

Bell of Sarajevo Part 2

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We have concluded our day of [debate](#) here in Bosnia about politics and the media with a conversation session between Martin Bell and myself. More on what the regional journalists said later but here's a flavour of what Martin has been saying over the last 24 hours.

"The whole media and political culture is moving from scepticism to cynicism and we are witnessing a polarisation of politics and the media. Old Europe has nothing to teach New Europe about how to run its own affairs. In the UK we have lost the confidence of the people, especially the young.

This is partly because of the professionalisation of the political class who are now out of touch with the real world and distanced from the people. We have a new generation of politicians who know nothing except politics. The Iraq War was the consequence of this catastrophic failure of party politics. The politicians are sending people to war without any knowledge of what war is really like. War should not be seen as a policy option.

Blair spoke complete nonsense about the power of the media. Politicians are distrusted because of what they do, not what the media says about them. MPs vote for things they don't believe in, so why should we trust them?

Political and journalistic cynicism leads to situations like the Balkans War, where we accept what is wrong instead of trying to do something about it. As journalists we become the accomplices of politicians when we become cynical. And cynicism, not censorship, is the greatest enemy of good journalism."

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