Dean Godson is the director of Policy Exchange, a United Kingdom think-tank.[1] He attended St Paul's School and is a graduate of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge.

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### Background

Godson's family has a history of involvement in covert action. His father Joseph Godson was a follower of Jay Lovestone, the ex-communist trade union leader who ran an international network for the CIA's James Angleton. During his tenure as US Labour attaché in London, Godson Snr was involved in an attempt to expel Aneurin Bevan from the Labour Party.[2]

His elder brother Roy Godson is an expert on covert action and disinformation[3], who was involved in the Iran-Contra Affair.[4] As director of the International Labor Program at Georgetown University in Washington DC., Roy organized "educational visits" for British trade unionists to visit the U.S. during the Reagan administration "to broaden international education about Western democratic values."[5]

Godson's writings have often alluded to this background, for example his familiarity with figures from the right-wing of the postwar labour movement like Frank Chapple[6] and Ray Gunter[7]

### Career

- 1983-1984, Special Assistant to John Lehman, Secretary of US Navy
- 1985-6
- 1987-1989 Research Fellow, Institute for European Defence and Strategic Studies (erroneously noted as the Institute for Defence and Strategic Studies by the BBC - no such organisation existed in the UK, and Godson is listed as a Research fellow in IEDSS publications in 1988)[8]
- 1987 publishes a study on public diplomacy with the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis in the US.
- 1990-92 Librarian to Sir James Goldsmith,
- 1997 "Currently, Mr. Godson serves as the Chief Editorial writer of the Daily Telegraph, the Associate Editor of the Spectator and Special Assistant to Conrad Black.[9]"
His political career includes Joint Deputy Chairman of Kensington and Chelsea Conservative Association. 
2004 He is the author of *Himself Alone: David Trimble and the Ordeal of Ulster Unionism.*
After his departure from Hollinger, he has been the Research Director of the Policy Exchange, a neo-conservative think tank.

1983-84 John Lehman

During 1983-84, Godson served as Special Assistant the the US Secretary of the Navy, John Lehman, who would later become a signatory of the neoconservative Project for a New American Century.

1987 SDI

In 1987, Godson published *SDI: Has America Told Her Story to the World,* a report of the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis Panel on Public Diplomacy. At the time of the printing of the pamphlet in April 1987 Godson was listed as being based in Cambridge Massachusetts. Dedicating the report to his father Joe Godson ‘who told the story’, Godson sets out an analysis of the challenges facing the US administration to try and sell a defence technology regarded as something of a joke in Western Europe. In the conclusions there are four sections focussing on how best to tell the story inn the US, France, Germany and the UK. These conclusions provide a reasonable blueprint for the kinds of propaganda campaigns Godson would subsequently wage as both a journalist and think tank director. It is thus worth examining them at length.

How to run a propaganda campaign in Britain

In the section on A British Perspective, Godson writes:

>The United States is suffering from a long-term negative image in Great Britain associated with President Reagan's reputation for unpredictability... The most that can be expected from the Thatcher Government, therefore, is an attempt to take the credit for contracts that come Britain's way in economically hard times, while public opinion, in the absence of proper educational programs, will continue to drift, and possibly turn hostile - particularly if the Geneva arms talks are seen to be failing because of U.S. "obduracy" on SDI... This is exacerbated by alienation among traditional supporters:

Moreover... the United States cannot count upon the "core" constituency which carried NATO to victory during the INF dispute. The strategic community, as represented by such figures as Professors Sir Michael Howard and Lawrence Freedman, and Admiral Sir James Eberle (of Chatham House), are not uncritical of the President's vision. Likewise, the Daily Telegraph has been somewhat skeptical about the program, echoing the concerns of senior figures such as Francis Pym, Edward Heath, and the vast majority of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), which, of course, broke with the Labour Party over its anti-defense posture... Thus, for the time being, SDI is supported in Britain by a small group of Conservative-connected individuals, such as Thatcher "advisor" David Hart and the outgoing M.P. for Torbay, Sir Frederic Bennett. The Times remains a major advocate of SDI, as envisaged by President Reagan, although the enthusiasm it displayed under the editorship of the late Charles Douglas-Home has slightly cooled.

'Thus', argued Godson 'the United States and her "proxy forces" in the United Kingdom must address' a number of the issues, 'with speed and assiduity'. These included - according to Godson -

- concern that what remains of British influence in the world will be further diminished.
- The notion that the proposed SDI system is not fool proof.
- The desire, as constantly expressed by Neil Kinnock and Denis Healey, among others, not to seem to be "toadying" to the Americans.
- The perception of the apocalyptic, moralizing, and futuristic nature of the President's proposal.
- the notion that British business is going to receive mere crumbs from the SDI pie.

'In terms of responding to the above-mentioned concerns of the British regarding SDI, the U.S. mission has been less visible than it might have been, wrote Godson. He even quotes Richard Perle as saying that 'Great Britain has become a prime target for Soviet propaganda and seduction'. Godson's dire and preposterous diagnosis, which panders to the Western propagandists who see all opposition to US power as indications of communist influence, leads to his remedy - more propaganda.

In spite of this bleak picture, there exist several persons and groups, hitherto uncoordinated, who, if amenable, could form the spearhead of an indigenous Public Diplomacy program. With the image of the United States perhaps at its lowest point in years, SDI will not achieve the comprehension to which it is entitled if it does not gain the support of at least some of the following individuals and groups:

- An elder statesman (perhaps Lord Home?) might be persuaded to head up a major campaign.
- A key centrist figure, who is not opposed to SDI research, possibly in the SDP/Liberal Alliance, might be persuaded to support the program. Many of the leading Alliance figures are instinctive Atlanticists who want to be seen as people who can think up "new ideas" to escape from the dilemma of the nuclear age. SDI could be the vehicle for doing it.
- The Labour Committee for Trans-Atlantic Understanding, the last remain-ing group of Labour Party and trade union officials organized to support NATO on security questions.
The "strategic" and academic communities—such as Lord Thomas, Gerald Frost, and Lord Chalfont. The scientific community involved in SDI research—such as Professor Manny Lehman of Imperial College London, who could form a "Scientists for SDI" Committee. The business community—such as ThornEMI, Racal, Plessey, Marconi.[13]

Here we have a blueprint for Atlanticist destabilisation of democratic politics in the UK - one rolled out by the Atlanticists in the 1980s and very much the currency for dealing with the alleged war against 'islamofascism' in the contemporary period.

1987-89 IEDSS

Research Fellow, Institute for European Defence and Strategic Studies (erroneously noted as the Institute for Defence and Strategic Studies by the BBC - no such organisation existed in the UK, and Godson is listed as a Research fellow in IEDSS publications in 1988).[14]

1990-92 James Goldsmith

According to his BBC biography, Godson was librarian to Sir James Goldsmith from 1990-1992[14]

Conservative Party

In 1995 the Guardian reported on the '21st Century Tories':

From the outside it is not always easy to see the novelty in the various mutations of conservative thinking that well-up out of the party's troubles. Successive generations of young Tory thinkers appear much the same - well spoken Oxbridge graduates, astrgh with the decline of Britain and the conservative establishment. Is there anything really so new about Roberta, or indeed Matthew D’Ancona (Times and Fellow of All Souls), Niall Ferguson (Telegraph and Don at Jesus College, Oxford), Michael Gove (BBC and former president of the Oxford Union), Anne Applebaum (Yale and deputy editor of the Spectator), Paul Goodman (Telegraph and former chairman of the Federation of Conservative Students) and Dean Godson (Telegraph)?

Well, yes. The first obvious distinction is that its members come from widely different backgrounds and that most of them were literally children of the sixties. Gove and D’Ancona were products of standard middle-class families and although Roberta has the whiff of the grand Tory about him, he picks his friends, according to one of The Group, "to find the same mindset and congenial companions, rather than attempt to create a young England clique". Most of them have links with, or were at, Oxford - unlike their predecessors in the seventies who had strong connections with Peterhouse College, Cambridge. Quite a number are Jewish - Goodman, Godson, Applebaum and Danny Finkelstein, who was originally a member of the SDP but is now regarded by his friends as veering rapidly to the right. "One thing you can say about us," said Roberts, "is that we are extremely philo-semitic."

There are other members - banker Oliver Letwin, Steve Hilton who used to work for Saatchi & Saatchi and is now a prospective Tory candidate, Sheila Lawlor, an historian and education expert for the Centre for Policy Studies and Martin Ivens of the Times. The important thing is that most of them met after university and have come to know each other because of the congruity of their views. In this sense, The Group is a network which is spread through history departments, journalism, advertising and, in one instance, radio. As you would expect its main outlets are The Times, but more important is the Telegraph Group, which also includes the Spectator.[15]

In the 1997 election Godson stood for the Conservatives in Great Grimsby East:

Great Grimsby E 65,043 V 43,096 (66.3%) Austin Mitchell (Lab) 25,765 Dean Godson (C) 9,521 Andrew De Freitas (LD) 7,810 Lab hold Maj 16,244 Swing 11.5% from C to Lab 1992: Lab 25,895; C 18,391; LD 6,475[16]

By this stage Godson's political career included serving as Joint Deputy Chairman of Kensington and Chelsea Conservative Association.[17]

Hollinger

Godson, who was Conrad Black's Personal Assistant was part of the process of moving the Telegraph towards Black's right wing views. According to Tom Bower, Godson was one of a group of "chosen intellectual journalists", who welcomed Black's interference with the Telegraph's editorial policies under Max Hastings.[18]

Godson was initially a feature and profile writer for the Sunday Telegraph before becoming chief leader writer of the Daily Telegraph under the patronage of Charles Moore.[19] Here is a report from 1996:

hope that Moore, who was the prototype young fogey in his youth, would turn into a traditional fat-bottomed Conservative in his middle years was forlorn. Among his first moves was to import from the Sunday paper his two favourite leader writers, Paul Goodman and Dean Godson, whose style was vigorous, amusingly arch and very right-wing. The views of the couple (who swiftly came to be irreverently known as Pearl and Dean) opened up a gap between the new and old Telegraph camps. "I know that you think we're a bunch of homosexual fuckwits," said Moore to the paper's news editor David Sapsted, a robust hard newsman of the old school, "but we know what we're doing."

The result is a much closer reflection of the hard-right views of the Telegraph proprietor, the Canadian media magnate Conrad Black. This is what might have been expected. When Black bought the Jerusalem Post he turned its editorial policy on its head, transforming the line of the leading Israeli paper from a dove-ish to a hawkish one virtually overnight. The views
in yesterday's leader - "cutting taxes, including capital taxes, and spending so that Labour would either limp behind them or be forced out into the open and declare its tax-and-spend philosophy" and abandoning the vision of Europe embodied not just in the single currency but in the whole of the Maastricht treaty - were pure Black.[20]

**Departure from Hollinger**

Muffled, loony-bin sounds emanate from the leader writers' enclave at The Daily Telegraph, where new editor Martin Newland is baffled by the political eggheads he inherited from Charles Moore. During a meeting last week about the Tory leadership, Newland watched in despair as trad-Tory Daniel Johnson enthused about Iain Duncan Smith while Jewish-American neo-Conservative Dean Godson thundered that IDS was useless. Eventually an exasperated Newland ordered both men to be quiet and gave the piece to rising star Philip Johnston.

It was a lively week for Godson, who is seen as Conrad Black's favourite commissar. He was sent "almost ballistic" (to quote one witness) by a Spectator article in favour of Malaysia's anti-Jewish prime minister, Mahathir Mohamad.

Godson was so angry that, according to one source, he threatened to resign as an associate editor of the Spec. The piece, by Independent hack Sholto Byrnes, was duly attacked in a huge Telegraph leader the following day.

Spectator editor Boris Johnson hopes he can still calm down Godson. "I love him like a brother," says Boris. "Diplomatic relations are still open."

Godson left The Telegraph after Conrad Black lost control of the paper in 2004.

Young fogey Dean Godson, one of Conrad Black's favourite leader writers at the Telegraph, has had his contract terminated shortly after Black's legal war with parent company Hollinger International began. Strangely, Godson, who is great mates with Boris Johnson and often sports an India Jones-style hat, is still turning up at the office, to the bemusement of fellow journalists. "He was definitely booted out but he has either not noticed or he's coming in and using the reference library," says our Telegraph mole. Whether the Barclay brothers will take pity on him and allow him to stay remains to be seen.[21]

In the acknowledgements to his June 2004 biography of David Trimble, Godson expressed his thanks to Hollinger International directors Conrad Black, Barbara Amiel and Dan Colson. The three were being sued by the company at the time over the alleged diversion of £391 million between 1997 and 2003.[24]

Later that year, editor Martin Newland said:

"I soon came to recognise we were speaking a language on geopolitical events and even domestic events that was dictated too much from across the Atlantic. It's OK to be pro-Israel, not to be unbelievably pro-Likud Israel, it's OK to be pro-American but not look as if you're taking instructions from Washington. Dean Godson and Barbara Amiel were key departures."[25]

**Policy Exchange**

Godson subsequently became a research director specialising in terrorism and security and International issues at the conservative-leaning think-tank Policy Exchange, which is chaired by his former Telegraph editor Charles Moore.[26]

In July 2006, Godson sponsored the publication of 'When Progressives Treat with Reactionaries' by Martin Bright. The pamphlet accused the British Government of "pursuing a policy of appeasement towards radical Islam that could have grave consequences for Britain" though the Foreign Office's Engaging with the Islamic World Group and the Government's engagement with the Muslim Council of Britain.[27] It included a series of documents leaked by civil servant Derek Pasquill,[28] Policy Exchange has claimed[29] that this pamphlet influenced Communities Secretary Ruth Kelly to change the Government's relations with Muslim organisations.[30]

In June 2007, Godson sponsored the publication of 'Learning from Experience', the text of a lecture by Peter Clarke of Metropolitan Police Counter-Terrorism Command, in memory of Colin Cramphorn, with an appendix by Sir Ronnie Flanagan.[31]

In September 2007 he oversaw the publication of 'Islam in Australia, Democratic bipartisanship in action', by Gerard Henderson of the Sydney Institute.[32]

In October 2007, Godson oversaw the publication of The Hijacking of British Islam: How Extremist Literature is Subverting Mosques in the UK, by Denis MacEoin.[33] According to this report, which claimed to be 'the most comprehensive academic survey of such literature ever produced in this country', Policy Exchange sent four Muslim research teams to almost 100 mosques across Britain, and found radical material at 25 per cent of the institutions surveyed.[34] The Report's recommendations included calls for the British authorities to reconsider their relationship to the Muslim Council of Britain, the Islamic Foundation and the Muslim Safety Forum.[35]

The report's findings were widely covered in the British media with articles appearing in, for example, The Daily Mail,[36] the Daily Telegraph[37] and The Times.[38] According to Newsnight editor Peter Barron, the BBC had originally been due to run an exclusive report on the findings:

On the planned day of broadcast our reporter Richard Watson came to me and said he had a problem. He had put the claim and shown a receipt to one of the mosques mentioned in the report - The Muslim Cultural Heritage Centre in London. They had immediately denied selling the book and said the receipt was not theirs.[39]
On closer examination, the BBC identified particular concerns about five of the receipts in particular:

1. In all five cases the mosques involved said the receipts did not belong to them.
2. The expert analysis showed that all five had been printed on an inkjet printer - suggesting they were created on a PC.
3. The analysis found "strong evidence" that two of the receipts were written by the same person.
4. The analysis found that one of the receipts had been written out while resting on another receipt said to be from a mosque 40 miles away.[40]

On 12 December 2007, Newsnight ran a report on these concerns, followed by a studio discussion between Jeremy Paxman and Dean Godson, during which Godson accused Barron of disastrous editorial misjudgement" and of "appalling stewardship of Newsnight". [41]

An initial statement on 12 December, 'the executive of Policy Exchange will meet on Thursday 13th to discuss legal action against the BBC'.[42] A second response the next day stated that 'Policy Exchange is in legal consultations about action in this matter.'[43] The BBC responded: ‘Policy Exchange’s statement is misleading in many ways and doesn’t answer the simple question raised by Newsnight’s film. Given that the Policy Exchange report was based on the testimony of the researchers who gathered the receipts, do they believe all the receipts are genuine?’[44]

In the Daily Telegraph on 15 December, Policy Exchange Chairman Charles Moore accused Peter Barron of questioning the receipts in order to justify his original decision not to run the report.

Given that the report was being published that night, the obvious thing for Newsnight to do was to broadcast Policy Exchange’s findings at once, allowing the mosques to have their say about the receipts.

There was no need for Newsnight to claim "ownership" of the report. Instead, the editor, Peter Barron, decided to run nothing. His decision meant the Policy Exchange report was not touched by the BBC at all.[45]

On 17 December, The Times issued an apology to Dr Muhammad Abdul Bari of the East London Mosque in connection with its coverage of the report.[46]

In February 2008, Private Eye reported that 'furious Conservatives say they’ve no option but to sue or take a dossier on Peter Barron, Newsnight’s editor, to the BBC’s senior management.’[47] In a letter in the following issue, Barron responded ‘Policy Exchange promised to investigate these discrepancies, but two months later they have still not said if they believe these receipts are genuine.’[48]

In late January 2013, Godson was appointed the Director of Policy Exchange, in succession to Neil O’Brien who had become a special adviser to George Osborne.[49]

Views

On British Islam

In an April 2006 Times article Godson called for a new war of ideas against radical Islam, citing British and American covert operations as precedents.

During the Cold War, organisations such as the Information Research Department of the Foreign Office would assert the superiority of the West over its totalitarian rivals. And magazines such as Encounter did hand-to-hand combat with Soviet fellow travellers. For any kind of truly moderate Islam to flourish, we need first to recapture our own self-confidence. At the moment, the extremists largely have the field to themselves.[50]

Godson’s approach to fighting radical Islam has significant parallels with a US Department of Defense proposal from 2002.

The Defense Department is considering issuing a secret directive to the American military to conduct covert operations aimed at influencing public opinion and policy makers in friendly and neutral countries, senior Pentagon and administration officials say...

...Such a program, for example, could include efforts to discredit and undermine the influence of mosques and religious schools that have become breeding grounds for Islamic militancy and anti-Americanism across the Middle East, Asia and Europe.[51]

Godson’s campaign against any engagement with Islamist political movements had already led him led to focus on a broad range of institutions.

In August 2005, he criticised the Home Office report Preventing Extremism Together:

One panellist, Tariq Ramadan, is a case in point. This grandson of the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood once had his visa revoked in America and was once kept out of France — but is most welcome here. Based at Oxford, he has become the pin-up boy for elements of the Met’s Specialist Operations department. He opposes violence yet he intervened on the task force to ensure that Salafist ideology was not condemned.[52]

In November 2005, Godson accused Shadow Home Secretary David Davis of entering "into a kind of Molotov-Ribbentrop pact with the do-gooding classes and Campaign Group crusties to dilute key elements of the Government’s response to the 7/7 suicide attacks.’[53]

In February 2006, he accused part of the Metropolitan Police of "a kind of ideological “Stockholm syndrome.”
In December 2005, Godson accused the US ambassador to London of incoherence over US Policy towards Syria:

In September 2005, Godson considered the possibility of regime change in Syria:

In March 2005, Godson suggested

Unionists and the Israelis.

good excuses to go back “to war.” That process, of depriving the insurgents of “excuses,” inevitably comes at the expense of

Center for Public Affairs

In October 2004, Godson wrote a study of the ‘Lessons from Northern Ireland for the Arab-Israeli conflict’ for the

On the Middle East

In August 2007, Godson asked:

In February 2008, Godson defended the bugging of MP Sadiq Khan:

On the Middle East

In October 2004, Godson wrote a study of the ‘Lessons from Northern Ireland for the Arab-Israeli conflict’ for the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs which argued that the British “believe that the IRA, like the Palestinians, has a great number of very good excuses to go back “to war.” That process, of depriving the insurgents of “excuses,” inevitably comes at the expense of Unionists and the Israelis.”

In March 2005, Godson suggested Hezbollah was losing support in Lebanon because of ties to the Syrian Government:

In September 2005, Godson considered the possibility of regime change in Syria:

In December 2005, Godson accused the US ambassador to London of incoherence over US Policy towards Syria:

Then there are the career State Department “professionals” under Mr Tuttle. The trouble with too many of them is that they do not conceive their role as aggressively promoting the policy of any administration. Privately, precious few of this disproportionately liberal cadre have much good to say about the Bush agenda.

Certainly, there are many who do sterling work in the embassy’s specialist services, such as Customs. But when it comes to political warfare, American diplomats couldn’t organise panic on a doomed submarine...

...Unintentionally, Mr Tuttle has shed renewed light upon the enduring, unresolved contradictions in US grand strategy
towards the region: whom has America really been at war with since 9/11?

Much of the career bureaucracy at the State Department and the CIA held that al-Qaeda was an autonomous entity, largely independent from control of any state. [64]

Godson has praised the scholarship of Bernard Lewis:

How democracy is implemented is critical to him: unlike much of the Administration, he believes that free elections should be the culmination of the reform process, rather than the starting point (as shown by the ballots in Egypt and Palestine that have strengthened anti-democratic Islamists). Democracy, he contends, needs to be introduced “like an antibiotic — drip-drip, or else it kills the patient”. [65]

He has criticised Alistair Crooke’s call for negotiations with Hamas:

Crooke and Oatley are the products of late-imperial British defeatism: an era when the main issue was the terms on which to exit the colonies. That is why the self-confident liberal interventionism of the American neoconservatives poses such a stark challenge. But America, whose decline is far from assured, should tread carefully before embracing the mindset of a country at a different phase in its existence. [66]

Following Israel’s failed campaign in Lebanon in 2006, Godson predicted that Israelis might turn to former chief of staff Moshe Yaalon for political leadership.

General Yaalon, a Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, has so far been almost as cryptic about his intentions as General Eisenhower was before being drafted to run for the US presidency in 1952. If he wins power, it will be by constitutional means rather than by a military coup — unlike almost everywhere else in the Middle East. But in the current climate in Europe, don’t expect anyone to give the Israeli political system much credit for that. [67]

On Iraq

Godson has defended the record of Ahmad Chalabi in Iraq:

He seemed to have fallen spectacularly from grace last May, when his offices were raided by American security forces after allegations that he had informed the Iranians that the US had broken some of their secret codes.

This reflected a longrunning grudge held against him by the British and American foreign policy establishments, who are inveterate foes of the neoconservatives’ Wilsonian vision for the region. [68]

In May 2005, he questioned Paul Bremer’s decision to reverse the policy of ‘de-ba’athification’ in the armed forces.

Much of the debate in Washington has been fought out between neoconservative proponents of democracy, concentrated at the Pentagon and the office of the vice-president and “realists” at the state department and the CIA. [69]

Godson has defended the role of the neoconservative ‘Pentagon civilians’ in planning the Iraq War:

What about the postwar period? General Jack Keane, the Army Vice-Chief of Staff during this critical period, told me that it was just as much the military’s responsibility to anticipate the insurgency, if not more so. “We had no plans for that”, he said.

“It was our fault, not Donald Rumsfeld’s.” [70]

He has also contested the view that the war was a failure:

Many years hence, will Iraq come to be viewed in the same light? From 2005, the jihadi world was riven by a dispute between al-Qaeda’s Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and his mentor, Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi. Al-Maqdisi stated that al-Zarqawi’s priorities were askew. Iraq was the wrong war, at the wrong place, at the wrong time. It was rapidly becoming a “crematory” for the flower of Islamist youth. No energies were left for wider Islamist revolution elsewhere in the region. [71]

On Iran

In May 2005, Godson suggested that “the option of making massive political mischief for the regime has never been fully developed”, putting forward former Revolutionary Guards commander Mohsen Sazgara as a key opposition figure.

It was a significant straw in the wind that the US State Department recently gave Sazgara a visa to take up a fellowship at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. [72]

During the 2005 Iranian presidential election, Godson attacked suggestions Hashemi Rafsanjani was a moderate within the Iranian establishment.

Lt-Col Oliver North et al tried to exploit those alleged fissures in what emerged as the Iran-Contra scandal of 1986 — and was rightly derided for entering the snake pit with insufficient knowledge. [73]

This analogy is particularly interesting, given the role of his elder brother, Roy Godson, in the Iran-Contra affair.

Godson criticised St Andrews University for awarding an honorary degree to former Iranian president Mohammad Khatami. [74]

On Ireland

Godson’s friend David Frum has written that for many years “Dean kept pointing out that the Israeli, Colombian, and Irish processes all shared a dangerous defect: They were attempts to make peace with terrorist adversaries who were not sincerely committed to peace.” [75]
In January 2008, Godson criticised the British Government's proposals for dealing with the legacy of the conflict: “We didn't win in Northern Ireland because we didn't want to win—not least because we didn't know our own history.”

In the same month, Godson claimed that “we didn’t win in Northern Ireland because we didn’t want to win—not least because we didn’t know our own history.”

In November 2006, Godson highlighted opposition to a power-sharing deal in the Free Presbyterian Church: “A senior minister, the Rev Ivan Foster, has led a chorus who abhor the moral compromises inherent in sharing office with Sinn Fein/IRA.”

In March 2007, Godson criticised Ian Paisley for his willingness to do a deal with Sinn Fein. “For years, officials have smirkingly counted upon the defeatism, vanity and venality of much of the Unionist political class to push through a project of creeping condominium with the Republic. But who would have thought that Ian Paisley, the ultimate “honest bigot”, would turn out to be their last card?”

In June 2007, Godson backed calls for the Labour Party to organise in Northern Ireland.

Godson declared his admiration for Conor Cruise O'Brien on the occasion of the latter's 90th birthday: O'Brien became a hate figure among republicans and civil libertarians for his modernisation of Section 31 of the old Broadcasting Act giving the Government the right to ban paramilitaries from the airwaves; it was precisely at times of heightened tribal consciousness, he argued, that restrictions on speech were necessary.

In the same month, Godson claimed that “we didn’t win in Northern Ireland because we didn’t want to win—not least because we didn’t know our own history.” This claim came in a Prospect article that brought a critical response from Professor Sean Swan of Gonzaga University.

In January 2008, Godson criticised the British Government's proposals for dealing with the legacy of the conflict:
Following Ian Paisley’s decision to step down as Northern Ireland First Minister, Godson wrote that ‘the newer cadres in the DUP may calculate that an enfeebled Mr Paisley was all that stood between them and “50 years of cross-community misrule”. They may turn out to be just as disappointed.’

**On Freedom of Information**

Godson supported Conservative MP David Maclean’s bill to exempt MPs from the Freedom of Information Act:

Neither side in this debate has yet secured a knockout blow. But there is far more to this than the simplistic notion that MPs are featherbedding their nests. More “open” government is not necessarily better government.

**On Migration**

Godson has praised Sir Andrew Green and MigrationWatch as an example of a successful thinktank:

Ralph Harris and Arthur Seldon, of the Institute of Economic Affairs, one of the most successful think-tanks of all time, laboured in the vineyards for nearly 30 years before their faith in the free market became accepted. Yet MigrationWatch has managed to “mainstream” the case for a much tougher immigration policy in less than five years.

...Sir Andrew’s current career shows that if the people are to have their way, the struggle must first be prosecuted via “insiderist” strategies within the elites. Not for him the trahison des clercs.

**On the Routemaster**

In October 2005, Policy Exchange published Replacing the Routemaster, a pamphlet attacking London Mayor’s Ken Livingstone decision to replace London's traditional Routemaster buses with the modern ‘bendy bus’ design. Edited by Godson, the pamphlet also included contributions from Simon Jenkins, Andrew Gilligan, Andrew Morgan, Dominic Walley, Zac Goldsmith, Colin Cramphorn, Kate Bernard and Kate Hoey.

Boris Johnson subsequently made the return of the Routemaster a key plank of his Conservative campaign for the 2008 London Mayoral election.

**Connections**

Godson was best man when James Barnard married into the Guinness family in 1995:

GUINNESS and Guinesses alike were at abundance in London's Claridges Hotel last Monday evening, brought together for a rare family celebration. For once, it wasn't a board meeting but a wedding that saw so many members of the extensive clan converge on the one place, as Lady Emma Guinness married barrister James Barnard. The couple first met early in 1993, brought together by a mutual love of music; Lady Emma plays the piano and is currently taking singing lessons.

Eldest child of the late Earl of Iveagh, who died three and a half years ago, the bride wore a dark green velvet suit from Belville Sassoon for the earlier part of the day, which was marked by three separate ceremonies. After going first to the Kensington/Chelsea registry office, the party moved on to Rut land Gate's Kent House synagogue (the groom is Jewish) before an afternoon blessing at St George's, Hanover Square.

Godson's acknowledgements in his biography of David Trimble highlight a wide range of contacts, particularly with Northern Ireland unionists and with American neoconservatives but also more widely. Figures cited include:


Downing Street officials: Sir Rod Lyne, George Bridges, Sir John Holmes, John Sawers, Jonathan Powell, Alistair Campbell Alison Blackshaw, Tom Kelly and Pat McFadden.


Foreign Office officials: Anthony Cary, George Fergusson, Paul Johnston, and Sir Ivor Roberts.

In the US: Blair Hall, Sara Rosenberry, Larry Butler, Dick Norland, Jim Steinberg, and Meghan O'Sullivan. David Trimble’s staff: David Campbell, Graham Gudgin, David Kerr, Steven King, David McNarry, Mark Neale, Barry White and Rodney McCune.


Affiliations

- Joseph Godson, father
- Roy Godson, brother
- Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, Godson has written for it.
- Policy Exchange - Research Director
- Institute for European Defence and Strategic Studies
- Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis
- Prospect Magazine - Contributing Editor

Conferences

- Ninth Herzliya Conference - participant.[99]

Publications, further reading, notes

Publications

- Dean Godson, SDI: Has America Told Her Story to the World?, Pergamon-Brassey's International Defense Publishers (for the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis), 1987. 73 pp. (Special Report.)[100]

Further reading

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- Dean Godson (2006) Why America's Generals Are Out For Revenge: The US top brass are ducking their responsibilities - and beleaguered Donald Rumsfeld is just doing his job, Times April 18.

Notes

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December, 'the executive of Policy Exchange will meet on Thursday 13th to discuss legal action against the BBC'.

Godson accused Barron of 'disastrous editorial misjudgement' and of 'appalling stewardship of Newsnight'. [8]. An initial statement on 12 Newsnight ran a report on these concerns, followed by a studio discussion between Jeremy Paxman and Dean Godson, during which Godson accused Barron of 'disastrous editorial misjudgement' and of 'appalling stewardship of Newsnight'. [8]. An initial statement on 12 December, 'the executive of Policy Exchange will meet on Thursday 13th to discuss legal action against the BBC'.