

Paul Foot goes down for the third time

That right-wing softy Douglas Hurd (who scarcely deserves the honourable epithet right-wing) made the mistake of reviewing a book by the late Paul Foot in the *Sunday Telegraph* on 20 February 2005. This is the third time I've had a go at Foot since his welcome decease (the others were [2004.013](#) and [2004.015](#)) . I'd better stop or it will begin to look like necrophilia (necrophobia more like).

Hurd absurdly says Paul Foot's voice is missed. It is missed by me about as much as Princess Diana's wisdom is missed. I rejoiced when I heard of the death of each of them, that they could do no more mischief in our world. I revelled at that news nearly as much as I did when, as an RAF pilot in World War II, I heard that the invention of the atom bomb had saved me from service against the amiable Japanese.

Foot's book is about votes for women. Hurd spots a silly error where Foot said that Cromwell shot rebel leaders in Burton churchyard when it was really Burford. Then he spots a 'howler' where Foot thinks the 1828 Catholic Emancipation crisis was about whether Irish Catholics should be given the vote when in fact they already had the vote as much as anyone had it in England. Then Hurd says Foot's allegation that the Chartists were ruthlessly crushed by the English forces of law and order 'doesn't fit the evidence'.

So it goes on. The wretched Foot calls the summer of 1972 'glorious' because it was when trade union militants began to get the better of Ted Heath. Hurd retorts that he remembers the year 1972 as 'the most politically miserable of my working life'. So why does he bother to review this book? He can't need the fee surely.

Enraged, I raise my eyes from Hurd's review and find in the one above it on the page (by Graham Robb) the extraordinary statement that most of the book he is reviewing 'has the pointless obscurity of academic prose'. Having written acres of academic prose in my time I am speechless with further anger at this impudence.

Returning to Hurd. He is typical of so many upper class English people. Instead of stamping on the vipers in our midst (such as the wicked Paul Foot) he pats them indulgently on the head. Hasn't he the brains to see how dangerous and destructive these class traitors are? It's a dreadful kind of rot, a dry rot or wet rot, that has warped and finally almost destroyed our fine English traditions. That's why I get so angry about it.