Freethinker", Barbara Smoker says we can't win against muddled thinking. I want to ask freethinkers to unmuddle their thinking about the Argentine invasion of the Falklands.

Here Is a factual proposition not one word of which anyone but an opponent of truth could disagree with: on 2 April 1982 the Falklands were forcibly and illegally occupied by troops whose presence the people living there detested.

Here Is another true statement: if British military action had not been taken, the Falklands would still be under Argentine rule.

Those two statements are not "fundamentally irrelevant" to the islanders. What T. F. Evans means is that they are "fundamentally irrelevant" to him. But then T. F. Evans is 8,000 miles away from the Falklands, and sleeps safe in his bed at nights. Is his standard really the one for humanists to adopt? It is usually described as "I'm all right Jack".

Barbara Smoker rightly asks for unmuddled thinking. This requires us to separate out the two propositions stated above from various other possible propositions about the Falklands, such as "Britain is to blame for not having made her intentions clear", or "Britain made many mistakes in this affair", or "Britain should work towards ultimate transfer of sovereignty by agreement". We should not blur the borderline between the various propositions.

Britain (that is our representative Government) no doubt deserves blame for many things. I think she deserves credit for not leaving some of her people in the lurch just because they were very few-- and very far away.

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