

THE WORD

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Equality Democracy Truth Courage THE PEOPLE'S PAPER www.thewordmedia.org.uk

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MAY OUT BY MAY

THE PETERLOO PROJECT

Starting in September of 2015 the project was put together on the Peter Loo Facebook page and then in the "Together against the Tories" Facebook group. The idea is to create a popular and entertaining socialist hub with the involvement of as many people as possible from the left of the socialist movement in Britain.

As the project has proceeded it has become increasingly clear that the media in the UK is run for and by big business and as such will always need to oppose socialist values to keep such a position. The project was then crowdfunded to raise the money to be able to print and distribute this newspaper as a prelude to a whole cross-platform media fight-back.

THE
WORD

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The right wing media repeats the line that Theresa May is doing well. Is she? Let's have a look at her record.

1. The number of MPs under investigation for election fraud is more than the Tories' majority in parliament. They would have to resort to cobbling together another unpopular coalition or calling a general election. The Conservatives who organised this election fraud are still working closely with Theresa May.

2. Deficit predictions yet again fail to materialise. The prediction for 2016/2017 is £55bn deficit, yet in just 6 months the deficit is already at £45bn. The second half of the financial year needs to come in at an impossible £10bn further deficit. The national debt stands at £1.7 trillion and still increasing.

3. N.I. Double U-turn was a fiasco. The 2015 election pledge to not increase NI contributions was broken in the budget only to be scrapped minutes before the following PMQ. A Labour PM in the same situation would have been roasted alive in the media. This has increased the deficit by a further £5bn.

4. Another expenses scandal. An online leak reveals £3.6 million paid by 150 MPs to relatives for work they probably did not do. The outrage by MPs was remarkable because it was focussed on the security breach while the rest of us are outraged by their fiddling again.

5. Over 40 NHS hospitals in England and Wales declared black alert during the winter. Third world conditions prevailed with ambulances being turned away from A&E. Patients on trolleys in hospital waiting areas. Patients dying from delays and overworked staff trying to cope.

6. Trident missile malfunction cover up. A few weeks before a crucial vote over Trident a test off the Florida coast saw a Trident missile heading in the wrong direction towards Florida. Theresa May denied all knowledge as did

Michael Fallon. Britain was kept in the dark. However our allies and our enemies knew months before hand. This was potentially the biggest case of "friendly fire" ever.

7. The IFS says that on current forecasts, real average earnings will be no higher in 2022 than they were in 2007. In layman's terms, Britain has had no wage increase for 15 years. That is a record. May has no economic scapegoat to explain away her Government's incompetence. Up to now Conservative's forecasts have been optimistic to say the least and we may see a fall in living standards.

8. The SNP are holding a second referendum because of the nature of May's BREXIT plans. A second referendum will most likely succeed after the first referendum where the people of Scotland were misled about Independence. The United Kingdom without Scotland be even less of a political and economic force and May will take the blame. The fake news that Spain would block Scotland joining the EU has been blown apart by Spain's official declaration.

9. Brexit plan in tatters. Immigration levels after Brexit may look pretty much the same as before with Theresa May refusing to answer whether immigration will fall. When she was home secretary, she oversaw record levels of immigration. Although May likes to portray the UK as a great power that can dictate to the EU, the EU's insistence on the UK not being allowed to become a tax haven as part of a trade agreement puts that fallacy to rest.

10. George Osborne's welfare cuts are coming online and will see even further increases in financial hardship, homelessness and mental anguish by the poorest in our society as well as the disabled and sick.

If we had a fair and balance press in this country Theresa May's government would be in ruins. However, with growing dis-sent in her ranks with backbenchers threatening resignations, we may yet see Theresa fall.

"FOR CHRISTMAS I'VE CREATED THE SNOOPERS CHARTER TO SPY ON YOU, ADOPTED AN ANTI-SEMITISM POLICY TO SILENCE CRITICISM OF ISRAEL AND PROPOSED A 'RING OF STEEL' AROUND THE CITY OF LONDON TO PROTECT THE BANKERS FROM ANGRY CITIZENS."

WELCOME TO THE POLICE STATE

MAY
MAY
BE
OUT
BY
MAY



Will May start her own war?

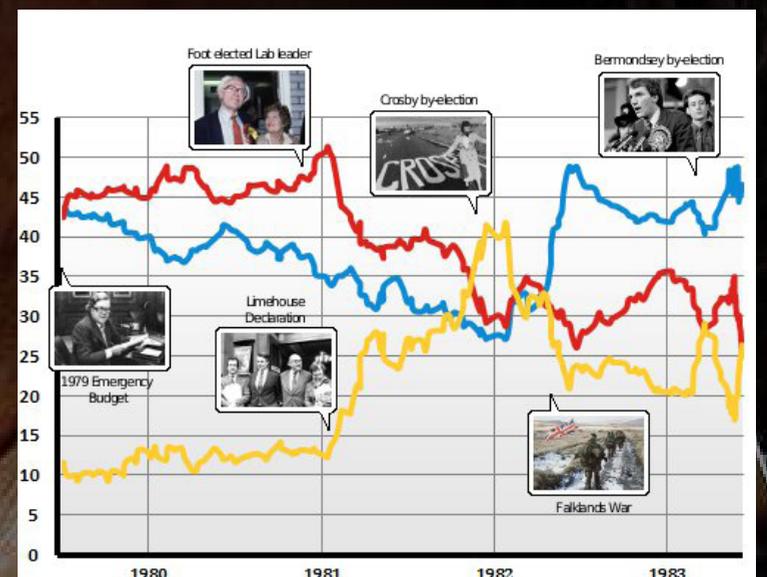
The Falklands war of April-June 1982 was the turning point in Mrs Thatcher's premiership, indeed in her political career. The previous October, the Tory party conference had been alive with dissent. The so-called "wets" were openly conspiring against her. Bets were being taken against her surviving into the new year. Well behind in the polls and with the new Social Democratic party challenging both Labour and Conservatives, few believed Thatcher would ever lead her party to another election win.

In 2017 and another hectoring Tory female leader ramps up the rhetoric about a small rock left over from the colonial past. War with Spain? Let us all pull together in another patriotic murder? Look at Thatcher's poll ratings before the Falklands war. May's Government has yet to feel the effects of the Cameron cuts, Brexit, inflation, the death of the NHS and the Scots referendum mark two. Could she be planning a sly, dissembling way out of the fire she is heading into?

A war with Spain would be unthinkable but listen to the lu-

nacy of ex Tory leader Michael Howard on the subject "Thirty-five years ago this week, another woman prime minister sent a taskforce halfway across the world to defend the freedom of another small group of British people against another Spanish-speaking country, and I'm absolutely certain that our current prime minister will show the same resolve in standing by the people of Gibraltar," Howard told Sophy Ridge on Sunday on Sky News.

This was not a publicity seeking has been gone rogue but a carefully constructed test of the blue waters of jingoism. A slight of hand card trick to take the electorates mind off the crumbling rule of this unelected white witch of winter. Let us hope that Jeremy Corbyn sees through the utter daftness and fights it with all the well founded sarcasm it deserves. Michael Foot back in the eighties was too weak to oppose the deaths for the rights of sheep to roam free that the Falklands debacle became. If Corbyn drips the sarcasm this deserves on it. This can be the making of him.



<https://thoughtsofaleicestersocialist.wordpress.com/2017/03/31/derby-teaching-assistant-speaks-in-leicester-about-how-they-succeeded-in-making-their-labour-council-to-listen-to-reason/>

Derby Teaching Assistant Speaks in Leicester About How They Succeeded in Making Their Labour Council to Listen to Reason

On Saturday morning, here in Leicester, we are lucky enough to have the opportunity to listen to a speaker from the Derby teaching assistants campaign who has kindly given up their time to update us on their ongoing dispute with their own Labour City Council.

After Derby's Labour-led Council proposed to cut the pay of all teaching assistants by 25%, around 1,200 Unison members stood firm, and over the past year have successfully fought back. Most recently their dispute led them to calling an all-out strike, which succeeded in forcing their backstabbing Labour Council back to the negotiating table. This means that presently their strike has been suspended, so that the workers can be balloted as to whether they want to accept the Council's latest offer (a deal which has yet to be revealed to the public).

<http://www.thejournal.ie/legal-action-bus-eireann-strike-3319642-Apr2017/>

Fears of more disruption as NBRU may be sued over 'wildcat' strike

The union said it remains focused on helping resolve the Bus Éireann dispute.

IRISH RAIL AND Dublin Bus are considering legal action over the 'wildcat' strike that caused massive disruption to bus and train services on Friday. Unions have distanced themselves from the secondary picketing connected to the ongoing Bus Éireann strike, saying it was not officially sanctioned.

Córas Iompair Éireann (CIÉ) is expected to take legal action against the National Bus and Rail Union (NBRU) over the disruption and lost revenue it caused. NBRU General Secretary Dermot O'Leary told TheJournal.ie: "Any allegations levelled against the

NBRU in relation to the action undertaken by bus workers, action which we have already condemned, will be comprehensively assessed by our legal team.

"In the meantime our focus remains firmly on finding a resolution to this dispute in order that our members can return to doing what it is they do best, providing a vital public transport service for the 100,000 people that rely on Bus Éireann services on a daily basis."

<http://www.markpack.org.uk/148939/west-midlands-police-conservative-election-expenses/>

13th police force sends files on alleged Conservative law-breaking to the CPS

I previously noted the bad news for Conservative MPs in the Electoral Commission's recent report which led to a record fine being levied in the party. That report clearly pointed towards numerous Conservative MPs having broken their constituency expense limits.

Enforcing such constituency limits is essentially a matter for the police rather than the Electoral Commission, which is why the Commission did not go further on the issue in its report.

The police, however, are very much going further:

The Crown Prosecution Service confirmed that it had received a file from West Midlands Police - the 13th police to do so in recent weeks...

Dozens of detectives working for 19 separate police forces have been investigating for nearly a year whether the costs should have been declared locally.

During most of those investigations, the media - and political pundits in particular - have given the investigations very little attention. Political predictions for the forthcoming year made at the start of 2017 almost without fail did not mention how the government may see more MPs than its majority in court on charges of cheating their way into office.

http://www.croydonguardian.co.uk/news/15198232.Twelve_people_arrested_after_Westminster_terror_attack_all_released_with_no_further_action_being_taken/

Twelve people arrested with alleged connection to the Westminster terror attack all released with no further action being taken

All those arrested in connection with the Westminster terror attack which left five people dead have now been released with no further action being taken.

Twelve people were arrested from addresses in Birmingham, London and Manchester after Khalid Masood, 52, crashed his Hyundai 4x4 into pedestrians on Westminster Bridge before, armed with knives, he tried to break into the Palace of Westminster.

From March 22: Westminster terror attack: Four people dead after car hits pedestrians on Westminster Bridge, police

officer stabbed at Houses of Parliament and attacker shot

A 30-year-old man arrested on March 26 in Birmingham on suspicion of preparation of terrorist acts and detained under the Terrorism Act was released with no further action being taken yesterday (Saturday, April 1).

Eleven other people who were previously arrested in connection with the Metropolitan Police's investigation have all been released with no further action.

Masood's attack claimed the lives of American tourist Kurt Cochran, 54, "coolest of mummies" Aysha Frade, 44, Clapham pensioner Leslie Rhodes, 75, and hero cop PC Keith Palmer, 48.

http://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/news/15198367.Running_of_Tyne_and_Wear_Metro_back_in_public_hands/

Running of Tyne and Wear Metro back in public hands

A TRANSPORT system is back in public hands after being run for the last seven years by a private operator.

The Tyne and Wear Metro was formally handed back to operators Nexus at the weekend by private company DB Regio, which has run the railway since 2010.

Nexus formally resumed day-to-day management of the system in an early morning ceremony in the Metro's Control Room on Saturday. The move follows widespread criticism of the performance and reliability of the railway system over recent years, most notably during the 2015 Great North Run when passengers faced long delays getting out of South Shields.

<http://www.pembrokeshire-herald.com/33350/under-sand-heating-to-warm-up-newgale-beach-year-round/>

Under sand heating to warm up Newgale beach year-round

NEWGALE BEACH is set to have under sand heating installed to make it an all year round holiday destination.

In a new pilot scheme being trialled in Pembrokeshire, heating company Heating Force Cymru has been commissioned to install specially designed underfloor heating and heating outlets across the popular tourist beach.

The project, which begins today (Apr 1), will include the installation of two large commercial gas boilers to be placed under the shingle bank tidal barrier, 30 heating outlets and metres of underfloor heating pipework installed to the main beach area.

This heating will enable the beach to keep at a constant temperature of between

18-23 degrees throughout the year.

Heating Force Cymru's Director, Simon Foxhall said: "Having explored a variety of options for this area we are delighted to announce our plans for gas heating across the beach at Newgale.

"Subject to the pilot scheme analysis, we are hoping to roll the project out to other Pembrokeshire beaches over the next 18 months. Given the ever changing Welsh weather we think this will enhance the beach users experience even on days of inclement weather.

"We are exceptionally proud to have been chosen for this project and look forward to supporting Pembrokeshire as an all year round holiday destination!"

Gerry Adams says 'sustainable' Stormont deal needed in the absence of Martin McGuinness

Sinn Fein leader says Martin McGuinness had helped to carry the institutions
April 2 2017

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/gerry-adams-says-sustainable-stormont-deal-needed-in-the-absence-of-martin-mcguinness-35586265.html>

Gerry Adams has said if agreement was reached at Stormont tomorrow it would not last due to the absence of Martin McGuinness

Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams has said that if a power-sharing deal was made at Stormont tomorrow it wouldn't last unless it is "sustainable", due to the absence of Martin McGuinness. The Sinn Fein leader made the comments in an interview with Sky News on Sunday morning. Asked why agreement could not be reached at Stormont over relatively minor issues like an Irish language act last week, he replied:

"The issues we have to deal with are not as difficult as the issues which we have dealt with in the past and resolved in the past."

"It isn't that we're reluctant to share power, I believe fully and we're wedded to the Good Friday Agreement and the political institutions.

"But as Martin McGuinness said there can be no return to the status quo, so what went wrong was that terms of previous agreements and accords were not implemented and not delivered."

He added: "When you have somebody as big and as strong and formidable as Martin he could carry that to a certain degree for the rest of us. Martin's gone so even if we were able to cobble something together tomorrow it wouldn't last so I want it to be sustainable."

LOCAL

<http://www.chroniclelive.co.uk/news/north-east-news/labour-leader-jeremy-corbyn-promises-12823264>

Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn promises better transport and more jobs for the North East

By Michael Muncaster

A Labour Government will deliver improved transport links, more houses and jobs in the North East, the party's leader Jeremy Corbyn has said. Speaking at the Blyth Workshop in Blyth, Northumberland, he pledged to create a "crossrail for the North" to transform the region's economy.

Mr Corbyn said the plan was part of a wider commitment by the party to close the investment gap between the South and North of England.

"There's a massive imbalance of investment across the country," he said.

"There is six times as much transport investment in London compared to the North East, for example. There has to be a change in that.

"We want to see a national investment bank which will invest equally and fairly across the whole country and remove that degree of imbalance."

<http://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/news-opinion/len-mccluskey-continue-fight-jobs-12829101>

I will continue to fight for jobs, investment and skills

By Len McCluskey

Speaking recently to shop stewards and members at Unite's biggest branch - Jaguar Land Rover in Solihull - I was told an extraordinary thing. In all the years that Gerard Coyne, my opponent in the election for Unite general secretary, has been Unite's West Midlands regional secretary, he has set foot just once in their workplace. It was something of a surprise therefore to read the claim of my former colleague Jack Dromey who, in another extraordinary intervention by a West Midlands MP in this election was giving his support to Mr Coyne, that my challenger takes credit for stopping the collapse of motor manufacturing in the Midlands.

Tony Woodley, our general secretary at the time of the Rover crisis in 2005, tells me he can't remember Gerard playing any part at all in the campaign to save jobs.

Jack Dromey: Why I'm backing Gerard Coyne for General Secretary of Unite
If Gerard had then I would have thought

that such an achievement would have won him the backing of Unite branches across the automotive sector here, and elsewhere in the UK. Yet all of JLR's Midlands branches support me, along with BMW in Cowley, Ford in Daventry, and all nominating auto branches across the country.

Their backing demonstrates my determination to secure a future for those working in an industry that faces many challenges, including a hard Brexit and automation, and that our auto members recognise Unite needs a general secretary who understands these challenges and is prepared to support them by working with the government and with employers to create decent jobs, maintain our place as a world-class industry and ensure the voice of a highly skilled and dedicated workforce is heard loud and clear.

<https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/politics/1211478/minister-welcomes-spain-no-veto-comment-independent-scotland/>

Minister welcomes Spain 'no veto' comment over Independent Scotland

Scotland's Brexit minister has welcomed confirmation from Spain that it would not initially block an independent Scotland's attempts to join the European Union (EU).

Madrid's foreign minister Alfonso Dastis has reportedly said Spain would not veto an independent Scotland's EU hopes - while stressing he does not want to see the country leave the United Kingdom.

Scottish Government minister Michael Russell said the comments will help to end "misinformation" about Spain's position regarding Scotland and the EU.

Addressing reporters in Europe, Mr Dastis suggested an independent Scotland would have to apply for EU membership - something which could take several years.

Asked whether Spain would veto an independent Scotland joining the EU, he reportedly said: "No, we wouldn't."

Mr Dastis told The Guardian: "We don't want it (Scottish independence) to happen. But if it happens legally and constitutionally, we would not block it."

Responding to the statement, Mr Russell, the minister for UK negotiations on Scotland's place in Europe, told BBC Scotland: "That has been the position of the Spanish Government for some considerable time.

"All the speculation about what the Spanish Government would or wouldn't do has been wrong.

<http://www.stornowaygazette.co.uk/news/scottish-news/scottish-government-takes-control-of-crown-estate-1-4409462>

Scottish Government takes control of Crown Estate

Powers over the revenue and management of Crown Estate resources in Scotland have been transferred to the Scottish Government.

The transfer, which formally took place on Saturday, is part of the changes contained in the 2016 Scotland Act.

It means ministers at Holyrood now have control over thousands of hectares of rural land, around half of Scotland's foreshore and leasing the seabed for rights to renewable energy.

The assets were worth a total of £271.8 million in 2015/16 and generated a gross annual revenue of £14 million.

The Scottish Government said the transfer will give communities a stronger voice over how those assets are managed.

Land Reform Secretary Roseanna Cunningham said: "This is a historic day. The management and resources of the Crown Estate now rest with the people of Scotland and we have a genuine, once in a lifetime opportunity to use them to change the fabric of Scottish society, placing the needs of local and coastal communities at the centre of our long-term planning for these considerable assets.

"From today, decisions about both the day-to-day management and the future of the estate will be taken in Scotland. "This will have positive implications, not only for the many people who live, work or have some other direct connection with the Crown Estate, but for many communities across Scotland."

<https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/local/angus-mearns/398733/hd-44pt-black-heading-375-words-2/>

Defence Secretary refuses to rule out cuts to Arbroath's marines

By Kieran Andrews

More uncertainty has been piled onto Arbroath's 45 Commando base after the UK Defence Secretary once again refused to rule out slashing the number of Royal Marines.

Sir Michael Fallon was pressed on reports that the specialist units could be subject to cutbacks because of a reported a £10 billion funding shortfall facing the Ministry of Defence over the next decade.

He denied there was a "shortfall" but did

confirm the MoD was making "efficiency savings" of £1bn a year to be reinvested into the Armed Forces.

Pressed on corps cutbacks by Dundee-born broadcaster Eddie Mair on the BBC's Andrew Marr show, Sir Michael said: "Royal Marines are part of the Royal Navy.

"We are increasing the strength of the Royal Navy by around 400. Now the balance inside the Royal Naval strength between the number of sailors and the number of marines, that's a military judgment.

"It is a matter for the First Sea lord and the military chiefs to advise me on and that's a balance they keep under review at any time."

Sir Michael told The Courier in February that the future of Condor as a Royal Marine base was "absolutely secure" during a visit to the site.

His pledge came against the backdrop of an MoD basing review, which will see the Arbroath base lose its airfield.

<http://www.dorseteye.com/east/articles/major-economic-boost-for-dorset-as-enterprise-zone-opens-for-business>

Major economic boost for Dorset as Enterprise Zone opens for business

Site renamed as Dorset Innovation Park
Aims to create 2,000 new jobs and dozens of new businesses for Dorset over the next 25 years

Joint partnership between Dorset LEP, Purbeck District Council and Dorset County Council to create new cluster of excellence in advanced engineering

Announcement comes during national launch of 12 new enterprise zone sites that are going live across the UK today

Dorset Innovation Park in Winfrith is the second largest employment site in the Dorset LEP area. The site already hosts two world leaders in defence technology - QinetiQ and Atlas Elektronik UK - and will now become a major focus for the economic regeneration of South Dorset and a vital stimulus for employment.

Dorset Innovation Park is a single site, accommodating 56 hectares of employment land. It follows major public sector redevelopment of the former Dorset Green Technology Park by Purbeck District Council, Dorset County Council and Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). Having undertaken enabling investment, the HCA is now transferring the site to the local Councils who, working with Dorset LEP will take forward the delivery of the Enterprise Zone.

NEWS



We are Unity March News, an online news publication guesting with our own segment courtesy of our friends at The WORD

Here at Unity March, our political position is clear, we support progressive politics of any kind, be it Labour's left or the Greens. Our politics is based on ideas not ideology. On policies not personality. And whilst there may be an emphasis (as the biggest progressive party) on Labour politics we are eager to publish ideas, policies and news

from other centre-left parties and organisations.

We believe in positive action and are keen to promote any and all progressive community activity. So, bring us your causes, your ideas, and your stories.

Visit daily at www.unitymarch.org.uk And search Unity March News on Facebook and all the usual social sites.. for the latest news and views that matter to you!

In Unity we Find strength..

Original source Unity March News

Conducting a crime scene investigation outside the Leeds Virgin store on Saturday 1st April, NHS Detectives appealed to passers-by for information about the attempted murder of the NHS.

As the NHS Detectives sealed off the entrance to the Leeds Virgin store, people out doing their shopping were shocked to learn that global management consultants are guilty of making millions from drawing up the so-called Sustainability and Transformation Plans that are set to make a final, fatal attack on the NHS - and that Virgin have already taken over £1bn worth of NHS contracts and are now suing the NHS because one of their bids lost out for a big contract.

Professor Allyson Pollock, a Public Health professor at Newcastle University, said she was shocked by Virgin's announcement:

"This extreme action by Virgin is another example of private business riding roughshod over what should be a public service catering for our public health. When profit becomes the motive patient care and public well being go out the window."

At the crime scene investigation, witnesses came forward with horrific accounts of deaths caused by A&E closures, services not open and reduced treatments.

NHS Detective said:

"These are all symptoms of the Sustainability and Transformation Plans. This is a life or death situation here. The NHS is on life support now - and these STPs will be the killing blow if we don't stop them. It's as simple as that."

The white-suited forensics team from Yorkshire, County Durham, Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire and the Wirral brought information from their areas that the STPs, which are being sold as 'improvements' and 'efficiency savings', in reality are destructive plans to set up a USA-style, two-tier health service.

NHS Detective added:



NHS DETECTIVES INVESTIGATE VIRGIN CRIME SCENE IN LEEDS LEEDS MARCH FOR THE NHS 1ST APRIL 2017



"This is a truly worrying case. If we don't stop these Plans, health care will be mostly private and paid for by private health insurance - for those who can afford it. And the NHS will be like US medicare - a minimal backstop for people who can't get private health insurance.

Sustainability and Transformation Plans are final murder weapon for the NHS. We have to seize this weapon now before it batters the NHS to death. Otherwise, we'll be faced with an unsafe substandard health care system where people will unnecessarily die from treatable and preventable health conditions."

In Leeds for the March for the NHS, the national NHS campaign group 999-Call-for-the-NHS drew its team of NHS Detectives from all over the country. They joined over 4,000 people from Yorkshire and beyond who brought the city centre to a standstill as they highlighted the secretive Sustainability & Transformation Plans (STPs)

The NHS Detectives, from 999-Call-for-the-NHS, Calderdale and Kirklees 999, 999 Call North-East, Fighting 4 Life Lincolnshire and Defend our NHS Wirral are clear there is a solution. Supported by leading academics and some MPs they are calling for :

An end to the so-called Sustainability and Transformation Plans

The restoration of a comprehensive, universal NHS

A publicly run NHS that is free at the point of clinical need

An NHS that is free of privatisation and marketisation

NHS with sufficient government funding for good quality health and social care

1. Underfunded NHS clinical commissioning groups have spent at least £16 million between them, for advice from management consultants on drawing up the 44 secretive Sustainability and Transformation Plans that NHS England imposed in 2016. More information here: <http://www.energyroyd.org.uk/archives/15971>

2. Sustainability and Transformation Plans - dubbed Slash, Trash and Privatise by Defend the NHS campaigners - involve:

£billions of cuts to NHS and social care services by 2020,

huge denials of care as "demand" for NHS and social care services are "managed", massive NHS and social care privatisation.

The size of the cuts is disputed. NHS England's figure is £22bn, the Health Select Committee estimates around £25.5bn, and a Kings Fund estimate is £29.2m. This is because the amount of additional government investment in the NHS is disputed, depending on how it is counted.

Sustainability and Transformation Plans' cuts and "demand

reduction" measures will end our cradle to grave health care system and replace it with a 2 tier system that imports the profiteering, costly, unsafe and unfair American health system.

Soon - unless we stop the STPs - our health care will be mostly private and paid for by extortionate private health insurance, with a rump Medicare system for those who can't get private health insurance.

Already Leeds Teaching Hospitals Cancer Centre has a "partnership" with an American-owned private health company, to provide private cancer care in its hospital. And the West Yorkshire & Harrogate Diabetic Eye Service is provided by a private company. Increasingly commissioning is privatised too.

This pattern is repeated across England.

The shrinking pot of NHS and social care funding - relative to real costs and population growth - guarantees more cuts to our NHS and social care. Our hospitals and community services are already at breaking point. Unless we stop this NOW, Sustainability and Transformation Plans will be the nail in the coffin for a free comprehensive health care equal to all. We'll be faced with an unsafe substandard health care system where people will unnecessarily die from treatable and preventable health conditions. More info here: www.stopthestps.org.uk

3. Virgin Care has been mopping up NHS contracts since 2010, when it acquired a majority stake in Assura Medical; the renaming took place in March 2012.

Virgin Care has two arms to its business: primary care services, including GP services and walk-in centres; and community-based NHS and social care services.

These sectors are set to expand as Sustainability and Transformation Plans run down hospital services in favour of Care Closer to Home - which campaigners have dubbed Death Closer to Home, since there is no evidence that so-called Care Closer to Home will provide the required quality of care or be capable of being delivered for less money than hospital services - which it is required to do.

With its primary care and community health and social care contracts, Virgin Care will be part of the Accountable Care Organisations or Systems that the Sustainability and Transformation Plans are setting up to replace the current NHS and social care commissioner/ provider structure. This will place Virgin Care like a privatised Trojan Horse right in the centre of the new NHS and social care architecture

In mid 2016, Virgin Care announced that it currently runs or oversees more than 250 NHS services, treating more than 5 million people.

Last autumn, it got a seven

year, £700m community health and care services contract from Bath Council which is the largest deal the company has ever won from a single authority and the first time that a for-profit company will be in charge of out-of-hospital services.

In 2016 it took over children's care services in Wiltshire and recently it was awarded a £126 million contract to take over services at hospitals in Kent.

However Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust (KCHFT), has launched a legal challenge in the High Court which has stopped contracts being signed. <http://www.kentonline.co.uk/sittingbourne/news/legal-challenge-to-virgins-1284m-91885/>

Rich and litigious, Virgin Care is no stranger to taking legal action against the NHS.

In March 2017 Virgin Care Services Ltd began legal proceedings in the High Court against NHS England, Surrey County Council and the county's six clinical commissioning groups after losing out on a 3 year £82 million children's community services contract, which was awarded to Surrey Healthy Children and Families Services Limited Liability Partnership.

In February 2016, Virgin Care successfully forced Hull Clinical Commissioning Group to run a full primary care tender for its planned large-scale GP practice groups (which are key to delivering the new Care Closer to Home schemes). Hull CCG had intended to create the large-scale primary care providers by inviting groups of GPs to take over eight practices currently run under alternative provider medical services (APMS) contracts. Three of these eight contracts, which all expired in March, are run by Virgin Care Services Ltd. The private companies' move has forced commissioners to undertake a full procurement process for these eight primary care practices, divided into four lots.

Virgin Care smaller contracts include musculoskeletal, dermatology, and sexual health services.

The most recent financial data for Virgin Care are the accounts filed with the UK Companies House for the year ending 31 March 2015. Turnover was reported as £40.38 million leading to a gross profit of £5.2 million, however after administrative expenses of over £20 million, the company made a loss of £9.1 million. As a result the company paid no tax in the UK.

For the past five years Virgin Care Ltd has reported an annual loss of around £9 to £10 million in its accounts and so has paid no tax in the UK.

Virgin Care Ltd is registered in the UK, however, an analysis by Richard Murphy, a chartered accountant at Tax Research UK, found 13 holding companies, some of them offshore, between Virgin Care and its ultimate parent

company, Virgin Group Holdings Ltd based in the tax haven of the British Virgin Islands. Virgin Group Holdings Ltd's principal beneficiaries are Sir Richard Branson, reported to have a net worth of £2.7bn, and his family. According to Murphy's analysis, this type of company structure makes it unlikely that Virgin Care will pay any tax in the UK in the foreseeable future.

More info here: <http://nhsfor-sale.info/private-providers/private-provider-profiles-2/virgin.html>

4. 999 Call for the NHS is a grassroots campaign group with no affiliation to any political party. The group organised the 300 mile People's March for the NHS in 2014, marching from Jarrow to London and ending with a 20,000+ rally in Trafalgar Square. More info: www.999callfortheNHS.org.uk

By 999 Call for the NHS

Campaign groups that attended on the day were as follows:

LeedsKeepOurNHSPublic-(Organisers) - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/141710829185241/>

Keep Our NHS Public - <https://www.facebook.com/keepournhspublic/?fref=ts>

999 Call for the NHS - <https://www.facebook.com/999CallForTheNhs/>

999 Call for the NHS Calderdale and Kirklees -

<https://www.facebook.com/999-Call-for-the-NHS-Calderdale-Kirklees-323693161115837/?fref=ts>

999 Call for the NHS North East -

<https://www.facebook.com/999northeast/?fref=ts>

Fighting 4 Life Lincolnshire - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1696693563977788/>

With representatives from Fighting 4 Grantham Hospital and Fighting 4 Louth Hospital -

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/399594473752084/>

Hands Off HRI - https://www.facebook.com/groups/377903472573420/?ref=br_tf&qsefr=1

Defend Our NHS Wirral - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/defendournhs/>

Barnsley Save Our NHS - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/barnsleysaveournhs/>

NHS Detectives - <https://www.facebook.com/NHSDetectives/?fref=ts>

And many more health campaigns and unions from around the country.....

Join your local and national campaign to save your NHS - if there isn't one - Set One Up!

By Jenny Shepherd (999 Call for the NHS) and Melissa Darcey (Health Campaigner and NHS Editor Unity March News)

Dramatic rise in anti-semitism was a hoax

<http://stematthewmurray.blogspot.co.uk/2017/04/israels-anti-semitism-problem.html>

True Torah Jews reported that Last week's revelation that a host of the recent bomb threats made on Jewish community centres throughout the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand actually came from a 19-year-old in Ashkelon, "Israel" was, to put it mildly, a bombshell.

Never missing an opportunity to prove their relevance, Johnathan A. Greenblatt, chief executive of the Anti-Defamation League, said that the threats were, "calculated to sow fear and anxiety and put the entire Jewish community on high alert."

The UK keeps selling £billions worth of weapons to Saudi Arabia

<http://anotherangryvoice.blogspot.co.uk/2017/04/the-uk-keeps-selling-billions-worth-of.html>

The UK sells more weapons to Saudi Arabia than any other country. £3.3 billion worth since the Saudis began bombarding Yemen in 2015.

Saudi Arabia has committed numerous war crimes in Yemen including "double tap" bombing a wedding party (a double tap strike is one bomb

to do the damage, then another a few minutes later to kill medics and rescue workers) and attacking a boat full of refugees with a helicopter gunship.

British MPs have openly admitted that British weapons have been used by Saudi Arabia to commit war crimes in Yemen.

PLEASE HELP THIS GRAVELY-ILL 10YO BOY IF YOU CAN

<https://skwawkbox.org/2017/03/31/please-help-this-gravelly-ill-10yo-boy-if-you-can/>

This is not a normal post for the SKWAWKBOX but this young man has aplastic anaemia and desperately needs a stem-cell transplant:

BREAKING: Jay is 10, from Fife - and we urgently need to find him a stem cell donor.

Can you help spread the word? <http://>

[metro.co.uk/2017/03/25/urgent-appeal-launched-to-find-stem-cell-donor-for-10-year-old-boy-6533161/...](http://metro.co.uk/2017/03/25/urgent-appeal-launched-to-find-stem-cell-donor-for-10-year-old-boy-6533161/)

His family need donations for their appeal but just as importantly, potential donors to register with the Anthony Nolan Trust - you can do so here.

Please help if you can.

The truth about benefits sanctions

<https://www.sochealth.co.uk/2017/04/01/truth-benefits-sanctions/>

By Ruth Patrick

300,000 people have had their benefits suddenly stopped by sanctions in the last 12 months, many of whom have been plunged into poverty, unable to heat their homes or even eat.

On today's National Day of Action Against Sanctions, Ruth Patrick highlights the reality of welfare reform as laid out in her new book, For whose benefit? The truth is that our punitive welfare reform agenda leaves people further away rather than closer to the paid labour market.

"While Cameron and Osborne may no longer be in charge, their welfare reform agenda continues apace. This

month sees the implementation of another wave of reforms, which will further weaken Britain's social security system.

Over recent years, politicians have robustly defended successive rounds of welfare reform. They argue that reform is needed to end supposed cultures of 'welfare dependency' and prevent people from being able to 'choose' benefits as a 'lifestyle choice'. In making their case, politicians draw upon simplistic but powerful demarcations between 'hard working families' and 'welfare dependants', and suggest that welfare reform will help those on out-of-work benefits join the ranks of the hard working majority.

Shocking! 4 million people can't afford to eat sufficient amount of food

<http://www.thelondoneconomic.com/news/environment/shocking-4-million-people-cant-afford-eat-sufficient-amount-food/31/03/>

The UK has left the EU and is also leaving it's poorest families starving. Theresa May has promised that Britain will flourish in this brave new world, but before that happens (which many feel is unlikely) she needs to ensure the population can eat three meals a day.

A new survey by the FSA (Food Standards Agency) found that eight per cent of those questioned are facing low food security, so around four million adults in Britain are not able to eat the right amount of food needed, as they can't afford to do so. Large sections of the nation are literally going hungry on a nightly basis.

The FSA, which questioned 3,000 adults in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, found that for unemployed respondents 47% said they often or some-

times worried about their food supplies running out before they got more money, compared with 7% of respondents in the top quartile of income.

The study reported that a quarter of low-income families under eat on a regular basis, due to their stretched finances. These shocking figures were recently reflected in the feature film I, Daniel Blake directed by Ken Loach. The filmmaker conducted their own research with case studies who are living in poverty, which formed the backbone of the story.

The FSA survey showed that women (10%) were more likely than men (6%) to live in food-insecure households. While 16% of young people aged 16-24 and 11% of 25- to 34-year-olds were food insecure, this shrank to just 1-2% for over 65s.

The new national funding formula has become a figleaf for austerity-driven cuts

<https://www.tes.com/news/school-news/breaking-views/new-national-funding-formula-has-become-a-figleaf-austerity-driven>

By Ed Dorrell

If minister decide to abandon their plans for a new formula, they will lose a useful distraction from the cuts being experienced by schools

The government finds itself in a right policy pickle. Damned if they do, damned if they don't.

Where once I wrote admiringly of ministers' resolve to push ahead with the new national funding formula (NFF) for schools in the face of the funding squeeze, I've now concluded that this determination is more likely born of being stuck in a catch-22.

Increasingly under attack because

of the cuts that will come as a result of the NFF's redistribution of schools cash, the government must be sorely tempted to abandon the whole idea altogether. But it can't.

Why? Because somehow the actual funding cuts being dealt with by heads right now have become conflated with the NFF's projected cuts.

Thus the new formula has become a figleaf for the real business of austerity. Up and down the country, schools are feeling the results of the money-flow drying up, and projecting worse in the years to come - even before the results of the NFF are accounted for.

A housing association says it can't afford to keep vital services open. But it wasn't expecting someone to go through its books

<http://www.thecanary.co/2017/04/02/housing-group-sells-community-set-help/>

A housing association claimed it has hit hard times and can no longer afford to run important communal services. But an investigation has uncovered that the housing association's finances are in "great shape". So much so, in fact, that it is able to plough money into its more profitable ventures. Despite the organisation involved be-

ing set up for charitable aims.

There's no money

Five communities in inner city London have been told that their community centres are no longer financially viable. The bearer of such bad tidings was The Hyde Group. It is a housing group founded to help the "poorest and most vulnerable members of society".

Best of

Teenage prisoner took life only hours after receiving deportation letter

<http://thejusticegap.com/2017/03/teenage-prisoner-took-life-hours-receiving-deportation-letter/>

A jury found on Tuesday that a 19-year-old man's self-inflicted death in custody was caused by warnings of deportation by prison officers just before being locked up for the night, which was described by INQUEST as 'cruel and insensitive treatment of a vulnerable teenager who should have been supported and protected.'

Ondrej Suha was remanded to a young offender's institute in Brinsford on September 12 2015, while awaiting trial for burglary and assault. He had sold property from his mother's house while she was on holiday, and slapped her on the wrist during an argument.

On November 30, he attempted to strangle himself with ligatures on two separate occasions during the day. He tried to prevent staff from removing the ligatures and told them that he wanted to die. Suha was accordingly placed on a suicide prevention and self-harm regime, only to be taken off it the following day by a prison officer who later said he was unaware that Suha had tried to strangle himself twice.

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Ondrej Suha died on Christmas Day at New Cross hospital in Wolverhampton, with his mother and sister at his bedside.

Back down on NHS agency staff working restrictions welcomed by Unite

<http://www.unitetheunion.org/news/back-down-on-nhs-agency-staff-working-restrictions-welcomed-by-unite/>

The back down by NHS bosses on an edict that would have restricted agency staff working in the NHS has been welcomed by Unite, the country's largest union, today (Friday 31 March).

The union, which has 100,000 members in the health service, said it would have been 'grossly unfair' that NHS trusts would not have been able to employ existing NHS staff, hit by continued below-inflation pay increases, as agency staff.

Unite national officer for health Colenzo Jarrett-Thorpe said: "Unite welcomes this statement from NHS Improvement that it has pressed 'pause' on this edict which was due to have

come into force on 1 April.

"It would have been grossly unfair - after the Pay Review Body (PRB) recommendation this week of a measly one per cent increase for NHS staff - that health workers struggling, in many cases, to make ends meet were denied opportunities to boost their incomes.

"We hope to work with NHS Improvement and other staff side unions to ensure that already hard-up NHS staff do not suffer further detriment as a result of the general NHS drive to reduce spending on agency and locum staff.

"The background to this is that the majority of NHS staff has suffered a 17 per cent cut in pay in real terms since 2010.

Hate crime Britain: Teenage asylum-seeker suffers serious head injuries in attack

<http://voxpolygonline.com/2017/04/01/hate-crime-britain-teenage-asylum-seeker-suffers-serious-head-injuries-in-attack/>

By Mike Sivier

The 17-year-old was waiting at a bus stop with two friends in Croydon, south-east London, when he was set upon by around eight youths. Labour's Shadow Home Secretary, Diane Abbott, says this is part of an increase in hate crime for which the Tories have no response.

"Sadly this is not an isolated incident, but part of a sustained increase in

hate crimes that this Tory government is yet to offer any effective response to.

"With right-wing politicians across the world scapegoating migrants, refugees and others for their economic problems, we are seeing a deeply worrying rise in the politics of hate.

"We must make clear that there is no place for anti-foreigner myths, racism and hate in our society."

Article 50 has been triggered. Now let's get on with job and hold the Tories to account

<http://socialistvoice.co.uk/article-50-has-been-triggered-now-lets-get-on-with-job-and-hold-the-tories-to-account/>

I, like millions of other people who voted to leave the EU, am relieved that Article 50 has finally been triggered. These last nine months have been one hell of a journey, with pro-Brexit politicians trying their utmost to disrupt Brexit, interference from millionaires like Maria Miller and pro-EU campaigners holding demonstrations across the country in an attempt to override democracy.

Thurrock voted Brexit by 73% and I was not surprised after the amount of anti-EU feeling I experienced when I campaigned for Labour in 2014 and 2015. People across Thurrock are not anti-Europe, they are anti-EU. They were angry at the EU interfering with our laws, our sovereignty and our way of life. And they were also angry that Britain had no control over its borders and could not control the number of EU migrants entering the country.

When New Labour relaxed Britain's borders with Poland in 2004, we were the only country in the EU to do so; other EU countries did not relax their borders until 2007. New Labour grossly underestimated how many Polish migrants would come to Britain. Employers across the country took advantage of cheap EU labour and sacked British workers and exploited EU migrants. Areas like Lincolnshire that is agricultural hired EU migrants to work on farms and fields, and the influx of cheap EU labour in 2004 led to the fall in wage growth.

Pro-EU campaigners argue that Britain's farming industry and the NHS will suffer because of Brexit. Britain managed perfectly well prior to 2004 and there is no reason why we cannot manage post-Brexit. For starters we should start training young people and give them the skills they need to work in construction, farming and in medicine rather than remain reliant on overseas labour. There are around 600,000 unemployed young people aged under 25 in Britain and many would jump at the opportunity of being given a decent job rather than having to rely on zero hours contracts and seasonal work. Young people are leaving school with no aspiration because the Tories have thrown them on the scrapheap. These people are the future of Britain and they should be given a fair start in life.

Now is the time for Labour and other opposition parties to come together and hold the Tories to account over Brexit. Turbulent times lie ahead and it is the job of opposition parties to ensure the Tories deliver a Brexit that benefits everyone and not just a few. Jeremy Corbyn was right to respect the Brexit vote, as Labour's northern heartlands voted Brexit by 75%. Unlike New Labour and Ed Miliband's time as Labour leader, Jeremy Corbyn is listening to Labour's heartlands and he is the first Labour leader in decades to truly represent them. Under New Labour the party lost 4 million working class voters.

Can Devolution Solve Greater Manchester's Housing Crisis?

<http://novaramedia.com/2017/03/31/can-devolution-solve-greater-manchesters-housing-crisis/>

Outside of London, Greater Manchester is one of the regions worst affected by the housing crisis. New developments have led to the displacement of communities, with fast-gentrifying neighbourhoods like Ordsall among the worst affected areas. There are now more than 120,000 people on the waiting list for social housing and the average mortgage requires a salary of over £34,000 a year. Homelessness in Manchester rose by 44 percent in 2016 and 79 percent in 2015. Shelter estimates there are 3,200 street homeless across the city. As well as street homelessness,

there is a crisis of 'hidden homelessness' with over 13,000 houses in the city being home to more than one family.

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The main question here is one of political will and whether Burnham feels enough pressure to carry out his campaign pledges. That Burnham's campaign has been built around these issues is a testament to the hard work of grassroots campaigners in setting the agenda, and their role will be no less important after 4 May. In this context, a strong housing movement will be more essential than ever.

The new word

The word newspaper started at the mechanics institute in Manchester in 2015 the day JC won the leadership the first time around. We knew that he had won but when they announced it and the packed room spontaneously started singing the red flag...wow...a moment in time.

I realised that the media would try and destroy him in the way they had Michael Foot. It was obvious we needed our own media. I started to research how. By joining together many people to forge a loose network, each doing a small amount of work seemed the answer. I put this idea to the self-appointed steering committee of Momentum Rochdale who thought it ridiculous. I contacted (many times) James Schneider and Jon Lansman of Momentum who were equally as unhelpful.

The first widely advertised meeting of the word was held in the Baum pub in Rochdale in the autumn of that year (4 people turned up, myself included) The Baum was symbolic as it was next door to the Pioneers museum where the cooperative movement was began. At the second meeting in Rochdale Labour hall we agreed ideals of how we would operate.

We were attacked incessantly by certain members of momentum and were only saved from giving up by the intervention of Lita Hallyburton. We crowd funded and began to see more people interested. We organised in the TOGETHER AGAINST THE TORIES FB group. There we voted on many thing including the name which was the idea of Sean Jones. Most people we talked to did not want to write for us until we had a paper out there. It became a bit of a vicious circle. There were some notable exceptions such as George Galloway. We decided to launch at the Tolpuddle festival in 2016 on Bastille Day.

From the outset the problem was distribution. I did for see that this was a weakness of a newly launched project but what happened was more like sabotage. At Tolpuddle 2000 papers were left out in the rain despite phoning all parties several times with arrangements. We carried on. At that time the people staying up all night to put the paper together were myself, Daniel Mansfield and Jamie Lewis. George Christophorou came on board soon after and has been indispensable to the project. We have run out of money several time and myself, George and Julie have had to put funds in. There are many people who have been onboard from the start who are in other groups, not on FB or not even on the internet.

We tried a second crowd funder as THE Anti-Sun...this was not a success. Most of our finance to continue comes from sales of the



THE WORD (THE STORY SO FAR)

PDF of the paper. There have been several meetings of our group at Tolpuddle, London, and Manchester and twice in Liverpool. Anyone who wants to constructively help is welcome. We cannot pretend there have not been arguments but the original intention was as much about an experiment in organising a left wing group with fairness and democracy as it was about producing a newspaper. We have been joined by likeminded cooperatives and people in a loose network: Vibe, Unity march, Bury poetry and literature group. Alex Taylor with the left wing events, Peter Stefano-

vic ETC. As you will all have seen the radio and television side is well underway to create a multimedia fight back.

Do not join us if you want fame, acclaim, money and power. Our principles exclude these things and the principles have been on the FB page since we started. We do understand we are different, especially from an organisation like momentum, where it is steering committees and secret groups. Anyone who wants to help can have my phone number and I am sure most of us here feel the same. If you want to

try out an idea then ask us first to make sure we have not already tried it or it conflicts with others. It also must be legal and comradesly. If you have a good idea be prepared that we will ask you to put it in action. We need people to help much more than we need ideas. We already have huge lists of things that need doing.

The printed paper will now take a break for a few weeks as we reorganise and refinance to come back as a weekly. All deliveries will be honoured from the relaunch If you feel you can help with the following jobs please let us know. Even

half hour a day will be enough:

Designers, editors, talent scouts, website design, writers, (especially those on football, sport, fashion, television, gossip ETC.) Distribution managers. THIS LAST ONE IS A MUST.

Remember, no one will make this work but us. So if you feel strongly enough help us make this a popular non-profit making newspaper that is left wing and radical. Our purpose is to tell the truth to those who have only had mainstream rags like the Sun and the Mirror or the bias of the BBC. Please help us achieve this?

#6

So now I see Lisa, Specialist Oncological Nurse, every twelve weeks, writes Ian Charles.

She's not like some of the nurse practitioners we've met at A&E, at our GP 'led' Health Centre, or in the 'Walk-In' (Limp-in, Hobble-In, Crawl-In) Centres, where you hope you're going to see a properly qualified Professional medic and instead get a properly qualified and well-meaning nurse who specialises in two or three things and tends to see those things present in anyone that presents. Worst of all, he or she doesn't say "Hi, my name is T... and I'm a nurse."

What they say is, "Well, let's have a look at you; what seems to be the problem?"

And you come out with a diagnosis of muscle strain, asthma, irritable bowel syndrome or worst of all, anxiety. What you really have is thrombosis threatening your lungs and brain, sinusitis, sepsis due to a perforated appendix, or an ear infection which is driving you mad and rendering you unfit to drive your car. If anyone is really interested I could supply names, dates and outcomes, but really, my family and I are fortunately past all of that.

What is wrong is that the system leaves vulnerable patients in the hands of people who are flattered to be given responsibility, and a little knowledge, and do their best to discharge it, and quickly. I feel the situation is similar in some ways to Driver Only Trains, where an employee, quite well paid, has to look through a mirror or at a camera and make sure that nobody is hurtling head-first into a closing door before he or she starts the train moving. Any casualties and the driver is prosecuted. In the NHS, the feeling is that we'll all die anyway and medical personnel can't get everything right, can they? ASLEF are a tougher bunch to

MEETINGS WITH MY ONCOLOGIST



convince, and RMT, far from worrying about their members' pay structure once Guards are consigned to the pages of history, are actually complaining on grounds of passenger safety.

But Lisa isn't like that; she has been trained rigorously in an area which is relevant to each of her patients, and she really does have good answers. As you'd expect, she's bright, has great 'people'

skills, and so far, they give her time to see us because she's saving time for the consultant oncologists. The system is a good one until the accountants get hold of it.

And she can prescribe. So just before I see her, I have a blood test which goes to the laboratory; I allow about three or four days. Then I turn up, am measured and weighed (my height is liable to reduce as I'm in danger of osteoporosis

as well as having had secondary invasion of bone) and my oxygen levels measured as well as blood pressure and pulse.

Before I get the wonder drug, my results are sent then to the 'chemo lab' who query everything. Is it safe to give me this drug? Will it kill me? Will it do me good? Am I still a suitable candidate for it? Have I been a good boy?

The required answers are YES-

NO-YES-YES-OH BEHAVE!

Any wrong answer is referred back to Lisa who tells me that she then advocates on my behalf, assures them that I'm OK for it, and after half an hour of sitting around in a café where I can eat or drink nothing (another time, dear reader) leave with a package worth about nine thousand pounds, and feel like a drugs-mule as I walk through the car park.

I went with my pal Tall Paul *On The Knock* with a gang of councillors to talk to voters and ask them what they thought of Labour just after the Stoke by-election victory, writes Bob Newby (Newby by name; Newbie by nature.)

I felt that there was an agenda. I was paired up with a councillor called Chris (by coincidence) - a really lovely girl who is local and has been in the party since childhood, note, pre 1997, and works on the premise that if you always do what you always did, you'll always get what you always got, and that's fine by her. Chris took the lead, but by the end of the session, she was allowing me up to doors on my own, but either she or our gang master, Adam, who has been a Labour Politician since before 2010 (another significant moment

Bob Newby Speaks Out!

in history) was either listening out or asking us after every knock what had been said to us.

Adam wrote it down and told us where to go next.

"How do you know my name," was one serious question we got again and again.

"Electoral roll," was only a semi-truthful answer, because the printouts that Adam was working from are the result of many previous knockings. Labour in Stoke and Copeland told us that the door knockings that you do when you don't want anything build relationships with voters, because when there is an election, they cannot bear the sight of politicians of any hue.

A softly spoken voter, Mark, told us he was supportive of Labour, but dismayed by the Party nationally who seem as split as ever over a) Brexit (they're not surely?) b) the Leadership (at a time when *even Tom Watson* says we can't do with another leadership election - perhaps he means for his position?) and c) timely interventions from ex-Labour people like Lord Peter Mandelson (four days before the by-elections) and Tony Blair (three days before, when even notorious windbags like Kinnock and Blunkett had the good sense to remain silent lest they be thought foolish or treacherous.) Peter and Tony opened their

mouths and confirmed their disloyalty to Labour,*to Labour!* beyond all reasonable doubt.

Another guy called Darryl had had his fence blown down by Doris the night before and told us the Council hadn't done anything about it. Since he's in Social Housing, this will come to the door of the Local Authority anyway so Chris took some photos, and spoke into her phone so she can follow it up.

We met up halfway through this paper round of leafletting and knocking to compare notes.

"There's some terribly negative stuff about Corbyn," said Chris untruthfully. Or perhaps now I think about it there had

been, but it had come from her, "Do you feel that Jeremy Corbyn is to blame for all of this then?" She'd asked most people, getting various responses from not-really-committal to broadly supportive of the leader. One woman was massively enthusiastic about him for a long while so Chris left me with her to go after the others to say there were mixed messages coming back from the voters. There was a lot more of the negative stuff from the other Councillors than the voters.

In the pub later, Chris quizzed Tall Paul and me about Momentum. We told her that neither of us were members, which is true. I don't know whether she was pleased or disappointed that she couldn't report back that there were a couple of flies in her pot of eye shadow.



MENTAL HEALTH DANCING ON THE FIVE NICE STEPS



What it's like

By Dedrick Poole

*Too scared of everything
in the future,
Can't stand the pain of
reminiscing in the past.
Misery feels that it will never end,
Terrified of happiness because
I know that it must end.
I can't go to the party,
I need it to go on
for ever and ever and
never come down,
Carry on and keep it going,
In tears when everyone else is either
asleep or has gone home,
My rent money all snorted,
Taking more and more
Of whatever intoxicant
there is left,
until something breaks.
So in truth my only real
option is to stay in alone.
And get used to it.
Or maybe join a knitting circle.*

*Loves lost, people lost -
to life or to death,
Each hurt and every sadness
stacks and intensifies,
One on top of the other,
Year after year.
Past happiness never solidifies
into experience or memory,
It is gone - fleeting
And leaves no enduring impression.
Achievements never matter -
Another one made them.
Another me.
Not I.
Then minute by minute
apprehension,
Not knowing which emotion
is coming next
Whether gentle or ferocious,
Heart and head like driftwood
smashed against rocks,
Or not,
Dependent on a random tide.*

By Karl Trevor and Dedrick Poole

After five years of my first experience of a severe depressive episode I am now ready to write on the subject. Not a heartfelt cathartic blert all about me, me, me but an attempt to objectively describe the system and methods used to treat me and my many friends and associates. Some of the experiences are personal and some are collectively Dedrick Poole, the collective persona of friends collated from the Facebook Group 'WTF CMHT'.

As we now have a 'multi-provider' system, it depends where you live as to how the jumps from step to step happen and how well the Patients fair. So lets go back a bit, to a time when National Health and Social Care was an integrated service....

Dedrick; So WTF is this 'Dancing On the Nice Steps then Karl Mate? So first an explanation of the

NICE Stepped care model, this was the system for diagnosing and treating Common Mental Health issues in patients. This guided the G.P. when we first went to them with the whole Depressive /Anxiety thing, back when health and social care was all under one umbrella.

Dedrick; Christ Mate! Sounds a bit odd, surely the Doctors just send you to the right Clinic or give you the right meds on the NHS right?

ERRR No!

Step 1 Is most commonly the first time someone goes to the GP and asks for help with Depression, Anxiety, OCD, Panic attacks or Post Traumatic stress. They have their condition identified and assessed are monitored and referred for other interventions. This is often groups and self education, often these are charity run, or from other clinics than your GP. This is self help for 'mild presentations'...

Step 2 For more 'moderate' cases again self help is the key, with medication such as antidepressants and the talking therapy is more formal with IAPT councillors. Group or online CBT (Cognitive Behaviour Therapy) is offered.

Step 3 Is where the symptoms are severe and persistent or other levels have not helped. Medication is definitely involved and therapies are more intensive and specific. This will be the stage where the Community Mental Health Teams (CMHT) are involved and Care coordinators assigned. Medication and treatment is no longer from the GP.

Step 4 This is full-on Crisis Team stuff for folks with a risk to life and severe self neglect. Drug therapy is complex and psychiatric teams are involved. This point is very intensive.

Dedrick; You missed out Step 5 Mate, I'm guessing that's like when we got Sectioned under the Mental Health Act and got to stay in the Mental Hospital. So why the hell do I have to ring around so many folk now then. There's my Social Worker, Care Coordinator, the CMHT duty staff, the GP the Psychiatrist and the other Councillors and the projects I go to are all Charities.....

TORIES! - ever since the Government separated Social Care from central NHS control the various elements and agencies are all competing for funding and are essentially Sub-Contracted. Multi-Agency providers, including charities are now involved in all of those steps. Often the patient is required to contact the various providers themselves. The NICE stepped care model is now often unconnected so if a patient is transferred to another 'step' the care provider and even the care coordinators no longer follow them up and down the steps.

NOT SO NICE ANYMORE!!

Below are the words that explain the experiences of some of these Patients. Judge how these feelings may affect someone needing a cohesive Care model...

The Library Is Open

By Suze Lewis

The main problem I am having at the moment is when people try to tell me what is the best thing for me, in absolute terms, and completely reject my perspective on my own mind. It's really triggering. The last thing you want after a manic episode is to start doubting yourself more. Yes I lost time and don't remember it all, but what I can remember is traumatic.

Especially when the idea I was trying to communicate is something that I feel is more necessary now, than it was when I was manic.

And I was manic. I couldn't sleep, I was trying my hardest to rest, but I kept getting distracted by other people, my carers, the staff, other patients, it was impossible. It was really stressful for me, and it was really stressful for the people around me. I couldn't articulate what was going on with me. I couldn't explain it. The only way I can talk about my mania is in metaphor.

And I was very manic. My memory of those early days is blurry, so I have to say I am glad that I wrote every little thing down. When I was writing everything that came into my head down (sometimes to prevent me from saying it out loud) I had no filter whatsoever and I had to express what I was experiencing in some form or other. I'm so glad I did, now I have a record of my manic episode, a record that I can share with you.

I was making connections; connections between what I was seeing and interpreting it in the language of my own journey through popular culture. The idea (hardly original) is an idea that I assume all artists have had at some point or other; spread truth through art.

It's what the ASOIAF fandom are doing. It's what podcasters are doing, whether they are discussing pop culture or presenting a completely original piece of work. Those communities look out for each other. They advertise the brands they know, they get financial support through crowd funding, and best of all, pop culture can be used to discuss complicated moral and political issues.

Is fiction a better learning tool than fact? I think so.

So what if I was presenting as manic, I was going through a spiritual and creative awakening, language became such a wonderful toy for me to play with. I feel like I've awoken to a fundamental truth about myself as a person, and trying to explain it to people is really hard. I know I must have terrified some of my friends, and all I want to do at the moment is reassure them that what happened was actually a very good thing.

A lot of people keep asking me what happened. It's really bloody hard to explain in plain English. Catharsis? Epiphany? Kundalini awakening?? Psychotic episode?

For me it was a tidy up. A cleansing, and I've come out of it a better person. I've possibly gained even more enthusiasm for writing since I've come out of hospital. Even more enthusiasm that the ideas I was having while I was manic are definitely worth-while. There is a mental health crises, across the bloody board, it is affecting us all.

Maybe you are suffering without even realising it?

Maybe you are suffering with a diagnosis; lost in a labyrinthine system.

Maybe you're well, but you've got that label hanging over you; that label that "protects you under the law" at the same time as identifying you as abnormal.

Maybe you are caring for someone with a mental illness, and it's tearing you apart because you just don't have the knowledge to look after them properly.

I am blessed. Truly blessed. I couldn't be in a better position compared to other people going through this system. Unfortunately, my diagnosis will hang over my head for years. I will always be bi-polar, even when I am well.

And the scariest thing about having a diagnosis? A Tory government taking us out of the EU with a blank cheque to take the only good thing away; that all important protection from discrimination.

If anything, going into hospital just enthused me even more than when I was initially going manic. The difference is I can control that pent up energy now. I can direct it, most of the time. I feel like I have been liberated.

When I first started working at 19, and for most of my early twenties my boss used to say "your brain is like an organised library" I had so much promise. Unfortunately over the years I stopped taking good care of the library, and it got really chaotic in there. Throughout my manic episode, insights about my identity were coming thick and fast and I was remembering too much information at once.

I am Suzanne, Suzy, Sue, Suz, Suze, Spoo, Moonbeam, Scully. Those are the personal labels. I've been given labels by society too.

I've even given myself a fair amount of labels.

For too long I have felt it necessary to hide parts of myself. I'm not sure why yet, I'll get there eventually. I do however, have a pretty good grasp on the things that made me go manic.

I recorded pretty much every minute of it, after all.

The Tories have lost 7 out of 10 by-elections since the last GE which they scraped through on with a very narrow majority, further they have lost every mayoral election to date and they lost a massive 23,000 majority when they lost Richmond to the LibDems recently. On top of this the "alleged" Tory election fraud is at long last starting to bubble-up and could well lead to by elections and some judicial prosecutions which will be very damaging to their electoral prospects.

Also there are the 30 U-Turns the Tories have been forced to make since Corbyn became Labour Leader

* Government forced to abandon £6m Saudi Prison Contract (13th Oct 2015)

* Immigration controls on Nurses working in the NHS lifted (16th Oct 2015)

* Government finally scrap plans to extend Sunday Trading hours (10th Nov 2015)

* Tories dramatically abandon £12bn Welfare Cuts including PIP & Tax Credits (25th Nov 2015)

* 25% mooted cut to Police Service budgets scrapped after CSR is published (25th Nov 2015)

* Tories backtrack on Tampon Tax, instead earmarking £15m for women's charities (28th Nov 2015)

* Plan to make convicts pay £1,250 towards their court case axed after outcry (3rd Dec 2015)

* Tory Plans to remove "feminism from A-Level syllabuses are scrapped (10th Dec 2015)

* Government reversed decision to keep Bahrain & Egypt off human rights concern list (19th Dec 2015)

* 33% cut to 2,000 Govern-



ment Interpreters enhanced pay scrapped (15th Jan 2016)

* Planned 1% cut in rent support to OAPs, Veterans & Abuse Victims is withdrawn (27th Jan 2016)

* Planned 9% cut to legal aid fees that would have hurt law firms is scrapped (28th Jan 2016)

* U-Turn on plan to abolish 4 Child Poverty measurements (26th Feb 2016)

* Plan to weaken the Freedom of Information Act halted (1st March 2016)

* Funding for Wildlife Crime

Unit restored after public outcry (1st March 2016)

* Abandon their Pension ISA plan (6th March 2016)

* Tory plan to tax solar panels 5% is axed (21st Mar 2016)

* Tories retreat on their plan to hold vote to overturn ban on Fox-hunting (6th April 2016)

* Tory plan to relax food safety & ethics standards in poultry halted (7th April 2016)

* Plan to levy 3% Stamp Duty on "Granny Flats" scrapped (14th April 2016)

* Threats to force e-voting on Trade Union strikes & opt-in for Labour funding withdrawn (26th April 2016)

* 13 defeats inflicted on Tory Housing Bill (26th April 2016)

* Cameron finally agrees that the UK will accept 3,000 lone child refugees (4th May 2016)

* Government climb-down on plan to impose a new contract on Junior Doctors halted (5th May 2016)

* Forcing *all* schools to become academies (7th May 2016)

* Tories abandon plan to withdraw from European Convention on Human Rights (30th June 2016)

* Plan to make firms list foreign workers in a staff list are withdrawn (9 Oct 2016)

* Tory climb-down on refusal to publish a Brexit White Paper before Article 50 vote (25th an 2017)

* Theresa May caves in to demand for MPs to get a vote on final Brexit Deal (7th Feb 2017)

* Plans to raise tax on Self Employed workers (NICs) axed (15th Mar 2017)

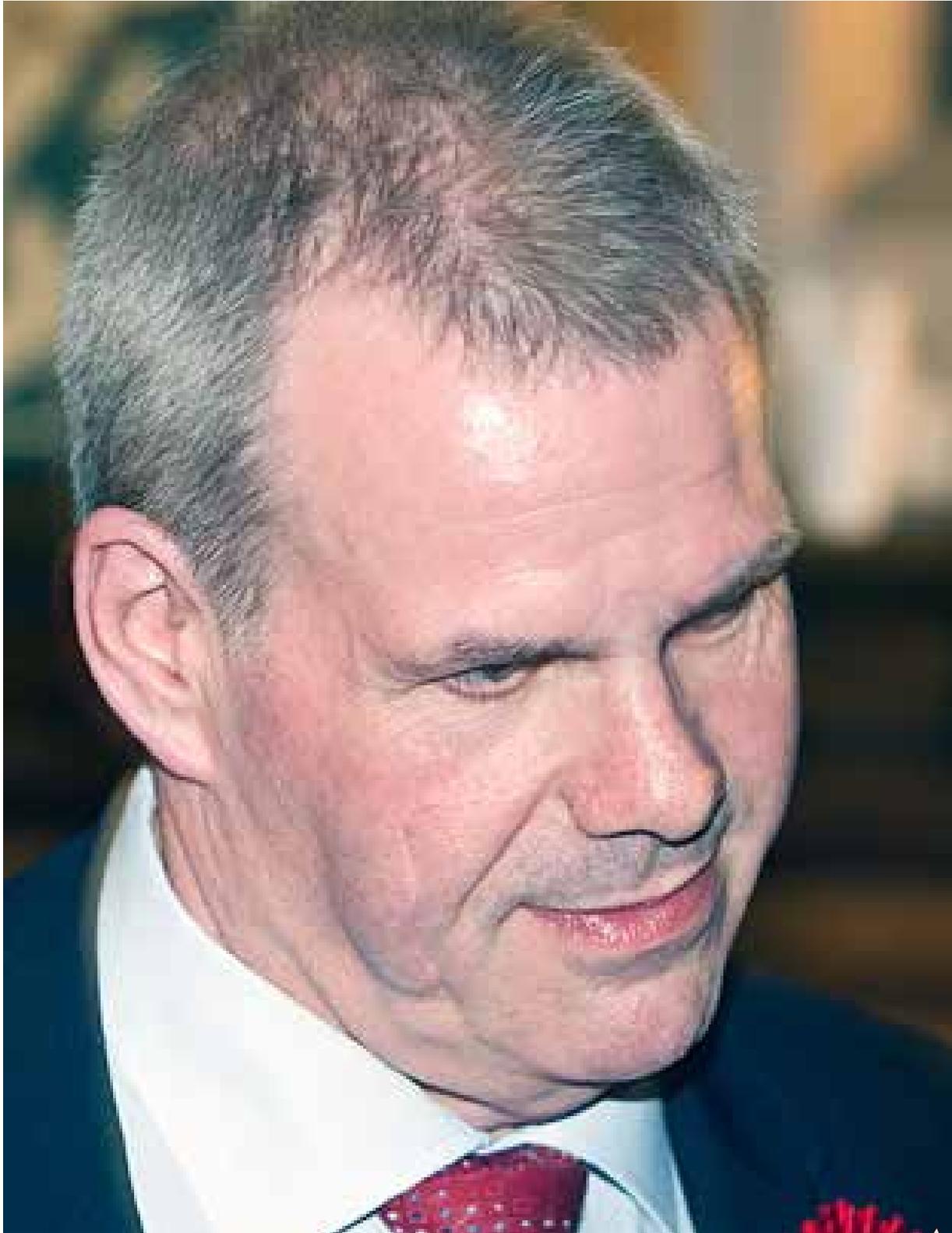
Theresa's Secret

To spite various front bench blunders and political faux pas, Theresa May is enjoying such little press criticism that she still has time to hanker after her one true love - **Jeremy Corbyn**. But if anyone finds out - she'll be ruined!



So you want to take my Jeremy from me

My legs are better



Has Farnell Lost His Marbles???

Why has Mr Farnell decided to put council staff in uniforms?

Does he not realise there are massive cuts going on all over Rochdale to try and SAVE MONEY?

Why, when council staff have had their wages cut or frozen or even lost their jobs, does Mr Farnell think that now is the time to splash out £14,000 on pointless uniforms? I am sure the staff would have preferred to see that money put into their wages or used to stop yet another cut.

Maybe Mr Farnell is planning on paying for it with

the Huge Pay Rise he gave himself? A true Socialist after all? We can always hope.

Mr Farnell seems to be out of touch with the real world, with all the struggles going on at the moment, how the ordinary people are having to live. Mr Farnell seems to care more about what looks good rather than actually is good.

I feel so ashamed that we have someone like this representing Rochdale Labour Party. He is more like a Tory. Shame on him.

Have a Heart, Mr Farnell.

From an angry Labour Party Member.



Having Elton John as my mum helps



OH GOD!

NATIONAL NARRATIVE UNDER SCHOLARLY ANALYSIS



PALESTINE IN ISRAELI SCHOOL BOOKS Ideology and Propaganda in Education

By Nurit Peled-Elhanan

By Cliff Jones

"Hey, guess what, young Israeli soldiers are wearing cameras on their helmets as they search Arab houses looking for terrorists."

"Really?" "Yeah, its great, you should see the pictures". "Wow, that's cool".

I paraphrase an overheard conversation between American visitors in a restaurant in Jaffa. It came to mind as I began to read this book. Remember that old American saying derived from General Sheridan as he suppressed the indigenous people in favour of settlers, "The only good Indian is a dead Indian"?

Once it is believed that Indians are savage, inferior, uncivilised and a hindrance to the fulfilment of those with God (and a specially designed historical narrative) on their side it becomes much easier to pull the trigger when you have them in your sights.

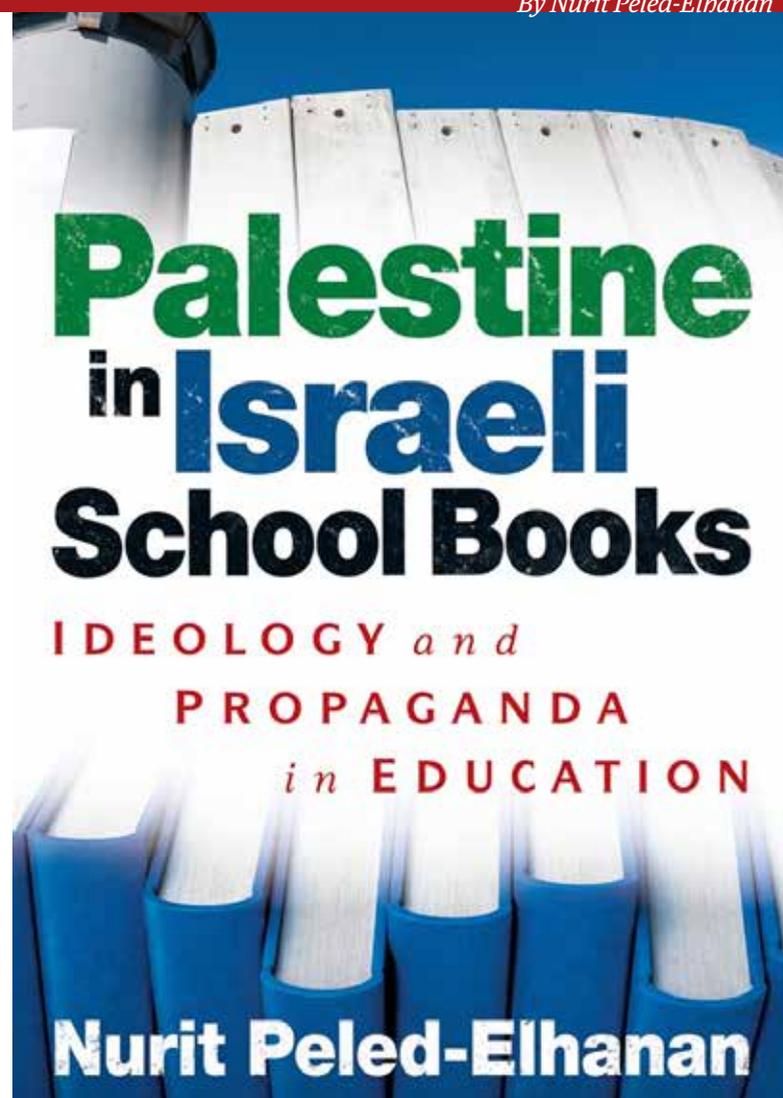
The proficiency in linguistics of Nurit Peled-Elhanan enables her to make points of historical,

political, national, cultural and personal significance: points that engage our emotions: points that disturbingly, for some, challenge the many myths sustaining a system that dehumanises even the believers of those myths.

To pull those triggers is dehumanising. To read, learn and inwardly digest this book just might rehumanise some of the people with fingers on triggers.

I wonder; to how many Israeli university undergraduate booklists will this book be added? Will it be studied by trainee teachers? Knowing and having worked with some Israeli teacher trainers I have hopes that it will. The power to approve school textbooks does not, however, lie with them and despite attempts by a valiant number of Israeli academics and journalists to draw attention to the role of ideology and propaganda in education the official narrative continues to be deeply internalised.

Some of the labels that we use in order to classify 'others' and to signpost the histories that keep us comfortable with ourselves can be misleading, even wrong, but also



very sticky. Like the UK Israel has many sustaining myths that come with some very sticky labels. I doubt if there remains a serious historian who believes that the Romans expelled the Jews from Palestine after the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem or the later Bar Kokhba Revolt and yet the notion of 'returning' after expulsion is an embedded belief-a sticky label- that helps legitimise the establishment of the state in a form that raises one group above another. And this is a state that, while reducing the status of the people it found there, has managed to promote the idea that it is 'The only democracy in the Middle East'. Can you be a democracy and yet raise one group of citizens above another? And, you might ask, how can a country claim for itself the power to charge its critics with being anti-Semitic when it pursues policies that humiliate and demonise 'others' who are at least as Semitic?

You know that you have been labelled as inferior when you are forced to accept being re-named and re-classified by a more powerful invading group: when your capacity to self-define is lost to



tors to tongue-tied silence, which commits us to dedicate our lives to never, ever, ever allowing anything like that to happen again, is built on a pleasant shallow hillside overlooking what was once Dier Yassin?

Why should any of this matter to us? Is it not merely "a quarrel in a far away country between people about whom we know nothing", as Chamberlain said about the German invasion of Czechoslovakia? It matters because "education, education, education" is really about "society, society, society". Let us not fall into the trap of assuming that Israel is exceptional in its portrayal of and teaching about 'others'. 'British' history is mostly 'English' history. The histories of, for example, the USA, Argentina, Brazil, Tibet or Australia are not taught to children from the perspectives of indigenous, invaded peoples. To do that would be disconcerting. We are suckers for reassuring narratives. They absolve us from sin. Remember the profound words of that archenemy of the working classes, Winston Churchill: "History shall be kind to me, for I intend to write it".

The book also matters to us because we collaborate with the distorters of history in an area that we have chosen to make special. The 'Holy Land' is not merely a tourist destination. We imbue it with so much meaning that the shape, nature, focus and intent of its discourse have the power to control how we make sense of humanity.

Do buy, read, disseminate and argue about this book: a book to which I have done scant justice. I have used the word 'exceptional' a number of times. I wish I could say that Nurit Peled-Elhanan is not exceptional. Unfortunately, she is. I met her briefly when she did some work on a programme that I directed in Israel working with teachers across cultural, religious, ethnic and political boundaries.

She is a co-recipient of the 2001 Sakharov Prize for Human Rights and the

Freedom of Thought awarded by the European Parliament. I knew before I met her that her daughter had recently been killed by a suicide bomber. What I did not then know was the huge extent of her intellectual capacity to focus upon and reveal the power of official discourse and narrative to create the conditions for killing. After reading this book no one should think that discourse analysis is only for ivory tower academics. It has the potential to relax a few trigger fingers.

The book is published by I.B. Tauris (www.ibtauris.com) ISBN 978-1-78076-505-1.

others. For example, to be labelled Welsh is to accept being called 'foreigner' in the Germanic language of the invaders of Britain. It is insulting but eventually you accept it because you lack the power to resist the new narrative. 'Israeli Arabs', however, whenever they cross over the border, refer to themselves as Palestinians. They have not accepted their reclassification.

Nurit's analysis of the discourse within Israeli (Jewish) schoolbooks makes clear that not only do two contradictory realities exist but that the internalisation of the official Israeli narrative is so crucial for self legitimacy that it must squeeze out, suppress and subdue historical narratives that contradict it.

Nurit's book reveals how Palestinians are represented negatively within the

Israeli national narrative, specifically in school textbooks. The high quality of her scholarship, including the amount of carefully detailed evidence she provides, will make it difficult for propagators of the official narrative to attack and contradict her. So, we

should ask, what might be the effect of this book?

The Israeli historian Shlomo Sand's book *The invention of the Jewish people*

(2009) generated very strong pro and con reactions and, incidentally, huge sales in Israel. His intention to normalise or to de-exceptionalise being Jewish in Israel was probably weakened because in straying from his area of expertise he enabled those he had upset to pick holes in part of his thesis.

Nurit does not stray from her area of expertise. She uses it on a specific topic: a topic that might be thought to be small and narrow but that actually unlocks matters of huge significance. In discussing Israel as a democracy she introduces us to the word 'ethnocracy'. School textbooks reinforce the idea that Israel is an ethnically based state: a state for Jews: a racially ring-fenced democracy. I have often wondered how schoolteachers taking classes round the Diaspora Museum in Tel Aviv deal with the display just inside the entrance that makes the contrary point that Jews are racially disparate. There is plenty to argue and

become upset about.

What she has to say about the rationalising, even the justifying, of massacres carried out by Israeli forces reminds me of yet another conversation, this one between me and a strong supporter of the official narrative. We were arguing about the Dier Yassin massacre in 1948 when most of the inhabitants of a

Palestinian village were killed.

My interlocutor:

"It is emerging now that they were warned to get out so why did they stay to be killed?"

This was presented to me as a



debate winning argument. It was, in other words, their own fault that they were killed. As Nurit explains in the book, it is not a case of hiding history but, rather, a case of setting examples of such massacres within a discourse of what had to happen in order to establish a state for exceptionalised people.

Visiting Yad Veshem, the holocaust museum, I found to be a deeply emotional experience. American money has since paid for its expansion. Foreign dignitaries are taken there. Its impact upon them must be very powerful. I bet that Tony Blair has been. He was, after all, charged with bringing peace to the area, though visiting Gaza, for example, was such a low priority for him that during the massacre in the summer of 2014 he brought forward the date for his wife's sixtieth birthday party by several months: the weather for an outdoor party was better during the massacre. During these visits does anyone have pointed out to them by their guides that this museum, which remembers an appalling crime against humanity, which humbles us, which reduces visi-



Douglas Carswell is quitting the party and hopes he will continue representing his constituency of Clacton without having to face a by-election.

He plans to stand as an independent but how independent will he really be?

He has already shown himself a die-hard Tory during his time with Ukip.

On the BBC news channel Saturday morning he stuck the knife in Ukip firmly and squarely.

He assessed Ukip as a one trick pony that is finished now that PM Theresa May is about to trigger Article 50.

In October 2014 we reported "Ukip and its party leader are celebrating Friday morning. The party secured its first seat in the Commons in Thursday's vote boosting the party's image and ego. Tory defector Douglas Carswell won Clacton in the South of England but was the electorate voting for their tried and tested old Tory MP or UKIP?"

Carswell was full of praise for unelected Tory PM Theresa May Saturday.

His words re Ukip "job done" obviously do not reflect his full view.

Carswell is hoping his constituents remain a one MP set of voters

OP-ED; UKIP'S FORMER TORY MP

who are intrinsically right-wing but what about local Ukip supporters? If Carswell has his way they will not get a chance to elect a Ukip MP or one of any other political colour.

Is he so desperate to stay in politics and if so why?

Did Carswell discuss his resignation with Theresa May and other Tories? Was he hoping to simply cross the floor of the House and join his Tory chums? Such a move would trigger a by-election.

He did not discuss his imminent departure with his Ukip colleagues who found out he had quit along with his blog readers and the mainstream media.

Carswell posted his intention to resign on his blog saying;

It has been an extraordinary achievement. UKIP, my party, which was founded in 1993 in order to get Britain out of the European Union, has now achieved what we were established to do.

On Wednesday, the Prime Minister is going to trigger Article 50, beginning the formal process of withdrawing our country from the EU. By April 2019, Britain will no longer be a member of the EU. After twenty-four years, we have done it. Brexit is in good hands.

UKIP might not have managed to win many seats in Parliament, but in a way we are the most successful political party in Britain ever. We have achieved what we were established to do - and in doing so we have changed the course of our country's history for the better. Make no mistake; we would not be leaving the EU if it was not for UKIP - and for those remarkable people who founded, supported and sustained our party over that period.

Our party has prevailed thanks to the heroic efforts of UKIP party members and supporters. You ensured we got a referendum. With your street stalls and leafleting, you helped Vote Leave win the referendum. You should all be given

medals for what you helped make happen - and face the future with optimism.

Like many of you, I switched to UKIP because I desperately wanted us to leave the EU. Now we can be certain that that is going to happen, I have decided that I will be leaving UKIP.

I will not be switching parties, nor crossing the floor to the Conservatives, so do not need to call a by election, as I did when switching from the Conservatives to UKIP. I will simply be the Member of Parliament for Clacton, sitting as an independent.

I will leave UKIP amicably, cheerfully and in the knowledge that we won.

At the hundreds of meetings and action days I have attended as a UKIP activist across the country since I joined in August 2014, I have met some truly remarkable people. You are heroes! Thank you and well done. I wish you all well.

When first elected to represent Clacton in 2005, I promised to do all I could to help ensure that Britain left the EU. To the consternation of my then party whips (some of who, I'm delighted to see, are now ministers helping make Brexit happen), I made my intentions on that front plain in my maiden speech. Job done.

I will be putting all of my effort into tackling some of the local problems affecting the NHS in our part of Essex, including GP shortages and the threat to our local Minor Injuries Unit. In that spirit, I called a Westminster Hall debate last week about the future of primary care in our part of Essex. Local comes first.

Cheer up! The days when small elites can try to arrange human social and economic affairs by grand design are coming to an end. Change is coming - Brexit is just the beginning.

Later Saturday there are claims that Mr Carswell jumped before he was pushed.

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Word Search Puzzle

ENGLISH COUNTY COUNCILS

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 CAMBRIDGESHIRE
 DERBYSHIRE
 DEVON
 DORSET
 EASTSUSSEX
 ESSEX
 GLOUCESTERSHIRE
 HAMPSHIRE
 HERTFORDSHIRE
 KENT

LANCASHIRE
 LEICESTER
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Sudoku

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Compiled by Karl Trevor

Mary Berry was a Dinner Lady in Chatham, Kent before she was discovered by Johnnie Craddock in 1952 after her Cauliflower Cheese recipe was published in Peoples Friend. Following Brexit she is planning to re-publish her post war recipe books as the more exotic imported ingredients will become prohibitively expensive. Mary is an advocate of Garlicfree food and is predicting that Chorizo will be replaced by Beef Dripping in most kitchens within five years and Granary Hovis will be topped with Old Holborn or Capstan Tobacco. Her favorite catchphrase is 'Its My Own Hair!'

BBC Breakfast News Brexit coverage is set to be reviewed after two consecutive interviews with Kier Starmer, the Shadow Brexit Minister, were cut short by technical failures. A rumoured new format is to be compered by an apparently ill-informed presenter interviewing a more Tory informed presenter. This will be followed by 20 minutes of David Davies MP talking uninterrupted on any topic he wants. The two presenters will then agree that Jeremy Corbyn caused all this and state that the Labour Party are in massive disarray. The segment will close with Steph talking to ordinary working and unwaged people who all espouse Labour values and policies out in the real world before the weather with Carol.

The foppish Mod off Never Mind The Buzzcocks and Mighty Boosh is replacing Mel and Sue as presenter of Great British Bakeoff. He will be avoiding getting Homepride Flour on a variety of bizarre outfits. He is expected to irritate the contestants with a mixture of Surrealism and some stuff he makes up on he spot. Each episode will end with a parody of a 1980's music video.

Dr Kellogg never ate a bowl of Cornflakes.

The BBC Only recruit Graduates from non-Oxbridge Universities so long as they went to Private Schools.

Karl Marx died penniless in 1883 in London. As a migrant German Jew he worked mostly as a freelance Journalist until he met his sponsor Friedrich Engels. A friend once taunted Marx saying he failed to see how he would survive in a Communist state as a 'Non-Worker'. The response was "I can't see it either. These times may come, but we must be away by then!"

Earlier in his life his Mother was quoted as saying "I wish you would make some Capital instead of just writing about it!" Later in life he suffered ill health in poverty including; Shingles, Ulcers, Arthritis,



FAKE NEWS OR IS IT?

Insomnia, Asthma and Pleurisy. He wrote most of Das Kapital standing up as his backside was covered in 'Huge Carbuncles'. Eleven People attended his Funeral.

The chairs used on the set of BBC Question Time were bought

in the Streatham branch of The Range.

Five Pound Notes are made of plastic and are to be coated with Palm Oil in order to Appease Vegans angry that animal oils had formerly been used.

Under-achieving former pupils with a privileged background and private education have higher earning potential than high achieving pupils from poorer areas and state schools.

Article 50 is widely thought to be an irrevocable process and once triggered it is certain that the UK will leave the European Union. This is far from certain as no one has ever done it before. It can still be challenged and it has no defined end date.



William Shakespeare Quiz Questions

1. What was the name of Shakespeare's wife?
2. How many children did Shakespeare have?
3. Without taking into account any lost plays or collaborations, how many plays did he write?
4. Who is the Prince of Denmark in a Shakespeare play?
5. Which is Shakespeare's shortest play?
6. And which is Shakespeare's longest play?
7. What is sonnet 18 often alternatively titled?
8. Which famous writer of the same era disliked *A Midsummer Night's Dream* calling it 'insipid and ridiculous'?
9. Which play is thought by many to be the last that Shakespeare wrote alone?
10. Cole Porter's *Kiss Me, Kate* is an adaptation of which play?
11. Goneril, Regan and Cordelia are the daughters of which Shakespeare character?
12. 'All the world's a stage' is the phrase that begins a monologue in which play?
13. Who is consort to Titania, Queen of the Fairies?
14. Name the theatre in London associated with William Shakespeare which was built in 1599 and destroyed by fire on 29 June 1613?
15. Which English poet and playwright, the foremost Elizabethan tragedian of his day, was born in the same year as William Shakespeare?
16. True or false. Shakespeare is buried in Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey?
17. Which planet in the Solar System has several moons named after Shakespearean characters?
18. Which year is the 400th anniversary of the playwright's death?
19. Antonio is the title character in which play?
20. Which character's mother is Lady Capulet?
21. What is Crab in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*?
22. Who is the Moor of Venice?

ANSWERS

1. Anne Hathaway
2. Three (a son Hamnet, and two daughters, Susanna and Judith)
3. 37
4. Hamlet
5. The Comedy of Errors (which is a third of the length of his longest)
6. Hamlet (which takes four hours to perform)
7. Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
8. Samuel Pepys
9. The Tempest
10. The Taming of the Shrew
11. King Lear
12. As You Like It
13. Oberon
14. The Globe Theatre
15. Christopher Marlowe
16. False (he's buried in Holy Trinity Church, Stratford upon Avon)
17. Uranus
18. 2016
19. The Merchant of Venice
20. Juliet (in *Romeo and Juliet*)
21. A dog
22. Othello

Home Made Muesli



This 'recipe' (I'm not sure I can count mixing things in a bowl as a recipe - more of a formula, I guess) is for my lovely sister-in-law, Geraldine. She wants to eat muesli that's actually healthy, which the stuff on our supermarket shelves doesn't really qualify as. Why not? It's stuffed full of sugar. In fact, most breakfast cereals are. If you turn the box over and read the ingredient list it soon becomes apparent that you'd be better off eating the packaging.

If you want a genuinely nutritious breakfast cereal the best way to achieve it is to make your own. This muesli will give a slow release of energy over several hours and it will take literally minutes to make a batch. You will need a large plastic bowl and one or two big pieces of tupperware to store it in. Alternatively you can keep it zip-lock bags.

This batch of muesli contains currants as the dried fruit content and almonds as the nut content but these can be swapped for any type of nut or dried fruit or a mixture of different ones - just keep the weight ratio the same and then play around with it according to taste or what you have in the cupboard. Most of the ingredients can be bought from the supermarket but I would definitely recommend Holland (no relation) & Barrett for the seeds. They are by far the cheapest place to buy them - and the nuts too, actually. Supermarket own brand oats are perfectly acceptable to use and you will find them tucked away on the lower shelves of the cereal aisle (they don't want to encourage you to buy oats - not much profit in them) and the dried fruit - sultanas, currants, raisins - will be in the baking aisle.

To make the muesli weigh out the following ingredients and mix thoroughly. That's it. The initial ingredients may seem expensive but it's worth the the lay-out. It actually works out cheaper per bowl than the sugar-laden stuff in packets but even if it didn't it would STILL be worth it. This healthy breakfast is a slow burner, the nuts and seeds are essential for supple, well-nourished skin and a moderate amount of dried fruit gives all the sweetness you need at breakfast time.

2 lb porridge oats
1/2 lb sunflower seeds
1/2 pumpkin seeds
6 tbsp linseeds
1/2 lb nuts
1/2 lb dried fruit





THE MOST DAMAGED TOWN IN BRITAIN?

This week's nominee Bury in Lancashire.

By Lucky B.

Bury in Lancashire, home to the world famous Bury market and the Bury Black Pudding,

Sir Robert Peel (founder of the modern police force),

Richmal Crompton (author of the Just William stories) and Victoria Wood (writer, comedienne and entertainer)... is this week's nominee for most damaged town in Britain.

Despite huge numbers of tourists flooding the town centre on market days to £spend, £spend, £spend; it's common to see 30 coach loads of happy shoppers flood the town centre; the Labour controlled council led by Richie Shori (Greater Manchester's first BEM council leader) are currently offering a less

than impressive service to their long suffering populace.

Following the closures of all but one of its Police stations to the public in recent months and with local crime a major concern, Bury now faces the closure of its 2 NHS walk-in centres and it tops the UK's list of largest number of public libraries facing closure - 11 are listed for closure in Bury this year.

Local people in search of Art and culture in their free time are compelled to visit Museums and Art Galleries in adjacent towns on weekday evenings and Sundays and Mondays - as Bury's major museum and its art gallery and sculpture centre - which cost £100,000 and was created in opposition to the wishes of local people; are closed to the public at these times. Strange but true.

Outside the well manicured town centre (Bury has won North

West Britain in Bloom more times than any other town), local people experience fly tipping on a gargantuan scale and neglect of public areas to the extent some pavements in the borough are un-negotiable by pedestrians.

Whilst Bury council regularly report zero numbers of people sleeping rough on Bury streets; possibly because of the time of day they have chosen to do their rough sleeping count; local youth charities Rathbones and Streetwise struggle to support troubled teenagers sleeping out in tents in the boroughs park areas, to feed themselves and stay dry, let alone achieve academically.

Bury's struggling families and homeless are directed by the council to the local Salvation Army Church for food parcels, financial support and transport to the near-

est Salvation Army Hostel in Blackburn. Bury has no hostel for the homeless - presumably because it has no homeless people.

Members of refugee communities in Bury can wait up to 3 years to access basic English courses to help them improve their job prospects and affordable study in Bury for people on a pension is only possible thanks to the thriving U3A group run by Bury's unacknowledged army of committed volunteer tutors headed by Mike France.

Bury's local MP David Nuttall (Conservative) was recently named and shamed for voting not to accept unaccompanied Syrian children to the UK and has featured on national BBC news in connection with the recent election fraud allegations.

2 weeks ago Bury council's

chief executive Mike Owens and 2 other senior members of staff were suspended, following an external review of the case of a councillor who admitted making indecent images of children.

A very sad state of affairs - for a town with such an illustrious heritage and such a hard working populace.

Bury deserves Better

If you live or work in Bury and want to oppose the nomination, please write telling us why.

If you live or work in Bury and want to support the nomination... vote now.

Have you got a nomination for the best or most damaged town in Britain? If so we'd love to hear from you.

IMAGINE

*Imagine there's no heaven
It's easy if you try
No hell below us
Above us only sky
Imagine all the people
Living for today... Aha-ah...*

*Imagine there's no countries
It isn't hard to do
Nothing to kill or die for
And no religion, too
Imagine all the people
Living life in peace... You...*

*You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will be as one*

*Imagine no possessions
I wonder if you can
No need for greed or hunger
A brotherhood of man
Imagine all the people
Sharing all the world... You...*

*You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will live as one*

Imagine is a pure anarchist/socialist view of a world where people are not fooled into fighting and dying for a con trick that is foisted on them by elites in countries. Imagine there are no countries? Imagine there is no religion? How many wars would that simple premise have prevented over recorded history.

Written by John Lennon in 1971 it is a simple piano song that even crazed producer Phil Spector could not manage to mess up. Lennon famously stated about the lyrics: "Imagine", which says: 'Imagine that there was no more religion, no more

country, no more politics,' is virtually the Communist manifesto."

The song also has purity of melody by using nothing more than a basic open chord structure in the key of c and using the usual Lennon trick to put in a c major7. It is one of those simple lilting melodies that a child can play and enjoy.

So the best songwriting band in the world break up and Paul goes on to write the frog chorus and get a Knighthood. John writes working class hero and Imagine...and gets... Still, now we have the X FACTOR and TAKE THAT, bass booming, mind numbing mediocrities. Imagine.



IMAGINE

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It's easy if you try
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Above us only sky
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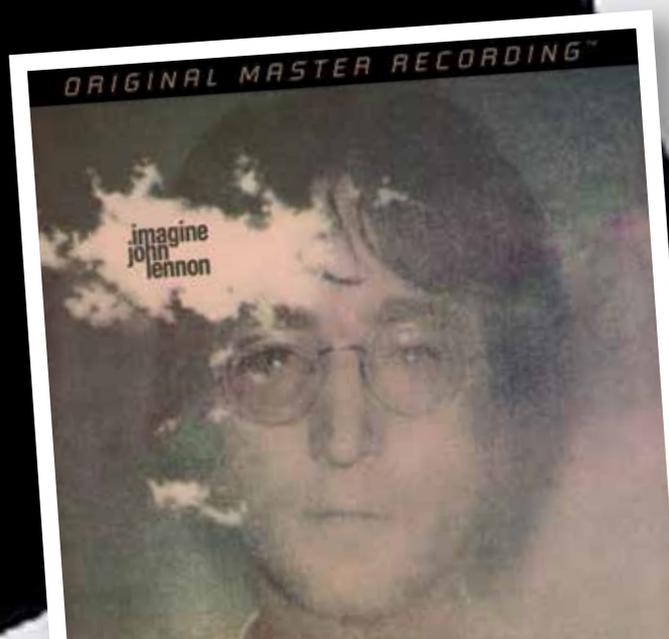
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By Peter Stefanovic

Recently I was asked the question "what's so special about the economic policies of Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell?" My reply was simple. They have the vision needed to rebuild and transform Britain into a society that's fair for everyone. "But don't Labour keep messing up the economy when in power?" was the reply! That really shocked me! Hang on a minute I said. Over the past seventy years the conservative Party has borrowed more money than Labour and created more debt than every Labour government in history! It's a well known fact! The Conservative party has done an absolutely terrible job of managing the economy! Its simple but ironic that Labour Governments are actually fiscally more conservative than conservative ones! Only two Labour Governments have ever left office leaving the national debt higher as a percentage of GDP, all others have actually lowered it! On the only two occasions labour oversaw increases in national debt as a percentage of GDP there were huge global financial crises going on! I'm talking about the Ramsay Macdonald Government of 1929/1931 and the final years of the Blair/Brown Government of 1997/2010 which coincided with the 2008 financial crisis! Let's not forget this in turn was caused by foolish financial deregulation policies and over reliance on the finance sector and all main political parties were responsible for that! If the conservatives had been in power there would have been just as little financial regulation so the impact of the crisis on U.K. banks would have been the same! Every other Labour Government has actually reduced the scale of the national debt!

Our conversation returned to the economic policies of Corbyn and McDonnell. I explained that a Labour Government would introduce a real living wage of at least £10 an hour. Just think about that for a moment I said, not just a minimum wage but a "real living wage", a wage that really will give millions of low paid workers and their families enough to live on. Did you not know that 19 million people in this country are on the edge of poverty even though nearly all of them have a job I asked? He looked at me blankly, a testament to the success of a biased right wing media! It's even worse than that I said. 17 million people have less than a hundred quid in savings. Just think about that. Seventeen million people just a heartbeat away from being thrown onto the street!

The number of children now estimated to be living in poverty in this country is four million and it seems to be a regularly overlooked fact these days that Labours final year in power saw child poverty at its lowest level since the 1980s! The simple fact of the matter is that the Tory Government is plunging



LAWYER AND NO BULLSHIT JOURNALIST PETER STEFANOVIC

the people in this country into levels of poverty not seen since the Victorian age. We've never needed a real living wage more in modern times and a Labour Government would deliver that for us, our families and our children.

The level of affordable house building in this country has fallen to a twenty four year low whilst the number of homeless has doubled. A Labour Government will build a million new homes in five years, half of them a new generation of council houses, and that's just part of Labour's £500 billion program of public investment! Just imagine the boost that will give to the economy from construction, job creation and rental income!

The number of people on zero hours contracts in the U.K. has just hit a record high of nearly a million people. You don't need me to tell you that People on zero hours contracts aren't guaranteed a minimum number of work hours but still have to be available to work. Zero hours contracts are a scandal that's trapping people into homelessness and poverty. People on these contracts simply can't earn enough to keep up with the cost of living. A Labour Government will ban them, that's right ban zero hours contracts and help those trapped by them to escape the risks of homelessness and poverty.

A Labour Government will introduce a right to own policy for

workers, giving them first refusal on taking control of companies undergoing a change of ownership. Just think about that, employees will actually be given first rights on buying out a company that's being dissolved, sold or floated on the stock exchange and Under a Labour Government the public sector pay cap will be lifted! Sounds good doesn't it? Well it gets better!!

A Labour Government will create a new national investment bank and a network of regional development banks to mobilise £500 billion of investment to rebuild Britains industries after years of Tory neglect. It's exactly what will be needed to help the U.K. economy recover after Brexit.

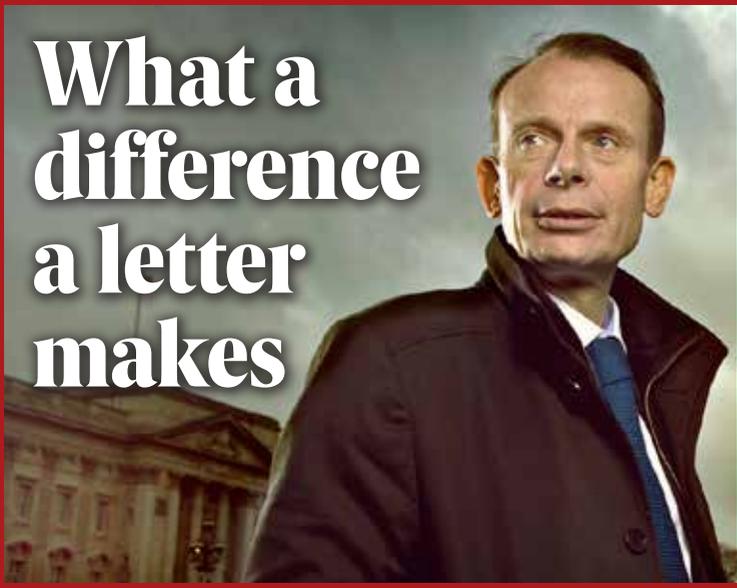
A Labour Government will take the railways back under public ownership and give local authorities powers to run their own bus services. It will bring in legislation to correct the bias in Government funding for the regions. It will commit to fund a £10 billion crossrail for the North rail project and green electricity from tidal lagoons. Labour will reverse the Conservatives abolition of student grants and EMA support. It will ensure there's financial support for business hubs in every major town and city. It will oversee a radical overhaul in business rates, including the removal of plant and machinery from rates and Labour will increase research and development spending to 3% of GDP by 2030.

A Labour Government will put an end to austerity cuts to-in work benefits and to people with disabilities and make a commitment to protect pensioners by maintaining the triple lock. It will shift the tax burden which is now too heavy on those less able to pay onto those who hold the real wealth in this country. A Labour Government will restore a fifty percent income tax rate for the highest earners, it will reverse cuts to corporation tax, to capital gains tax and inheritance tax. It will implement a policy of tax transparency and an enforcement program to clamp down on tax avoidance and evasion and it will legislate to make public the tax returns of those earning over a million pounds a year!

A Labour Government will work under a fiscal credibility rule to bring down the deficit whilst committing real Government resources to increase investments. A Labour Government would double the size of the cooperative sector in the U.K. It would unlock capital funding for small businesses by enabling mutual guarantees societies to be formed. Labour would manage the nations finances in a responsible way, creating an entrepreneurial state and finding ways in which the wealth of society is better managed!

The Labour Party understands that we don't have to live the way we do now, there's a better way, a fairer way and that's Labour's vision for the future! Labour is the only credible party actively making a stand against the soaring homelessness, child poverty and malnutrition presided over by this government. It's the only party actively standing against a government that's condemned a million people a year to foodbank handouts, that's brought our NHS to its knees and whose cuts to the welfare and social care budgets are likely responsible for tens of thousands of deaths, the majority old age pensioners. I could go on! The Conservatives are now a byword for arrogant, shambolic incompetence. But there is another way, a better way, a fairer way and that's Labour's way and that's the vision of the Labour Party. Enough said!

What a difference a letter makes



By Ian Charles...

One day I might invent a review of Marr and nobody would notice; the whole programme is fake anyway. On Sunday 2nd April, too late for April Fools' Day, stand-in Eddie Mair wanted to talk about 'the rock of' Gibraltar to all his guests.

Matt Chorley of the Times wanted to talk about the Sunday Times.

Miriam Gonzalez (Mr Clegg's wife) talked about Spanish newspapers; evidently Spain worries about Gibraltar's high concentration of banks, almost as many as that of the British Virgin Islands.

Failed politician Esther McVey explained how Gibraltar shouldn't be on the table. Esther was asked about Ed Miliband, and instead talked about Hilary Benn. She told us we have to remain 'good friends' with Europe. Is she 'good friends' with anyone, other than Sunday programmes on the BBC?

Horrid.

Fabian Pacardo, chief minister, refused to answer a question as to whether he'd lobbied to include Gibraltar on the Article 50 letter; apparently, he'd worked 'very closely' with Mrs May. Seemingly Gibraltar is 'tangentially mentioned.' Who knew?

Tomasz Schafernaker told us about the weather in Gibraltar and the UK. Ha ha.

What would Caroline Lucas do about Gibraltar? She had to think quickly and make something up. Generalisations are usually best with Caroline; Jonathan Barkley was even briefer. Thank goodness, I say. UKIP said "Jump!" and the Government replied "How high?" I've never heard that saying before, have you?

Then back to Lucas, talking about UK politics. This quickly became a Green Party Political Broadcast, rubbishing everyone else, but then Jonathan told us how they were similar to the Lib Dems on this, Labour on that, and Lucas pronounced that Terrorism "is an atrocity." She admit-

ted that her party website allows their policies to be unhelpfully interpreted in a number of ways by other people. You don't say, Caroline...

Just as I was getting bored, we went back to 1916, and the Wipers Times; the magnificent Ian Hislop entered stage left to talk about a new play about a satirical newspaper printed by troops during the second half of WWI, and explained how it was basically Private Eye before its time. They showed some of it, and the jokes were quite good but the singing and dancing let it down; the same with Private Eye, really.

Hislop was very good, a breath of fresh air on a fetid little programme, which quickly went fetid again, as Mair tried to crucify Ed Miliband; poor Ed, on the spot, again; totally sincere, again; unconvincing, again. But he was good on the question of a second referendum; it's not what we should do, but not impossible.

Oh dear.

Ed was nice about Kier Starmer and Jeremy Corbyn; someone has to be. He pointed out that Labour is trying to speak for the 52+48%=100% which was good.

Eddie Mair: "You could have been Prime Minister - did you cry?"

(A tip for Kuenssberg here, surely)

Miliband: "Pi** off you intrusive blighter," is what he didn't say. "Er ... no," was his more dignified reply. I still like Miliband, but I don't like Mair; bring back Marr.

What a difference a letter makes.

'Sir' Michael Fallon was next, to make things 'perfectly clear.' I normally ignore everything this guy says, other than to intuit the opposite in order to get at the truth. Today it was impossible. He tilted his head reverently and smiled, "We always take notice of what the Royal Family thinks."

An 'old rock and roller,' a 'stalwart of rock' Alejandro Escovedo, someone even I've never noticed, played us out.

Terrible.



PALESTINE ACTIVISTS

Support the Palestine Solidarity Committee over latest attempts by Israel to stifle peaceful protest

The recent controversy over praise for Martin McGuinness' contribution in later life to the peace process will inevitably lead to mixed reactions. What is clear is that political change through dialogue is always to be preferred to change brought about by violence if possible. However when people are trapped by being denied the right to protest, this fuels violence.

Which is why I have penned the letter below to my MP over the Israeli state's harassment of two peace activists. The Palestine Solidarity Committee have asked people to lobby their MPs to ask our Government to condemn the heavy handed treatment of Issa Amro and Omar Barghouti. Many of you will have already taken action, but if not please look at PSC's website, info@palestinecampaign.org or the links below in my letter, and write your own letter to your MP.

Dear MP,

Whilst condemning terrorism, even when motivated by achieving legitimate political objectives, I strongly feel when a state cuts the 'oxygen' of peaceful protest off, it risks creating more terrorists. Although lauded by most of the world now, Nelson Mandela and other activists either took part, or turned a blind eye' to acts of terrorism because the South African state crushed legitimate protests. Civil disobedience under Gandhi in India and equal rights under King in the States gained victories but the response by the authorities was aggressive and only fuelled their cause.

DISAPPEARING PALESTINE



5 million Palestinians are classified as refugees by the UN

So the recent action by the Israeli state in bringing 18 charges against Issa Amro dating all the way back to 2010 is an example of heavy handed treatment of a man who has been recognised as a Human Rights Defender by the European Union and the United Nations, which could push other Palestinians into acts of violence.

Similar 'trumped up' charges have been levelled at Omar Barghouti, the leader of the non-violent Palestinian Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement. He was hit by a travel ban which has prevented him travelling to the US to receive the Gandhi Peace Award at Yale University.

Please would you write to the FCO at the earliest opportunity asking them to make representations to the Israeli government condemning the treatment and unjust attacks on peaceful campaigners for justice and peace such as Omar and Issa.

The British Government must make clear to Israel that it is not acceptable for it to arrest and criminalise individuals who advocate for human rights of the Palestinian

people and protest against policies that violate those rights. It is obvious that Israel finds it harder to fight against the pen, but has the military might to hit back when Palestinians use violence. There are lessons to be learnt by both sides in this respect.

For more information:

<https://freeissa.org>
<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/27/opinion/whos-afraid-of-nonviolence.html>
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/11/israel-opt-drop-baseless-charges-against-palestinian-human-rights-defender/>

<https://bdsmovement.net/news/bnc-statement-israels-ongoing-campaign-silence-omar-barghouti-repress-bds-movement>

<http://amnestyusa.org/news/press-releases/israeli-government-must-cease-intimidation-of-human-rights-defenders-protect-them-from-attacks>

Yours sincerely,
John Wilkins.

If you invent a time machine, The Library of Alexandria is the first place you should visit (you can see the dinosaurs after, ok?). The most monumental of all ancient learning institutions, the Library was a beacon to the great thinkers of antiquity for over 7 centuries. At its peak, the Library contained nearly one million scrolls: plays by the great Athenian dramatists, annals of Homeric poetry, the schematics of Egyptian mechanics.

5. Berossus' *Babyloniaica* (written circa 281 BCE): Berossus was an incredibly bright historian whose masterpiece *Babyloniaica* covered the history of the world in three volumes. The first volume describes everything between the creation of the world and the Great Flood, a period Berossus astonishingly estimated as being about 432,000 years! That's over 100 times more than the Old Testament's estimate! Can you imagine the marvelous sights and fantastic events Berossus depicted in this volume? Sadly, as only fragments of the history survived, imagining is in fact all one can do.

4. The works of Sappho (written circa 612-570 BCE): Hardly a scrap of the 9 volumes of Sappho's poetry kept at the Library survived its destruction. But that tiny sliver of her immense genius was still enough to earn her the artistic immortality about which she often wrote (for example, this dagger-in-the-heart of a verse: "Although they are/ Only breath, words/ which I command/ are immortal"). More than a poet, Sappho was perhaps the finest musician of antiquity: her talent was frequently considered proof she was either a tenth muse or a goddess. In one of the most provocative flourishes in history, Stobaeus's *Florilegium* describes Solon of Athens hearing one of Sappho's songs and asking that it be taught to him. When asked why, he said, "so that I may learn it, then die." That's pretty much the highest praise possible, don't you think?

3. The works of Hero of Alexandria (written circa 10-70 CE): Hero was the greatest experimenter of

Greek antiquity. Endowed with mind-boggling mechanical genius, he invented steam engines, wind turbines and hydrostatic fountains millennia before these systems became commonly used. He even created automated machinery, which scholars today see as the groundwork for cybernetics! As if that weren't enough to rest his toga on, he discovered imaginary numbers and probably knew the laws of refraction. Reminder: this is

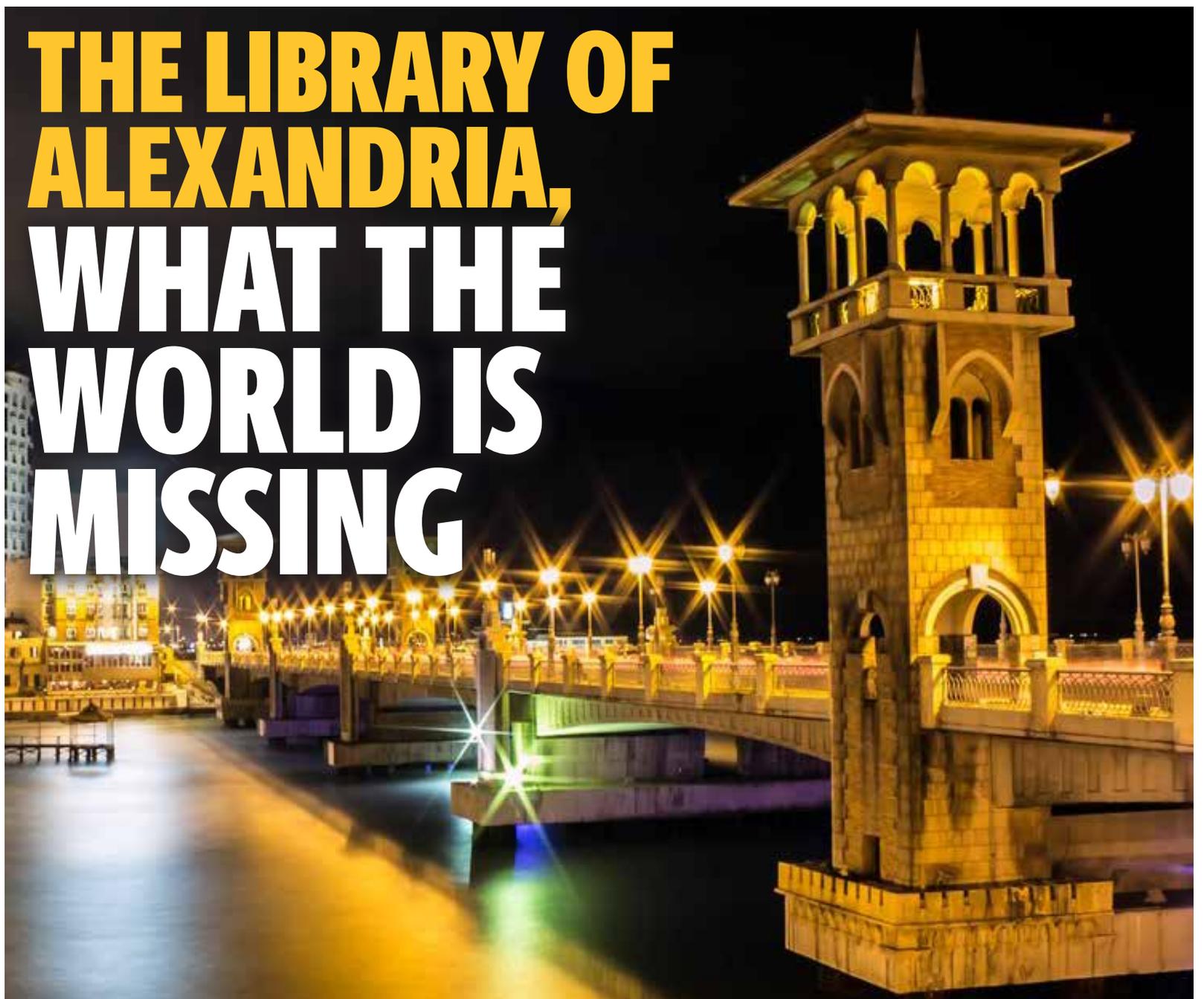
just the stuff we know about Hero. While thankfully, Arab scholars saved a portion of his works, we do not know the bulk of wonders discovered by this brilliant man.

2. The works and life of Hypatia (circa 370-415 CE): In March 415 CE, when the mob led by the ironically named Peter the Reader burned the Library of Alexandria, they also brutally assassinated its last chief librarian, Hypatia. Many scholars view her murder as representing

the symbolic death of classical antiquity. And for good reason: Hypatia was a world-renowned mathematician, a fiery lecturer beloved by her thousands of pupils and a woman completely unashamed of outshining her male contemporaries. Literally all of Hypatia's writing was lost with her library, but we know she built hydrometers and astrolabes as well as improving upon the theories of such luminaries of Apollonius, Diophantus and

Ptolemy, amongst others.

1. The works of Aristarchus of Samos (circa 310 BCE-230 BCE): This one is the biggest heartbreaker of them all. Sometime in the 3rd Century BCE, Aristarchus of Samos figured out that the Earth orbits the Sun, and not the other way around. He also correctly deduced the order of the planets, and he knew that the solar system was many, many times bigger than his contemporaries' estimates.



THE LIBRARY OF ALEXANDRIA, WHAT THE WORLD IS MISSING

Shakespeare interview

Our resident medium, Psychic Steve, has been in touch with England's greatest ever playwright to bring you his thoughts on Theresa May and England today.

Q) William, there has been a controversy over whether you really wrote all your plays or were the work of someone much posher?

A) Thou mammerring, hedge born codpiece. Art thou more dissembling than a Blairite dossier? Tis an attack by mewling idle headed maggots. Thou shalt feel my rapiers cold touch on your nether regions.

Q) So that is a yes then...you

did write them?

A) Spleeny, pox marked miscreant, of course I wrote them.

Q) Bill, what's your thoughts on Jeremy Corbyn?

A) The sweet chamber echoes of a fair unsullied maiden can be compared to the crystalline musings of this man. Yea, tis the wakening's of April in this snow driven land of the witch.

Q) What do you feel about the soft coup within the Labour party?

A) Fie, my lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account? - Yet who

would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?

Q) And can Corbyn survive?

A) Be not afraid of these errant, dankish, minnows...be not afraid I say.

Q) What are your thoughts on the Blairites?

A) Many a good hanging prevents a bad marriage.

Q) Isn't that going a bit far there, Bill?

A) No, thou art as unlearned as a rough hewn pigeon egg, I was updating *Twelfth night* with Blair as Malvolio.

Q) And your thoughts on bringing back Grammar schools?

A) Simply wrong.



Q) if there was anyone in history you would compare Jeremy Hunt to who would it be?

A) Well, fair Sir, there is the obvious. "My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,

And every tongue brings in a several tale."

Q) Richard the third?

A) Yea

Q) Are you still writing?

A) Yes. I just finished an episode of *Eastenders*.

Q) What would you say to Theresa May?

A) Methink'st thou art a general offence and every man should beat thee.

Q) What is the advice you would like to give us about modern media?

A) "Fear no more the heat o' the sun"

Q) Lastly, if you could wish anything to happen today what would it be and who would it happen to?

A) More of your conversation would infect my brain.

There you have it. William Shakespeare (who, incidentally, has a very strong West Midlands accent.)



FORGOTTEN BANDS

#5 THE WINTER HOURS

Memories of things you thought you'd forgotten, never knew, or perhaps you weren't even there at the time. By Ian Charles, who was there and forgets nothing, except, perhaps

From earlier articles in this series you might have thought that I only listened to bands or almost forgot bands that played in, say, 1971 or earlier. Although I listened extensively to music, and played a lot of it way back when, I've continued to appreciate many forms of music, though bands have always intrigued me, especially the major influence of one, or two, individuals on their sound or their success.

Between 1983 and 1991 there existed a New Jersey band called The Winter Hours who made a couple of albums and some *EPs* - something it might be worth running a piece on by itself. What's an EP? What's an LP? What's a 78? Back in the Day I'd call it. The Winter Hours, though, was a band which focused on gigging as much as recording, and possibly more so.

Joseph (Joe) Marques, a fine songwriter, and four other guys recorded two songs which stand above all their others, about which almost nothing is written, and what is available tells you almost

nothing. Fortunately YouTube hasn't forgotten them and neither has crime and thriller writer John Connolly, who refers to them throughout his 11th Charlie Parker detective story *The Wrath of Angels* (2012). Like all Connolly's writing this book is surreal and supernatural; don't confuse him with US author Michael Connolly. Personally I like to read them one after the other and confuse them even more; lord of the mash-up, that's me.

John laid it on so thickly about *The Winter Hours* during *The Wrath of Angels* that I had to look them up and was hooked. Indeed the best writing about the band and their music is probably to be found in Connolly's book, and the second highest number of words written about them is this article. So much is unknown about the band, unless you went to see them or knew them personally.

I've said previously that the key to making changes in band personnel is to ensure that the numbers of people in the band doesn't reduce from formation to conclusion, and Marques and his team were always five, changing their drummer, Frank Giannini for Stanley Demeski by way of John Albanese, keeping their bass

player, Bob Messing, who wasn't, and having two guitar players, Michael Carlucci and Bob Perry, who also played other things with strings on them, such as the banjo. Dave Scheff (*Translator*, a band not a job) played some drums for them too. Constantly switching your drummer is a way to kill your band, I've found, but constant gigging can be a way to kill your drummer; thus perhaps killing your band?

There remains a discography, again rather uninformative, a list of personnel, and some really nice songs with a wide ranging style. I like their haunting *Hyacinth Girl*, opening track on the 1986 EP *Wait Till the Morning*, and their single, *Smoke Rings*, second track on the 1989 eponymous second LP. The track is breathtakingly beautiful; if you don't agree then please accept that it took my breath away. This is one of those bands who cannot reform, even if they'd want to; Marques died in 2003, and Carlucci in 2015. Each contributed to the band's characteristic bright yet mournful sound; we shall never see their like again. Start with this link, and from there find *Smoke Rings* and *Hyacinth Girl*, in that order: <http://tinyurl.com/zzmoal6> Ian Charles.

'How Will Capitalism End?'

Essays on a Failing System'
by Wolfgang Streeck
(Verso, 2016) - book reviewed
by Andrew Wallace, 22/03/17

Capitalism and Entropy

This is an intriguingly titled volume of essays, only the first of which is however devoted to the subject of the book's title, namely a discussion concerning various scenarios in which we might contemplate the mortality of an 'improbable social formation, full of conflicts and contradictions,... unstable and influx and highly conditional on historically contingent and precarious supportive and well as constraining events and institutions'.

Streeck takes his cue from what he considers a seminal text co-authored 3 years earlier by 5 distinctive thinkers. Streeck's titular essay then is very much a dialogue and assimilation of this work:

- Does Capitalism Have a Future? (2013) - Wallerstein, Collins, Mann, Derlugian, Calhoun.

The crisis scenarios under discussion are of course a distillation of Marxist, Keynesian and heterodox economists who remain critical of the key axioms of the so called free market, especially in the wake of the Great Recession (2008). The old spectres of market disequilibrium by overproduction or underconsumption are of course very much in contention, as is Marxist crises of profitability and the problems of modernity by obsolescence and the finite limits of land and labour. Weber and Schumpeter also introduced wider socio-economic themes inherent with bureaucratic sclerosis.

Streeck suggests that various crisis scenarios from these 5 writers could be 'aggregated into a diagnosis of multi-morbidity in which different disorders coexist and, more often than not, reinforce each other.'

No revolutionary alternative is required

A nice little irony at the centre of Streeck's thinking unfolds here. With capitalism in its contemporaneous super-turbo charged 'neoliberal' platform, having so successfully vanquished all would be alternatives (which have typically rescued the system in revitalised form at various critical points in our past history) via its bleak credo of there is no alternative 'capital realism' - easier to imagine the end of the world than capitalism, now at the zenith of its apparent impenetrable hegemony, because it has exhausted the possibilities of renewal from reformist quarters, must now be forced kicking and screaming into a prolonged period of entropy.

We are hearing from many

thinkers how automation, information technology and electronicisation will have profound implications for the middle classes in much the same way in which mechanisation did for the manual working class. With alarming implications for unemployment and ongoing secular stagnation or dramatic declines, this will add to the ongoing crisis of underconsumption and demand gap.

Streeck has a nice line in irony as he notes our divided identities, located within our consumerist lifestyles, as voracious consumers of cheap clothes and electronic gadgets and household goods, we also put direct pressure on ourselves as producers, 'accelerating the move of production abroad and thereby undermining (our) own wages, working conditions and employment.'

Neoliberalism has overextended itself, having cannibalised a lot of the soft underbelly,

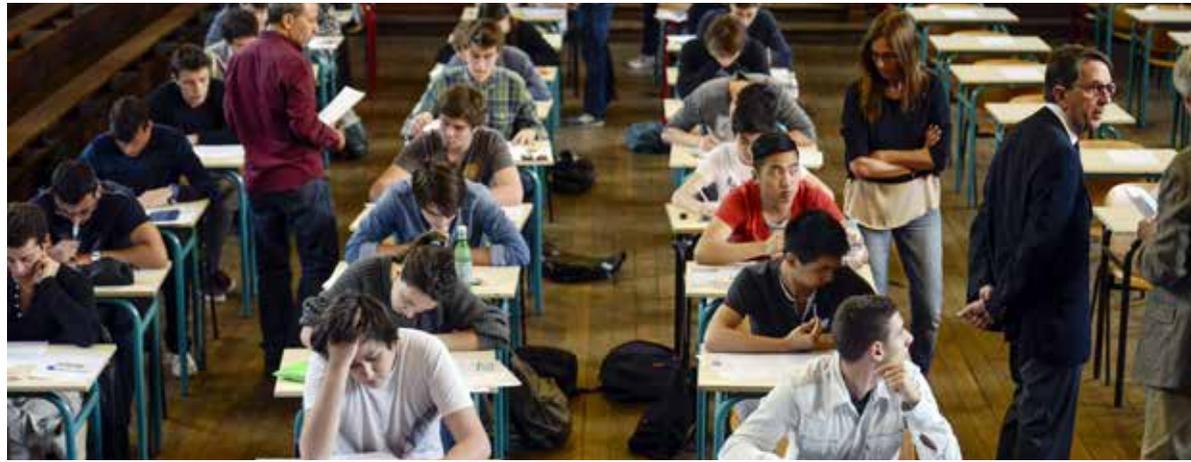


social capital and infrastructure vital to maintaining confidence and stability in the normative capitalist context.

Useful contribution to our Post-Liberal era

The other essays in the book discuss the nature in the shift of post war Keynesian democracy to the post democratic ordoliberalism of thinkers like Hayek, given the move to depoliticisation in many domestic spheres and of course international governance from the EU.

This is an interesting short volume of essays although some of the later offerings may come across as a little dry and technical. Streeck is certainly making a very interesting contribution to ongoing discussions concerning the distinct post-liberal phase we seem to be entering with the marked rise of anti-globalisation sentiments. And whilst the political atrophy of the left continues, it is important to note that wider structural shifts in the nature of capitalism may mean that other practicalities apart from mere politics may force the hand of history.



TRUMP SHOCK DOCTRINE FOR SCHOOLS

The Washington Post reported recently on the people Donald Trump has been talking to about schools. Advocates for community based public schools were not noticeable.

By Cliff Jones, February 2017

What is on its way has been called a 'democratic disconnect': the process by which services that once were managed and monitored by democratically accountable officers and elected representatives are handed over to private companies able to avoid scrutiny by citing commercial confidentiality.

In 2008 Brown and Jacobs wrote **The Private Abuse of the Public Interest: Market Myths and Policy Muddles**. They pointed out that the urge to privatise not only meant a retreat from public values and accountability but also generated a need for additional regulations and regulators. When there are holes in the road voters still wish them to be fixed. Who makes that happen if government is small and business is big? They noted that George W's plans for smaller government increased its

size. Not only do existing regulations and regulators not disappear but more regulations and regulators are needed to manage those now outside the public system. The difference is that voters cannot, for example, observe a local government education committee making the relevant decisions. Neither do their votes count as they once did.

In *The Shock Doctrine* (2007) Naomi Klein gave the example of how, following a hurricane, the residents of New Orleans returned to find that services such as schools were no longer public but private. A disaster creates turmoil and disorientation. Chaos provides opportunity, as Nick Boles, Michael Gove's former flatmate, once pointed out. Cameron put him in charge of planning.

Thatcher, Baker, Blair, Adonis and Gove took several years to de-stabilise and disconnect schools. With Betsy DeVos in charge in the USA the democratic disconnect

may come more quickly.

Fortunately, DeVos is sixteenth in line to be President should all those in front of her fall under a series of political buses: a small mercy.

Social Fracking is a long-term process of undermining social stability. The concept of choice is used a lot by social frackers. Voters are told that they will gain the power to choose but it is those in control of commodities with that power: children and their parents have a market value.

Trump is more a sudden shocker than a gradual fracker. Despite his assertions of inheriting a mess he has not. The speed at which he is dismantling social stabilisers plus the nature of the people he is placing in authority is providing the shock to create that mess. It is not easy to predict the outcome for schools in the USA but the pressure they will come under will unsettle teachers, children, parents and communities. The more time Trump and DeVos have the more extensive will be the damage.

Below is, first, a letter from the President of the American Federation of teachers and, second, a letter from the President of the National Education Association.

Donald Trump and Betsy DeVos are set to encounter resistance.

February 14, 2017
Betsy DeVos
Secretary of Education
Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202



Dear Secretary DeVos:

I watched this morning as you and President Trump reinforced the concerns raised by millions of parents, students, educators and the broader public during your confirmation process. Ninety percent of children in America attend public school, including children whose parents voted for Donald Trump. Yet, from what we could discern the president's first meeting in the White House on education was used as a platform to denigrate—not strengthen—public schools with primarily private and home-schooling educators and parents as a backdrop.

Instead of continuing on a path of undermining public schools, we urge you—indeed challenge you—to take the more responsible path—to do the hard work that your oath of office as secretary of education requires. Demonstrate that you take seriously the responsibility that the Senate bestowed on you, not through photo ops or sound bites, but by responding in a real and thoughtful way to what parents and teachers need to strengthen our public schools for the students who attend and need them.

I invite you to see the broad diversity that is our strength, but also the challenges presented by the fact that half our children live in poverty. That is a factor that can neither be an excuse or ignored in our quest to help every single child climb up that ladder of opportunity.

I invite you to visit a public school, to spend hours in our classrooms, cafeterias, hallways, libraries, community rooms, nurses' offices or all the little crevices and corners inside and outside school buildings where educators engage, nurture and grow this generation of children.

Ask teachers what they need to be successful, or paraprofessionals how they spend their days. Talk to parents about supports they would like for their students, or ask them what they like about their public schools. Ask students about their educational experience. This—more than any particular ideology—will help inform every decision you make as secretary.

You are now the secretary of education for all of the students in the United States. Public school teachers and parents all over America are waiting for you to walk their walk. Sincerely,
Randi Weingarten
President
American Federation of Teachers.

February 14, 2017
The Honorable Betsy DeVos
Secretary of Education 400 Maryland Avenue SW LBJ Education Building Washington DC 20202

Dear Secretary DeVos:

I am writing in response to your voice mail. I'm an elementary teacher from Utah. I've taught in middle-class suburbs. I've taught homeless children and hard-to-place

foster kids in a residential home. I know how important it is for my students to have education leaders who understand their lives and the support they need. As president of the 3-million-member National Education Association, I look for partners to stand with us as we protect the rights of all our students.

NEA will continue to fight for students, educators, and public schools. I will make sure the voices of educators are heard and that policymakers understand that investing in public schools is an investment in the next generation of teachers, scientists, welders, and even politicians. It's important for educators, parents, and communities to know where you stand on some of the most critical work of the federal Department of Education. I must ask you to give us the substantive answers that I did not hear you give to the senators at your hearing on issues critical to our students:

1. Do you agree that all schools receiving public dollars must be held to the same accountability and transparency standards?
2. Will you agree not to privatize funding for Special Education or Title I?
3. Will you stand with educators and protect our most vulnerable students from discrimination, including LGBT students, immigrant students, students of color, girls and English language learners?
4. Will you focus, as educators are focused, on the civil rights of all children, regardless of their zip code, by challenging the inequities so many face in equal access to programs, services and support?



For us, there is a wrong answer to these questions. Privatizing and profiting from public education has not moved us toward equity, equal access, non-discrimination, and opportunity for all students. NEA members will never waver in our determination to create a system that works for ALL children. Educators, students, and parents deserve to know that the U.S. Secretary of Education will do the same. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,
Lily Eskelsen García
1989 Utah Teacher of the Year
President, National Education Association

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2017/02/14/heres-who-trump-invited-to-the-white-house-to-talk-about-schools-the-list-says-a-lot-about-his-education-priorities/?utm_campaign=buffer&utm_content=buffer0cfe1&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter

<https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2017-03/news/us-leads-rising-global-arms-trade>

U.S. Leads Rising Global Arms Trade

By Jeff Abramson

Fueled by armed conflicts in the Middle East and tensions in Asia, global trade in major conventional weapons systems has reached its highest level since the end of the Cold War, according to a report from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

The United States remains the world's top arms exporter, as it has been since 1990, with Russia as the perennial number two in the most recent period analyzed by SIPRI. Together, the two countries account for more than half of global exports. China, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom each recorded about 5 percent of global exports, rounding out the top six of 57 countries identified as exporters. Although exporting is relatively concentrated among a few countries, only India and Saudi Arabia took more than a 5 percent share of global trade among 155 identified arms importing states.

The SIPRI report, which looks at arms transfers during five-year periods, was issued Feb. 20 and found that no such period since 1990 had as large a level of major weapons systems transfers as during 2012-2016, using a specially designed measure called trend-indicator value that allows for comparisons back to 1950. The measurement provides something of a barometer of global instability because the arms trade embodies countries' perceived current and future military needs.

During the last five years, efforts to ensure that the global arms trade proceeds responsibly advanced, most notably with the 2013 conclusion of the Arms Trade Treaty. Now with 92 states-parties, the treaty requires the establishment of national export control systems, as well as assessments of whether exported arms would "contribute to or undermine peace and security" or could be used to commit or facilitate serious violations of international humanitarian or human rights law, acts of terrorism, or transnational organized crime. How the accord may slow the growth of the conventional arms trade remains to be seen, with treaty implementation a key topic at this year's conference of states-parties, planned for September.

<http://www.telesurtv.net/english/news/Paraguay-2-Officials-Resign-4-Police-Arrested-over-Killing-of-Activist-20170402-0003.html>

Paraguay: 2 Officials Resign, 4 Police Arrested over Killing of Activist

The arrests come in the wake of widespread disgust over the killing of Rodrigo Quintana during Friday's protests.

Four police officers were arrested on Saturday in Asuncion as part of the investigation into the killing of an opposition activist during the protests against a vote to allow the re-election of right-wing President Horacio Cartes.

Two top officials also stepped down over the tragedy. Cartes accepted the resignations of both Interior Minister Miguel Tadeo Rojas and police commander Crispulo Sotelo Saturday.

As protesters set fire to Paraguay's Congress building on Friday, heavily armed riot police stormed the headquarters of the liberal opposition PLRA party, shooting and killing Rodrigo Quintana, a 25-year-old activist.

An unnamed official with Paraguay's interior ministry told EFE that one officer, Gustavo Florentini, had confessed to shooting Quintana. Florentini and the three other officers are being held in preventative detention as part of the investigation.

While one doctor said that Quintana had died after being shot with rubber bullets at close range, EFE reported that the investigation is looking into why Florentini's shotgun was loaded with "lead bullets instead of rubber bullets."

<http://www.lookleftonline.org/2017/03/official-provisionals/>

Martin McGuinness, Political Strategy and the Civil Rights Movement

The death of Martin McGuinness has inevitably prompted reflection on his career, with the reactions varying according to one's political ideology. For the mainstream, McGuinness's oeuvre is sharply divided into two halves, that of paramilitary godfather and political statesman, with the dichotomy arising from their view on the Provisional IRA's (PIRA) long running campaign. For Sinn Féin and a wider body of sympathisers, that division is an artificial construct; the two eras - military leader and peacemaker - are different forms of the same struggle. The change in strategy by no means entails an admission that the Provisional's military campaign was misconceived, only that it could no longer sustain progress towards their goal. Interestingly, much of the online commentary sympathetic to Sinn Féin has revolved around how the Pro-

visionals' armed campaign was a fight for civil rights in Northern Ireland; the military campaign being an inevitable response to the brutality of British State and the loyalist mobs that the campaign's progress elicited.

.....
Danny Morrison made this point in his review of Tommy McKearney's book on the Provisional IRA: "He suggests that the IRA by demanding a British withdrawal and an all-Ireland republic left itself no room for manoeuvre to contemplate an alternative to these stark objectives. Surely he appreciates that it was that goal which generated our passion and was what we were actually fighting and prepared to die for? And that during the fighting of a war to anticipate anything less than your sovereign demands is to undermine your struggle? He then confuses the current outcome of the struggle (the Belfast Agreement) as apparently having been the real objective: that the campaign was about reform and redressing the wrongs which the civil rights movement identified, rather than about ending partition and establishing a thirty-two-county socialist republic."

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170402-under-israeli-gag-order-omar-barghouti-urges-more-bds/>

Under Israeli gag order, Omar Barghouti urges more BDS

Human rights defender Omar Barghouti is urging people around the world to increase boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaigns as the best way to show support for him - and for the Palestinian people - as he faces escalating repression by the Israeli government. Barghouti wrote in an email to supporters on Saturday:

Finally, I was allowed to access my email account after 12 days of being banned from doing so during the most intense phase of the ongoing interrogation I am subjected to by the Israeli authorities. In what is his first public statement since his interrogation began in mid-March, Barghouti condemned Israel's "McCarthyite witch hunt" against him and the BDS movement.

"Due to a gag order, I am not allowed to delve into any facts about the case," Barghouti added. "I am thus denied the ability to even refute the vicious lies published by Israel's regime against me. I am in no hurry to do so, though, as their main objective - attempting to tarnish my reputation and, by extension, hurting the BDS movement - has clearly failed." Barghouti says that a statement issued last week by the Palestinian BDS National Committee (BNC) "accurately sums up this latest chapter in the Israeli regime's war on the BDS movement."

Israeli media have reported that Barghouti, who lives in the coastal city of Akka in present-day Israel, is suspected of tax evasion. The BNC, the civil society coalition that guides the BDS movement, has accused the Israeli government of "fabricating a case."

<https://thinkprogress.org/putin-thinks-russia-will-benefit-from-climate-change-and-communities-will-adjust-35a2014c28b5>

Putin defends climate deniers and looks forward to the Arctic melting

Russian President Vladimir Putin praised U.S. EPA head Scott Pruitt during a television interview on Thursday, then went on to say Russia stands to benefit from global warming, despite the fact the country has already seen deaths,

wildfires, and anthrax outbreaks related to climate change. "Climate change brings in more favorable conditions and improves the economic potential of this region," Putin said told CNBC while attending the International Arctic Forum in Arkhangelsk, Russia. "Today, Russia's GDP is the result of the economic activity of this region." It is true that with the melting Arctic, Russia is expected to see increased shipping lanes and more moderate temperatures in its northern region. Russia is heavily invested in extracting Arctic oil reserves, as well, which could open up as the poles melt.

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13960113000140>

ISIL's Long Military Column Destroyed in Syrian Army Attack in Hama

TEHRAN (FNA)- The Syrian Army troops ambushed a long convoy of ISIL's military vehicles along the Salamiyah-Ithriya highway, setting ablaze most of the vehicles with a large volume of arms and ammunition. The army units carried out an ambush operation against a long convoy of ISIL's vehicles en route from Northern Hama to Raqqa. ISIL was trying to transfer fighters from Southern Syria to Raqqa front via al-Salamiyah-Ithriya highway in order to fight off the advancing Kurdish forces, but the convoy of terrorists' vehicles came under heavy fire by the Syrian government forces. Military sources said that the terrorist group packed several vehicles with explosives that would prove to be a fatal mistake, as a Syrian Army unit carried out a powerful ambush along the road during the night.

According to a military source in Salamiyah city, the Syrian Army rained anti-tank missiles on the convoy, causing a series of massive explosions that destroyed almost all of the transport vehicles. A row of burning vehicles blocked the Ithriya-Salamiyah Highway, forcing the Syrian Army to once again close the highway as a result of the ISIL presence in this part of Northeastern Hama. Military reports said Saturday that the army troops killed some 500 terrorists in their continued march on Al-Nusra Front (also known as Fatah al-Sham Front or the Levant Liberation Board) in Northern Hama. The army units engaged in an intense battle with Al-Nusra in Northern Hama and established full control over the towns and villages of Abu Obeida, Shliout, Hajamah, Zour al-Masagh, Taslibat Umm Hessian, killing almost 500 terrorists and destroying 3 tanks and 40 military vehicles, army reports said. The army also established control over the Abu Ubaida and Shliout checkpoints North of Maharda.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2017/03/positive-signs-as-asia-pacific-moves-towards-global-development-goals/>

Positive Signs as Asia-Pacific Moves Towards Global Development Goals

By Shamshad Akhtar

It is encouraging to note that most countries in the region have made serious attempts to domesticate the landmark global action-plan by developing national sustainable development strategies- a first and crucial step if we are to fully realize the ambitious targets set out in the landmark agreement. Steady economic growth over the past year has seen a decline in poverty and an improvement in the quality of life. A bright spot worth highlighting is the progress on gender equality. Gender parity has been achieved in primary education, and maternal mortality rates have been brought down across the region with the exception of certain pockets. For example, maternal

mortality dropped by 64 per cent in South Asia from 1990 to 2015 and by 57 per cent in the Pacific over the same period. Notwithstanding these incremental gains, a number of outstanding challenges remain which if not effectively addressed may scuttle our collective efforts. A joint study undertaken by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) reveals that some 400 million people in Asia and the Pacific continue to live in extreme income poverty and more than one in four people experience poverty in multiple dimensions that impact their health, education, and standard of living. South Asia is the worst affected with 15 per cent of the population living in extreme poverty, and 86 per cent residing in rural areas where income diversification opportunities are limited and challenges of poor natural resource management persist. Of equal concern is the rise in income inequality within countries. The challenge is to ensure that prosperity is felt by all, and not just a fortunate few.

<https://eblnews.com/news/world/turkish-opposition-imprisoned-party-chief-has-gone-hunger-strike-71133>

The head of Turkey's pro-Kurdish opposition party has launched a hunger strike from prison.

Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) chief Selahattin Demirtas began refusing any intake of food on Friday in the maximum-security prison in western Turkey's Edirne, the party said on Friday. HDP lawmaker Abdullah Zeydan, a fellow inmate, has also joined the hunger strike. The party officials are showing solidarity

with more than 100 political prisoners in Turkey who are protesting the conditions for detention during the country's state of emergency. Demirtas communicated through party officials that he and Zeydan have taken up the hunger strike in protest at "unlawful" and "inhumane" practices that prisoners are subject to, including "extensive torture," solitary confinement, unannounced cell searches and the confiscation of personal property. Demirtas is among a group of HDP members who were detained in November on terrorism-related accusations. He and 12 others from the pro-Kurdish party are currently in custody awaiting trial.

<http://www.strategic-culture.org/news/2017/04/02/us-plunge-into-yemen-war.html>

US to Plunge Into Yemen's War

The US administration is on the way to escalate its involvement in Yemen - a drastic change of its Middle East policy in an attempt to roll back Iran's influence in the region. It wants Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and local Yemeni forces to jointly defeat the Houthis, a militarized Shiite group strong in northern Yemen fighting side by side with the Yemeni army loyal to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh. According to Foreign Policy, the Saudis came away extremely pleased after a series of meetings in Washington in mid-March when Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman visited the White House. Saudi officials celebrated the meeting as a milestone in resetting a relationship that had frayed under the Obama administration. Saudi Gen. Ahmed Asiri,

spokesperson for the Saudi-led coalition fighting in Yemen, said that teams from the two countries are already engaged in talks, and the stepped-up cooperation would likely involve «intelligence sharing, equipment, and training», for Saudi pilots and troops. «We had a commitment that they will increase cooperation», Asiri said. US State Secretary Rex Tillerson established good, business-like relations with Saudi Arabia in the days he headed ExxonMobil. The civil war in Yemen has created a humanitarian disaster. According to United Nations estimates, two-thirds of Yemen's entire population needs some kind of assistance. Seven million people are hungry, 10,000 have been killed in the war. UN-brokered peace talks have so far led nowhere, with all parties seeking a battlefield victory. On March 13, the Russian Foreign Ministry expressed concern over the situation in Yemen in a statement. «It is our firm belief that the Yemeni conflict cannot be resolved by military means», it reads. Russia calls for an immediate cessation of all hostilities.

WELCOME TO 4 PAGES OF ART IS THE WORD!

Welcome to April and the start of British summertime and welcome also to National Write Poetry Month.

These pages are still edited by WILD WORDS - the North West based art collective of Chris Bainbridge, Emma Lea, Eve Nortley and Gordon Zola - who welcome you back for another literary feast.

Since the last edition, the poetry world has lost 2 of its greats.... St Lucia born Nobel prize winner Derek Walcott, who died on the 17th March aged 87 and Birmingham born Roy Fisher, who died aged 86. Both will be missed.

April's edition of ART is the WORD features an iconoclast in the world of Beat poetry, Yorkshire born Philia Del Fia, we hope you enjoy our exploration of her life and art.

In the spring a young man's fancy...

In our last issue we featured the current plight of our public libraries...

And we offered the first 5 couples to contact us, who are getting married in a library the opportunity to receive a FREE anthology of love poetry writ-

ten by Chris Bainbridge and Eve Nortley.

Simply contact The Word with details of your wedding - which library and when....and the first 5 couples will receive a copy of LOVE AND LUST by Chris and Eve.

On cloaked claret moors,
By light of moon,
My well loved swain
Is wont to swoon,
With rhesus negative rushing
To his loins,
His head aswimming
As we writhe and join.
In nature's tortuous torrid tango,
As hounds at full bay,
We tally ho.
Soft sounds of owl wings.
Stroke silken air,

As I grip tight,
My Samson's hair.
And as his temple
column crumbles
The earth beneath him shakes
He tumbles.
And I am left,
Alone with thoughts
Of nirvana denied,
I'm overwrought,
And unfulfilled,
So much for the
bloody little blue pills.

The Book Corner.....

Still on a "legal theme" we delve into the world of crime fiction

The Golden age of murder by Martin Edwards

This book gives the reader a fascinating insight into the lives, times and talents of the great crime writers of the 1920s, 30s and 40s, all of whom were members of the mysterious detection club. Which amongst its members boasted Agatha Christie, G.K.Chesterton, Dorothy L. Sayers and many more.

The author of this book, who is himself a member of the de-

tection club and who's novels I would highly recommend, leads us through the private lives of the early members in fascinating detail, which makes this a thoroughly gripping and unputdownable book, which I feel any aficionado of crime novels would read again and again.

One of the most entertaining books I myself have ever read.

Alan Stead



GETTING INTO (AND WRITING) ITS COMPETIT

Any budding writers who have been following our getting going in writing and poetry thread and have dipped their feet into the warm and welcoming waters that are Write Out Loud and other spoken word events, can't fail to notice that there are a number of competitions you can enter as a writer and poet.

In our next issue Emma Lea, our resident publisher, will be offering advice on writing for competitions and how not to get "scammed" by the unscrupulous of the literary world.

In preparation for Emma's pearls of wisdom and your foray into the competitive world of modern poetry, we offer you 2 current competitions to have a look at.

Write Out Loud Milestone Competition: Poetry

Global Competition to be judged by renowned Liverpool poet Brian Patten. Now's the time to sharpen your pencil and start getting those entries in before the deadline of 21 June.

Write Out Loud is running the competition in association with the Milestone Society, and in conjunction with their Finding the Way project. First prize is £500. There is also an under-16 category, with a first prize of £100. All short-listed entries will also be published in a competition anthology, which



will be free to successful entrants.

The milestones in your poems can be physical ("those quirky lumps of rock or cast iron sitting quietly by the wayside, marking a path into the past", as the Milestones website puts it) or metaphorical, and you can focus on one single milestone or a host of them.

The Milestone Society, established in 2001, has gathered records of over 20,000 milestones, guide posts and tollhouses still existing in the UK in a mission to tell the world about what these represent, the history of our highways and the people who travelled along

them. Its Finding the Way project aims to restore some unique mileposts in Warwickshire.

The fee to enter for those aged 16 and over is £5. If multiple poems are entered in the same submission, £10 will be charged for three poems and then £3 for each subsequent poem. Entrants aged 15 and under pay £1 per poem. Poems must be no more than 40 lines.

Results will be announced in early August. The winner will be invited to read their poem at an award ceremony in Long Compton, Warwickshire on 7 October.

To enter go to the Write Out Loud website.

Books not Bombs, Art with a Heart, Poetry not Poverty, Books not Bombs, Art with a Heart, Poetry not Poverty, Books not Bombs, Art with a Heart, Poetry not Poverty



POETRY (G) PART 3 ION TIME



Its all Greek to me!
Cafe Reading Room
Project: Writing
and poetry
International competition

Closing date for entries is June 7th, 1pm UK time.

Enter unpublished or online published poems that you have the rights to. Poems can be up to 30 lines in length.

Reading Room Café Project Publishing's 2017 big Summer Mixed Competition is for interpreting a Greek myth. You might interpret a myth by re-writing the story either

setting it in modern times/ future/ sci-fi or by keeping it in ancient Greece but updating the language and putting it in your own style.

Entries costs £4 per piece

The top prize is publication in a collection of work, £100 in cash and 5 copies of the book. On top of that the winner will get 2% of profits from any copies sold.

Runners up will be classed as contributors and receive 2 free copies of the book and 0.5% of profits from any copies sold. All contributors will have the option to buy more at a reduced rate. To enter go to the Reading Room Cafe website.

Phylia Del Fia born 25th December 1964 in Wensleydale North Yorkshire to Italian immigrant parents has become famous for the lyrical sweetness of her farming inspired poetry and prose.

The only child of devout Roman Catholic parents, Gordon Zola and Dol Celatta, Phylia was exposed to music, art and poetry at an early age whilst attending the convent school of St. Agur of Boursin in Easingmold. Although possessed of an outstanding soprano/ counter tenor voice, Phylia was unable to take up a place at York's prestigious choristers' school (following gender re-assignment aged 12), since she/he played an active part in the family dairy business - due to his/her father's deteriorating health.

Phylia won her first poetry competition aged 10, for a piece entitled "Cheese can make you crackers", inspired by Brian Patten's classic poem "The Milkshake Cafe".

Phylia continued to write throughout his teens and twenties whilst attending Ripping St Johns College in York, where she undertook a joint degree in Education and Substance misuse. He briefly played bass guitar with Yorkshire based proto - punk ensemble the E Bi Gums, who were a one hit wonder in 1985 with their double A side single Anarchy in Richmond / Bereted on Ilkley Moor. Phylia is rumoured to be the inspiration behind Iggy Pop's hit Candy - although it is unclear if they ever consummated their relationship after a brief liaison following a concert at Sheffield Arena where the E Bi Gums played support on The Passenger tour.

During this time Phylia was the recipient of the prestigious National Dairy Poetry Prize for her epic poem "the Trojan Cow", which he penned following a lecture by visiting American poetry Professor Derek Walcott.

In 1983 Phylia was awarded the Paul Theakson award for best anthology of poems inspired by real ale. Phylia was a lifelong supporter of CARYA (Campaign for Real Yorkshire Ales) and spent a night in custody following chaining herself to the pumps of the Whip Public House, Leeds and The Precision Grinder Public House, Sheffield - when it was rumoured they were being forced by economic pressures to sell bitter from the Joseph Holt brewery in Manchester. She went on to become Chair of CARYA and in 1989 awarded the chairman of Joseph Holts CARYA's coveted "most distinctive (and undrinkable) beer award" - a fact which was later hotly denied by the Holt family and resulted in an acrimonious and costly court case which took



Phylia Del Fia



Phyllia's luxury apartment block, which he designed as a modern take on her family's traditional cheese grater coat of arms...



Phyllia's exclusive racing silks, which he wore when she rode to victory at Thirsk in 2011...now on display under armed guard at the Precision Grinder pub, Sheffield

CARYA to the point of bankruptcy.

Whilst at University Phylia was a member of the prestigious Wensleydale Group - a collection of young Bohemian academics known for their free thinking and love of gourmet Yorkshire food and real Ales. Phylia outraged genteel York society with her well publicised attendance at pie and pea orgies and flower arranging master classes - accompanied by her pet Whippet Mellor (named after the flamboyant Conservative MP) and dressed in nothing but a flat cap

He wrote some of her best works during this period including "the truth of the orchid", "smell of shemale" and "the 2.30 at Thirsk". She had well publicised affairs with a number of national hunt jockeys, including Lestershire Pig-mott and Pam Edry, as well as a very public liaison with the elderly married race horse trainer Chip McCain - who he later went on to marry on Mc Cains death bed. Mc Cain dying in Filias arms following a series of massive strokes.

Broken hearted, Filia still a young wo-man of 27 retired from public life, moving to the border town of Heaven Bridge and wrote only spasmodically suffering from severe depression and clinical obesity until her very public suicide in the Northallerton Pizza Express.

The death was reported in the national press under the headline "Queen of cheese ends it by topping herself in Pizza".

She was awarded the Pulitzer Prize posthumously, for her gently satirical collection "A homage to S,M and whippets".

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WHEN YOU'RE SMILING

**(The whole world smiles
with you) by Gordon Zola**

Like you, as Teresa May signed Article 50, confirming Brexit and condemning us to an uncertain future. I thought it'll be easier to raise the Titanic than raise a smile today. But on the way home I called at my friends house and his six year old daughter, exhibiting all the chirpiness and exuberance of her age rushed up to me and said

'Can I tell you a joke?'

Not really in the mood. But knowing I didn't have a choice. I readily agreed.

When she'd stopped jumping up and down on the spot, like a kangaroo on hot coals. She took an enormous breath and said:

'What's the longest word in the world?'

Having been a parent well

versed in the tit for tat exchanges that muster for communication between adult and child, determined to get the right answer. I trotted out 'Mississippi, Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious.'

'No. No.' She laughed. Do you give in?'

My competitive side, didn't want to admit defeat, wanted to prolong the suspense. But seeing she was on the verge of exploding with excitement, I capitulated.

'Go on then. What's the answer?' I said.

Unable to contain her excitement a minute longer, she blurted out, 'SMILE. Coz it's got a mile in it. Do you get it?'

... and despite my mood, I did get it. It may not be in contention for the funniest joke of the year

and she was no Einstein, but her remark was definitely the most relative remark I'd heard in the last week- and what's more it got me thinking and my train of thought didn't stop to pick up passengers until it reached the station where I remembered a story I was told, many moons ago, but had filed in my minds 'To Do later', tray.

Way back in the sixties, a time of peace and free (or relatively inexpensive) love. A bus driver in New York, fed up with seeing the tired, down trodden, sullen, faces of his early morning passengers, decided to try and brighten their day by giving them a beaming smile as they got on the bus.

He discovered that most people returned the smile with interest and that smiling at everybody

made him feel better, so he decided to make it part of his daily routine.

The effect was almost beyond belief. He found that his passengers weren't just returning his smile they began to smile at each other...and if you've ever travelled on the Tube, something that's way beyond belief. They actually started to talk to each other.

Subsequent research found that this wasn't just on their bus journey. It had a knock on affect through the day. This could have been, because, as Allan and Barbara Pease, state in their best seller "The Definitive Book of Body Language".

"The smile is the universal symbol of communication that breaks down all barriers."

I can still picture my Grand-

mother telling me to put on a happy face. Show them pearly whites and give everybody a big smile.

I was never too sure why I had to do this. But I guess she intuitively knew that it would create a good impression when meeting people. These days it comes naturally. My smile has been described as broader than a Cheshire Cat's that's won a year's supply of Kite Kat. (Other cat foods are available).

You don't have to have a smile comparable to the Mona Lisa or the Joker in Batman to create a good impression because extensive research shows that when you smile at another person they will almost always return the smile, which causes positive feelings in both you and them. Recent studies also show that most encounters run

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you make a point of regularly smiling, until it becomes second nature.

I'm not going to bore you with the fact that you use less facial muscles when you smile, than when you frown...or that scientific evidence, shows that when you smile the neuronal signal travels from the cortex of the brain to the brainstem (the oldest part of the brain). From there the cranial muscle carries the signal further towards the smiling muscles of the face. And I'm not going to tell you that...once those smiling muscles contract, there is a positive feedback loop that goes back to the brain and reinforces our feelings of joy.

But I am going to tell you that... 'Smiling stimulates our brain's reward mechanism in a way that even chocolate, a well-regarded pleasure inducer cannot match.'

I thought that might wake you up - and if your still not convinced...

Smiling reduces stress enabling your body and mind to experience feelings similar to getting a good night's sleep, according to recent studies - and smiling helps to generate more positive emotions within you. That's why we often feel happier around children. They smile up to 400 times a day. While the average adult only smiles 20 times a day.

Mmm. Maybe these pesky kids know something we don't.

I'm going to give the last word on the benefit of smiling to my friends daughter. I'm sure you'll agree that her joke wasn't the funniest joke in the world. But I have to admit, it did make me smile - and despite today's senseless madness, made me feel s miles better.



Red Ladder Theatre Company CONVICTS AND LUNATICS

Review by Emma Kendall Lea

To pair a one woman musical about women's suffrage with a modern dance troop who both ask and offer up an answer to the question "should we be naked?" was a bold move, and one that paid off beautifully. Red Ladder Theatre Company's show *Convicts and Lunatics* consists of two very different acts.

The stark contrast between the witty, brutally honest story of Lancashire Suffragette Annie Wild (by Boff Whalley) and the absurdity of *This Really Is Too Much* by Gracefool Collective throws the light and the shadows of each in to sharp focus.

Wrong 'Un follows mill-girl Annie Wild from her childhood, saying nothing, through to her imprisonment, and subsequent release, and beyond to the heartbreaking realisation that Pankhurst was fighting not for all women, but for ladies. It shows her pain after giving her own



brother a white feather, at loosing him to the war and her being the cause of it. It describes graphically the injuries sustained by being force fed. How that barbaric practice killed women.

So after the intermission we needed the hilarity and strangeness of Gracefool, four lythe young women, dancing about in

their pants and shouting about moisturiser, water, cleaning products and salad. They were far more than that, though, more than a little light relief. They pulled us in and out of our comfort zones, demanding that we pay attention to their questions. I've just come through some ridiculous job interviews and jumped through the hoops, so when the (now clothed) woman being interviewed struggled to find the correct answer and was told "I haven't got a box for that." There were tears in the laughter. Gracefool Collective do "post-intellectual-pseudo-spiritual-feminist-comedy-dance for the modern day era" beautifully.

Currently touring, they will be on at the University of Sheffield on the 18th of April.

<http://www.redladder.co.uk>
<http://www.redladder.co.uk/whatson/wrong-un/>
www.gracefoolcollective.com



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GREENWORD

Impacts of mass coral die-off on Indian Ocean reefs revealed

http://www.theecologist.org/News/news_round_up/2988806/impacts_of_mass_coral_dieoff_on_indian_ocean_reefs_revealed.html

Warming sea waters - caused by climate change and extreme climatic events - threaten the stability of tropical coral reefs, with potentially devastating implications for many reef species and the human communities that reefs support warn scientists at Exeter University

These reefs are now eroding at a faster rate than they are growing and researchers suggest given the severity of the bleaching impacts it may take 10 to 15 years for full recovery to occur

New research by the University of Exeter shows that increased surface ocean temperatures during the strong 2016 El Niño led to a major coral die-off event in the Maldives, and that this has caused reef growth rates to collapse. They also found that the rates at which some reefs species, in particular parrotfish, are eroding the reefs had increased following this coral die-off event.

Similar magnitudes of coral death have been reported on many other reefs in the region, including on the northern Great Barrier Reef, suggesting similar

impacts may be very widespread.

Professor Chris Perry and Dr Kyle Morgan, of the University of Exeter's Geography department, studied the impact of the 2016 El Niño event at sites in the southern Maldives and found that the event had not only caused widespread coral bleaching, a phenomenon whereby corals expel their photosynthesising algae when stressed by high temperatures, but that this had also led to extensive coral death in all shallow water reef habitats examined.

"A very major concern now is how quickly these reefs might recover. Recovery from similar past disturbances in the Maldives have taken 10-15 years, but major bleaching events are predicted to become far more frequent than this. If this is the case it could lead to long-term loss of reef growth and so limit the coastal protection and habitat services these reefs presently provide," Professor Perry said.

"The most alarming aspect of this coral die-off event is that it has led to a rapid and very large decline in the growth rate of the reefs. This in turn has major implications not only for the capacity of these reefs to match any increases in sea-level, but is also likely to lead to a loss of the surface structure of the reefs that is so critical for supporting fish species diversity and abundance."



Before and after photos show dramatic retreat of glaciers

<http://www.treehugger.com/climate-change/and-after-photos-show-dramatic-retreat-glaciers.html>

Melissa Breyer

Earth is losing ice. The instances of glacial retreat far exceed those of advance, note the authors of a report published by the Geological Society of America.

Melting glaciers can be a pretty abstract thing. In fact, climate change in general can be a pretty abstract thing. As noted in Lloyd's post about Americans thinking that climate change is happening - just not to them: "Because climate change is a statistical phenomenon that cannot be experienced directly, it presents a unique challenge for the human brain."

And thus a unique challenge as well for scientists who work to convey the urgency of the

issues at hand; which is why a group of experts in the field have put together this report with before and after photographs showing the loss of ice across Earth's surface, an almost assured consequence of anthropogenic carbon emissions, they note. "One cannot dismiss it - the photographs don't lie. The real problem for geoscientists is what we are going to do about, when much of our science and society lies intertwined with fossil fuels."

Because not many of us have the opportunity to see glaciers in the wild, it is difficult for us to recognize the scope of the issue. The authors - Patrick Burkhardt, Richard Alley, Lonnie Thompson, James Balog, Paul E. Baldauf, and Gregory S. Baker - hope to change that by showing easy-to-understand evidence. As geoscience educators, they hope to present the best scholarship "as accurately and eloquently as we can, to address the core challenge of conveying the magnitude of anthropogenic impacts,

while also encouraging optimistic determination on the part of students, coupled to an increasingly informed citizenry."

"Let us endeavor to tell the story better," they say.

El Salvador becomes first country to ban metals mining

<https://news.mongabay.com/2017/03/el-salvador-becomes-first-country-to-ban-metals-mining/>

Legislators in El Salvador made history Wednesday, passing a bill to ban all metallic mining activities in the country.

The move follows on the heels of similar bans enacted regionally in El Salvador, the most recent of which happened in late February.

The governor of the Philippines province of Nueva Vizcaya and others travelled to El Salvador to support the mining ban and to draw attention to the negative social and environmental impacts they attribute to the activities of a mining company that had been vying to establish its presence in the Central American country.

In passing the bill, El Salvador becomes the first country in the world to enact a ban on metallic mining, according to industry watchdog organization Mining-Watch.

Legislators in El Salvador made history Wednesday, passing a bill to ban all metallic mining activities in the country.





The results of the much-anticipated vote were unanimous: 69 in favor, none against, and no abstentions. Fifteen of the country's 84 lawmakers did not show up for the vote.

The result "makes tiny El Salvador the unlikely hero in a global movement to put the brakes on a modern day 'gold rush,'" MiningWatch Canada wrote in a statement Thursday. The Central American nation is the first country in the world to ban mining for gold and other metals, according to the industry watchdog group.

With the exception of a transition period for small-scale artisanal gold miners, the law provides for an immediate, definitive, and permanent ban on all metals mining, including exploration activities. No old permits or license applications will be grandfathered in, according to the succinct 11-article bill. It will take effect one week after its publication in the official government gazette.

Inspired by Nature: Scientists Find Groundbreaking Solution for Solar Storage

<http://www.ecowatch.com/battery-storage-rmit-2339929808.html>

One of the most common pitfalls of solar energy is storing it. On sunny days there is typically an excess of energy, which is lost if not captured. But, fortunately many battery storage options are now available, including this groundbreaking new electrode



prototype from the RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia, which could store energy at a much higher capacity, about 3000 percent more than existing technology.

The highly compact electrode is designed to hook up to a supercapacitor, which can charge and discharge energy at a much faster rate than conventional batteries. This technology hasn't been used as a main storage mechanism for its lack of storage capability. The electrode solves that with an intricate and self-repeating pattern of circuits, known as fractals.

This visionary approach was inspired by ferns, which have a dense system of veins that transfer energy and water to the entire body of the plant. The electrodes are able to store the energy in these "veins" and the supercapacitor is able to transfer the energy when it is needed at a rapid pace, without little to no energy leaked.

"Our electrode is based on these fractal shapes—which are self-replicating, like the mini structures within snowflakes—and we've used this naturally-efficient design to improve solar energy storage at a nano level," said Min Gu, professor at RMIT and co-author of the research. "Capacity-boosted supercapaci-

tors would offer both long-term reliability and quick-burst energy release—for when someone wants to use solar energy on a cloudy day for example—making them ideal alternatives for solar power storage."

Clean Power Worldwide Has Doubled in 10 Years



<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/clean-power-worldwide-has-doubled-in-10-years/>

Asia was the fastest-growing region, with a 13.1 percent increase in renewable energy capacity

By Daniel Cusick

Renewable energy generation grew globally by 161 gigawatts in 2016, setting another annual record for capacity additions and pushing clean power capacity past 2,000 GW, according to newly released data from the International Renewable Energy Agency.

That's roughly double the amount of renewable energy that

was flowing across the world's power grids a decade ago, according to the Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates-based organization, and it reflects the unprecedented adoption of solar, wind, hydro and other emissions-free power by the world's largest economies.

China, Europe and the United States now account for 62 percent of the world's total installed renewable capacity, with China and the United States supporting the largest clean power portfolios, according to the data. Other leaders are Brazil, Germany, Canada and India.

Asia was the fastest-growing region year over year, with a 13.1 percent increase in renewable energy capacity. Africa installed 4.1 GW of new capacity in 2016, a 12 percent jump from 2015.

In addition to boosting the world's carbon-free electricity, which experts say is essential to arresting global warming, the surge in renewables "provides multiple socio-economic benefits in terms of fueling economic growth, creating jobs and improving human welfare and the environment," Adnan Amin, ARENA's director-general, said in a statement.

The 2016 growth represents an 8.7 percent jump in global renewable energy capacity from 2015, according to ARENA. Solar was the largest source of new renewable energy for the year, estimated at

71 GW, followed by wind power at 51 GW and hydropower at 30 GW.

Hydropower saw its greatest expansion in Asia, Africa and South America, while solar and wind installations were more broadly distributed, with China and the United States leading the world in year-over-year expansions for the two leading non-hydro renewable energy resources. Solar also saw multigigawatt expansions in India, Japan and the United Kingdom. India, Germany and Brazil each added more than 2 GW of wind power capacity in 2016, according to the data.

Notably, offshore wind energy saw its second-largest annual growth in 2016, with China nearly tripling its capacity in 12 months, from 559 to 1,480 megawatts. New offshore turbines also came online in Germany, the Netherlands, Great Britain and the United States.



When I suggested to one of the editors Barbara Castle as a possible inclusion in my series 'Women who made a difference', the response was "oh no, what about 'In place of Strife'?"

In Place of Strife was a divisive white paper which attempted union legislation but never became law. Although there were many worthy proposals intended to strengthen trade unions, all anyone saw were plans for compulsory strike ballots and a cooling off period, both to be underwritten by sanctions. As I told the editor politicians need to be judged rationally over time, as her legislation looks insignificant compared with to harsh measures under Thatcher. The requirement that strike action could only take place after a ballot would later become a key component of the 1992 Trade Union Act. Barbara wanted unions to move away from their sectional interests and towards corporate responsibility for national economic development. Although this almost destroyed her career Barbara went on to make beneficial changes to politics and society.

Barbara was born in October 1910, into a socialist family who lived by their beliefs. Her father was also an intellectual, in a fairly well paid job, so Barbara was able to fight her way into the almost all-male preserve of Oxford University and then into the largely male world of politics. Later she met William Mellor, a leading figure of the Intellectual left, a founder editor of a left wing magazine Tribune who gave Barbara a chance in journalism. Mellor became more than her mentor as they had an affair which lasted until his early death in 1942. Here with the Tribune she met up again with another major influence on her thinking, Michael Foot, who she had been with at Oxford. Foot later described Barbara 'the best Socialist Minister we've ever had'. In 1955 she married journalist, Ted Castle, also influential on Barbara until his death 34 years later.

Let us look at the difference she made to our politics and society in general. Although only the fourth woman to hold cabinet office it was as Minister of Transport for less than two and a half years she made some radical changes



WOMEN WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE

BARBARA CASTLE (LABOUR'S RED QUEEN)

Barbara introduced the breathalyser and made permanent the 70 mph. speed limit. Although unable to reverse all the Beeching cuts to railways, she did stop the closure of some and introduced the first rail subsidies for socially necessary but unprofitable lines. She saved more

lives by passing legislation that made it compulsory for new cars to be fitted with seat-belts.

She was able to strike a blow for women's rights by intervening in the sewing machinists strike at the Dagenham Ford Plant. This gained pay rises for women of up to 92%

of men. Then she went on to put through the Equal Pay Act in 1970.

Harold Wilson kept faith with her and she stayed on for a time as shadow spokesperson on employment when Labour were ousted in 1970, moving her to health later.

Barbara bounced back when

Labour regained power in 1974. As Secretary of State for Health and Social Services introducing mobility allowance and the Invalid Care Allowance, which enabled carers to give up their jobs to look after severely disabled relatives. There were reforms in child allowances which she insisted 'went into the purse not the wallet'. She introduced Serps, a scheme for second pensions, which she hoped would transform the old age of the low-paid.

However a row over Pay Beds gave Wilson's successor, Jim Callaghan, the chance to remove her. She later claimed that Callaghan had told her he wanted 'someone younger' in the cabinet. For once her hot temper was kept in check and she never used the response which was on her lips 'Then why not start with yourself' as Callaghan was 4 years older than Wilson!

Despite being a Eurosceptic she left Westminster in the 1979 General Election and won a seat in the European Parliament. She still wanted to make a difference and by 1982 she felt Labour should abandon its opposition to membership of the EEC and Britain should fight its corner inside it. In her ten years representing Greater Manchester North in Europe her contributions to European Democracy were recognised by the award of the Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany.

South Africa awarded her The Order of the Companions of O.R. Tambo in recognising her 'outstanding contribution to the struggle against apartheid and the establishment of a non-sexist, non-racial and democratic South Africa'.

She became Baroness Castle of Blackburn in 1990, having refused the courtesy title of Lady Castle when husband Ted became a life peer in 1974.

This passionate, but pragmatic fighter for left wing causes and in particular a fairer society, and was still challenging the Chancellor Gordon Brown in 2001 for his refusal to link pensions to earnings. She died a year later aged 91.

She remained committed to the socialism of her youth, hating what she thought Tony Blair was doing to the party. Barbara advanced the cause of women's equality as much as anyone in the 20th. Century. She **Made a Difference.**

Venice in April or Calais in November ?

By Kevin FOLEY

So we are off. We have decided to go on a bit of an adventure. I wasn't too certain about it but most of the family were. A Staycation seemed less hassle to me. Not that is it as exciting and then there's the weather...but enough 'moaning' from me, I am assured we're off to some exotic destination. Best get on board.

I have asked that we maybe sit

down and discuss where exactly we are going and when, how much it will cost, and will it be safe. What a pessimist I am. Raining on the Parade as usual I am. Have I no sense of adventure. It will be great. The world is our lobster. Venice in April. That would be great would it not?

Yes but surely we can't just walk out the door and head to the airport and expect to end up in Venice. Shouldn't we at least check the flight times and hotels. And

how much it will cost at Easter if we haven't sorted it in advance and try to do it all 'on the hoof'. Will the hotels be full? Is there room on the plane? Can we can afford it? Like it or not, other folk are involved in our jolly; pilots, hotel managers, taxi drivers, we can't just assume they will do our bidding in a rush - especially if they are 'foreigners' who may be sick to the back teeth of bothersome Brits barking orders.

Call me Mr Party Pooper but if



we're not careful we could end up in Calais in November not Venice in April. And then maybe my staycation would start to look more attractive. All we have decided up to now is to go somewhere.

I am going to suggest to the family that we have a little re-think - and maybe another vote - if it's looking like Calais in November; Brrrrrr.

Wish me luck. Will let you know how I get on.

OUR FOOTBALL LEAGUES AREN'T JUST LAUGHABLY THE BEST LEAGUE IN THE WORLD

By Ian Charles

Twenty levels down exist about ten local leagues, including the Bristol and Avon League; about a dozen clubs vie to gain promotion to the Bristol and District League (division 5) at level 19. Below that are purely 'reserve team' leagues; five divisions higher (level 14) is B&D's Senior League, promotion from which is to the Bristol Premier Combination. A team can move up these divisions quite quickly, as Old Sodbury did between 2006 and 2011. Last season it was won by Chipping Sodbury Reserves, which leads me to an important question: which is the lowest level of football without Reserve teams?

Round about levels 10 and 11 of the English Football League System, there seems to be no more Reserves. If your club operates at say, level 11, and has good enough results and facilities, you can gain quick promotions, eventually ending up in the Football League, and theoretically the English Premier League (at level one!) Secondly, you can take part in the preliminary rounds of the FA Cup.

It might take a dozen or more years to get to the EPL, and you would initially have to go through up to six preliminary rounds of the Cup before winning through to Round One Proper, meeting the 48 League One and Two clubs, and the 44 Premiership

and Championship clubs in the Third Round.

Out of 90 different divisions, over eleven levels, around 1800 clubs, with up to fifty thousand players involved, about a dozen or so lads lift the FA Cup at Wembley in May and take it home to their club. Early in August the competition will begin again with the 'Extra-Preliminary' Round.

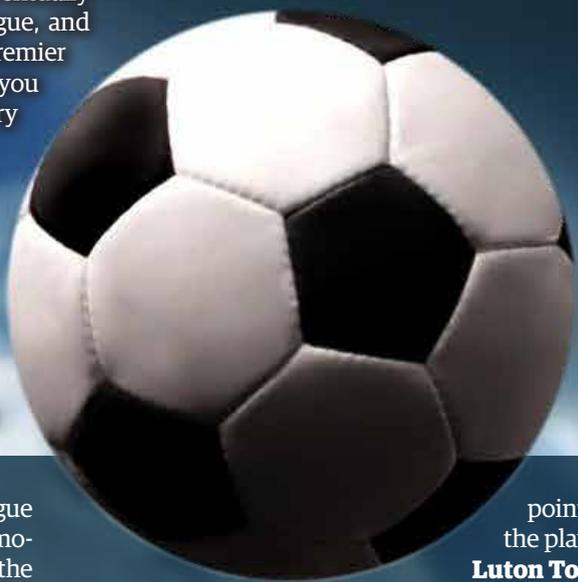
How many of these fifty thousand players are qualified to play for England? I'm guessing most of them would be. How many of them are good enough? Firstly we have to consider how good you need to be to go out there in an England shirt and lose to Iceland. At some point in the 20+ level structure are clubs full of young men who were the best players ever to come from their locality, the ones old schoolmasters still talk about and look at the Sunday pa-

pers to see if they've scored, or even played, the strongest, fittest, fastest and most skilful player they've ever known; I reckon you begin meeting these lads in levels six and seven. Brian Clough knew it, and signed Gary Birtles from Long Eaton United. He won two back-to-back European Cup winners' medals, but didn't do quite so well in a declining Manchester United team or for England.

Beyond a certain level, the game is played inside the head, and Clough and Taylor knew how to get performances from a player, whereas Dave Sexton and Ron Greenwood, for all their achievements with others, couldn't do that with Birtles.

The English Team manager, whoever it is this week, might do well to have a good look at the guys playing in the Championship, Leagues One and Two and even below, the team mates of the Iceland lads and the Welsh lads, and watch those games to see who shines.

EPL managers could do so too and avoid wasting multi-millions on marquee signings from Monaco, and bonza-bucks on big-heads from Bayern. If they could work out what Clough and Taylor did at Forest, and Ron Saunders and Tony Barton did at Villa, and apply some football psychology, a lot of money might be saved on expensive mistakes and result in a better England squad. Ian Charles.



This is the most exciting League in the World writes Stanley Acrimious... fail, and you're out of the Football League! Win and you're two hops from the Premiership.

Plymouth Argyle 0 Accrington Stanley 1

Our lad Jordan Clark nabbed a goal after seven minutes and all it took was a magnificent goal-keeping display to keep out second-placed Plymouth and continue the unbeaten run. We're not far off the play-off positions!

Grimsby Town 1 Doncaster Rovers 5

Teams with names like 'Rangers' and 'Rovers' make you think that they don't really belong anywhere, and just turn up to play. After a goal scored by the home team, a consecutive hat-trick from Doncaster's 'marquis-signing' in June of last year, John Marquis, a player

who has spent much of his career on loan at various clubs, showed that in this case, he ought to be staying at Donnie and going into League One with them next year. I think 'Rovers' means they chase you like a terrier goes after a postman. Late goals from Williams and May (no relation, I hope.)

Hartlepool United 0 Portsmouth 2

Third-place Portsmouth went to Hartlepool and snuck a little closer to Plymouth, pushing Hartlepool nearer to the drop zone.

Stevenage 1 Barnet Hairdressers 0

Two things you can say about Stevenage: they are on a winning run at home; they're still two

points ahead of the pack in the play-off positions.

Luton Town 1 Blackpool 0

Luton edge up to the second play-off spot, knocking Blackpool down to eighth. Just one goal, and all that change from it.

Mansfield 1 Exeter City 2

Exeter also rise one position. Two very late goals indeed prevented Mansfield creeping into the play-off zone at their expense. I've seen films that didn't last as long as this match.

Yeovil 0 Carlisle United 2

Yeovil used to have a pitch that sloped like the side of a hill, making decisions about game strategy difficult for their opponents. How they could have done with that pitch against Carlisle, with one win from the last seven games. Ben Whitfield got a red card for using his specially sharpened elbow on

Tom Miller and shortly afterwards the visitors scored a second. Will Whitfield be sent back to Bournemouth?

Crewe 1 Cambridge 2

It was a game of legges for Cambridge. Firstly Crewe shot straight at those of keeper Tim Norris, then having gone ahead, they suffered an equaliser when Leon Legge legged an own-goal from a Chris Dagnall cross. Finally after Luke 'Chuck' Berry won the game for them, they lost Paul Lewis for kicking the legges of Chris Dagnall.

Notts County 3 Colchester United 1

A gola either side of half-time from Newcastle Championship winning veteran Shola Ameobi put County ahead and then consolidated the win after the oldest city in England had equalise an early opener from Haydn Hollis.

Newport 1 Crawley 0

Newport gained three points, edging them closer to Hartlepool, but really they're a lot of points short of getting out of the relegation zone.

Cheltenham 3 Morecambe 1

Architects of their own destruction, Morecambe had a man sent off, went further down to the resultant penalty, and could only score due from an own-goal. Relegation?

Leyton Orient 0

Wycombe Wanderers 2

Orient showed why they're going down and out at the end of this season. They had a man sent off, two scrappy goals went in and new manager Omer Riza was sent to the stands for verbal abuse of the referee as the teams came out for the second half.

And a word for Big Sam and Palace: Yes!!!!



- The English league champions beat Danish side Fortuna Hjørring on Thursday to progress to the last four in their debut European campaign.
- French side Lyon have reached the final five times in the past seven seasons.
- Cushing's side won the English Women's Super League One title in September, finishing their league campaign without defeat, and added the WSL Continental Cup (League Cup) in October.
- So far in their maiden Champions League campaign, City have knocked out Russian side Zvezda 2005 plus Danish sides Brøndby and Fortuna.



- Lyon won their third European Cup with victory over Wolfsburg in the 2016 final
- "It is an unbelievable achievement in our first season to get to the semi-finals," added Cushing. "We now can draw on all of those good performances and try to play Lyon."
- "We need to enjoy putting ourselves up against what people believe is Europe's best team."
- City will be at home in the first leg on the weekend of 22-23 April, before the return leg in France on the weekend of 29-30 April.
- The other semi-final sees Barcelona, who beat Swedish side Rosengård on Wednesday, face 2015 runners-up Paris St-Germain, who were 4-1 aggregate winners over Bayern Munich in the last eight.
- Like City, Barcelona have reached the semi-finals for the first time in their history.



MANCHESTER CITY WOMEN GO THROUGH TO THE EUROPEAN CUP SEMI FINAL

Manchester City Women's Champions League success has been hailed as 'unbelievable' by their manager Nick Cushing.

After all their recent success it will be strange for City to be going in to the game as underdogs but Cushing said that suits them just fine.

He said: "It's an unbelievable achievement in our first season to get to the semi-finals so we can go in to that game with no pressure on us. "Everyone expects Lyon to beat us. But we will go and do what we normally do and be defensively solid but we will enjoy both games.

Since the competition was started in the 2009-2010 season Lyon have been finalists five times, winning it three times and have a team of world class players including Carli Lloyd's USA team-mate Alex Morgan.

Despite Cushing stating that Lyon have the squad strength to field two strong teams, City captain Steph Houghton thinks they can match their rivals.