

A GOOD MAN IN AFRICA

Many contemporary figures swelled with pride after learning of their inclusion in the BBC's list of the 100 Greatest Britons. Not so Sir Bob Geldof who, at 74, was ranked 18 places above Sir Walter Raleigh.

"I think it's balls. Utterly facile, asinine balls. How can I be on such a list? I've never heard of anything so ridiculous in my life."

Asked about the phenomenon of "compassion fatigue" and why the West should still care about a dirt-poor country seemingly incapable of helping itself, Geldof replied: "Yes, I'm sick of it myself. I'm sick of looking in the mirror at this mournful, lugubrious face. I'm worn out. I don't know how to describe five million starving children any more."

But added: "I'm Irish. It's my duty to attack governments."

When the final story about this Knight is written, it might well emerge that his greatest virtue was to have used his character flaws to do something of real value.

So, President Bush will need a personal guard of 3,000 to protect him in Bangkok. Montague Browne was Churchill's private secretary and recalls a visit to Chequers during Churchill's second stewardship: "One summer afternoon I was working with the Prime Minister, sitting on the lawn - I had gone into the house to fetch a document, and

on returning was surprised to see a dumpy little woman in earnest conversation with the PM. I approached, and heard her say: 'You see Mr Churchill, they control me by radio...'

"Come and tell me about it,' I urged, 'the prime minister is awfully busy.' She followed me docilely. We were pursued by a shout from Churchill.

"No one is to be unkind to her. She is to be given ?1 and a piece of cake and taken home." That piece of cake, the homely touch, is the key; without the cake the remark could have been no more than principled kindness, or mere showing off. Churchill had a canine quality and people don't like letting dogs down. Except around here.

War is bad enough, but now it's even worse. Terrorists have taken all the fun out of it because they have absolutely no sense of humour. In April 1916, the Australian 1st Division had not been in the trenches in France a week when there appeared on the German parapet opposite the 2nd Battalion a signal lamp which flashed in Morse code: "Australians go home." "Go... this morning." "You will be dead after breakfast."

The 2nd flashed back: "Why?" The Germans' fluency was probably limited to a few prepared sentences, and they replied feebly: "We are good."

The 2nd flashed back: "Says who? Your toast is burning."

Motorcycle Helmets



Wearing a helmet when riding a motorbike is required by law in Thailand. As is an international license for the class of vehicle you are driving. As of October 1st the police have been instructed to enforce the law that says all those riding a motorbike must wear a helmet, not just the rider. If you are renting a motorbike and plan to carry a pillion passenger make sure you get two helmets.

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FORMULA ONE 2003

Remaining Races

Suzuka, Japan - 12th
October

MOTO GP

Remaining Races

October 5th - Motegi - Pacific Grand Prix
October 12th - Sepang Circuit
Malaysian Motorcycle Grand Prix
October 19th - Phillip Island
Australian Grand Prix
November 2nd - Comunitat Valenciana
Gran Premio de la Comunitat Valenciana

