**Progressive Change Data**

**35 - Haldane**

if I’ve got something to offer you on that front then that’s great and that gives you a degree of- I'll never have hard power in the sense of doing that job or, but the soft power thing, “Here's an idea, here's how we make it happen, can I do something for you on that?” and seeing that pop out, you can do that irrespective of your background. That element of a- It’s a different network, it's not the old boys network, it's not the social circle network.

There’s more of a market for ideas now, slight digression but you know, even politically people are less ideological than they were, they just want stuff that's going to work basically and that's quite lucky for someone like me basically, who essentially is largely apolitical but I've had the thought about one or two things, so I think in some ways those barriers are fewer than they have been.

**George Brock**

RES: I honestly can’t say that I did feel terribly self-conscious about it.  I mean of course I was careful about, I was pleased to be in Who’s Who.  I was careful about how I filled it in but you know I followed a pretty straight style.  I mean I suppose journalist, journalistic experience taught me you know don’t give hostages to fortune.

**INT:** **Yes, yes, yes.**

RES: But I don’t, I can’t remember anymore than that.

**INT:** **No, no, no just, it was just an interesting add on question.  A few other sort of questions that I’m curious about.  I mean do you, I mean some people when we’ve been doing this project would say, “Oh you’re looking at the British elite, that’s what Who’s Who is.”  I’m sort of always curious as to how this term lands right.  I mean it’s very pejorative or very loaded term particularly at the moment in the UK but if someone was to say to you, “Oh you’re part of the British elite” would that be something that jarred for you?  Would it be something that you would reluctantly accept?  Would it be something that you are you know offended by?  What, how would that?**

RES: Well I’d accept it.  I’d accept it with some reluctance because it’s almost certainly going to be used as a pejorative term sooner or later by somebody.  I mean I, I mean I hold views that, I hold the view sorry that broadly speaking societies however plural and however rich the opportunities in them, there will always be some sorting by talent.  I mean that is one force, it’s not the only force.  Of course there are other things that give people status and rank and blah, blah, blah but it always, you will be well aware because of your research of Anthony Sampson’s book about the British elite.  I can’t remember what it was called the one in the 1960s.

**INT:** **Yes the er**

RES: Well whatever.

**INT:** **The Anatomy of, yes.**

RES: The first one anyway. I remember reading it I mean quite a lot of years after it had been written and thinking one of the things as you do as an editor is you watch out for the mismatch of the attention and the words and Sampson’s intention had been to say that there was a stuffy establishment ruling Britain, put crudely.  You read the book and it was plainly obvious that he was describing nothing of the sort. He was describing an extremely porous establishment actually.  Well that was my view, that was my take on the book.  It struck me that it was littered with evidence that contradicted his tone.  It was more tone rather than argument if you see what I mean.

**INT:** **Yes, interesting.**

RES: But his tone was very much you know these people are the elite and brackets you know (they don’t really deserve to be there).

**INT:** **Yes, yes, yes.**

RES: Well the fact was he was describing an elite which was becoming more porous all the time and was already quite porous, in my opinion and so I’ve always thought that the “British elite” in I’d better say this as it’s just audio recording, that’s in inverted commas.

**Bell 62 good on positioning himself against image of Sir Humphrey**

**INT:** **I suppose we’re particularly interested in how people make sense of their success and as I said we’re really wanting an honest sense of that. I mean obviously people talk about various degrees here about various merits or ornate abilities that they think they have you know the role of hard work. Many people talk about the power they think of having a particular advantaged background and I’m just interested in thinking about those types of potential factors and how you would consider your own success.**

RES: Yes that’s a difficult question. I mean one thing which I really liked about the Ministry of Defence was that it was not a kind of band of Sir Humphreys. Interestingly when I joined I was told with pride and this was before the class system was abolished so there was an administrative class an executive class and clerical class. And I was told that half the members of the administrative class the top class had in fact achieved promotion from lower down including a famous Permanent Secretary called Sam Way Richard Way has he occurred on your radar?

**INT:** **No.**

RES: He became Permanent Secretary from joining the clerical class. I met him a couple of times and he was a delightful person very enjoyable. Anyway, so the fact that I’d been at a public school and/or Winchester or Oxford for that matter didn’t matter that much.

**INT:** **How did you feel about revealing that within your career I mean did you talk openly about Winchester or was it something that you sort of – I don’t know I just sorted of interested in what sort of role it played for you, you know something that you were either proud of or quite the opposite in terms of within the Civil Service?**

RES: Well within the Civil Service I never mentioned it and I felt that it was not relevant and still think that. What was important was could I deliver and I personally owe I think a good deal to my education but you know this was not something I talked about. In fact very few well some of my colleagues had been to public schools but not I think that many certainly the most distinguished was my Permanent Secretary Frank Cooper who was an absolutely amazing man I think he was grammar school educated. So I think I would have regarded it as imprudent if nothing else to say listen to me because I’ve been [unclear 00:47:12].

**INT:** **So generally you felt that the Civil Service was pretty meritocratic in terms of your experience of it?**

RES: Absolutely yes I would say that without hesitation.

**1201**

**1202**

**INTERVIEWER:** That's enough. And just to touch on that, do you think there was more circulation between the middle class and an upper class historically, is that – Did I understand that right?

**PARTICIPANT 1:** Well, I think it's, it's more than that. The problem with – if you if you take the aristocracy, the aristocracy could only maintain the position as long as they had their estates and their money. And if they lost that, or if you know, there were too many children, and the younger members kind of dropped away, it was actually very easy for them to lose their social class. And they could decline, big time. And historically, this did happen, that you might have in a couple of generations a movement from, you know, the top edge of society right down to the bottom, because you could discover somebody was a peasant, and a couple of generations before, the family from which he descended, had been or rather, perhaps his grandfather had been at the level of the aristocracy. And you have a similar thing with the middle classes.

**Bradley Fried**

. I think the City has moved on now, it’s much more meritocratic.

**INT: Yes.**

RES: It suits me fine. If it were about clubs, codes or fitting in I would have got nothing. I wouldn’t be at the Bank of England. I certainly wouldn’t be the Chair at the Bank of England because I conform with nothing, nothing. I don’t conform nothing, absolutely nothing. I don’t fit in, I don’t conform, I don’t do what they do. I’m not interested in what they do. It’s of no consequence to me whatsoever.

**INT: Interesting, just**

RES: Nothing.

**INT: I mean do you, I mean I think you alluded to this earlier but I’m inviting you to be immodest here. You know you’ve got to one of the most influential positions in the country, why do you think you have been able to do that? Why you specifically? Is it you know and of course I’m interested in the constellation of different things that people might think of at this point you know whether it’s talent, merit, whether it’s hard work, whether it’s luck, whether it’s elements of knowing the right people and using networks appropriately or even you know elements of kind of having an advantage?**

RES: Yes I think, I think look I don’t have, I don’t have the right name, I don’t have a title, I don’t have form, I don’t have old boys networks. This focus on what I don’t have, I don’t come from Eton, I didn’t go to Oxbridge. I’m a South African undergraduate in school education, I come from the Commonwealth and I had an American Business School education. I have good training in that McKinsey trained me well, I have good experience of running a bank through a financial crisis and running it successfully and trained me well. What do I have going for me? What do I think I have going for me? I work like a dog okay and it is okay I really work hard.

**David Johnson on changes in politics and particularly conservative party**

RES: I think the professionalisation of politics has lessened the importance of those things. So the people I know who are at clubs, members of elite clubs tend to be donors to me or to the party, more than they tend to be my fellow parliamentarians. So, they are much more kind of old money people, they might be new money, but they're people who- Because politicians are constantly trying to pretend they are men of the people, right? So they don't seek out the kind of thing that someone who can trace their family tree back to, you know, Shakespeare or whatever.

**INT: But you might get invited to these clubs?**

RES: Yes, I would be a donor say, let me take you out to lunch, come to …. But I don't think you'd find many people, probably the odd one. Interestingly, there was a quote in the paper last week from a bloke saying, the party used to be about dating clubs, now MPs just want to get money for their constituencies and my partner's said to me, well, and that's kind of the point isn’t it? I do think there's been a shift there and I think the party has probably changed quite a bit. If you think about the three candidates most likely to be in the final three, if we had a leadership- Tomorrow had a leadership contest, the three most likely candidates in the final three will be Rishi Sunak, Liz Truss, Nadhim Zahawi, not a white man among them. Now, Rishi, Winchester, of course, Nadhim, private school, sort of lesser one, of course. But even ten years ago, I don't think you could imagine a white man not being in the final three of a Tory leadership contest, never mind. 20 years ago. I think the change in backgrounds of people coming into politics, which is both good and bad, has lessened that old school thing. That's much more now the environment in which we operate. The people we want money from are members of all those clubs. I'm not sure many of my colleagues are.