

# Newsletter



## A WAY FORWARD ?

The E-AG has often posed itself a challenge so ambitious it would seem almost beyond the wit or capacity of a suffering humanity to remedy: it attempts to offer solutions to large-scale problems of international relations. The cop out from the charge of hubris comes in the form of a weasel word, 'debate'. In that can lie an acceptable half-way house. Every now and again, some shaft of light may be thrown on some intractable question and we will all be the gainers of such an interchange. If those with fingers on the levers of power meet at the E-AG in an atmosphere of informal politeness and friendliness to discuss with informed and intelligent people some solutions of sense and seriousness, that is perhaps as much as can be asked. From this closet of 'realistic humility' the E-AG has - twice over recent months - made a bid to emerge. It is too early to say if solutions substantially unveiled at the E-AG will find their way into the interna-

tional arena but all those present to hear Chief (or 'Tribal elder') Khan may dare yet to hope. In a 'first' at the E-AG, **Ajmal Khan** spoke only at the House of Commons - and not at an ensuing Dinner -Debate - but he did so for over an hour longer than is customary at the E-AG. His pronouncements seemed less than mainstream at the time; now they are echoed from the podia of world statesmen. The E-AG paper on Afghanistan, in which 17 members of the Group collaborated, has perhaps, just perhaps, made a difference. Chief Khan himself has become more and more of a vocal and focal voice in Afghanistan and many are the politicians and diplomats in the West who wish him well.

On Myanmar/ Burma, by comparison, the ideas advanced by one of our speakers might have seemed more opaque, and the mountain for their proponent to climb almost too high, but it was refreshing that the E-AG was able to offer a platform to

one who, here as well, has tried at such personal cost for so long to bring peace and stability to his ravaged homeland.

There are dire challenges in the world that jostle for a top priority and it is heartening to think the E-AG in its way could usefully approach them. **ECOLOGY** is one such potential area in which the Group can engage. There are some who think that alarmists hog this stage, others that doomsday beckons unless a seemly prudence is exercised. All of us however might accept that there are steps to be taken and that the E-AG would be justified, again, in devoting more than one event to the subject, and in compiling a paper with recommendations.

Accordingly, the office would be glad to hear from members with an interest in the subject of Climate Change or who have a contribution to make as regards ecology or alternative energy sources.

### Chief Ajmal Khan

*speaking in the House of Commons at the E-AG*

### Bo Aung Din

### THE E-AG CONSTITUTION

The time is ripe to review the Constitution with a view to bringing its provisions up to date. The document in question has served the Group well over decades though, in fairness, there has been small need for recourse to it. Some might feel that a 'founding document' should attempt to lay down the law for all contingencies, others that a more minimalistic

guide is more suitable to coping with unforeseen exigencies. This latter route is the line that the committee has taken. If members of the E-AG have particular provisions that they wish to suggest, they are asked to contact the office and to submit their proposals in writing so that they can be reviewed by our legal advisers and if accepted put to the next AGM or an EGM.

### SPEAKERS and TOPICS

Members are asked to suggest speakers and topics for the programme. Subjects of burning topicality, speakers who grace the international stage with distinction, ideas or pundits offering a way out of impasses whose exits are currently cloaked from the eyes of decision-makers, proposals like these are grist to the E-AG mill and will elicit avid attention at HQ.





## THE ELMA DANGERFIELD PRIZE

**The book by 2007/8 winner JOHN HALL SPENCER has now been published and members can order a copy by sending the office a cheque for £7.50 being a reduced price (from £9.99).**

*Hitler and the King* lifts the veil on the extraordinary courage of a Royal saviour of the Bulgarian Jews. It was a time when the genocidal assault of the Third Reich threatened their numbers with extinction yet the all of Jews of the Bulgaria survived. It was a unique case

in lands where German hegemony held sway. King Boris was pivotal in devising this solution to stave off the Final Solution.

Beset with dangers, he dared beard Hitler in his *Wolf's Lair*. The King felt his way through a minefield. He used charm and diplomatic cunning against the Nazi military and SS apparatus, and he won. Was Churchill right that Boris was but a weak and vacillating figure ...or was Goebbels closer to the mark in calling him a cun-

ning fox?

This short book seeks to show that Boris has been a greatly underestimated man who masked a true humanitarian intent. It cost him his life. He sought not plaudits even when success smiled in extraordinary degree. Here is a tribute also to the valiant Bulgarians whose deeds are known, and who made Boris's stance possible. It is a timely tale, with Bulgaria welcomed back in the European comity of nations.

## THE EUROPEAN-ATLANTIC JOURNAL

The latest edition of NEW EUROPEAN, the E-A Journal, includes book reviews, papers or texts of speeches to the E-AG. Sir Philip Goodhart in 'A Stab in the Front' draws salutary attention to the way in which political leaders can be prone to mis-

appraise situations, in this case the Suez Crisis; the Europe Question is jostled over by Professor Stephen Haseler and Derek Scott ; Sir Christopher Gent assesses some implications of American-style globalisation; there are articles on politics and religion

or both penned by figures ranging from the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Russian Ambassador. Sir Maurice Shock dispenses 'Advice to a Prime Minister' which in part remains to be adopted but which we can read with profit for £3.00 - sent to the E-AG office

We wish  
members  
of the  
Group a

VERY

MERRIE

CHRISTMAS