

**Reading Section A**

**TEXTS**

**ACCENTS ON RADIO PROGRAMMES**

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|---|---|--|
| <b>Radio 2</b><br>Current news<br>Sports events<br>Concert listings       | <b>Radio 4</b><br>Woman's hour<br>The Archers<br>Programs A – Z     | <b>ABC Live</b><br>News headlines<br>Live music on air<br>Walks and tours          |
| <b>Radio Extra</b><br>Formula 1 update<br>On air schedule<br>Daily review | <b>Radio 1Xtra</b><br>Garage days<br>Hip Hop albums<br>RnB new hits | <b>ABC Music</b><br>Daily music news<br>What's on – clubs and DJ bars<br>Quiz show |

**THE COOK ISLANDS**

The Cook Islands are located in the South Pacific Ocean, between Hawaii to the north and New Zealand to the south-west. Each of the 15 islands in this group offers unusual natural beauty! The main island is not the centre of industry, but tourists will be certainly impressed by its characteristic volcanic mountains, which make it a special place to see.

Don't worry about taking heavy clothes to the Cook Islands, as you will enjoy pleasantly warm days all year round. Lovers of gastronomic experiments should not miss the traditional "umukai" – a dish with a specific flavour because they cook it underground.

It is not difficult to reach this place. Many airlines offer regular flights from Australia to the Cook Islands, so what you have to do is pack your suitcase and go for it.

**A NEW YORK CITY ICON**

The Staten Island Ferry is a service carrying over 19 million passengers annually on a 5-mile run between the St. George Terminal in Staten Island and the Whitehall Terminal in Manhattan. People have been crossing over since 1713. The first steamboat came into operation in 1817 and the Railroad Company ran the ferries until 1905 when the City Department of Sea Transport took in charge. It currently maintains a fleet of seven vessels.

All ferries are employed daily with departures every half-hour during the day and every 15 minutes at rush hours. But on weekends only three boats are used.

On 15-th October 2003 the ferry *Andrew J. Barberi*, which belongs to the same service, was approaching the dock on Staten Island at about 3:20 p.m. when it crashed killing a dozen of people and injuring severely at least 42 others.

## EXERCISE DOGFISH 2004

Seventeen NATO nations provided submarines, Maritime Patrol Aircraft, surface ships and personnel to take part in an exercise code-named DOGFISH 04 from 19 February until 3 March 2004. Usually conducted off Sicily this largest annual anti-submarine warfare (ASW) event got underway 34 years ago. Its purpose is to showcase the Alliance's ability to conduct joint counter-submarine operations.

In relation to the assigned ASW tasks the navy forces were split between two groups, the blue and the gold. Participants were given the chance to exercise the associated NATO procedures against submarines on-station or transiting the designated exercise area. Once contact was made, blue crews passed their information to their "air buddies", which then pursued the enemy. According to the officer conducting the exercise (OCE) located in Naples, Italy at the NATO Headquarters Allied Naval Forces South, when multinational forces operate together in live exercises they benefit immensely from the training.

## NEWS REPORTS

*0. What could possibly be Europe's oldest toothbrush has been unearthed at the site of a former hospital in Minden, Germany. The bristles of the 250 year-old toothbrush have long since rotted away. Cleaning one's teeth first came into fashion in the 18th century among noble houses, when sugar – known for its cavity-inducing characteristics – became a staple of many upper-class homes.*

1. According to a directive released on Tuesday only 63 nations will be allowed to compete for major undertakings to rebuild Iraq's electrical and water systems, the housing, transportation and oil infrastructures. This is how the Pentagon has decided to bar nations that did not support the war in Iraq from bidding on one of the most ambitious reconstruction projects since the end of World War II.

2. The grazing grounds and livelihoods of more than 50,000 herdsmen on the Hulun Buir Plain, north China's Region, are being threatened by a heavy snowstorm. Some 6.4 million hectares of grassland have been covered in 15 to 29 meters of snow. So far the storm has led to a shortage of 110,000 tons of fodder for 3 million heads of livestock.

3. Tuesday saw some pretty heavy turbulence in the atmosphere of America's China policy. Initially, President Bush, sitting next to China's Prime Minister in the White House, rebuked Taiwan's leader for his intention to hold a referendum for independence. Later, however, his officials made the strongest commitment so far not to stand idle in any future clash in the Taiwan Strait.

4. As global markets have caused coffee prices to nose dive Ethiopia has lost around \$830 million in export earnings over the last five years. Accordingly, Ethiopia's farmers are dropping coffee for a local drug called khat. This amphetamine-like substance is rapidly taking over because it is easier to grow, less prone to pests and can be harvested up to three times a year.

5. A statement released by the Postal Workers Union said Sydney will be without Parcel Post services for part of the week. The stoppage will begin on Wednesday evening, after talks with Australia Post over proposed technology changes fell through. It will probably lead to a delay in posting Christmas gift orders across Sydney.

## **IN DEFENSE OF A POLICY**

Senator John Kerry is perceived as the most electable Democrat because he seems more moderate than his rivals. That worries Republicans. Democrat or Republican, rich or poor, black or white, Americans tend to think of themselves as culturally and politically centrist. In a survey conducted every year since the end of Vietnam, the Harris Poll consistently finds that more Americans call themselves "moderate" than liberal or conservative. And both liberals and conservatives consider themselves less extreme than those on the other side of the ideological fence.

Americans love the crassest forms of mass entertainment the human mind can conjure up: wrestling, football, midget-dating reality shows. Their spectator sports are extreme, yet they elect men who, though they acknowledge that those in power have messed everything up, pledge to change just about nothing. We believe that our presidents should be calm, reserved and, yeah, "moderate".

At any given time we face a wide variety of problems and challenges. Certainly, many of these matters call for a calm, reasoned approach--you don't triple interest rates at the first sign of inflation or ban imports because free trade is causing corporations to move jobs overseas. Other issues-- the long-term, seemingly intractable afflictions that seem to go on forever--may require radical solutions.

Like Bill Clinton before him, Kerry approaches contentious issues with self-contradiction rather than genuine moderation. Voting for the invasion on Iraq while standing against the funding of the occupation, for example, couples a radical right-wing stance--preemptive warfare--with an equally radical, liberal opposition to neoimperialism. These conflicting votes exacerbate two equally problematic positions without solving either.

Democrats assert that the current administration is the most radical in U.S. history. They're right, and their argument may persuade some swing voters come November. But the mere fact that Bush's approach to foreign and domestic policy appears extreme doesn't intrinsically make him dangerous. A more moderate response to the 9-11 attacks--firing a few cruise missiles à la Clinton or freezing some bank accounts--would have fallen woefully short of what was called for.

Should Kerry prevail in the general election, radical solutions will be required to fix Bush's radical mistakes. To stem the bleeding of men and treasure in Iraq and Afghanistan, he'll need to withdraw our forces as quickly as possible. To get the federal budget back on track, he'll have to eliminate Bush's tax cuts. To restore our international reputation, he'll be forced to release the Guantánamo and other detainees, and apologize to the world for our post-9-11 excesses. Anything less--anything moderate--would be too radical to contemplate.

## **LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

*Example: I think that online voting via the Internet has a certain superficial appeal. It's quick, simple and the convenience of voting from home might draw more people into the democratic process.*

*But none of those positives outweighs the potential threat to honest elections. Internet voting is vulnerable to hackers, worms and viruses, foreign governments, and there's no way to ensure the integrity of the ballots.*

*That's why it's disturbing that the Pentagon seems determined to push ahead full bore with an Internet voting system for Americans overseas, both military and civilians, despite the warnings from four computer security experts. There are 6 million Americans overseas, more than enough to swing a national election, and as Florida in 2000 showed, it takes only a handful of people.*

**A.** Like no president before him, George W. Bush has exacerbated the American fracture line. On the coasts and big cities, there is a rather liberal political tradition, built out of tolerance in moral matters, where one isn't necessarily convinced that the country personifies The Truth and The Good. In the South and inland, there is a political culture increasingly marked by religion where traditional family values are valued as highly as hyper-nationalist patriotism, and the Bible and the Star Spangled Banner stand as a manifesto. On one side, the democratic nation; on the other, the republican nation. And in between them, less and less in common.

**B.** Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) employees are "examples of what was supposed to be the bedrock of society — working people playing by all the rules and enjoying the benefits," according to a labor expert. The mechanics' benefits include a comprehensive medical plan, retirement with full pension after 23 years of service and paid health insurance to age 65. Who pays for these benefits?

I play by the rules, attend to the needs of my customers and pay for my own health insurance. I expect to work hard for over 40 years and to live in retirement on my Individual Retirement Account funds and other savings. The total negligence of these MTA employees for their customers — hundreds of thousands of the poorer and most-vulnerable residents of this county — disgusts me. They should enjoy the same benefits as the rest of us.

## **SPEECH OF EU CHAIRMAN**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today we have addressed some extremely important issues regarding the present state of the European Union. Back in 1989, we set an essential objective and our greatest expectations were that, one day, this whole continent could be unified peacefully and democratically.

**0** .....

Despite all problems and uncertainties, we have achieved a quality of life within the Union that is the envy of the world. Above all, we have reduced significantly the differences in wealth and opportunity among the Member States. **1** .....

And it is not because what we have attained so far is insignificant - the economy we have managed to develop, for example, is enjoying unprecedented prosperity. Yet, for some time, doubts have been gnawing at Europeans' hearts and minds. **2** .....

Europe's main worry now is whether keeping up with the rapid pace of euro-integration won't actually erase all that makes each country unique. But elimination of national values has never been our purpose and this is not likely to change in the future. **3** .....

Another thing some argue about is that talking about joint reform is out of the question, as each state introduces different reforms, based on the in-country situation. But they forget that national reforms are only small steps to our ultimate goal of integration, which is, obviously, supranational. **4** .....

One such occasion is budgetary planning within the Union, which involves linking resources to existing needs. Each country has its individual resources, but if it had to act separately, relying only on them, this would surely impede its economic growth. **5** .....

With this idea in mind, we have reconsidered our current budgetary structure and certain management rules over the last days. We have found them too rigid and this rigidity acts solely to the detriment of our common interest. **6** .....

The new system will encourage the transfer of resources from wealthier to poorer regions, to ensure sustainable development. It will also aim at ensuring that less privileged countries are given as much opportunity for economic growth as those that have already reached greater prosperity.

**7** .....

Thank you and keep working with the same energy and enthusiasm for Europe's future.

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| A        | Since our goal is to maximize common benefits, not curb them, it would be best to get all available wealth together and allocate it to our common priorities.                 |
| <b>B</b> | <b><i>From that extraordinary moment on, we have never stopped working towards it and Europe has made huge strides forward.</i></b>   |
| C        | On the contrary, we believe that preserving them would only contribute to the establishment of a stronger and richer European identity.                                       |
| D        | Still, we cannot claim we have done it all, and if we stop and say we are satisfied, we would be wrong.   |
| E        | We believe that only by such solidarity and sharing of responsibility and benefits can we keep the pace of our common progress.   |
| F        | This has to be a natural emotional reaction to the process of globalization and to the profound and ever-faster changes that it entails.                                      |
| G        | That's why we have proposed a fresh line of action that will be more appropriate to meet the needs in new and unforeseen circumstances.                                       |
| H        | Accordingly, over the next few years, the Union is to work together with the national governments, to ensure that the principle of European citizenship is put into practice. |
| I        | Therefore, one joint policy towards its achievement is far more effective than several independent ones, and in some cases it is unavoidable.                                 |

**This is the end of the Reading Section**