

You cannot know American history without knowing the fight that the Careys and their collaborators carried out. This, Salisbury passionately believed; and he wrote this book to overcome the ignorance that hampers the fight for a sane economic policy today.

Economics

Allen Salisbury, a long-time collaborator of political prisoner Lyndon LaRouche, who passed away in 1992, began the work for his book in the aftermath of the 1977 publication of *The Political Economy of the American Revolution*, a compilation of the work of British, American, and French thinkers who formed the American economic outlook. The central argument of what became known as the *P.E.A.R.* book, was that the United States and its original economic system was based upon the republican commitment to scientific and technological progress for all people.

The *P.E.A.R.* thesis ran directly counter to the popular historical revisionism of the time, which claimed that the American founding fathers were simply greedy planters and businessmen, who wanted to cut Britain out of the profits, and line their own pockets. Among the Black population, these revisionists peddled a Black nationalism which called for a return to African culture and rejection of the role of Black Americans in building the American republic, as reflected in Alex Haley's bestseller, *Roots*.

Salisbury was angry at the stupidity of his fellow Black Americans who fell for the *Roots* line. He plunged himself with gusto into reviving the real story of the fight against slavery, which meant digging out the history of Carey's fight against British free trade.

The protagonists of the American System of political economy had always been against slavery. Franklin had formed a society for the manumission of slaves, and Alexander Hamilton, so often slandered as an oligarchical economist, had formed an anti-slavery society in New York in the mid-1780's. It was their understanding that the creation of a prosperous econ-

omy depended upon providing the conditions for development of the individual creative mind, and that the toleration of any slave society would undermine that development.

The fact was, as the founding fathers and their American System heirs realized clearly, that the British System of economics, expressed through the free trade system of buying cheap and selling dear, both created and maintained slave labor conditions. This was literally true in the colonial South, where British cotton merchants profited off the slave plantation system, and more generally true in all Britain's Third World colonies, such as India. The British system depended upon driving down the price of labor and raw materials, to provide the greatest possible profit.

It was because of Britain's insistence on maintaining the free trade system in the United States, that the Civil War became inevitable. To be truthful, the Civil War should be called, as Salisbury says, the Second War between Britain and the United States.

Relevance Today

Today it is the International Monetary Fund (IMF), supported by a host of other international financial institu-

tions, which has taken over the role of the British Empire of the eighteenth century. Behind the IMF is a host of international bankers and cartels, who profit from the imposition of free trade.

Therefore, today, just as Carey said in the nineteenth century, the free traders literally reduce nations to starvation, in order to get all the advantages of the "free market." The American System measures of tariffs, internal improvements, and national banking, are virtually outlawed.

But to wage an effective fight against the IMF, it is necessary to understand the successful war waged by Abraham Lincoln in the 1860's, and also the means by which his faction was later defeated. This, author Salisbury presents in his Introduction to the compilation of excerpts. Given the devastation wreaked throughout today's world by the oligarchy's free trade dogma, the truth of Salisbury's introductory conclusion may now be as clear to others as it was to him when he first penned it in 1978:

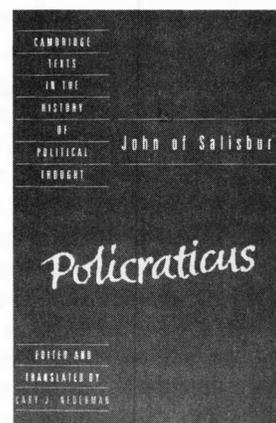
"If the American System is not now restored, adherence to British economic policy threatens to plunge the nation and the world into themonuclear disaster."

—Nancy B. Spannaus

Some Early Ideas of A Christian Republic

I first came across mention of John of Salisbury, the twelfth-century secretary to Thomas à Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury during a research project into Louis XI of France, the fifteenth-century founder of the modern republican nation-state. Neither man is very familiar, unfortunately, although both are important to the ideas that evolved around the construction of what can best be described as a "Christian republic."

John of Salisbury lived in a time of political turmoil and great intellectual ferment. Born in the early twelfth cen-



Policraticus
by John of Salisbury
edited and translated
by Cary J. Nederman
Cambridge University Press,
New York, 1990
240 pages, hardbound, \$49.95;
paperbound, \$15.95

tury, he studied at Paris under Peter Abelard, Thierry of Chartres, William of Conches, and others. Returning to England, he joined the court of Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury in 1147, where he came into contact with another member of the staff, Thomas à Becket. This book was written to Becket in 1156-57, at a time when Salisbury had been banished from the archiepiscopal court on orders of King Henry II (Plantagenet), and Becket had become the King's chancellor.

In the fifteenth century, at the beginning of the Renaissance—which revived debate over the roles of Church and State—Salisbury's writings were closely studied. Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini (later Pope Pius II), the ally of Nicolaus of Cusa, featured Salisbury in his *De liberorum educatione*; Thomas More is widely believed to have drawn inspiration for his *Utopia* from the works of the twelfth-century thinker.

Policraticus is one of the earliest, if not the first, explicit treatises on the constitution of a republic in Christian times, which addresses how the different responsibilities of each of the republic's elements—the king, the clergy, the military, the ministers, and the working class—must function to the mutual benefit of all.

Salisbury posits a "divine right" of kings—although he does not use that term as such—which is very different from the oligarchical absolute right, derived from the Roman emperors, which we associate with the term today. Instead, Salisbury develops the idea that the king is the image of the divine Lord, Whose works are good and to Whom one owes obedience.

Since the king is not himself divine, Salisbury argues, he must strive to do that good which will most advance the body politic. Nonetheless, as is the case with obedience to God, obedience to the king is not conditioned upon the king's actions; although obedience must be an act of free will. Salisbury makes much use of the metaphor of the organic body, both to draw out the analogy of functions, and to inject some quite humorous elements, with respect to some of the more bureau-

cratic functionaries within the political "body."

Against Tyranny

Salisbury draws a great deal on Roman sources—Ovid, Cicero, Plutarch, Vegetius—but does not neglect the Church Fathers nor references to Plato and Homer (the latter two were extremely rare and, at best, in translation). Nearly a third of his book, the section on the military defense of the republic, heavily cites a work by Plutarch—the *Instruction of Trajan*—which editor/translator Cary Niderman believes to be apocryphal, as there are no references to this work predating Salisbury's, and all subsequent references base themselves on the discussion in *Policraticus*.

Book VIII, which begins and ends with an attack on the Epicureans, includes Salisbury's application of the doctrine of just war to the appropriate treatment of a tyrant, an issue whose conflicting concerns *Fidelio* readers who are familiar with Schiller's play *Wilhelm Tell* will find particularly interesting.

Salisbury begins his polemic by distinguishing the tyrant from the prince and, in the same chapter, addresses the clergy—which are also capable of a kind of tyranny—by making the distinction "in what way a shepherd, a thief, and an employee differ from one another." Focusing on the difference between the prince and the tyrant, he writes: "[T]he law is a gift of God, the likeness of equity, and norm of justice, and image of the divine will. . . . The prince fights for the laws and liberty of the people; and the tyrant supposes that nothing is done unless the laws are canceled and the people brought into servitude. The prince is a sort of image of divinity, and the tyrant is an image of the strength of the Adversary and the depravity of Lucifer."

Citing Scripture, Salisbury warns that, while tyrants may justly be killed, they may also have been imposed on peoples as punishment for sin: "[A]s the history of Judges narrates, the children of Israel were repeatedly enslaved under tyrants. They were afflicted at many and various times according to

divine dispensation, and they were often freed by crying out loud to the Lord." However, of those who slew a tyrant, he says: "Not a single one of those, by whose virtues a penitent and humble people was liberated, is to be censured, but the memory of posterity is to recall them favorably as ministers of God." Salisbury cites as an example, Judith's killing of Holofernes: "[She] destroyed his cruelty with the weapons of charity for the liberation of her people."

Although recognizing Judith's bravery, Salisbury nonetheless argues that "tyrants are to be removed from the community, but . . . they are to be removed without loss to religion and honor." He recommends the example of King David: "Although he enjoyed frequent opportunities to destroy the tyrant [King Saul], David still preferred to spare him, trusting in the compassion of God who could free him without sin. He therefore decided to wait patiently to the end, that the tyrant might be visited by God with a return to chastity or might fall in battle."

Pursuit of Truth

In his last chapter, Salisbury returns to his polemic against the Epicureans, by showing how the pursuit of that which is truly most pleasing, and which therefore confers the greatest happiness, must be the pursuit of that which is most good. This pursuit prevents one from being tyrannized by one's appetites, and hence becoming incapable of resisting external tyrannies.

Salisbury addresses Becket directly: "[T]o those who grieve, Truth, which neither deceives nor is deceived, promises true happiness in return. And one is not to be afraid to extend a hand towards the tree of knowledge of good and evil on account of the example of the first prohibition. . . . [For] in the tree of knowledge is found a certain branch of virtue, through which the whole life of man as he progresses is consecrated. No one, except for him who extends the branch of virtue cut from the tree of knowledge, may return by other means to the Creator of life, namely God."

—Katherine R. Notley